

A Psychological Exploration on Unseen Phases of Cinderella Complex

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Abstract

This study explores the phases of the “Cinderella Complex,” a psychosocial construct developed by Colette Dowling (1982), through the character of Tulsi in K.R. Meera’s *The Poison of Love* (2017). Tulsi represents the consequences of social conditioning on Indian women, where dependency masquerades as romantic love, complicating their understanding of marriage as part of their identity. The research investigates how conditioned mentality and neurobiological mechanisms foster Tulsi’s emotional dependence on her husband, Madhav. By integrating Dowling’s psychoanalysis of feminine dependency with Helen Fisher’s interdisciplinary approaches on romantic attachment and obsession, the study explores the causal effect of psychological and neurobiological factors that shape Tulsi’s emotional trajectory. This analysis reveals how entrenched ideals of love contribute to Tulsi’s marital turmoil and eventual filicidal tendencies. The findings highlight the need for a critical re-evaluation of romantic narratives to promote healthier relational patterns and advance discussions on female autonomy and emotional resilience.

Keywords: Cinderella Complex, Psychological Dependency, Romantic Love, Neurobiological Mechanisms, Tulsi.

Introduction

“Marriage is the destiny traditionally offered to women by society. It is still true that most women are married, or have been, or plan to be, or suffer from not being” (De Beauvoir 1956, 415). This observation highlights the societal conditioning that positions marriage as the ultimate goal for women, often resulting in psychological dependency on men. Such conditioning fosters fears of both abandonment and independence, merging over time with romantic ideals to construct marriage as synonymous with eternal happiness. This obscures the socially constructed dependence of women, framing it as a moral imperative of femininity for centuries. Colette Dowling noted that this “wish to be saved” mentality has its roots in early human history when a man’s physical strength was vital for protecting mothers and children from external dangers (1982, 15–16).

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These pervasive stereotypes are particularly evident in literature, where women are often portrayed as “damsels in distress,” awaiting rescue from their prince in shining armour (White 1986). In the modern era, this distortion is exacerbated by visual and social media, which continue to present marriage as the ultimate source of joy, reinforcing the notion of a “happily ever after” (Merritt 2010; Walsh et al. 2023). While storytelling serves as a powerful mechanism for conveying societal values and shaping perceptions (Gottschall 2012), it frequently propagates gender stereotypes across various genres in contemporary literature (Ladzekpo, Attiye, and Davi 2024, 38). In light of this conditioned dependency, it is crucial to examine the psychological implications on women’s lives through literary narratives. Notably, most traditional cultures in Indian society still perceive marriage and motherhood as the cornerstones of feminine identity. In this context, the present study examines Tulsi, the protagonist of K. R. Meera’s English-translated Malayalam novel *The Poison of Love* (2017), to explore the causal effect of the “Cinderella Complex” on Indian women. This psychological complex, popularised by Colette Dowling (1982), describes a woman’s hidden fear of independence and unconscious desire for dependence on a man, shaped by social conditioning that idealizes a fairy-tale-like romantic existence.

In *The Poison of Love* (Meera 2017), Tulsi’s transformation from passionate love to psychological dependency serves as a poignant illustration of the “Cinderella Complex,” wherein romantic ideals become parasitic rather than conduits for fulfilment. The title itself functions as a critical metaphor for the toxic nature of love that underpins Tulsi’s psychological and emotional decline. The metaphorical “poison” encapsulates the paradoxical essence of love in her life; it initially presents the promise of liberation but ultimately ensnares her in a web of entrapment and emotional disintegration. This title reflects the central theme of the novel, revealing how romanticized love, intended as a means of salvation, subverts Tulsi’s psychological stability and undermines her autonomy rather than fostering empowerment. Thus, Tulsi functions as a significant case study for examining the detrimental effects of social conditioning on women within the framework of the “Cinderella Complex” in contemporary Indian society. Through an analysis of Tulsi’s character, this study aims to illuminate how K.R. Meera represents the perceptions and behaviors of women in Indian society, shedding light on the multifaceted influences of the “Cinderella Complex” regarding marriage and love.

Colette Dowling’s notion reveals that Tulsi’s romantic dependency and fear of independence are not merely reactions to external circumstances but are deeply embedded in her psyche, shaped by unconscious drives and internalised beliefs governing women’s responses to love and attachment. To further elucidate these psychological aspects, the analysis also draws upon the lifelong studies of anthropologist Helen E. Fisher, whose interdisciplinary insights from neuroscience, psychology, and evolutionary biology on romantic love, obsession, and attachment help to explain Tulsi’s experiences. By interrelating Fisher’s studies on romantic love and obsession with Dowling’s framework of psychological dependency and fear of independence, this research provides a comprehensive analysis of how the “Cinderella Complex” manifests in Tulsi’s life. This interplay between literary narratives and individual psychological experiences illustrates the complex relationship between romantic ideals and personal

identity, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of the enduring influence of fairy-tale narratives in contemporary society.

Literature Review

The Poison of Love in Contemporary Indian Literature

K. R. Meera's *The Poison of Love* (2017) has garnered critical attention in the Indian literary circle, with prominent review articles from *The Hindu* (Bajwa 2017), *The Indian Express* (Sarangan 2017), and *Hindustan Times* (Sharma 2017; Nair 2018). These reviews collectively emphasize the novel's exploration of the institution of marriage as a domain of patriarchal control. They illustrate how K. R. Meera's work not only comments on traditional marital norms but also invites deeper reflection on the societal constructs that sustain them. Central to this exploration is Tulsi, the protagonist of the novel, who serves as a poignant symbol of the emotional and psychological trauma that arises from oppressive marital expectations.

Feminist Perspectives on K. R. Meera's Work

K. R. Meera's writings vividly illustrate the power dynamics inherent in marriage, portraying how societal structures entrenched in patriarchy stifle female autonomy and subjectivity. Through Tulsi's character arc, the novel emphasises pervasive themes of submission, dependency, and the erosion of psychological well-being, highlighting the detrimental effects of these dynamics within the institution of marriage. This exploration of female subjugation deepens our understanding of the feminist themes present in Meera's oeuvre. Scholarly critiques have further examined how her female characters navigate patriarchal oppression within their marital contexts. In *Denial of Female Subjectivity in K. R. Meera's Meerayude Novellakal*, Sabu (2020) argues that Tulsi's traumatic experiences in *The Poison of Love* (Meera 2017) are emblematic of patriarchal marital suppression. This perspective aligns with the broader feminist discourse surrounding the emotional and physical abuse that women endure in K. R. Meera's works, as evidenced in other novels such as *Assassin* (2023), *Qabar* (2021), *The Angel's Beauty Spots* (2019), *Jezebel* (2018), *And Slowly Forgetting That Tree* (2015), and *Hangwoman* (2014) (Rekha and Manjula 2022a; Rekha and Manjula 2022b).

Psychological Dimensions in The Poison of Love

While considerable attention is dedicated to the patriarchal dynamics within marriage, *The Poison of Love* (Meera 2017) transcends this narrow lens to offer a broader commentary on the psychological toll of these social conditions, emphasizing the dependency of Indian women. In *The Poison of Love: An Essential Feminism*, H. R. and Bhattacharya (2023) emphasize that Tulsi's marriage to Madhav is portrayed not merely as a union but as a significant desire and achievement for her (131). This portrayal highlights her enduring love and longing for him, which persists even after she becomes a Meera sadhu (H. R. and Bhattacharya 2023, 131). Such a depiction underscores the psychological complexities of Tulsi's internal struggle, particularly how societal conditioning and emotional dependence shape her actions. This notion directly reflects the "Cinderella Complex" (Dowling 1982), where Tulsi's fear of

independence and reliance on romantic ideals reveal her deep emotional entrapment. As a result, the novel serves as a critical exploration of how social conditioning intensifies psychological dependency, ultimately leading to Tulsi's eventual downfall.

Cinderella Complex in Global Literary Context

Colette Dowling (1982) introduced the concept of “The Cinderella Complex,” which has been examined in various literary contexts. Notably, scholars have identified this psychological complex as instrumental in understanding the dynamics of female psychology in literary works such as Oka Rusmini’s *Kenanga* (Hargita and Nurhadi 2022), Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women* (Asriyanti, Arafah, and Abbas 2022), William Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew* (Özata 2021), and Doris Lessing’s *The Grass is Singing* (Hussein 2020; Herouach 2020). These studies contribute to an understanding of how female characters in literature navigate societal expectations of passivity and dependence on male figures. However, many of these analyses primarily focus on the characteristics of the “Cinderella Complex” without fully exploring the nuanced psychological dimensions that may influence its manifestation, particularly in non-Western narratives.

Research Gap in the Indian Context

Although there are significant global studies on the “Cinderella Complex,” its specific manifestation within Indian narratives remains underexplored. Tulsi’s character in *The Poison of Love* (Meera 2017) exemplifies the casual effect of social conditioning on Indian women, where dependency masquerades as romantic love, complicating their understanding of marriage and feminine identity. While previous feminist critiques of K. R. Meera’s novel have predominantly focused on patriarchal oppression within marriage, they often overlook the psychological nuances, particularly the connection between the “Cinderella Complex” and emotional distress.

To address this gap, Helen E. Fisher’s interdisciplinary research on romantic love, attachment, and obsession is applied to frame Tulsi’s experiences not only as products of social conditioning but also as reflections of her psychological entrapment. Fisher’s insights illuminate the neurological pathways that underlie Tulsi’s attachments, emphasizing that her feelings stem from both societal influences and innate human responses to love. This intersection of psychological and neurobiological factors becomes essential for comprehensive understanding of Tulsi’s predicament, revealing how her experiences resonate with broader patterns observed in women who internalise romantic ideals. Thus, this study aims to bridge this research gap by examining how Tulsi’s internal conflict, fear of independence, and clinging to romanticised ideals reflect the “Cinderella Complex,” shaped by societal conditioning. By integrating Fisher’s exploration of the emotional consequences of romantic love with Dowling’s framework, this research offers a nuanced understanding of Tulsi’s psychological unravelling within the Indian narrative, connecting social conditioning, romantic ideals, and psychological dependency.

Significance of the Study

This study contributes to both feminist literature and psychological research by examining how social conditioning, particularly through romantic ideals and psychological constructs, shapes Tulsi’s

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emotional journey in *The Poison of Love* (Meera 2017). By focusing on the “Cinderella Complex,” it provides insights into how psychological dependency and fear of independence intensify Tulsi’s marital dissatisfaction and tragic actions. Helen E. Fisher’s interdisciplinary insights into romantic love, attachment, and obsession enhance the psychological analysis, showing how Tulsi’s entrapment reflects both societal conditioning and innate human responses to emotional dependency. This dual framework enables a deeper exploration of Tulsi’s psychological struggle. By integrating Fisher’s research with Dowling’s feminist psychological perspective, this study deepens the critique of K. R. Meera’s work, highlighting how emotional and psychological dependencies shape women’s experiences. It addresses a critical gap in Indian literary studies by combining feminist and psychological approaches to explore the complexities of female identity and autonomy in a patriarchal society.

Theoretical Framework

This study integrates feminist psychoanalysis with an interdisciplinary approach to examine the “Cinderella Complex” as portrayed through the character of Tulsi in K. R. Meera’s *The Poison of Love* (Meera 2017). It primarily draws on Colette Dowling’s concept of the “Cinderella Complex” (1982), which describes a woman’s hidden fear of independence and emotional dependency on male figures for fulfilment and security. Dowling’s framework serves as a crucial lens for examining Tulsi’s psychological struggles, particularly her fear of abandonment and her emotional dependency on her lover. This dependency not only reflects Tulsi’s personal insecurities but also highlights the broader social conditioning that reinforces women’s reliance on men for emotional fulfilment and security. In addition to this psychological perspective, the study incorporates Helen E. Fisher’s exploration of romantic love, emotional attachment, and obsession. Fisher’s research emphasises the intensity of romantic attachment and its psychological consequences, such as emotional fixation and dependency. Her insights into the addictive and often overwhelming nature of romantic love provide a framework for understanding Tulsi’s deep emotional entanglement and romantic idealisation of Madhav, which ultimately drives her toward self-destructive decisions. Fisher’s studies complement Dowling’s “Cinderella Complex” by illustrating how societal expectations of romance intensify emotional attachment, trapping women like Tulsi in cycles of dependency and despair.

Thus, the theoretical framework combines Dowling’s feminist psychoanalysis with Fisher’s exploration of romantic attachment to offer a comprehensive understanding of Tulsi’s emotional struggles. The “Cinderella Complex,” as both a psychological and emotional construct, mixes her romantic ideals and contributes to her personal downfall. By merging these perspectives, the framework underscores the importance of exploring romantic dependency through both social conditioning and emotional experience. This dual approach, integrating Dowling’s analysis of psychological dependency with Fisher’s examination of the intensity of romantic love and attachment, provides deeper insights into the complex interplay between cultural expectations and emotional drives that shape Tulsi’s experience of love, dependency, and personal conflict.

Rationale for Theoretical Framework

The integration of feminist psychological frameworks with the interdisciplinary research of Helen Fisher provides a nuanced understanding of the complexities of human emotions, particularly regarding love and attachment. This study illustrates the necessity for psychoanalysis to extend beyond its traditional boundaries, recognising the influence of cultural, psychological, and biological processes on behaviour. By combining these perspectives, the framework offers a comprehensive analysis of Tulsi's emotional struggles, revealing the intricate interplay between societal conditioning regarding psychological dependency on men and the factors that shape women's expectations in marital experiences. Furthermore, this integration allows for a critical examination of how traditional psychoanalytic theories have often marginalised female experiences, thereby fostering a more inclusive discourse that prioritises the unique emotional realities of women in literary representation.

Feminist Psychology and Critique of Phallogentric Psychoanalysis

Feminist psychology essentially anchors this study, which critically explores the phases of the "Cinderella Complex" through the romantic desires and psychological distress of Tulsi, the female protagonist of *The Poison of Love* (Meera 2017). While Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theories laid the foundation for understanding human desires, they have been criticised for their male-centric perspectives, particularly in relation to female psychology (Barbieri 1999; Leung 2019; Prakash 2022). As Simone de Beauvoir points out in *The Second Sex* (1956), "Freud never showed much concern with the destiny of women; it is clear that he simply adapted his account from that of the destiny of man, with slight modification" (66). Freud's phallogentric focus on "libido" not only neglects the distinct nature of the feminine libido but also marginalises the unique emotional and psychological experiences of women.

Prominent feminist psychoanalyst, Karen Horney (1967) introduced the concept of "womb envy" as a counterpoint to Freud's "penis envy," suggesting that men may experience envy of women's reproductive abilities. This challenges Freud's male-dominated perspective and underscores the need to consider women's psychological experiences independently of patriarchal interpretations. Nancy Chodorow (1978) further critiques Freud's "Oedipal complex" by proposing a relational theory that emphasises the role of early mother-child relationships in shaping identity, contrasting with the patriarchal and male-centric models of psychoanalysis. As Nebioglu (2023) stated,

It is not simply sexual awakening of a young girl to become woman in molar terms, but an awakening that contains a revolutionary tenor to dismantle the Oedipal theatre of repression in the form of the family, destroy the rigid hierarchies of socially constructed binaries, break away from the boundaries and affirm life in its immanence (880).

This notion aligns with feminist critiques of the rigid structures of Freudian psychoanalysis, reflecting a broader call to challenge patriarchal repression and embrace a more expansive understanding of female psychological development. Additionally, Jessica Benjamin's exploration of desire and identification in infant development questions Jacques Lacan's symbolic reflection of gender role asymmetry, highlighting the complexities of female experiences in psychosexual development (Elliott 2015, 134). In response to

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this phallocentrism and misogyny, feminist psychoanalysts continue to critique and expand upon Freudian, Lacanian, and other male-centric psychoanalytical theories. Therefore, this study seeks to navigate the complexities of female psychology outside the confines of traditional male-centric frameworks, advocating for a perspective that prioritise women's psychology and emotional experiences in literary representations.

In light of these critiques, Dowling's concept of the "Cinderella Complex" (1982) emerges as a significant contribution within the broader framework of feminist psychology. Dowling argues that societal conditioning instils a fear of independence in women, which is critical for analysing Tulsi's psychological state in *The Poison of Love* (Meera 2017). Tulsi's fear of independence and her expectations of romantic love are central to her emotional distress. This psychological dependence of Tulsi on her male partner exemplifies the "Cinderella Complex," entrenching her in a cycle of romantic idealisation and fear of abandonment. By exploring how these internalised fears shape Tulsi's experiences, this study reveals the profound effects of social conditioning on her emotional entrapment within a toxic relationship. Therefore, this theoretical framework not only facilitates a nuanced understanding of the intricate interplay between social conditioning and psychological dependency but also provides a comprehensive analysis of Tulsi's emotional struggles within the narrative.

Interdisciplinary Approach in Modern Psychoanalysis

In recent years, the necessity for interdisciplinary approaches in psychoanalysis has gained significant attention. A bibliometric analysis of 42,571 papers reveals a declining reliance on Freudian psychoanalysis, particularly in fields such as psychology, psychiatry, and neuroscience, marking a shift towards more integrative methods (Yeung 2021, 6). This decline reflects the need for psychoanalytic theory to evolve and engage with contemporary scientific and philosophical developments. Interdisciplinary collaboration enriches psychoanalytic theory by expanding its capacity to analyse complex emotional and psychological phenomena (Herzovich and Govrin 2021, 10–11). Steinmair and Löffler-Stastka (2021) further argue that such integration fosters a more comprehensive understanding of emotional and psychological dynamics, which is crucial for both clinical and therapeutic applications. This shift highlights the growing importance of incorporating disciplines such as philosophy, pharmacology, anatomy, social sciences, humanities, and communication studies to revitalise psychoanalytic frameworks and ensure their relevance in addressing contemporary psychological issues (Steinmair and Löffler-Stastka 2021, 5).

This study employs Helen E. Fisher's interdisciplinary approach, which integrates insights from neuroscience, psychology, and evolutionary biology to examine romantic love, emotional attachment, and fixation. Fisher's research emphasizes the neurological mechanisms that influence feelings of love and dependency, specifically the role of dopamine and other neurotransmitters that foster emotional highs and fixation in romantic relationships. This neurobiological framework is instrumental in analyzing Tulsi's intense attachment to Madhav. Her attachment is influenced not only by the "Cinderella Complex," which is a manifestation of social conditioning. It is also shaped by neurobiological and neurochemical processes that reinforce her emotional ties, psychological dependency, and fear of independence.

By integrating Fisher's neurological insights with Dowling's concept of the "Cinderella Complex" (1982), this study reveals how psychological and neurological factors jointly trigger Tulsi's dependency and fear of autonomy. Fisher's evolutionary perspective on love, which connects emotional attachment to survival instincts and reproductive needs, further elucidates Tulsi's deep-rooted desire for emotional security, propelling her into a cycle of fixation and personal downfall. Through this interdisciplinary lens, the study provides a holistic understanding of Tulsi's emotional struggles, illustrating how both neurological imperatives and social conditioning contribute to the "Cinderella Complex" in her life. Moreover, this approach demonstrates that the intensity of romantic attachment is shaped by both neurological factors and psychological constructs. This entrapment places Tulsi in a toxic cycle of emotional dependency and despair, ultimately limiting her autonomy and well-being.

Cinderella Syndrome

Phobia has so thoroughly infiltrated the feminine experience it is like a secret plague. It has been built up over long years by social conditioning and is all the more insidious for being so thoroughly acculturated we do not even recognize what has happened to us. (Dowling 1982, 58)

Resonating with Dowling's assertion, the patriarchal institution has constructed indirect boundaries around femininity throughout history and cultural narratives. These boundaries create an environment where women's aspirations are often subordinated to the expectations of marriage and family, leading to oppression and discrimination that further entwine women's identities with their dependence on men (Becker 1999). However, a significant "paradigm shift" emerged as a milestone in the battle for gender equality during the 1990s, marked by a surge in women's education and financial empowerment (Dilli, Carmichael, and Rijpma 2018). As Betty Friedan (1977) articulated in *The Feminine Mystique*, "We can no longer ignore that voice within women that says: 'I want something more than my husband and my children and my home'" (27). Despite the positive changes and opportunities for independent women during this period, it was also a time fraught with challenges and chaotic obstacles. The struggle for autonomy forced women to navigate the conflicting demands of personal aspirations and traditional expectations, disrupting the conventional ideal of the "angel in the house" (Maika 2011) as the perfect woman. Virginia Woolf (1931) critically examined this image of perfect woman in *Professions for Women*, arguing that "killing the angel in the house" is necessary for a woman to gain creative and intellectual freedom. In the 1990s, the internal struggle for autonomy, coupled with the fear of breaking free from traditional roles, was not just a societal issue but also a deeply psychological one.

As a result, the tension between historical subjugation and modern liberation emerged among women, often manifesting as psychological distress. This psychological conflict often leads to "dependent personality disorder" (Disney 2013), which can permeate various phases of a woman's life as she struggles to reconcile her desire for independence with deeply rooted dependency. Colette Dowling, a relational psychotherapist, introduced the term "Cinderella Complex" (1982) to describe this unconscious fear of independence in women, shaped by centuries of social conditioning that fosters emotional reliance

on men. Dowling (1982) notes that society raised women to “depend on a man and to feel naked and frightened without one” (20). They were taught to believe that “women cannot stand alone... too fragile, too delicate, needful of protection” (20).

The “Cinderella syndrome” is the repressed and apprehensive mental attitude of expectation in women who wait for someone or something from outside to change their lives and fulfil their responsibilities. In other words, these “damsels in distress” expect their lives to be happy and romantic once their Prince Charming comes to rescue them from their gloomy existence through marriage. However, these highly romanticised expectations often deceive and undermine a woman’s perception of reality. While some women successfully confront the harsh truths of life, accepting and navigating the obstacles they encounter, others may find themselves ensnared in these illusions. The failure to meet their expectations can precipitate significant emotional distress, leading to the breakdown of marriages, the dissolution of romantic relationships, and potentially more profound psychological crises. A central concern of this study is to examine how a woman’s psyche becomes chaotic and disruptive in these circumstances, particularly when her expectations of romantic rescue remain unfulfilled. This disruption not only illuminates the psychological impact of unmet romantic ideals but also underscores the broader implications of the “Cinderella syndrome” on women’s emotional well-being.

Case Study: Tulsi in *The Poison of Love*

The analysis conducted by Xu et al. (2019) elucidates the pervasive nature of the “Cinderella Complex” (Dowling 1982) across various narratives, drawing on a vast corpus of 7,226 books, 6,087 movie synopses, and 1,109 movie scripts. This study serves as a salient reminder of how deeply entrenched gender stereotypes shape modern collective memory, perpetuating harmful constructs that continue to influence societal expectations. In *The Poison of Love* (Meera 2017), Tulsi’s romantic dependency provides a poignant illustration of the “Cinderella Complex” in action, serving as a case study that highlights its implications for Indian women.

Mirroring the archetypal damsel in distress, Tulsi becomes psychologically enmeshed in her romantic desires and dependency on male validation, ultimately culminating in her emotional disintegration. The narrative reveals how male-dominated societal frameworks reinforce women’s fears, compelling them into a false sense of security within their relationships. Tulsi’s psychological trajectory aligns with Dowling’s assertion that society has historically discouraged women from confronting their fears of independence, instead steering them toward relationships that promise comfort and protection.

Tulsi’s inability to extricate herself from this cycle exemplifies the destructive consequences of unmet romantic expectations. Her journey underscores how the “Cinderella Complex” continues to undermine women’s emotional well-being by perpetuating their dependency on male approval and protection. The causal effect of this societal conditioning, as highlighted in this study, leads to profound psychological turmoil. Tulsi’s narrative serves as a case study reinforcing the argument that patriarchal constructs, such as those embodied in the “Cinderella Complex,” have a significant and lasting impact on women’s personal development and emotional health. The novel’s portrayal of Tulsi’s disillusionment,

resulting from unmet romantic ideals, accentuates the imperative for a critical reassessment of these entrenched cultural narratives.

Formation of the Cinderella Complex within Tulsi

In *The Poison of Love* (Meera 2017), the disintegration of Tulsi is not just a personal tragedy but a manifestation of the deeply rooted “Cinderella Complex” (Dowling 1982). At the beginning of the novel, Tulsi prioritises her studies and focuses on building an independent career. Even, her decision to marry her childhood friend Vinayan, urged by her mother’s terminal illness, reflects her rational and goal-oriented mindset. She is acutely aware of the impact her choices will have on her family’s fortunes rather than surrendering to the romantic desires associated with the “Cinderella Complex.” As she balances her personal goals with her family responsibilities, this early stage of her character demonstrates her sense of autonomy and reason. Her strong sense of control over her life illustrates her resistance to the romanticised notions of love that typically fuel the “Cinderella Complex,” enabling her to reject the allure of dependency.

As the narrative progresses, the seeds of the “Cinderella Complex” are sown during Tulsi’s sporadic phone conversations with Madhav, which begin after Vinayan introduces him as a resource person at her institution. As Tulsi engages with Madhav, her rational awareness begins to waver, intertwining with his charm and charisma. Her equilibrium breaks dramatically when Madhav expresses a sudden interest in her upon learning of her engagement to Vinayan. His visit to her home, disrupts her rational disposition and heightens the tension surrounding the complex. Amidst this, Tulsi’s rational consciousness continually reminded her that Madhav had a history of romantic relationships with twenty-seven other women. Despite Madhav’s claims that his past amorous relationships were intended to make those women happy, her conscious awareness signalled that a relationship with him would alter her future.

However, when Madhav suddenly kissed her and begged on his knees for her to marry him, pointing out that Vinayan’s formal persona was incapable of fostering such romantic intimacy with Tulsi. He further claimed that he “never went seeking anyone. All of them came in search of him” (Meera 2017, 14), asserting that Tulsi was the only woman he sought to marry in his lifetime. This romantic gesture mesmerised Tulsi, pulling her into the psychological entrapment of her “Cinderella Complex,” as the sober and mundane grey of her life made her more susceptible to Madhav’s colourful and romantic persona. As Helen Fisher’s states “romantic love is like a sleeping cat: it can be awakened at any time” (2022a) is particularly relevant here, as Madhav’s actions stirred dormant emotional dependencies within Tulsi. Fisher’s insights are aligned with the neurological findings of Ortigue et al. (2010), which indicate that twelve specific areas of the brain release dopamine, oxytocin, and adrenaline during romantic encounters. This biochemical response serves to elucidate Tulsi’s euphoric attachment to Madhav. As these psychological and neurobiological factors intertwine, Tulsi begins to romanticize Madhav’s presence, overshadowing the rational caution that initially led her decisions. Her emotional entrapment mirrors that of a child lured by cotton candy held by an abductor, blind to the potential dangers.

Consequently, the “Cinderella Complex” cemented itself in Tulsi, binding her to a love that felt intoxicating yet ultimately destructive.

Tulsi’s Obsessive Attachment and Romantic Dependency

This emotional vulnerability in Tulsi’s romantic attraction to Madhav can be further examined through Melanie Klein’s “object relations theory” (1997), which explores “a connection between the drives of sexuality and aggression and deeply unconscious internalised relationships” (Gabbard and Rachal 2012, 188). According to Klein, individuals develop internal representations of their relationships with significant others, which shape their emotional experiences and expectations (Klein 1975).

In Tulsi’s case, her idealisation of romantic love and dependence on Madhav reflect her internalised notions of love, formed by both her early experiences and societal conditioning. Her longing for a fairy-tale romance blinds her to the realities of Madhav’s character, illustrating Klein’s concept of the “manic defence,” where an individual denies the negative aspects of their internal objects to maintain an illusion of love and connection (Klein 1991). Tulsi’s idealisation of Madhav becomes a projection of her internal desires, as she suppresses her awareness of his flaws to sustain the illusion of a perfect romantic relationship. This defence mechanism reflects her inability to reconcile her romantic desires with the potential emotional consequences of her choices, trapping her in a cycle of dependency and delusion. As Klein notes, “the psychic world of a child is filled with the anxieties and conflicts arising from their relationships with their primary caregivers” (Klein 1975, 112). Tulsi’s unresolved internal conflicts, stemming from her desire for love and security, manifest in her obsessive attachment to Madhav, further entrenching her romantic dependency. This psychological dependency in Tulsi’s relationship with Madhav, triggered by her “Cinderella Complex,” serves as the foundation for understanding the psychological patterns driving her behaviour. These dynamics pave the way for further exploration of the tragic consequences of her decisions.

Byproduct of the Cinderella Complex within Tulsi

Caught between logical reason and romantic delusion, Tulsi’s “Cinderella Complex” results in a scenario where romantic love clouds her rational awareness. Ironically, the reason behind the blindness of an intense woman like Tulsi, who falls prey to a philanderer’s charm, is not solely due to his deceitful words but rather her inner craving for a romantic life as a byproduct of her “Cinderella Complex.” Madhav essentially triggers this inner urge within her through his charming words and seductive actions. He convinces Tulsi to elope with him, sacrificing her dreams, her sick mother, her father’s trust, her sister’s future, and her groom’s reputation. Moreover, Tulsi’s actions exemplify Helen E. Fisher’s assertion that

Romantic love is much more than a cocaine high – at least you come down from cocaine. Romantic love is an obsession. It possesses you. You lose your sense of self. You can’t stop thinking about another human being. Somebody is camping at

your head... romantic love is one of the most addictive substances on Earth. (2008, 04:39)

Fisher's insight into the obsessive nature of romantic love provides a critical understanding of Tulsi's descent. The byproduct of her "Cinderella Complex" is not merely her desire for love, but the overwhelming compulsion to realise an unattainable romantic fantasy. Tulsi's fixation on Madhav mirrors Fisher's depiction of romantic love as an addictive substance that consumes one's sense of self and rationality. Her emotional dependency and blind devotion are symptoms of a deeper psychological need for validation through romantic connection, leading her to sacrifice everything for an idealised relationship. This mirrors Melanie Klein's observation that unresolved internal conflicts drive individuals to seek out romantic relationships that fulfil their unconscious desires, blinding them to the negative realities of the situation (Klein 1975; Klein 1991). Tulsi's desperate need for love and security, stemming from these internalised conflicts, pushes her toward emotional dependency on Madhav.

Hamartia of Romantic Love

Humans are born to love; their feelings of "sex drive, romantic love, and deep attachment" are three crucial neural systems that have evolved over millions of years in the human brain (Fisher et al. 2002; Fisher, Aron, and Brown 2006). According to Helen E. Fisher, "among the three neural circuits, romantic love is often the most powerful" (2010, 221). In a general sense, it is not the end of the world for individuals if someone refuses to have sex with them. However, romantic love is different. Because of this romantic love, "around the world, some men and women who have been rejected in love commit suicide or slip into severe depression. Some even die of a broken heart, caused by a stroke or heart attack brought on by stress" (Fisher 2010, 221). The sex drive motivates individuals to seek sex with a range of partners; romantic love predisposes them to focus their mating energy on just one individual at a time; and feelings of deep attachment inspire them to stay with a partner long enough to raise their children as a team (Fisher 2010, 221).

Although the brain might fall head over heels in love instantly, the feelings of deep attachment take time to manifest. However, the deep attachment in the marital relationship between Madhav and Tulsi has waned over time. In the real world, "romantic love is like milk; with the passage of time, it sours, splits, and becomes poison" (Meera 2017, 03). Moreover, studies show that the euphoric romantic love created in a marital relationship begins to fade within two years (Fisher 2022b, para. 04). This fading occurs because relationships transcend from intense love to long-lasting affection. In fact, marriage is about devotion and sacrifice for one another, as the ultimate happiness and purpose of marriage reside in giving rather than receiving. However, the absence of such "affectionate love" and "deep attachment" in Tulsi's marital life results from her expectations of loyalty and commitment from her chosen philanderer and the immaturity of her marriage.

The Anagnorisis of Tulsi

Tulsi's journey encapsulates the psychological vulnerability and complexity of romantic entrapment. Studies reveal that fear and anxiety can drive individuals to remain in unhealthy relationships, often to the

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detriment of their well-being (Bowlby 1969; Levy, Johnson, and Clouthier 2015; Mikulincer and Shaver 2016). Central to this phenomenon is the “fear of abandonment,” a psychological factor that significantly influences emotional responses within romantic relationships (Mikulincer and Shaver 2016, 84). Palihawadana, Broadbear, and Rao (2018) claim that while “fear of abandonment” manifests differently in individuals, it plays a crucial role in therapeutic engagement, and increases the risk of suicidal tendencies, non-suicidal self-injury, and long-term mental health complications. This critical insight underscores the profound psychological conflict Tulsi experiences in her marriage to Madhav

In Tulsi’s case, her “fear of abandonment” culminates in a critical moment of anagnorisis, where she confronts the painful realities of her life and relationships. The illicit behaviour of her husband, Madhav, leads Tulsi to profound regret regarding her decision to marry him. As the loneliness of her marriage begins to swallow her, she feels like an abandoned being even in her own house. This period of introspection compels Tulsi to acknowledge the harsh truth about men like Madhav, against whom her blinded reason had cautioned her long before. In this moment of clarity, she reflects on her compromised aspiration to become a scientist and the life she might have experienced with Vinayan, which serves as a consequence of her romantic desires.

I imagined being married to Vinay, I might have earned a name as a scientist. I would have lived without any troubles. Perhaps Vinay would not have kissed me like Madhav did. But he would never caressed other woman in my presence. (Meera 2017, 75)

This passage illustrates Tulsi’s awakening to the choices she has made and the dreams she has forsaken. The recognition of her compromised identity and the aspiration she sacrificed for her romantic fantasies becomes a defining moment in her journey.

As Tulsi learns of Madhav’s new affair with Bhama, her emotional turmoil deepens, fuelled by an obsessive love that drives her to seek ultimate vengeance. Despite agreeing to his demand for divorce, her mental instability stemming from her fears of abandonment and independence underscores her entrapment within the “Cinderella Complex.” Bouacida, Lecheheb, and Imane (2023) aptly note that “trauma returns to the surface in the form of fear and anxiety” (1248), suggesting that Tulsi’s repressed emotional turmoil manifests as a compulsive fixation on Madhav. This representation of K. R. Meera’s *The Poison of Love* (Meera 2017) reflects that even a highly educated daughter of a bureaucratic family can become ensnared in the psychological traps of dependency in romantic relationships. Dowling (1982) aptly notes, “There are women who love their men but fear for the death of their own souls” (21). This sentiment resonates with Tulsi’s internal conflict, where her dependence on Madhav obscures her ability to envision a fulfilling life beyond their relationship.

Moreover, Helen E. Fisher observes, “romantic love is an addiction—a positive addiction when your love is returned, a horribly negative fixation when your love is spurned, and you can’t let go” (Fisher 2005, 182). Tulsi’s negative fixation on Madhav consumes her life and overshadows her role as a mother. She perceives her children as extensions of Madhav, resenting their presence as reminders of a love that has betrayed her. In a final act of desperation, before meeting Madhav to finalize their divorce, Tulsi poisons her children driven by an obsessive love that seeks ultimate vengeance. K.R. Meera (2017)

compares her devilish actions with “Putana” (99), the demoness in Hindu mythology who poisons infants. After their meeting, she implores him to share his love with her one last time. The following morning, she reveals to him the poisoned bodies of their children, now infested by ants. Tulsi’s actions echo the tragic narratives of classical Greek literature. In retaliation for Jason’s treachery, Medea kills their children and Jason’s new bride. Similarly, Procne cooks her children and serves them as a meal to her husband in revenge for his sexual assault on her sister. Tulsi, Medea, and Procne all experience passionate relationships with their husbands, but that passion transforms into wrath when their husbands deceive them for another woman.

Findings and Discussions

The key findings of the study highlight the dual and holistic influences of the “Cinderella Complex” (Dowling 1982) and “hormonal mechanisms” (Fisher 2005) on Tulsi’s emotional experience in K. R. Meera’s *The Poison of Love* (Meera 2017). The analysis reveals that the “Cinderella Complex” acts as a parasitic construct, trapping Tulsi in cycles of emotional dependency and unrealistic expectations about love. This dependency not only distorts her sense of self but also positions her children as pawns within her tumultuous relationship with Madhav, ultimately contributing to the tragic narrative of maternal filicide. Simultaneously, reactions of neurochemical in “hormonal mechanisms” significantly shape her emotional decline, particularly through the initial euphoric effects of dopamine and the subsequent absence of deeper emotional attachment, complicating her relationship with Madhav. These findings underscore the need to critically examine the intersection of psychological constructs and neurobiological influences in a holistic understanding of the complexities of romantic love and its implications for women’s emotional experiences. The interplay of Tulsi’s emotional struggles, rooted in her “Cinderella Complex,” illustrates how the pressures of romantic ideals can lead to devastating outcomes, emphasizing the urgent need for deeper societal reflection on the psychological burdens faced by women in conditioned mentality.

Cinderella Complex - A Parasite

The “Cinderella Complex” (1982) operates as a parasitic entity, thriving on romantic ideals that obscure the realities of emotional labour, compromise, and self-reliance. In Tulsi’s case, her entrenched romantic beliefs overshadow her logical reasoning, trapping her in a cycle of unrealistic expectations and emotional dependency. This tension between logic and imagination underscores a significant imbalance, where the idealization of love undermines personal agency.

A natural characteristic of parasites is their inability to survive independently; they induce a phobia of independence in their hosts. The “Cinderella Complex” functions similarly, asserting itself on individuals regardless of their perceived vulnerability. Tulsi exemplifies this dynamic, demonstrating that the complex can ensnare even those who are not inherently susceptible. The invisible grip of this parasitic belief system manipulates individuals through mesmerising illusions, effectively clouding their judgement and dominating their existence. Even amid all the commotion, Tulsi’s decision to become a Meera Sadhu is a blatant example of her “philophobia” (Travers 2024), a consequence of her “Cinderella Complex.”

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This fear of intimacy exemplifies the broader societal narrative that emphasises women's loyalty, as expressed by H.R. and Bhattacharya (2023): "women stick to their lovers once they decide to be committed and will never change their mind till the end; this feminine value enhances the view on women's love that lasts even after their death" (133). This perspective reinforces the notion that romantic commitment can entrap women in unhealthy relationships, instilling anxiety about solitude while simultaneously generating dread about intimacy. Notably, the "Cinderella Complex" not only instills anxiety about living alone, but also fosters a fear of coexistence with another, even after overcoming its immediate toxicity. Though this complex may not cohabit with its host indefinitely, its lingering effects manifest as hamartia, influencing the host's emotional landscape long after the initial exposure.

Thus, it is imperative for victims to confront harsh realities rather than yield to the seductive delusions perpetuated by this complex. As Das and Rao (2022) conclude, love remains a complex phenomenon shaped by various factors such as intimacy, attraction, sensuality, passion, attachment, and commitment. Achieving a healthy union necessitates a delicate balance among these elements; the mere attainment of love's object does not guarantee a fulfilling relationship (200). Tulsi's narrative serves as a cautionary tale, illustrating the perils of romantic idealization and the importance of critical engagement with societal narratives surrounding love and commitment. By interrogating the implications of the "Cinderella Complex," this study highlights the need for self-awareness and critical engagement with societal narratives surrounding love and commitment.

Romantic Expectations to Ruthless Execution

The parasitic nature of the "Cinderella Complex" actively distorts Tulsi's perception of love, driving her obsessive attachment and fear of abandonment into a destructive emotional state. This emotional entanglement not only intensifies her "philophobia" (Travers 2024) but also induces her to commit maternal filicide as a brutal act of revenge against Madhav's betrayal. The complex preys on her insecurities, manipulating her vulnerabilities and overshadowing her moral judgement. In her desperate bid for control and recognition, Tulsi sacrifices her own children, illustrating how the toxic ideals of romantic love can distort a woman's mentality and lead to tragic outcomes.

The tragic phenomenon of maternal filicide, the act of mothers killing their own children, has left a haunting mark on societies across the world throughout history (Friedman and Resnick 2007; Friedman 2023). It serves as a chilling reminder of the extremes to which human emotions and circumstances can drive individuals. Ironically, children are often used as pawns in the crossfire of marital institutions, and Tulsi's children are no exception. The rage of Tulsi, Medea, and Procne stems from their husbands' betrayal of their expectations. However, in an attempt to compensate for the injustices they experienced, they unjustly sacrificed their innocent children. Their unnatural actions challenge the essence of their womanhood, as motherhood has been revered as the Achilles' heel of women for generations. Furthermore, many women continue their marital lives while enduring traumatic experiences in their domestic spheres, primarily for the sake of their children's well-being (Rich 1995). This ruthless execution known as maternal filicide not only finds its place in literature but also echoes in real-life scenarios. In reality, tragic instances of maternal filicide have occurred due to various factors, including

altruism, acute psychosis, fatal abuse, ritual murder, unwanted children, or even marital revenge (West 2007; Flynn, Shaw, and Abel 2013; Sorrentino 2022). These horrifying cases underscore the complex interplay of human emotions and circumstances that can lead to such unimaginable acts.

Turning to the realm of literature, Lady Macbeth proclaims her willingness to sacrifice her child for the throne: “I have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums and dashed out his brains” (Shakespeare 1994, 42). In contrast, Gertrude’s ‘Cinderella Complex,’ rooted in her romantic love for Claudius, is responsible for the terrible demise of her son, Hamlet. Even within children’s fiction, the Brothers Grimm fairy tale *The Juniper Tree* (2016) exemplifies maternal filicide. In *The Juniper Tree*, a stepmother kills her stepsons to ensure her biological daughters’ inheritance. Similarly, Michelle Ann Abate’s study observes that the theme of filicide is reflected in another famous Brothers Grimm fairy tale, “Snow White,” through the wicked stepmother’s repeated attempts to murder her stepdaughter due to envy and vanity, particularly over beauty (2012). In all these instances, the “Cinderella Complex” and the weight of romantic expectations quietly influence the actions of women who manipulate their children as pawns within their marital lives.

Furthermore, it is significant to note that the act of maternal filicide, both in reality and literature, offers a glimpse into the darker aspects of human nature. Understanding the intricate motives behind such actions sheds light on the complex interplay of emotions and circumstances that can lead to these tragic events. In any case, it is essential to recognise that not only do women suffer within the confines of marital institutions; their children are also deeply affected. Research indicates that children who witness or experience emotional, physical, or sexual abuse are predisposed to an elevated risk of encountering health complications in adulthood. These complications can include mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety, as well as physical conditions like diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disease, diminished self-esteem, and various other ailments (Monnat and Chandler 2015, 733–42). In this context, it is the children who emerge as the real victims, rather than their mothers. Moreover, insensitive behaviours within their parents’ marital relationships tarnish cherished childhood memories and negatively influence the psychological well-being of most individuals, with these scars often persisting throughout their lives.

Hormonal Mechanisms in Tulsi’s Emotional Decline

The complexities of Tulsi’s emotional experience are further deepened by the interplay of hormonal mechanisms, which significantly contribute to her emotional decline. The phrase “love at first sight” is often glorified in both textual and visual literature. However, the reality of human relationships is far more complex, driven by underlying psychological processes and neurochemical hormones that often go unnoticed. According to Helen E. Fisher, mating drives produce different behaviours, hopes, and dreams that are correlate with different neurochemical hormones:

Lust is associated primarily with the hormone testosterone in both men and women.

Romantic love is linked with the natural stimulant dopamine and perhaps

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norepinephrine and serotonin. and feelings of male-female attachment are produced primarily by the hormones oxytocin and vasopressin. (Fisher 2005, 78)

This hormonal interplay is crucial for understanding Tulsi's emotional decline in *The Poison of Love* (Meera 2017) as a manifestation of the "Cinderella Complex" (1982).

Initially, the intense attraction to Madhav may have ignited a surge of dopamine, creating an illusion of euphoric love. However, this initial euphoria is temporary, as the biochemical effects of romantic love are known to diminish over time, leaving Tulsi emotionally vulnerable. As the relationship unfolded, the interplay of hormonal responses likely led to confusion and despair rather than fulfilment. It is significant to note that the deeper emotional attachment, which would be sustained by oxytocin, never fully develops in her relationship with Madhav. Instead, Tulsi's connection to him remains rooted in the fragile, short-lived stage of romantic love, leaving her unprepared for the emotional betrayal that follows. The tragic irony of her story lies in the fact that this hormonal response, coupled with her "Cinderella Complex," blinds her to the reality of her situation. Tulsi's experience underscores the complexities and dangers of idealized romantic expectations. The euphoria of initial attraction, shaped by hormones like dopamine, creates a temporary illusion of happiness, but it does not guarantee the lasting emotional fulfilments necessary for a stable relationship.

The misguided belief in the permanence of happiness following "love at first sight" and the "happily ever after" narrative perpetuated by social conditioning is shattered by the harsh realities of Tulsi's life. As Thomas Hardy asserts, "happiness is but an occasional episode in the general drama of pain" (2007, 372), highlighting the transient nature of joy in the broader context of human suffering. This observation is particularly pertinent in Tulsi's situation, where her adherence to romanticized ideals ultimately leads to disillusionment and emotional turmoil. Such romantic notions not only obscure the complexities inherent in real-life relationships but also foster detrimental attitudes that can manifest in toxic behaviours. In Tulsi's case, Madhav's fanciful romantic demeanour ultimately distorts her identity, leading her down a path of devastation, including the tragic fate of her children and her transformation into a Meera Sadhu in Vrindavan. This trajectory emphasizes the potential dangers of misplaced romantic ideals, revealing how hormonal influences can intertwine with social conditioning on psychological dependency to shape destructive realities.

Conclusion

The exploration of the unseen phases of the "Cinderella Complex" through Tulsi's romantic love in K. R. Meera's *The Poison of Love* (Meera 2017) offers critical insights into the intricate role of social conditioning in shaping psychological dependency among Indian women. By examining the intersection of psychological constructs and neurobiological influences, this study underscores how women's emotional lives and identities are shaped by the conditioned perception of marriage as a source of everlasting romantic bliss.

Notably, Tulsi's act of maternal filicide, driven by her fear of abandonment stemming from the "Cinderella Complex," illustrates the devastating effects of this dependency. It sheds light on the role of the "Cinderella Complex" in contributing to other forms of marital distress, such as divorce, infidelity,

and emotional turmoil. Furthermore, the analysis reveals that the “Cinderella Complex” functions as a parasitic construct, trapping Tulsi in cycles of emotional dependency. This dependency is exacerbated by hormonal mechanisms that influence her emotional responses, heightening her vulnerability in romantic relationships. These findings highlight the disillusionment surrounding love and marriage, profoundly impacting Tulsi’s emotional well-being and serving as a critical warning about the dangers of internalized social norms. The broader implications of psychological and neurobiological factors in shaping emotional distress are evident in Tulsi’s journey, offering valuable insights into how societal pressures manifest in women’s experiences of love and marriage.

Although this study provides important interdisciplinary insights into the feminist psychological and neurobiological dimensions of the “Cinderella Complex” through an Indian narrative, it has certain limitations. The focus on Tulsi as a representation of Indian women may not fully capture the diverse experiences across different regions and social strata in India. Nevertheless, Tulsi’s journey reflects a larger pattern seen in literary narratives, where women are often tethered to romantic and familial expectations, leading to marital distress. K.R. Meera vividly portrays the bleak truth of the “Cinderella Complex,” yet it is essential to recognize that Tulsi’s experiences resonate with the psyches of women worldwide. Patriarchal structures across the globe perpetuate similar cycles of emotional dependency, making the “Cinderella Complex” a global phenomenon that transcends Tulsi’s personal journey.

By shedding light on the hidden dynamics of the “Cinderella Complex” and its implications for marital illnesses, this study makes a valuable contribution to the existing literature. It calls for further exploration and awareness regarding the role of the “Cinderella Complex” and its psychological and neurobiological components explored in this study, such as fear of abandonment, philophobia, and love hormones, in emotional distress and psychological well-being. Future research could expand on this study by conducting comparative analyses of the “Cinderella Complex” across various Indian cultures and global contexts. By integrating a wider range of perspectives, scholars could further illuminate both the universal and culturally specific dimensions of this phenomenon. Such research would deepen our understanding of the intricate relationship between societal conditioning, psychological constructs, neurobiological factors, and women's emotional experiences, providing crucial insights into the challenges posed by societal expectations and gender roles.

رواية (سَمَ الحب): استكشاف نفسي لمراحل غير مرئية من عقدة سندريلا

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الملخص

تحاول هذه الدراسة الوصول إلى استكشاف مراحل "عقدة سندريلا"، وهو بناء نفسي اجتماعي طورته كوليت داولينغ عام (1982)، من خلال شخصية تولسي في رواية "سَمَ الحب" لـ ك. ر. ميرام (2017). تجسد تولسي عواقب التكيف الاجتماعي على النساء الهنديات، حيث يتنكر الاعتماد في شكل حب رومانسي، مما يعقد فهمهن للزواج على أنه جزء من هويتهم، وتبحث الدراسة في كيفية تعزيز التكيف الاجتماعي والآليات العصبية الحيوية في اعتماد تولسي العاطفي على زوجها، مدهاف، من خلال دمج التحليل النفسي لداولينغ حول الاعتماد الأنثوي مع نهج هيلين فيشر متعددة التخصصات حول الارتباط الرومانسي والهوس، وتستكشف الدراسة التأثير السببي للعوامل النفسية والعصبية الحيوية التي تشكل المسار العاطفي لتولسي، إن تكشف التحليلات كيف تسهم الأفكار الراسخة حول الحب في الاضطرابات الزوجية لتولسي والميول القاتلة تجاه الأبناء، وتسلب النتائج الضوء على الحاجة إلى إعادة تقييم نقدية للسرديات الرومانسية لتعزيز أنماط العلاقات الأكثر صحة وتوسيع النقاشات حول الاستقلالية الأنثوية والمرونة العاطفية.

الكلمات المفتاحية عقدة سندريلا، الاعتماد النفسي، الحب الرومانسي، الاستراتيجيات البيولوجية العصبية، تولسي..

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