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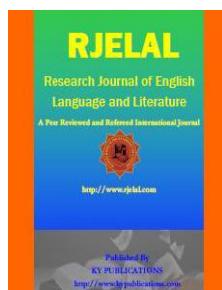


**ISSN**  
INTERNATIONAL  
STANDARD  
SERIAL  
NUMBER  
INDIA  
2395-2636 (Print):2321-3108 (online)

## **PSYCHO DYNAMICAL STUDY OF MEN AND WOMEN RELATIONSHIP IN D.H LAWRENCE'S "SONS AND LOVERS"**

**TYAGI PALLAVI**

Research Scholar, Department Of English Chaudhary Charan Singh University, Meerut Uttar Pradesh,  
India



### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this psycho dynamical study is to identify the relationship between men and women in D.H Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*. D.H. Lawrence, a multifaceted literary genius of the twentieth century looks at things differently from his many contemporaries. He is a pioneer of modern psychoanalytical novel. M. L. Pandit remarks, "Thirty years ahead, he anticipates the new coming together of mind and matter, the body and spirit, male and female that was actually achieved in the fifties and sixties". While the nationalists and realists were content to present the outward reality, Lawrence seeks to present man in his essence. He is primarily concerned with the inner world of their emotional and spiritual life. He is sensitive to the psychological forces that control the great movements of humanity.

He had violent hatred of the mechanized world of the twentieth century that stood for the suppression of one's instinctive response to life. To Lawrence suppression of instincts was a sin. He was never interested in the mere externals of life. Therefore, he dives into the deep emotional and psychological life of his characters and tries to catch the 'shimmery protoplasm' there. His books are strewn all over with psychological truths revealing attitudes, situations, emotional status, so rich and convincing that he makes most writers of his time look trifling and almost childish by compassion.

**KEY WORDS:** Psycho dynamics, men-women relationship, Sons and Lovers, suppression of instincts, mother fixation, solo-family.

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*Sons and Lovers* is the first major psychoanalytical novel of the twentieth century which heralded the advent of new frankness in modern literature. It deals with the psycho dynamical study of the tangled relations between men and women —one of the most serious problems of the modern age. The Freudian nature of the novel and the fact that it had its roots in the personal experience of D.H. Lawrence give an added interest. It also offers an inside view of the

life of the industrial working class in England and the repercussions of industrialization and urbanization on the unconscious of those people.

As in the twentieth century stress was on what person thinks and feels, so the novel also talks of the psychological motives behind human action. The novel psycho dynamically reveals that behind all the manifestations of confusion and perplexities, doubts and uncertainties, joy and pleasure there lay an inner force of the *unconsciousness*. The novel is

therefore said to run on Freud's psychodynamic model.

It is Lawrence's first great novel and the subject of this study-was begun in 1910, finished in 1912, and published in 1913, when Lawrence was twenty-eight years old. Originally entitled *Paul Morel*, Lawrence himself attempted an excellent analysis of it in a letter to Garnett:

"A woman of character and refinement goes into the lower class, and has no satisfaction in her own life. She has had a passion for her husband, so the children are born of passion, and have heaps of vitality. But as her sons grows up, she selects them as lovers—first the eldest, then the second. These sons are urged into life by their reciprocal love for their mother—urged on and on. But when they come to manhood, they can't love, because their mother is the strongest power in their lives, and holds them... As soon as the young men come into contact with women there is a split. William gives his sex to a fribble and his mother holds his soul. But the split kills him, because he doesn't know where he is. The next son gets a woman who fights for his soul—fights his mother. The son loves the mother—all the sons hate and are jealous of the father. The battle goes on between the mother and the girl, with the son as object. The mother gradually proves the stronger, because of the tie of blood. The son decides to leave his soul in his mother's hands, and, like his elder brother, go for passion. Then the split begins to tell again. But, almost unconsciously, the mother realizes what is the matter and begins to die. The son casts off his mistress, attends to his mother dying. He is left in the end naked of everything, with the drift towards death."

The clarity of concept that we find in this outline is not to be found in the novel itself; still it defines the framework of the novel with a good deal of accuracy, except that Paul, in this outline, is 'left naked of everything, with the drifts towards death',

whereas, in the novel, Paul decides that he can and must go on living, and with a sense of the excitement and challenge of life, he turns his steps towards the lights of the town the city's gold phosphorescence...the faintly humming, glowing town...

Psychology centering round *mother-fixation* is implicit in the title of the novel *Sons and Lovers*. David Daiches, discussing this aspect of the novel has remarked,

"Insistently like a drum beat in the background of the novel, runs the question, what is, what ought to be, what can be, the most vital relation between man and woman".

It is the story of the sons who become lovers of their mother without any physical and sexual touch. Dr. Yudhishtar writes:

"The novel is basically about sons and lovers, or more precisely about sons as lovers".

The sons and the mother act as lovers and actually the sons are husband substitutes emotionally, if not physically. The sons bring presents for their mother, walk with her as her mate and even desire that their mother should look young.

This relationship with their mother makes their own love-affairs unsuccessful. Both the sons fail to establish satisfactory relations with other women.

The Morel's marriage is wrecked mainly because of the over-possessive nature of Mrs. Morel and the rugged exterior and unpolished manners of Mr. Morel. Both fail to recognize each other. Mrs. Morel fails to understand that Mr. Morel cannot totally give up the personality traits which he has developed as a miner since the age often. As Psychoanalysts believe - *Personality traits are more or less determined in the first few years of life.*

Relationship of sexes must be a reconciliation of opposites, and not an effort at domination. Lawrence constantly stresses that physical union with the other sex is essential for integrated personal development, but he also stresses the separateness of man and woman in union. Which he terms as '*divine otherness*' and

that it should be respected, *There must be two in one, always two in one, an equilibrium, a pure balance of two single beings as the stars balance in each other.*

Psychodynamics says that some people find it easy to mould their personalities to conform to social expectations while others do not. An inherent tendency may make conformity difficult or impossible and results in traumatic psychological and emotional experiences.

As cause of Mrs. Morel's such attitude is answered in psychodynamics — that some people find conformity difficult because they do not approve of the cultural ideas of the groups with which they are identified and prefer to conform to those of another group. For example, some find it hard to relinquish middle class values and accept lower class values. Mrs. Morel belonging to middle class, when placed in lower class after marriage could not identify herself with poor low class miners. She wants to raise her self-esteem by paying higher rent for the corner house and by getting white-collar jobs for her sons.

The predominant source of sexual maladjustment in *Sons and Lovers* is '*Oedipus Complex*'—a Psycho dynamical concept propounded by Sigmund Freud. It means manifestation of infantile sexuality in the relation of the child to its parent of the opposite sex. It is a state in which a person shows excessive affection for the parent opposite in sex to him or her and a corresponding hatred for his or her other parent. *Sons and Lovers* study the injurious psychological effects on her children of the love of an over-possessive and dominating mother. According to Freud, "*a mother through kissing and petting the child becomes its first 'seducer' and in this relation lies the root of a mother's importance for a whole life time, as the first and strongest love object and as the prototype of all later love relations*".

According to Graham Hough, "***Sons and Lovers is indeed the first Freudian novel in English***". Lawrence explains that an exaggerated and intense parental love leads to a painfully false relation between parents and children. By establishing a dynamic relation with the child on the second plane of consciousness, the parents - because of their

monomania for love and more love - do "*what is vicious for any parent to do*".

"The parents unwillingly establish a bond of adult love with the child- not of sex, because Lawrence held that biologically there is a radical sex aversion between parent and child, at the deeper sensual centers, but of sacred, spiritual love. Even this relation of pure love between parent and child, however, is fatal because it inevitably arouses in the child the centres of sex which cannot then find response from the sensual body of any other person. The intense non-sexual parent-child love has forestalled the great love experience which should lie in the future: "The cream is licked off from life before the boy or girl is twenty. Afterwards - repetition, disillusion, and barrenness".

Mrs. Morel is dissatisfied with her husband and turns to her sons for emotional fulfillment. She makes them husband-substitutes emotionally. First of all she takes on her eldest son William after casting off her husband. She turns him against his own father till he is ready to thrash him. Anthony Beal rightly comments, "*The children see their father with their mother's eyes and all unite against him*". Lawrence also writes, All the children but particularly Paul were peculiarly against their father. All this makes Mr. Morel alien in his own family. Scott Sanders comments, "*Despised by his wife, shut out from his family, Morel has added reason for drinking*". Lawrence, giving his judgment on the situation several years, later, wrote in *Fantasia*, "*It is despicable for any one parent to accept a child's sympathy against the other parent. And the one who received the sympathy is always more contemptible than the one who is hated*". The Morels family becomes a kind of 'solo family'.

Psychodynamics defines 'solo family' - "*when one parent is absent, due to death, divorce, desertion, separation, or some other cause, the home becomes 'Solo' home, with one parent, usually the mother, playing the role of both parents*". Since the child's personality pattern is largely moulded during the early years of life, the parent's absence at this time leaves its mark on the

child's personality. When the father is away from home, the mother tends to be more indulgent and less demanding in her child training. This encourages the child to be dependent and less mature than his age-mates. Conditions that jeopardize his social relationships and lead to unfavorable social judgments.

Lacking a source of masculine identification, boys are more likely to be psychologically damaged by the father's absence from the home than are girls. By comparison with boys from homes where father is present, boys from solo homes are usually more dependent and less sex appropriate in their behavior. Their poor personal and social adjustments often lead to aggressive behavior and this happens with both the sons William and Paul in the novel.

The personality effect of a solo home is not limited to children. It is felt by parents as well as other family members. The father will have feelings of guilt or become miserable on account of neglecting his children even if he supports them. And Mr. Morel faces more or less similar fate. Many wives resent extra burden of work and responsibility placed on them in a solo home. They are lonely and often try to compensate for their loneliness by attaching themselves emotionally to their elder sons, whom they regard as *surrogate husbands*. And Mrs. Morel does the same. Even more common, they are almost always anxious about their ability to play both the mother and father roles successfully. The damaging effects of living in a solo home are compounded by the social stigma of being different or disgraced. Children experience divided loyalties stemming out of different treatment from their two parents.

Mr. and Mrs. Morel neglects the psychological truth as Adler says, "*the general manner of life which enables the individual to compensate for his feelings of inferiority and inadequacy is more or less determined during the first five years of his life*"

Mrs. Morel since childhood forces Paul to sympathize with her by telling him how she never had a husband - she prevents his growth into maturity. All his life he wants to be mothered and taken care of, he wants someone to shoulder the

responsibilities of his life. It is as if the pivot and pole of his life is his mother. She makes both William and Paul '*husband-substitute*' in the emotional sense.

William when tells his mother about his love-affair. She replies, "*A fine mess of marriage it would be. I can't sleep when I think of it. Nothing is as bad as a marriage that is a hopeless failure. Mine was bad enough God knows and ought to teach you something*". William is torn within by the conflict between his love for his mother and his love for Gyp. He suffers terrible spiritual anguish. Non-fulfillment of sexual urge causes a psychological storm in him, which leads ultimately to his death. The suppression of the instinctive in man, intensified by the over- possessiveness of the mother, hastens his disintegration and death.

Mrs. Morel now clings to Paul. She cannot afford to lose him as she did her eldest son. She can never tolerate another woman snatching him from her. Therefore she hates Miriam, Paul's girlfriend. The following conversation between the mother and the son reveals Mrs. Morel's fears about Paul's drifting towards Miriam. She says:

"Is She so fascinating that you must follow her....you are never too tired to go if she will come for you....Nay, but you neither want to eat or drink then". Paul replies, "I do like her", Mrs. Morel says in a biting tone, "Like her. It seems to me you like nothing and nobody else. There is neither Annie nor me nor anyone else for you". Paul replies angrily, "What nonsense mother....you know I don't love her. She doesn't even walk with my arm... Mrs. Morel says, "Then why do you fly to her so often?" Paul says, "I do like to talk to her But I don't love her". Mrs. Morel "Is there nobody else to talk to". Paul replies, "Not about the things we talk of. There's lots of things that you are not interested in painting — book - Herbert Spencer - I do — and Miriam does" Mrs. Morel flashes defiantly, "And how do you know that I shouldn't? Do you ever talk to me about these things to try?" Paul says, "You are old mother and we are young". Mrs. Morel replies, "Yes, I know it will — I am old. And therefore I stand aside; I have nothing to do with you. You only want me to wait on you, the rest is for Miriam", Paul says, "No, mother — I don't really

love her. I talk to her but I want to come home to you". Mrs. Morel says, "I can't bear it. I couldn't let another woman - she would leave me no room. And I never had a husband not really.... And she exults so in taking you from me".

Paul himself caught in the conflict of two women fights them both but in the process begins to waste away. In desperation he turns to Miriam again, but comes up against the obstacle of his "*physical bondage*"; he shrinks from any physical contact with her. Miriam also has psychological problem, so far as her attitude to sex is concerned, Miriam is badly inhibited. Her sexual inhibitions verge on sexual frigidity: "*Mother said to me, there is one thing in marriage that is always dreadful, but you have to bear it, and I believed it*".

To her sex is dreadful. It is also ugly. Once she frankly admits to Paul, "*You have taught me it is not so.*"

Secondly she is too spiritual. Paul companies to her, "*You make .me so spiritual. I don't want to be spiritual. I am so damned spiritual with you always*". Paul also feels that Miriam wants to suck the very soul of him and this irritates and annoys him. In her company he always feels as if, '*she wanted to suck the soul out of his body, not him. He tells her in great anger, "you absorb, absorb, as if you fill yourself up with love because you have got a shortage somewhere"*'.

Even when she surrenders herself physically to him, it is more a sacrifice than love. A number of scenes show their love-making, and in each one we are conscious of the deep anguish which the lovers suffer. This relationship also ends.

Now Paul turns to Clara, She awakens the manly flame in him. He wants her physically. Both of them seek life and both of them have it in their relationship with each other as long as the relation lasts. Their union is merely physical, but it is intensive. As Miriam tries to possess the soul of Paul, Clara tries to possess his body. In his relationship with her he knows, for the first time, the blind force of life at work within him. "*It was as if he, and the stars, and the dark herbage and Clara were licked up in an immense tongue of flame, which tore onwards and upwards*". Lawrence thus sublimates sex, even when it is purely physical and

in this way convincingly rebuts the charge of obscenity that has been brought so frequently against him. Relationship of Paul and Clara also fails because it is one-sided. It is too physical.

In the end, after his unsuccessful relationship with any of the three women, Mrs. Morel, Miriam and Clara, and also after his mother's death, Paul is seen walking quietly towards? The city's gold light. Even after her death, both spiritually and physically Paul is glued to his mother. The pull she wields is too strong to allow any other centre of attraction in the field to retain any vitality. Paul must always be seeking for mother-image in his woman.

He breaks off both with Miriam and Clara. He becomes indifferent to life and death alike. In fact life for him is only where his mother is and she is dead. The last chapter is called *Derelict* and it emphasizes Lawrence's psychology in no mistakable terms.

The battle of sexes ruins the chief characters. Eternal polarities run throughout the creation such as light and darkness, male and female, love and hate and the reconciliation of such opposites or polarities is essential for vital fulfillment of men and women and tragedy occurs when there is lack of such reconciliation. In a letter to A.W. McLeod, 2 June, 1914 Lawrence himself defines this man and woman relationship,

"I think the only resourcing of art, revivifying it is to make it more the joint work of man and woman. I think the one thing to do, is for men to have courage to draw nearer to women, expose themselves to them, and be altered by them and for women to accept and admit man. That is the start by bringing themselves together man and woman, revealing themselves each to the other gaining great blind knowledge and suffering and joy, which it will take a big further lapse of civilization to exploit and workout. Because the source of all life and knowledge is in man and woman, and the source of all living is in the interchange and the meeting and mingling of these two, man life and woman life, man knowledge and woman knowledge, man-being and woman- being".

We find *Sons and Lovers* is the first psycho-analytical novel in the English Language. It is not

only the story of the conjugal relationship of Mr. and Mrs. Morel, but primarily the story of the development of consciousness in the hero, Paul, and his psychology. The failure of the marriage of Walter and Gertrude and that of Paul, Miriam and Clara's relationship is psychologically a conflict between the unconscious and consciousness, an opposition between body and mind, between male and female principle.

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