CHAPTER: 3

RELATIONSHIPS IN THE SERIALS OF EKTA KAPOOR

Kyun Ki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi, Pavitra Rishta, Kahaani Ghar Ghar Ki, Kutumb, and Kasauti Zindagi Ki; the names of the serials and their title songs reflect on the theme of the serials. All the serials are based on the relationships among the family members, couples, friends, and relatives. Serials have been reflecting on the internal culture of the family, relationships and society. The serials represent Indian rituals and customs. The following chapter ‘Relationship’ is defined, described, and discussed considering serials and their depiction of relationships on screen and its impact on the large spectatorship. The chapter also discusses the main cause for the increase in the TRP rates.

Relationship is an interaction between two individuals, groups, communities, or nations at large. The interaction can be through expression, communication, body language or behavioral gestures. Relationships need two people to reciprocate and build a relationship.
Society is a large institution of different kinds of relationships, while family is a small unit of multiple relationships. Each relationship varies from person to person and is interdependent. Relationship is influenced by emotions like love, envy, joy, hatred, sacrifice, modesty, selflessness, criticism, cynicism, honesty, patience, anger. These are a few remarkable traits; which cannot be explained but the intensity of each emotion can be felt. Each relationship is built upon the edifice of these emotions and expressions.

Types of relationships

1) Private and Public relationship
2) Healthy and Unhealthy relationship

Private Relationships can be of several types, mother-child, husband-wife, father-daughter, mother-son, brothers-sisters, friends, in-laws, love, pets, there is no contour to these relationships. Public relationships vary from person to person and place to place. Friendship, colleagues, room partners, boss-employee, celebrities and many more are shared in this public or social life. A healthy relationship is an outcome of morality, values and good behavior. In these serials each and every type of relationship is highlighted, depending upon the need and greed of the character. An unhealthy relationship is an outcome of all the negative feelings like jealousy, conflicts, and constant criticism. In an Indian society emotions and
values are given a greater importance Indians believe in leading a value based life. Vedas and the scriptures that are of great reverence to Indians convey the same message to lead a ethical life. Relationships are the main sources of social forums in India; each and every individual is directly or indirectly related.

Family: Family is the mother of all the relationships. It is a universal institution. Patricia Oberoi feels that:

“family is the private domain where the nation cherishes the cultural values”.

It is an institution that structures rules for the relationships, these principles and rules are acted out in the family. [1]

Fortes is of the view that:

“Domestic group is the workshop for kinship and marriage.”[2]

Mother Teresa said “What can you do to promote world peace? Go home and love your family.” The serials promote world peace, hence has asked everyone in the family to love every relationship they are in. There are several concepts that are instilled in the family; these are related to social behavior, customs, rituals, and tradition. One learns about their community and it’s expectation in a family; each and every member of the family is accountable for one or the other responsibility. It also creates a sense of bondage in the members of the family; hence each one in the family does his duty sincerely.
In 1950s, 1960s, and the 1970s, many films were produced keeping Indian families as the main plot and relationships being their subplot. Movies usually would telecast an ideal husband, wife, son, daughter, and an ideal family; where sacrifice is the major plot. These movies conveyed a message to the viewers and had greater impact on the youngsters of those years and more or less the same kind of attitudes and traits were developed by the younger generations and a few new things were added to culture with the old ones.

In 1990’s a lot of importance was given to Television and the serials, the first of the serials that gained highest TRPs all over Asia was the picturization of “Ramayana”. The epic is all about a family, values, principles, and ethics. The same theme was adapted by Ekta Kapoor in all her serials since 1994. Her serials hit the screen and were accepted by the Asian masses.

Analysis of Relationships in the Serials:

“All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.”[3]

The serials have depicted this fact that all families are alike and unhappy in their own way. The mega serials depict relationships that capture the audience’s attention to such an extent that, the spectators become emotional watching the serials. Popular relationships in the serials are mother-in-law/daughter-in-law, mother-son, father-daughter, sibling rivalry, bondage between the sisters and brothers of a family,
husband-wife relationship, friendship, grandparents, lovers, enemies and all these relationships knitted around love-hate feelings with all the relationships.

Mother in Law: Mothers-in-law have a tainted image in the Indian society; they are imagined to be the creators of hell and are very authoritative, and dominating. They expect complete obedience from their daughters-in-law, a sense of insecurity prevails and they try to overcome it with dominance. This Relationship is a bruised relationship in the Indian scenario and is a common truth and secret known to each and everyone in this society and the same theme has been commercialized by the serials.

Savita Thai is playing the role of a typical mother in law in the serial Pavitra Rishta. She is very rude, impolite, cynical, and unhappy. She just cannot see her daughter-in-law happy or peaceful; she spends most of her time conspiring against Archana. She is a package of all that can be worst and bad.

Rasika plays a violent role in the serial ‘Pavitra Rishta’. Her son is married to Vandita. She does not miss a single opportunity of criticizing; she is the worst of the mothers-in-law. She instigates her son to fight with Vandita and hit her black and blue. Irony in the serial is that Rasika happens to be the leader of the ‘Woman’s organizations’.
Savitha Virani: from Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi is Tulsi’s mother in law, she successfully creates a rift between the couple. She often manipulates and challenges her daughter-in-law that, she would be thrown out of the house very soon and Tulsi accepts her challenge but faces the menace courageously.

Payal plays the role of the mother-in-law to Tulsi’s daughter Shobha. She finds pleasure in troubling her. Shobha wins her heart by nursing her. Payal eventually accepts favors from her; Shobha makes her realize that she is a good daughter-in-law.

Tulsi turns into a mother-in-law with three daughters-in-laws and projects a very good role by being a mother more than a mother-in-law and brings in changes in the lives of Ganga, Damini, and Nandini. Directors have tried to give a new definition and an outlook to this rigid term “mother-in-law”. Tulsi as a mother-in-law won appreciation from the spectators and led to a ‘wave’ that changed the mindset of the mothers-in-law to a certain extent. Tulsi stood by women and considered her daughters-in-law as daughters and fought with her sons, family and society. In case of Nandini, Tulsi stands by her to protect her from the clutches of her cruel son and his unpredictable behavior. Tulsi kills her own son to protect her daughter-in-law’s dignity, she also stands by Ganga when Sahil cheats her and helps Damini in times of need as she treats them as her daughters. Sulochana Thai is just the
opposite of Savitha thai in the serial Pavitra Ristha she takes care of her family, just the way Tulsi does but had the worst of daughter-in-law, who ill treated her and kicked her out of the house deceitfully.

Father in Law: Projection of fathers-in-law and their relationship is generally passive in the serials. They are often found in episodes that conclude and reveal the dark secrets. Most of them are a great moral support to their daughters-in-law; they treat them as their daughters. In all the serials fathers-in-law keep themselves out of the internal politics of the family but they are the decision makers of the family. Father-in-law dies very soon in every serial so that the woman can take reins of the family, and run it according to her whims and fancies. After a few episodes the man of the family dies and this is a common episode because the director no more wants a father-in-law in his play. Hence he kills the father-in-law’s character. The serials have imitated the general social construction of a father in law and his relationship.

Mother: Mother contributes in personality development of her child. She teaches the child to behave politely with elders, siblings and the other relationships. She also teaches them to judge people. She is the first and an effective teacher and always has an influence on her children; for few years the child looks at the world from the mother’s point of view. In all the serials the heroines of the serials have lost their mothers’ and wish to have a motherly mother-in-law.
Parvathi plays a mother’s role and tries her level best to protect her child from various distractions. Shruti represents thousands of young teenage girls; who want to be independent but are not aware of channelizing their energies. Parvathi and Om try to understand her problem and help her solve them.

Tulsi plays the role of a mother to Gautam, Ansh, Shobha and Karan. Gautam was adopted by Mihir’s younger brother but the child was not brought up well this had led to, reckless attitude in him. He turned rebellious as nobody loved him. As a good mother, she takes the task of changing her son from Gomzy to Gautam.

Those episodes show the feeling of being wanted and loved. The show also highlights the importance of love in life. If a child is not given enough attention then there are many chances of a child getting distracted and depressed and in worst cases lands up in bad company and habits. The reunion of a son and mother is an emotional episode. The feelings of a mother were encashed and explored by the directors in the following episodes. This also won more TRP.

Similarly there is a representation of a good mother and a bad mother in the serial Kyun Ki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi, Tulsi represents a good mother, where as Mandira represents a bad mother, who uses her son for her selfish motives and does not care for his feelings.
Mandira: a representation of a cunning mother, She pretends as if not well because she was cheated by Mihir. She instills hatred in her son’s heart for the Virani’s, she gains sympathy from her son and instigates him to revenge the Virani’s. Karan steps back when he comes face to face with his mother’s reality. Apologizes and accepts Tulsi as his mother.

Rasika is another mother, instilling wrong values in both her children Manjusha and Ajith. She instigates them and lets them develop cruelty; as a result, they never understand the importance of good values and never hesitate to spoil anybody’s life with their crooked ways. Both Rasika and Manjusha conspire against Archana out of jealousy. Rasika also instigates her son to ill treat his wife; he assaults her several times and feels there is nothing wrong in it. The serials have tried to define mother and motherhood through these serials and have glorified that there is no other relationship as selfless as a mother.

Sons: are given more importance in India because of a staunch faith in culture and rituals. It is believed that, sons will take care of the family and will be getting dowry and precious gifts in marriage and it is also believed that the funeral rites are done by the son who leads parent’s journey to heaven. One character plays several roles, Manav, Gautam, Karan, Kamal, Prem, Sujal etc these characters play many other roles
along with the role of the son and all of them have won the best son award from Star Parivar awards etc.

“K” serials have picturized several episodes on son’s and their activities. In serials like Kasauti Zindagi Ki, Kyun Ki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi, episodes that are directed on a mother and a son and their bond have received highest TRPs. Disputes between the mother and the daughter-in-law arise because of a son. A mother feels that she has all right on him, where as the wife also feels that she has more right on her husband. One common factor shown on screen is that both of them cannot share a person, as a result the disputes between a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law arise.

Karan and Gautam fight for their mother and do not let anyone dominate her and ask everyone to respect her and stand for her in need. Sons in ‘K’ serials are very obedient; they sacrifice their love, when their mothers demand and get married to the woman selected by their mothers.

Father: Representation of father in the serials is passive, roles are not prominent, these roles are played for linking certain episodes in the serial, as the background for all the serials is patriarchy, fathers play a dominant role in decision making and in few serials fathers are not even decision makers. In most of the serials father pays attention to outdoor activities and do not interfere in a woman’s matter. There are
episodes that reflect a father’s love for his daughter and the bond they share with each other. A father’s heart is heavy while, he is giving away his daughter in marriage.

The serial KANYA DANA depicts the problems; a father faces in bringing up his daughters and getting them married. The serial speaks of the importance of this ritual in marriage; it also reflects the importance of daughters in every family. In most of the serials, the only role these men play is the role of a bread earner. Men characters on screen are very attractive like their female companions. Their looks are predetermined by the directors. A father usually has a grim look, he is of the reserved nature, and expects the family members to obey him and he takes major decisions for the family. All the members of the family abide by him and respect him the directors have imitated the socially constructed relationship of a father and a daughter.

Ideal Couple: Every serial tries to project its protagonists as the ideal husband-wife but the strong clutches of gender bias on the society and the recent rebellious attitude to the bias does not let the creation of an ideal husband-wife relationship. The earlier Indian serial “Ramayana” has depicted an ideal relationship; several episodes have been questioned by the younger generations in the recent years.

The depiction of the ‘wives role’ is ideal, but the conflict arises, when the depiction of a husband is not ideal, the main lead of the
serials often have several women doting on them. Whether it is Kyun Ki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi or Kahaani Ghar Ghar Ki there is a lady doting on somebody else’s husband and such villainous characters act as threat to the heroine of the serial.

The dream of an ideal husband-wife relationship is being exploited by the directors. Initial episodes evolve interest in viewers as they showcase a common dream of every spinster, they dream of a loving husband. They are close to reality. Throughout the serials, they make effort to give meaning to their life and call it a sacred relationship.

In the serial “Pavitra Rishta” both Archana and Manav trust each other. But gradually they misunderstand each other because they listen to others. They live in separation for eighteen years but their love for each other remains the same. There are several instances that question Manav for not understanding Archana and blaming her for so many irrelevant reasons and still say that his relationship is a true relationship.

Directors have often tried to project an ideal husband-wife relationship that goes through several hardships in life. The cinematography is such that, it makes the viewers believe that; the leading pair in the serial is the ideal one. In the serials of Ekta Kapoor, it is found that, tension prevails between a few close relationships and
this actually attracts the attention of the viewers. It is human nature to
be curious about others and make their comments on the issue. People
are curious to know personal issues rather than something factual. The
same fact has been publicized and sensationalized in the serials.

Love: Love has been a common plot of every serial; the initial episodes
always begin with characters that are looking forward for a best love
life. Initially the characters hate each other and later it gets transformed
to love. Love in its different forms is brought out. Festivals are the best
examples depicting love between the family members; Serials also
represented a fact that love can make miracles. One best example is
transforming Gomzy to Gautam and UD to Prem. Not just the mothers
but the life partners of the characters ‘Gautam’ and ‘Prem’ also had
patience in changing the lifestyles of these people.

All the marriages in the serials are either love marriages, or love
cum arranged. There are instances where the couple is not in love with
each other, but they slowly fall in love after marriage. The episodes
that telecast ‘love’ win audience’s attention. There are several people
who laugh and weep with the characters of these serials. Serials
revolve around love and conflicts between the characters and the
interference of the society in the life of the characters. These episodes
are made more impressive with romantic Bollywood songs at the
background which make the scenes even more attractive.
Disputes in Relationships:

Family quarrels have a total bitterness unmatched by others. Yet it sometimes happens that they also have a kind of tang, a pleasantness beneath the unpleasantness, based on the tacit understanding that this is not for keeps; that any limb you climb out on will still be there later for you to climb back. [4]

Action speaks Louder than Words: Quarrels are the climax of the stories on TV. Whether it is Ramayana or Mahabharata, the concept is the same. The first one is the tug of war between the Demons and Gods. In the serial Kahaani Ghar Ghar ki is a representation of the two brothers and their families fighting with each other and each one trying to blow the other out of existence to inherit the whole property. This was the serial which tried to focus on the half true theory that women do not stand united in a family and each one gives more importance to one’s differences than one’s family interests. In these serials, it is noticed that, the ideal daughter-in-law is imprisoned at least for once, and she is the only savior of the family; who are misguided by the evil forces. The story revolves around the members of the family; the lead cast is always involved in solving the problems of one or the other family member and bears the brunt on somebody’s behalf.

One common plot in the serial is, one of the loved family members is in trouble, and the leading character helps the victim secretly especially the extra marital affairs.. This in turn has a negative effect on her personal life, to cite an example; the three sisters of Pavitra Rishta are always in trouble, instead of discussing the problem,
it is hidden from their family members, till the situation worsens. An episode reveals to Vaishali that her husband Dharmesh Jaipurwal is married to Madhuri and has a five year old son. Shattered she goes to her elder sister and lives with them.

The episodes for a month were woven in a fashion that lead to the increase in the curiosity, as many episodes concentrated, on how Dharmesh was hiding, his reality from his family members. On the other hand Vaishali does not let the skeleton out of the cupboard to avoid complications. As the saying goes, “truth cannot be hidden for a longer period”. Society cooks up a ‘cock and bull’ story that Manav and Vaishali are in an affair; this aggravates Dharmesh’s mother’s fury as she had already smelt something fishy in Vaishu and Dharmesh’s relationship.

She wants Vaishali to ‘spill the beans out’, she makes a big issue of Vaishali staying at Manav’s place and lashes her meaninglessly, as a result Vaishu gives up and reveals the truth to her family and proves her innocence by leading them to the hotel, where Dharmesh had booked a room for his first wife and son. All the serials of Ekta Kapoor have characters specially the leading roles that keep secrets and faced the trouble to win loads of appreciation.
Disputes Between Mother-in-Law & Daughter-in-Law: This is one common scene telecasted in all the shows, where a typical mother-in-law, does not accept her daughter-in-law, and feels very insecure in her daughter-in-law's presence. She is not ready to share her son with her daughter-in-law. She feels that her son is henpecked and will no more take care of the family members.

Mothers-in-law do not treat their daughters-in-law as their daughters and usually have great expectations from them, the daughters-in-law usually have a fixed image of their mothers-in-law and this attitude towards each other leads to a great rift in their relationships. The mothers-in-law tend to compare their lifestyle with those of their daughters-in-law. In case it is a love marriage and an inter-caste marriage then the intolerance level increases because their customs, beliefs and way of life differ entirely.

A difference of opinion arises between Tulsi and Savita because of status. Tulsi’s good rapport with her grandparents leads to more confusion amongst the saas-bahu. Savita feels that her mother-in-law condemns her in front of her daughter-in-law. Hatred for each other increases to such an extent that Savita conspires against Tulsi and holds her responsible for a robbery. Being innocent, Tulsi strives hard and proves that she is not the culprit. Savita tries to create misunderstanding between Mihir and Tulsi. Such incidents weaken
relationships. Tulsi bears the agony of the relationship with a smile and this attitude of the character is often found in several real incidents. Hence this role draws viewer’s attention.

Similarly Savitha Thai in Pavitra Rishta is not willing to accept Archana because she is a middle class girl and does not pay huge dowry and gifts to her family. Savitha Thai’s role is very much closer to the role of the real life mother-in-law, who all the time keeps nagging her daughter-in-law for no reason, in spite of the fact that she too has hailed from the same social status. Mother-in-law separates husband and wife, deconstructs his wife’s image before him; she holds her daughter-in-law responsible for all the miseries that, the family faces in spite of which, Archana remains calm, composed, quite, and not argumentative.

Prerna of Kasauti Zindagi Ki faced similar problems, her mother-in-law did not like Prerna and Anuraag’s intimacy. Hence she manipulated her son’s life. Most of the Ekta Kapoor’s serials have similar concept as mothers-in-law have great expectations and when their expectations fail they play with their son’s life.

Marital Conflicts: Serials project that rifts are common between a husband and wife, because men are from mars and women are from Venus. Men are insensitive to feelings that a woman comes across. Hence their disputes do not resolve quickly. Every woman wants her
husband to respect her for what she is. Women generally get upset when men do not wish them on their birthdays and take them for granted. A woman wants her husband to be a good friend and share all his secrets with her, but in many cases this does not happen. Problem arises because men are not verbal and do not understand the importance of sharing their secrets with their wives. This relationship is mainly based on the faith. Along with Archana and Manav, there are some other couples, who give a picture of different types of husband-wife relationship.

The relationship that exists between Manav and Archana is just like a fairy tale. Archana and Manav are two ideal characters. A husband would expect his wife to be as understanding as Archana. Varsha is very ambitious and makes all her dreams come true. She gives less importance to her family related issues, resulting into quarrels. This situation is very much close to the real life situation in the Indian society. Vaishali and Dharmesh are two important characters of the soap Pavitra Rishta. Dharmesh represents men; who have been cheating their wives, families and themselves.

In the serial “Kasauti Zindagi Ki” Anuraag rivals Prerna. Many times he puts her on the threshold of her life to prove her words and deeds. Similarly fights are noticed between Tulsi and Mihir Virani in nurturing their children and a major dispute crops up in between them;
when Tulsi finds that, Mihir has broken her faith by having an extra marital affair with Mandira. Similarly Parvathi and Om of ‘Kahaani Ghar Ghar Ki’ fight on several issues. There are many episodes, in which Parvathi and Om do not speak with each other because of the misunderstandings created by others.

Pratham and Guari’s relationship begins with a debate that is picked up between boys and girls on gender issue. The fights that took place between them were ego related. Gauri’s close friend commits suicide when Pratham denies his love for her. This actually angers Gauri and in turn rivals Pratham and insults him in front of many students, to enrage him. One common thing found in their disputes was that both of them loved their families very much and struggled hard to maintain the dignity of their family. Pratham forcefully marries her and both of them do not miss an opportunity fighting with each other. Guari scares Pratham out of his wits by writing letter against him in the name of Tanya for which he is interrogated by his family members and is even punished by his mother. Assuming that Guari, must have told that, he is an impotent. Pratham walks into the room closes the door
and turns the music loud and tries to rape her and tell her that, he is not impotent but Guari somehow escapes from his clutches and starts weeping and her mother-in-law comes to know about the whole incident and supports Guari. Realizing the folly, he apologizes Guari, but she stops speaking to him. It is difficult for them to tolerate each other under the same roof but then all their fights turn out to be sweet memories. They bind themselves into a strong relationship of deep faith and love for each other. Such episodes are imitated by a few viewers in reality. People are under an impression that if they fight more then they will love more. In Kahaani Ghar Ghar Ki; Kamal and his wife do not get along well, she never considers him as her husband. She does not find anything admirable in him. She won the best negative role female. Kayamath also won appreciation mainly because both the heroine and the villain of the story fell in love with each other, and all their misunderstandings resolved. One common truth featured by the serials is that both friends and enemies are our relatives and man revolves around these relationships throughout.

Sibling Rivalry: In the serial Kahin Tho Hoga there is no harmony among the sisters and brothers. In the serial Kahaani Ghar Ghar Ki, Om and his brothers have a ‘tug of war’ to inherit the property. Om’s father had a brother whose family was absconding and the property was taken care of by Om’s father. In later part of the serial; the lost
family claims their share of property; which results into disputes. Kamal and Chaya fight with each other because of her attitude, Kamal always helped Parvathi because he knew that, Chaya and her thoughts could not be straight. As a brother Kamal always objected this behavior of his sister and expected her to look into the matter very responsibly and maturely.

Gautam and Karan from the serial Kyun Ki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi were rivals because of their mothers. Every time they come across they have an issue to fight; which would be wild and could not be controlled unless somebody intervened and stopped them. Krishna and Shasha in ‘Kahaani Ghar Ghar Ki’ in spite of being cousins, they oppose each other because of property and love. Both of them love ‘Gul’. Krishna marries her; which is not tolerated by Shasha and in the same fight Krishna loses his life. Such plots are borrowed from the real lives. Hence viewers feel that the relationships on screen are similar to them.

Aisha and Prachi are sisters in the serial ‘Kayamath’, Aisha hates Prachi because her father, cheated Aisha’s mother, hence takes revenge on Prachi by getting her married to her boyfriend and she in turn marries Prachi’s boyfriend to make Prachi’s life a miserable one. Prachi always forgives her sins and tries to treat her like a sister but Aisha never understands this and troubles Prachi. This plot is again an
Indian concept of punishment and satisfaction it is believed that children usually reap the fruits of their parents hard work, no matter the fruits be positive or negative. Generation gap between the parents and the children has led to many quarrels in all the serials. For instance, in the serial Kasauti Zindagi Ki, Kasak falls in love with Sharath; who is not faithful. When Prerna objects a misunderstanding is created. A similar situation is found when Prem comes to Mumbai to confront his mother. He is very arrogant and proud; He irritates Prerna and Mr. Bajaj. Most of the serials of Ekta Kapoor showcase the fight scenes, revenge, grudge and misunderstanding. All the relationships are more prone to such feelings than treating them more maturely. These concepts like fight, misunderstanding, conspiracy, revenge, and grudge are the main sources of attraction in the serials.

The serials have shown the fragmented relationships because of the advent of the concepts like individualism, privacy, space, freedom and liberty. Even though the families projected on screen are joint families the members are disturbed and lonely because they are trying to accept the Western concepts in an Eastern society. This does not promote individuality rather prefers team work in every aspect of the life. Each family emphasizes their love, anger and common culture on each member ensuring security to the family members. Characters like Gomzy and UD are under a wrong impression that they are individuals.
and happy in their life but the truth that is being depicted is that both characters felt lonely and were disappointed with their loved ones. A gradual transformation in the characters is noticed because all the ‘supports’ come unsaid as a package in the family.

Festivals and Relationships: Hindu community has several festivals each representing the unity, integrity, spirituality, divinity, togetherness, purity, prosperity and peace to increase the bond between the relatives. For instance, “Raksha Bandan” reminds the commitment between the brothers and sisters. The sister prays to God to give her brother the best life. This feeling strengthens their relationship. Brothers gift their sisters and wish her a great life. Next festival in the row is “Karva Chouth”; where the wife fasts whole day and prays for the welfare of her husband and his family. On Navaratri when ladies offer prayers to the nine forms of Goddess’, the bond between each and every member in the family grows healthier. As they take part in ‘Garbha’; friends and relatives are invited and are offered food and sweets, it is a complete package of fun. During ‘Holi’, men and women play with colors together which is symbolically celebrated for the triumph of victory over the evil. Symbolically it means that life is colorful. ‘Ganesh Chaturthi’ is another festival where the whole family offers prayers to Lord Ganesh to shield the family members from obstacles. ‘Diwali’ the festival of lights, is celebrated with great
grandeur in all the states of India. The festival signifies victory of good over the evil. Each and every state has festivals and they celebrate them with pomp and show. Almost every month there is a festival to be celebrated and all the members of the family take part in it. So festivals are meaningful when there is a get-together because it increases the bond between members of the family.

All the festivals are celebrated on screen; which in real lives help the family members to forgive each other’s mistakes and give a chance to the relationships because the youngsters bow to their elders and take their blessings along with the blessings of the God. The director highlights that all festive occasions are in actual sense the victory of the good over the bad. Hence he adapts the same idea in his plot where usually the negative characters are exposed.

Title Songs Glorify Relationships: The title songs of the serials describe the importance of the relationships. Most of the title songs are based on the theme of the serial. Kaahani Ghar Ghar Ki; the title song communicates to the viewer that it is a story of every home; every family has its own joys and sorrows. Similarly there is a combination of sensitive and insensitive people, ambitious and un ambitious people, lazy and active people, optimistic and pessimistic people, dominant and submissive people. Hence people under a same roof are different
from each other, which indicate difference of opinion and fights on trivial issues in the family members.

The title song of the serial depicts the common characteristics usually found in the serial. The lines in the title song describe a relationship its nature, it is not just a weak thread that binds all the family members, and it is because relationships are given a greater importance. As relationships are respected in a family and are taken care of by each and every one in the family. They stand for each other in thick and thin. It also glorifies relationships and its importance; the title songs attract the viewers attention as these songs are close to the Indian culture; where the relationships are honoured, elders are respected, where a mothers affection is metaphorically compared to the sacred river Ganga, it is also a place where we laugh and cry together, this is a story of every home.

The lines of the title song of the serial Kasauti Zindagi Ki, describe life and the testing times in life, love brings happiness as well as miseries, sometimes happy and at times sad. Life is a combination of good and bad. These catchy title songs are played till the soap gains the required publicity and in the later episodes only a line of the title song is used to draw attention of the viewers.
Summing up: The protection of the family dignity is the responsibility of all the members of the family irrespective of age and sex. Relationships are a combination of the conspiracy, love, hatred, jealousy, ambition, ego, torture, insult, punishment, suspicion, humility, biased outlook, stereotypical ideas and faith in it. The weakness of a family is the dominance and dictatorship, which creates a rift among the members giving birth to silent protests in the family. There are certain flaws in our system and when these are not accepted and changed, the elder’s interference in these matters is very important. The younger ones usually tend to forget the protocols and nurture a poison tree in the heart. The serials majorly showcase the battle between the good and bad and finally end up in the triumph of victory of the good.

Almost all the serials have a few common issues resulting in tension, leading to misunderstanding: In all the serials; there is one family member who wants to own the responsibility for everything but he is not given enough attention instead his younger brother. Who seems to be the smartest in the family is asked to shoulder the responsibility; this act of the elders separates him away from the family, as he starts feeling jealous about his own brother. Similarly, jealousy is found in all the relationships.
There are several episodes that picturize the massive impact of these emotions on one’s life. For instance, Sujal in the serial Kahin To Hoga hates Kasish because he trusts his brother Rishi and is misunderstood by his own brother Rishi. The serials promote good relationship between the family members and avoids bruised relationship in the family so that everybody can live in peace. The lead characters in the serials promote value based life in the society. They are strong ambassadors of the changes; for example a girl getting assaulted should never remain silent and suffer but she should raise her voice and fight for dignity. In the serial Kahaani Ghar Ghar Kii there were few episodes that showed the pathetic condition of women, who were assaulted, seduced and sometimes raped by their own family members. A voice is raised by the lead actors against such brutal act of the family members. They also convey a message that the girls must raise their voice and punish the person. At times the serials also project, the way a relationship should be handled; not a single relationship, can be ignored because each and every relationship means a lot in everyone’s life.

Even though the motto and values in families have changed, these days’ people like to stay in nuclear families; with no interference. This has encouraged a lot of individualism but not the adjustments and compromises. In the joint families usually one finds out that they have
to adjust and compromise on several aspects of life unwillingly. The soaps produced by Ekta Kapoor have both the joint as well nuclear families. The relationships remain the same in both of them. One should not unnecessarily interfere or advise people when it is not wanted.

The same implication of an Indian family is relayed in the serials produced by Ekta Kapoor and Shobha Kapoor in the ‘K’ serials; which have always been family oriented and maintain the family prestige. Indians believe in the saying ‘birds of same feather flock together’ They are scared that, if one family member commits a mistake then it affects the whole family because the person’s identity is connected to the family. A family man is considered to be a responsible man. Hence each and everyone in the family are scared to walk free against the society or do something that will put all their family members to shame; this concept of; living for the family prestige is shown in almost all the serials. In “Kasauti Zindagi Ki” Kasak conceives before marriage and the whole society comments and mocks at the Bajaj family. According to the Indian family system a young girl getting pregnant before marriage is considered to be a sin and is not encouraged.

The whole of the Indian philosophy is woven around these relationships and the sentiments attached to these relationships, a
personality is identified as good or bad only by these relationships; even though they play fowl with each other’s life it still is the centre of attraction. Man by nature is a social being and has greater confidence and happiness in a particular group. The groups may differ but not the nature; every person has a choice of his own. All the values and moral stories comprise of relationships and a story is stitched around it. Hence anything related to relationships attract the attention of Indian people, and these relationships together make a family otherwise family is completely meaningless and without a family there cannot be a society.

Balaji Telefilms; has chosen the perfect plot and theme to direct and produce their serials; these not only interest the viewers but are close to their heart as each one in the family has more or less a similar personal story. As the issues addressed in the serial are experienced by more number of people in their life. Even though the story may be fictious and not somebody’s autobiography but still is nearer to the real life instances. They are enjoyed by the viewers because the reality is reflected in them. Hence this chapter has glorified the importance of relationships and the use of the same concept by the script writers and directors for a better entertainment. The directors of these serial have chosen real life incidents and have selected upper class and middle class families as their main plot. The chapter has described the social
construction of ideal relationships by the serials through few instances; it has discussed the reason behind the popularity of the serials and the relationships.

END NOTE

1. Oberoi Patricia: family, kinship and marriage in India, oxford university press,1993
3. Leo Tolstoy, Anna Karenina, 