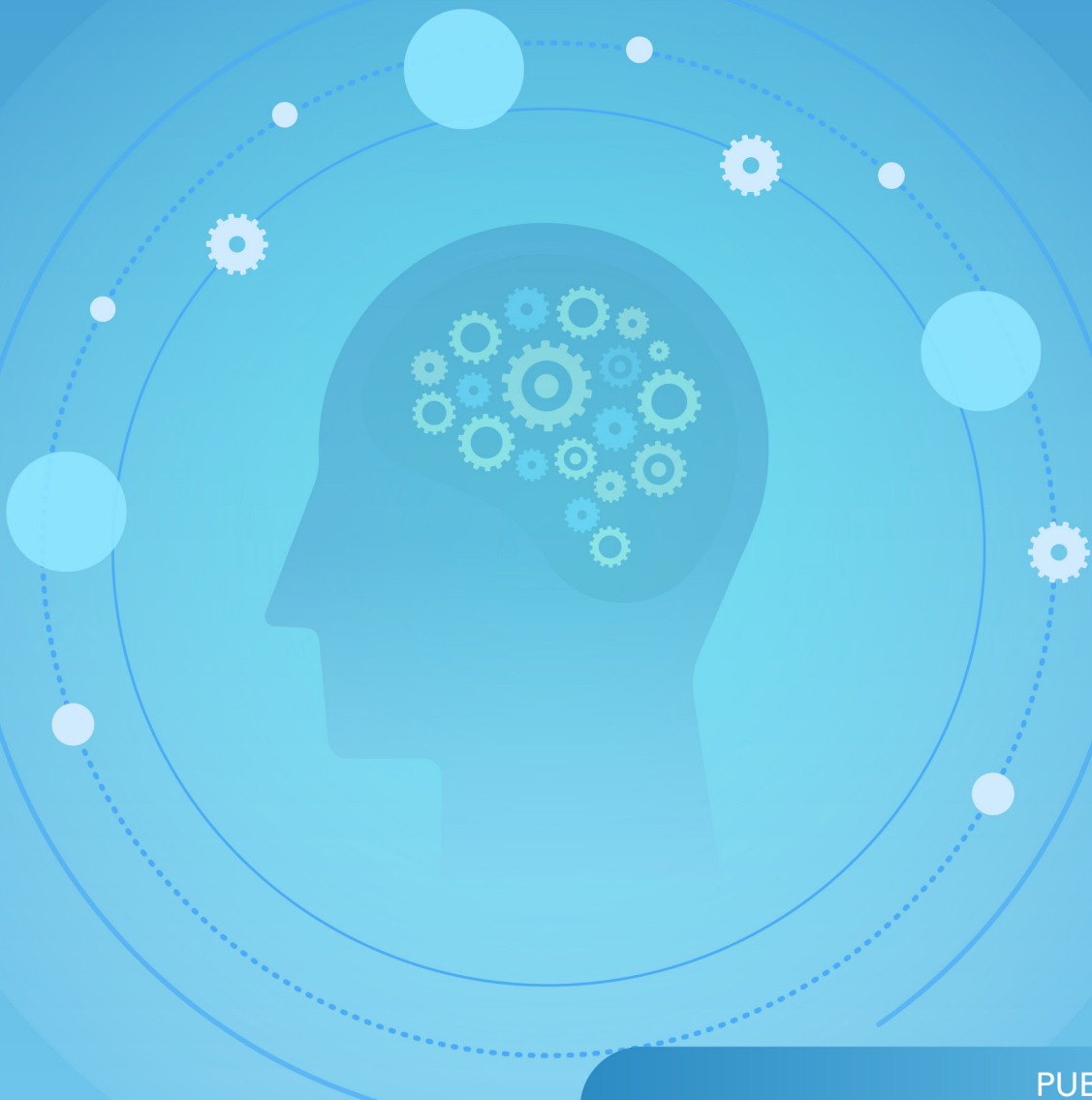




American Journal of Arts and Human Science (AJAHS)

ISSN: 2832-451X (ONLINE)

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 3 (2026)



PUBLISHED BY
E-PALLI PUBLISHERS, DELAWARE, USA

Between Identity and Dependency: The Psychological Dichotomy of Pip in *Great Expectations*

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Article Information

Received: April 09, 2026

Accepted: June 27, 2026

Published: July 20, 2026

Keywords

Dependent Personality Disorder (DPD), Maladaptive Dependency, Object Relations Theory, Primary Caregiver

ABSTRACT

This research paper investigates the gradual psychological development of the protagonist, Pip, in Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* through psychoanalytic and clinical lenses focused on Dependent Personality Disorder (DPD). The paper argues that the development of Pip's personality exhibits a certain level of chronic dependency, a pattern that permeates his behavioral tendencies and social relationships. It is a process that prevented the growth of his autonomous ego. The researchers applied a qualitative approach involving an intensive reading of the text and used the novel *Great Expectations* as the primary data. Secondary data sources include several articles on the psychoanalytical approach to the novel and several psychoanalytical theories to support arguments proposing the corrosive nature of the disorder. Prominent theories like Freudian psychosexual theory and Fairbairn's object relations theory were used to define and investigate the oral fixation, maladaptive dependency, and fragmented selfhood of Pip, which started to develop during early childhood because of the inconstant and authoritarian nurturing of the primary caregiver. Key findings of this investigation are that Pip's relationship with Miss Havisham, Estella, and Magwitch is not merely a social interaction but is indicative of pathological object relations. This relationship between Pip and the aforementioned characters also suggests that his identity was constructed entirely through the validation of idealised figures who ultimately reject him.

INTRODUCTION

Great Expectations (2008) by Charles Dickens is classified as a Victorian bildungsroman and a social novel that explores social development and social mobility in nineteenth-century England (Buckley, 1974; Bloom, 2010; Ledger & Furneaux, 2011). The central character is Pip, protagonist of this novel, whose social and moral development was molded by the class hierarchy and ethical expectations of Victorian society (Gallagher & Greenblatt, 2001; Hagan, 1954). This delineates the transformation of Pip from the marshes to a metropolitan gentleman through the implementation of the bildungsroman narrative and excavation of aspiration, disillusionment, and moral awakening of Pip (Buckley, 1974; Brooks, 1992). Pip's transformation is not only motivated by Victorian aspirations for leveraging class position but also by his yearning for external validation, fear of abandonment, and submission to authoritative figures, which directed and redirected his mode of identity. Pip's relational interplay with Joe, Estella, Miss Havisham, and Magwitch becomes an obstacle to the construction of his autonomous identity (Dessner, 1976; Miller, 1958; Byrd, 1976). Besides, his chase for attaining gentility, acceptance, and a desire for belongingness resembles dependence and insecurity. These aspirations result in Pip's oscillation between guilt, admiration, shame, and submission, creating a psychological tension between moral aspiration and shattered selfhood (Brooks, 1992;

Bloom, 2010).

Freud (1953) believed a person's whole identity is the sum of their early development experience and personal conflicts. Pip's early deprivation and emotional insecurity came as a cause for his guilt and anxiety. (Dessner, 1976; Miller, 1958). Children deprived of emotional care tend to produce persistent patterns of dependency and validation seeking, as mentioned in Freud's psychosexual development theory (Freud, 1953; Eagleton, 2008).

Fairbairn argues, in his object relations theory, that although the instinctual drives construct the individual personality, the internalized object relationships with significant others also contribute to personality development (Fairbairn, 1952; Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983). Moreover, modern research on Dependent Personality Disorder (DPD) describes individuals with signs. Contemporary clinical psychology provides an additional tool for understanding Pip's behavioral patterns. Individuals having an excessive emotional reliance on others, submissive interpersonal behavior, a chronic fear of abandonment, and a lack of self-confidence are highly prone to Dependent Personality Disorder (DPD) (Bornstein, 1992, 2012; Hirschfeld *et al.*, 1977; American Psychological Association [APA], 2013). Scholars also denote that by examining the literary representation of personality pathology, this type of clinical framework can display the psychological complexity of fictional characters whose behavior simulates empirically recognized patterns

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of dependency (Pincus & Wilson, 2001; Levine & Levine, 2012). Pip's actions, as exemplified by his repeated need for approval, his vulnerability to manipulation by Miss Havisham and Estella, and his perpetual sense of moral inadequacy, are akin to those associated with dependency pathology (Bornstein, 1992; Levine & Levine, 2012).

Although most of the studies on the novel have worked on Pip's moral development and social aspirations, fewer studies have exclusively integrated these literary interpretations with clinical psychology. While these studies unpack the historical context of the novel, this research paper outlines Pip's emotional reliance, submissive interpersonal style, and validation-seeking behavior through a clinical scope of dependency.

The data used in the paper consists primarily of developmental risk factors, diagnostic criteria for Dependent Personality Disorder (DPD), and interpersonal dependency constructs.

This work bridges the research gap of the overlooked connection between Dickens's literary portrayal of fragile identity and modern psychological understandings of it. Addressing this gap, the study uses an empirical-hermeneutic approach by combining psychoanalytic literary criticism with contemporary clinical psychology. This case study is based primarily on Freud's theory of psychosexual development and Fairbairn's object relations framework. Alongside these two prominent theorists, this paper also used several standardized comprehensive books to investigate this issue, like the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, or DSM-5 (APA, 2013). This study has also investigated concepts like oral fixation, ego fragility, pathological object relations, and the failure of individuation to explain the unconscious motivation behind Pip's psychological development (Freud, 1953; Fairbairn, 1952; Mahler *et al.*, 1975; Bornstein, 2012). This paper, altogether, not only scrutinizes the gradual moral growth of Pip but also the deeper struggle between his unwilling dependency and autonomous selfhood.

This research paper contains the following questions

1. How does Dependent personality disorder converge with Pip's cognitive decision pattern?
2. What is the role of the Victorian institutional regime behind Pip's aggravated mode of dependency?
3. What is the importance of this research in understanding clinical dependency?

Research Objectives

1. To analyse Pip's relational and cognitive patterns in *Great Expectations* and outline them against DSM-5 criteria for Dependent Personality Disorder.
2. To examine the role of Victorian social institutions in intensifying Pip's dependent traits through textual analysis.
3. To assess the implications of Pip's dependency development for modern clinical practice, social conditioning, and therapeutic approaches to Dependent Personality Disorder.

LITERATURE REVIEW

From Victorian moral values to class mobility, class struggle, and the psychological journey of the protagonist, this text scrutinizes and opens for various dimensional analysis. Numerous scholarships focus on the central character because the significance of the character's representation is relevant in every timeframe. Several scholarships reveal the transformation of Pip from innocence to experience by identifying the factors behind his aspiration for social advancement. The hope for becoming a gentleman caused aberrant behavior in Pip, emanating from class anxiety, an inferiority complex, and moral disillusionment. Enein (2025) analysed the development of the major characters in Victorian atmosphere and the role of social class in the formation of individual personality. From this notion, it is noticeable that Pip's looking for a polished identity is a completely falsified aspiration of Victorian society, pushing him to fluctuate between unreal idealisation and real conditioning. The Victorian capitalistic world produced the falsified aspiration inside Pip, thereby leading him to fluctuate between aspiration and origin. This desire shatters the innate identity of an individual who is fractured and reconstructed by the social lenses. Ying (2023) argued that Pip's growth unfolds across various social environments and displays how different perspectives on social conditions construct individual identity. He applied Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory and Lawrence Kohlberg's Moral Development Theory while assessing Pip's moral evolution. From an analytical perspective, the scholar unearths the fact that Pip's innocent self was destroyed due to the hypocritical role-play of social institutions. This insightful analysis uncovers the psychological motivation behind Pip's oscillations between social and economic desires.

Psychoanalytic studies of *Great Expectations* (Dickens, 2008) have created the groundwork for understanding the agency of the psyche behind Pip's actions. Specifically, they point out the major contributors, such as narcissistic injury, guilt, fear, and superego anxiety, that developed Pip's psyche. Ingham (2007) explained this novel from the psychological perspective, specifically the narcissistic presentation of the superego. Here, the superego pathology works as the catalyst for the narcissistic defense system. Levine and Levine (2012) argued that guilt and shame are the two reactive positions that contribute to the formation of Pip's superego. While on the one hand, Pip's internalization of vileness delineates the guilt-driven compliance of an individual, on the other hand, shame has been endured by him because of the interactions with people of upper-class society, leaving him in a world with a shattered self. Guilt as an ego strategy instigates remorse and encourages him to seek external goodness through approval, status, and ideal love. Lewis (1971) argued that guilt arises from presumed moral failure of an individual, and shame obligates an individual to accept the defective self. This guilt-based psychological framework is similar to dependent-based ego functioning that induces Pip toward docility, self-effacement, and an acute need to rectify imagined wrongdoing. Moreover, Dessner (1976)

analysed Pip's story by connecting infantile trauma and the Oedipal pattern. He argues that Pip's continual search for multiple father figures forms ambivalence and self-abasement. This is identical to dependency since a person suffering from DPD also longs for multiple caretakers. These caretakers become the objects of that person whose lives are invested in organizing and reorganizing the dependent induced person. Bornstein (1993) explicated the characteristics of Dependent Personality Disorder (DPD), which include the patterns of submissiveness, fear of abandonment, and excessive reliance on external validation. These features resemble Pip's relational struggles with the prominent characters who constructed his ego. His yearning for Estella's approval, his liability to social influence, and his displacement of ingrained values onto class-based acceptance are the direct result of his dependency.

Though the prominent research on Victorian social relations examines dependency in some systematic terms, such as patronage, charity, and class differences, a gap has been left open, as rarely any work has been done in the dimension of individual psychological development and clinical disposition. An orphan like Pip, who is raised in an authoritarian domestic environment, aligns with the subjects of clinical dependency. Their personality development is infused by the environment they have to deal with, which is mostly pointed to as overcontrol or inconsistent care (Bornstein, 1993). Thus, the relational configuration figures out the behavioral pattern of a mature person. The above-mentioned scholarships prove that *Great Expectations* (Dickens, 2008) is a fertile field for various psychoanalytic expeditions, while leading to a gap in addressing the character development from a dependent-oriented personality formation viewpoint.

Theoretical Framework

The research work uses several psychoanalytical frameworks to explain Pip's idealized self-image in the upper class, including Freudian psychoanalysis and object relations theory. The work also uses Dependent Personality Disorder (DPD) as a clinical criterion, as coded in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (5th ed.; American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2013), to further explain the condition of Pip's unresolved psychological issues. DPD, as coded in DSM-5, contributes greatly to understanding the interplay between Pip's unconscious drives, early caregiving deficits, and compulsive relational attachment, indicating that his attention-seeking behaviors resemble modern psychological pathology.

Psychodynamic Theory

According to Freudian psychoanalysis, dependency originates in the oral stage of psychosexual development. A child's experience of nourishment, comfort, and bonding constructs the emerging ego ideal and early object relations (Freud, 1953). Inconsistent emotional nourishment and authoritative nurturing during this stage

prevent oral-stage conflicts, thereby propagating oral fixation. This fixation proliferates a dependent personality pattern identified by chronic desire for external approval, validation, the internalization of authoritative figures, and separation anxiety when detached from protective others (Bornstein, 1992; Lantz *et al.*, 2025). Empirical views confirm that oral fixation during childhood instigates adult dependency traits, including excessive reliance on others, fear of abandonment, and help-seeking behavior (Bornstein, 1992; Faith, 2009). This very picture is identified in Pip's struggle and longing for affection, reassurance, and validation from external figures, like Joe, Miss Havisham, and Magwitch. These figures are assumed to be symbolic parental objects whose validation is needed for Pip's social recognition (Dessner, 1976; Ingham, 2007). Pip's condition presents the complex structure of dependency where an individual's social recognition and emotional reassurance depend on unresolved childhood insecurity and the internalization of external authority structures (Saoudi *et al.*, 2021; Ingham, 2007).

Object Relations Theory

Object relations theory is a psychoanalytic process of understanding an individual, notably in relation to the role of the object or primary caregiver in the construction of the psyche of an individual (Mills, 2010). Fairbairn (1952) explained that libido is object-seeking rather than pleasure-seeking, propelled by an innate need for relational connection from infancy. And when a child experiences emotional deprivation, rejection, or an inconsistent caregiver, then the frustrating relationship with the caregiver results in defensive internalization and the splitting of both the object and the ego (Fairbairn, 1952). The object is divided into:

The ideal object: tolerable, satisfying aspects; paired with the central ego; a conscious, adaptive self.

The exciting/libidinal object: tantalizing but unavailable; accompanied by the repressed libidinal ego; seeking warmth, validation, and closeness.

The rejecting/antilibidinal object: frustrating, cold; coupled with the repressed antilibidinal ego; responding with anger, guilt, self-reproach, or hostility toward the libidinal ego.

This psychological structure arises from splitting, a primary defense, to manage unbearable separation anxiety (Fairbairn, 1952). Fairbairn (1952) encapsulates the term 'moral defense' for the child who maintains attachment loyalty to harmful objects. Furthermore, the child introjects badness into the self to preserve the external caregiver as 'good enough'. Thus, the longing for unavailable or rejecting others subsequently remains pervasive in adulthood in the form of dependency. This repetitive pattern of a sense of longing for 'bad objects' reenacts early internalized relational dynamics. This theoretical approach helps to interpret Pip's introjections of object relationships while addressing his dependency in adulthood. Pip's urge for validation and affection from rejecting yet 'idealized objects' like Estella and Miss

Havisham shows the attachment of the 'libidinal ego' to the 'rejecting object' and the resilient influence of split internal representations. Estella's contemptuous conduct toward Pip produces a persistent psychological wound. Thereby, her calling him a 'boy', slapping him, and humiliating him in their early interactions, instigates his aspiration for recognition and acceptance (Gates, 2009). Pip's relational bonding with Estella positions her as an idealized, despite 'rejecting object', perpetuating Pip's desire and dependency (Saoudi *et al.*, 2021).

Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory postulates that individuals acquire behaviors and attitudes through the process of observation, imitation, and modeling others. Their behaviors are also bolstered by vicarious experiences of reward and punishment they receive from the social environment (Bandura, 1977). In the context of the formation of dependent personality disorder in an individual, social learning theory elucidates the influence of the social environment on excessive reliance on others, submissiveness, and a fear of independence, since individuals learn dependency through modeled relational structures and entrenched help-seeking behaviors (Bornstein, 1992; Faith, 2009).

In the Victorian era, dependency was a survival strategy and a deeply embedded cultural practice for individuals because of the rigid nature of class hierarchies, patronage systems, and social mobility contingent on a benefactor (Helleberg, 2022). Like many from lower-class backgrounds, Pip looks up to the higher-class individuals for a sense of worth and belongingness. A tendency shaped by the Victorian societies in order to uphold their traditional class expectations. This imitation from Pip played a vital role in strengthening the upper-class archetype through his validation of the system. The support from Pip's anonymous benefactor only deepens his passivity, and the backlash he received for his aspiration of class transgression left him with immense separation anxiety and self-doubt (Ying, 2023). This Victorian social situation perpetuates Pip's longing for affection and reassurance.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study uses qualitative psychoanalytic methodology in order to dissect development as well as impediment in personality among individuals. Researchers used the novel *Great Expectations* (Dickens, 2008) as the primary material, while secondary materials included multiple canonical psychoanalytical works of Freud and Fairbairn. Researchers also used various existing literary criticism on characters' psychology as well as their character development through the Victorian context as secondary sources of data. Textual scenes were selected based on scenes depicting Pip's intense fear of abandonment, submissiveness, and idealization of the authoritative figures in the novel, in addition to his social interactions with prominent characters in the novel who significantly

influenced him throughout his journey of maturation. Researchers implemented the study through close reading of the text and applied thematic coding of dependency-related behaviors, accompanied by mapping characters' actions through a psychoanalytic lens. The secondary data was used to support and validate its theoretical claims by implementing theoretical triangulation. In order to explain how Pip's psychological growth came to be, researchers integrated Freudian oral fixation, the superego, and Fairbairn object relations to support the findings. On the other hand, conceptual triangulation was further strengthened by linking dependency as a clinical construct. Although the practicality of the study implicates high value in the field of literature, it is more concentrated on the subjective understanding of an individual rather than measurable psychoanalytical data, and its conclusions cannot be applied beyond the boundaries of the novel. However, the theoretical framework provides a strong base to understand dependency as an architectural force in Pip's identity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Early Caregiving Deficit in Identity Fixation

The authoritarian discipline, inconsistent caregiving, and emotional deprivation during childhood directly form Pip's dependent psychic structure. His early development can be analysed by applying Fairbairn's dependent personality framework. His household, where he used to live in his childhood, can be mapped onto two primary internalizations. Joe, having the qualities of an 'exciting object', always supported Pip when necessary, yet he remains unavailable as a protective factor at times. On the other hand, Mrs. Joe represents the 'rejecting object', characterized as 'the tickler'. Her lack of emotional nurturance forces Pip to introject the 'bad object' in an attempt to control it (Fairbairn, 1952, p. 138). Pip's internalization of objects later created a zeal for adult attachment. Pip's longing for the 'exciting object' appears in his fixation on Estella, while his fear of the 'rejecting object' surfaces in his guilt towards Joe. Therefore, the psychic division reaches a critical nexus point during Pip's first visit to Sati's House. When Estella criticized him because of his appearance, Pip's 'internalized object' finds a new, external vessel, leading him to observe his lack: 'I had never thought of being ashamed of my hands before; but I began to consider them a very indifferent pair. Her contempt for me was so strong that it became infectious, and I caught it' (Dickens, 2008, p. 62). This infection precipitates the birth of his 'internal saboteur/anti-libidinal ego', which consumes Estella's disdain as self-criticism.

Freud's oral fixation also repeatedly comes to visibility when Pip seeks reassurance, emotional attachment, and psychological caretaking from external caretakers to compensate for early neglect. This oral-incorporative drive is generated in childhood when his existence and needs are treated as 'moral transgressions'. This condition can be explained through the dinner table incident: 'I

was always treated as if I had insisted on being born, in opposition to the dictates of reason, religion, and morality, and as if I were a hardened offender in connection with the idea' (Dickens, 2008, p. 24). This vividly establishes Pip's yearning for social validation, manifested as an 'oral deficit'. He wants to fill the void by being a perfect gentleman. This dependency is a 'defensive solution' to relational instability (Horney, 1945). Pip attempts to secure the self by accepting authority as a stable source of order. This aligns with dependency's clinical conceptualization as an interpersonal strategy constructed by early reinforcement and the fear of separation from the perceived source of safety (Bornstein, 1992).

Love as psychic medication

Pip confirms 'love' as a restorative force capable of putting everything right. In Dependent Personality Disorder (DPD), relationships are continually used for the regulation of self-worth, thereby substituting relational security for self-definition. Pip's obsession with and quest for Estella acts as a cure to neutralize both his deep-seated class-based shame and existential shame. This is evident when Pip hovers around his idealized future with her, stating, 'I thought that with her I could reach the highest point of my ambitions, and that with her my life would be a much better and a much happier one than it could ever be without her' (Dickens, 2008, p. 231). This romantic fixation indicates a reliance on affect regulation via object possession, as Moynahan (1962) argued, Pip's desire for Estella is an attempt to 'appropriate' her status to conceal his own 'commonness'. This strategy confirms an 'interpersonal dependency', clinically characterized by profound emotional reliance and autonomy impairment (Hirschfeld *et al.*, 1977). Additionally, Sadoff (1982) suggested that Pip seeks an idealized yet rejecting object to heal his formative wounds, which consequently turns his love into a 'narcissistic projection'. However, Pip's love remains an 'adaptive failure'; its defensive structure ensures dependency without establishing true individuation.

Persistence of Dependency even in redemption

Pip's ethical maturation is linked to his relational needs. He cannot achieve psychic wholeness without a father figure as an object. As a result, his redemption, notified by his clandestine help for Magwitch, turns into a reorganization of dependency from idealized social patrons to humanized, reparative social attachments. This resembles modern clinical goals like turning maladaptive dependency into reality-based relatedness (Bornstein, 1992). Pip's growth is delineated by his ability to move from a submissive interpersonal strategy to an interdependent structure where self-growth is attained through authentic connection. Sadoff (1982) stated that Pip's transition from the rejecting authority of Miss Havisham to the 'maternalized' care for the dying Magwitch suggests a profound change in his internal object relations.

Institutional construction of dependency

The Victorian social order, specifically the nature of class mobility, is homologous to dependency's core mechanism. Class mobility allows individuals to change their social condition, while respectability is policed through external and internal mechanisms of shame. Thereby, this social structure influences the individual to renounce autonomous ego consolidation to seek a patron. Pip's individual agency is not the pursuit of independence but a project of securing the approving gaze of a social parent. Pip's expectations prevent him from ever achieving true adulthood. This is evident in Pip's statement, 'I was a young man in a very hopeful way, and with very bright prospects. I was not a very lucky young man, but I was a young man with a great deal of what is called, in a certain kind of society, 'good expectations' (Dickens, 2008, p. 143). Cotsell (1985) argued that Pip's identity is constructed by looking to others for life directions. Thus, his dependency is institutionalized as his identity is contingent upon external social authorities.

Submission, fear of loss, and reinforcement of relationships

Pip's relationships with Estella, Miss Havisham, Herbert Pocket, Joe, and Magwitch reflect his dependency on external objects, as in these relationships, he only thrives for external validation, leading to internal approval of each member for Pip's every action and interest. When Pip met Estella for the first time, a certain sense of desire was struck in him that soon transitioned into idealization that transformed his deep emotional helplessness into an unattainable, exciting object because of libidinal fixation on Estella. 'The beautiful young lady at Miss Havisham's... I admire her dreadfully, and I want to be a gentleman on her account' (Dickens, 2008, p.129). Estella's continuous disapproval of Pip ultimately collapsed his sense of self. Despite recognizing the futility of this attachment, Pip remains psychologically bound to Estella, admitting that he loved her 'against reason, against promise, against peace, against hope, against happiness' (Dickens, 2008, p.287). This persistent devotion is attached to the approval of the rejecting object. Estella's continuous humiliation of Pip, as exemplified by her addressing of Pip as 'boy' and pointing out his social inferiority, unsettles his self-perception.

On the other hand, Miss Havisham's constant exploitation of Pip made Pip submissive towards a rejecting object. Furthermore, Miss Havisham's coldness intrigued Pip to attain her affection in every possible way. Brooks (1992) states that Dickensian narratives habitually characterize specific characters whose motivations surface from unresolved emotional dependencies and desires for recognition within interpersonal relations.

Regarding Joe's relationship with Pip, it is quite visible that Joe is the only primary caregiver who gave Pip solace and empathy during both his childhood and adulthood, as we see in a scene where, for the first time, when Pip misbehaved with Joe, it put him in excruciating guilt

and remorse. His anxiety came from his perception of the values of a class-based society, motivating him to hover around Joe's poor social position, 'I thought how common Estella would consider Joe, a mere blacksmith: how thick his boots, and how coarse his hands' (Dickens, 2008, p.61). He wanted Joe's acceptance but rejected him socially, which replicates antilibidinal ego dynamics. Schor (1999) argued that Dickens often portrays class aspiration as connected with emotional alienation, where the pursuit of social mobility leads characters to reject authentic relationships.

Moreover, Pip's sacrifice for Magwitch expanded his fear of abandoning another attachment figure. Initially, he was repulsive towards Magwitch's criminal background. Later on, fearing abandonment, Pip developed a sense of obligation and helped Magwitch escape from the country. Thereby, he redirected his attachment to Magwitch when he became conscious of his misapprehension of Miss Havisham's guardianship and Estella's affection. This helped him to maintain relational continuity and avoid the psychological trauma of abandonment.

This repeated cycle of dependency confirms how fragile Pip's identity has become. His ambition, expectations, and aspirations are all nothing but a critical response to his lack of autonomy. According to Brooks (1992), Dickens's narrative design centers on characters whose identities are shaped through desire and recognition within interpersonal networks. Thus, his psychological trajectory is centered upon external validation. His submission to the rejecting object, attachment to the exciting object, and oral fixation to various relational states confirm Pip's lack of stable self-definition and affirm that Pip's actions are largely other-directed.

Pip's behaviors converge with the empirically studied dependency construct

Pip's behavioral pattern can somewhat be explained by empirically studied constructs of interpersonal dependency, but the difference is that it does not include a diagnosis for a fictional character; rather, it clarifies the psychological logic that Dickens portrayed in his novel. Pip continuously looks for the legitimacy of his desires, choices, and self-worth inconsequentially in the gaze of others. His decisions are made by anticipated approval or disapproval, and his compliance is surrounded by fear of desired autonomy that can lead to humiliation, rejection, and loss of attachment. In this sense, Pip's conduct converges with dependency-based research, especially emotional reliance, low social self-confidence, and impaired autonomous self-assertion (Hirschfeld *et al.*, 1977). However, this convergence is merely interpretive, focused on the identity construction of Pip.

Pip's characteristics do not only stem from being passive in action, but they are bound up with aspiration, morality, and weakness. Pip, from his childhood to adulthood, only looked for authorization. This aligns with psychological observation that dependent individuals mostly delegate responsibility for major areas of their lives to others

(Simonelli, 2017). He becomes coherent when ratified by the valued other, like Miss Havisham, Estella, Jaggers, Mr Gargery, Magwitch, or the broader social code of gentility. This leads to internal failure of self-worth, which could withstand external volatility. This Dependency eventually became a ground for Pip's structural incapacity. During Joe's awkward visit to London in Chapter 27, he tried to show control over his actions by distancing himself from Joe as a reaction to the high status aspiration. However, the purpose of showing authority over his choices becomes futile as it was not a choice he made independently, but rather an obligation demanded by the elite. A person with DPD does not have a moral compass. They look outside to look for the rules on how to act. Pip's action echoes DPD features in this context. That society he desperately wanted to be in demanded that he reject the poor (Joe) and embrace the elite (Estella).

Pip's dependency does not uniformly apply to everyone. Instead, he gets psychologically dependent on authoritative figures who remain emotionally unresponsive towards him while promising a social status. Pip believed that validation is not something to be freely received through simple care, but rather it is a reward earned.

This pattern detects dependency in proximity to shame, class desire, and superego discipline. His need for attachment is inseparable from his need for being remade, which displays an anxious-preoccupied attachment style where the self is viewed as powerless and others as all-powerful (Crawford *et al.*, 2007). As a result, dependency in *Great Expectations* (Dickens, 2008) is a mode where social hierarchy, affective injury, and moral aspiration become psychically fused.

Interpersonal Dependency Inventory specifies stable tendencies towards reliance, low confidence, and autonomy difficulty, but *Great Expectations* (Dickens, 2008) disseminates how these tendencies are historically produced and symbolically saturated. Pip's dependency is shaped by orphanhood, coercive caregiving, and Victorian culture of patronage; it is also described from within as a felt experience of inadequacy and longing. Several research works suggest that such dependency stifles the development of autonomous skills because of the presence of authoritarian or overprotective environments (Bornstein, 2012). Thus, Pip's dependency is not only moral and emotional but also social, as he seeks others to know who he is, what he is worth, and what kind of future he may claim.

Pip provides a contemporary clinical model for personality research, where Dickens demonstrates a subject whose selfhood is persistently organized around external validation, whose agency is compromised because of attachment anxiety, and whose moral life is entangled with compliance. Dickens presents dependency as an adaptive formation that, in the first phase, protects the self from abandonment, consequently obstructing the emergence of a stable, internally authorized identity (Simonelli, 2017).

Pip's dependency and relevance to modern clinical

psychology

Pip's dependent personality is significant and at the same time relevant for understanding modern clinical psychology. Contemporary psychiatric literature indicates that personality disorders collectively affect a significant portion of the general population. Studies on personality disorders estimate roughly one in ten adults displays these relevant clinical personality traits (Volkert *et al.*, 2018). Eventually, if individuals do not meet full diagnostic thresholds, dependency-related patterns, such as excessive reassurance seeking, fear of abandonment, and reliance on external validation, remain common features of maladaptive interpersonal functioning. And these subclinical tendencies later appear as underlying negative affectivity, low self-esteem, and social inhibition of an individual (Ekselius, 2018).

Pip's character offers a culturally perceptible model to comprehend the gradual development and persistence of dependency. Pip's identity and self-worth are framed by public evaluation and peer feedback as he relentlessly sought external approval over the course of the novel. This urge for external validation is similar to clinical dependency-prone personality profiles. Studies on clinical dependency explain that an unparalleled relationship between the child and primary caregiver, due to incompatible or insensitive responses from primary caregivers, instigates insecure attachment styles. Such a relational gap further distorts the identities of the growing child and causes individuals to pursue maladaptive, continuous external reassurance to compensate for unmet emotional needs (Vega Vidal, 2023).

From a clinical perspective, to have a healthy reciprocal relationship, Pip needs to identify the difference between adaptive interdependence and maladaptive dependency. It is also crucial to know how a healthy relationship naturally operates. To ensure the continuity of adaptive relationships by nature, interdependence theory states that healthy interactions are built on shared goals, mutual responsiveness, and a concern for others' welfare (Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003). However, psychological dysfunctions arise when this balance is lost.

The role of self-worth separates healthy interdependence from dependency. If a person's perceived value becomes determined by external approval instead of his internal security, then the reliance turns into a hazard. This is precisely the imbalance Pip's early experiences produced. Social shame, absent parents, and class-driven rejection molded him into a person who instinctively seeks validation from those who hold power over him.

This uneven relational trajectory echoes several essential criteria mentioned in diagnostic pathology for Dependent Personality Disorder (DPD) and specifically outlined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (APA, 2013). For instance, when an external figure offers Pip a prepackaged destiny, he instantly surrenders his personal agency, his geographic location, and his career choice. This type of behavior from Pip, to a certain extent, conveys characteristics of DPD: requiring others to

assume responsibility for most major areas of life (APA, 2013). After hearing Jaggers outline for Pip's inheritance without any questioning, he steps out of the forge and takes the identity of an unknown benefactor. Thus, the extensive deficit in autonomy extends to an inability to form independent aesthetic or social evaluations without filtering them through external approval (DSM-5 Criteria 1 & 4). When Estella mocks his external appearance, at that moment, he forgot about his self-appraisal and relied on her judgment:

'Her contempt for me was so strong that it became infectious, and I caught it.' (Dickens, 2008, p.61)

Subsequently, Pip's obedience towards Miss Havisham's manipulated behavior and the verbal abuse of Estella can be relatable to DSM-5 Criterion 3, which identifies a difficulty to disagreement because of the fear of losing support or approval (APA, 2013, p. 675).

After knowing the real benefactor's identity, Pip's psychological security structure collapses. His terror left him with the realization of his borrowed social identity, which has left him without his original emotional support system. This alienating feeling was intensified by his acknowledgement,

'But, sharpest and deepest of all, was the miserable consideration that I was separated from Joe by a wide gap, which my own worthless self-interest had made... I would not have gone back to Joe now, I would not have gone back to the forge now, all the world over.' (Dickens, 2008, p.423).

Modern clinical psychology addresses these types of dependency and provides multi-model therapeutic interventions for growing self-security. From a clinical perspective, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Schema Therapy can be applicable to target his underlying 'Incompetence/Dependence' and 'Defectiveness/Shame' schemas. The use of cognitive structuring is more dependable to challenge the core belief that he is inherently weak or 'coarse' without an elite benefactor. At the same time, Assertiveness and Independent Decision-Making Training would task him with seeking lifestyle and financial choices without seeking reassurance. Finally, because his dependency grew from early childhood emotional neglect, Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT) for Attachment Repair would process the trauma of his sister's harsh upbringing and Miss Havisham's manipulation. Thereby, this method would help him to transition from submissive compliance to secure, mutually responsive relationships.

CONCLUSION

This research paper portrays the reinterpretation of *Great Expectations* (Dickens, 1861/2008) by using the clinical perspective of dependent personality disorder. The objective is to comprehend an individual's personality development from childhood to adulthood, and the internal and external catalysts in forming dependency. This dependency results in the individual's acute need for external validation, which was molded in early relational

deprivation and nurtured by a certain hegemonic social ideological formation.

Here, the central character, Pip, and the construction of his personality are the primary subject matter. This study explicitly demonstrates the structural condition of Pip's subjectivity by combining Freudian psychosexual fixation, Fairbairn's object relations theory, and the clinical perspective of dependency. Pip's constant failures to consolidate an autonomous ego present the persistence of unresolved separation-individuation and the dominance of relational security.

Since the concept of dependency is entrenched within Victorian social architecture, this study brings out the nature of class hierarchy, moral surveillance, and ideas of gentility, which operate as symbolic caregivers and intensify psychological dependency. Thus, the Victorian bildungsroman normalizes, disciplines, and aestheticizes psychological dependency under the rhetoric of progress. Based on the clinical framework, this study extends psychoanalytic literary criticism to clinical psychology that is not centered only on guilt and superego-centric readings; instead, it illuminates the cultural production of personality structures identifiable within contemporary diagnostic schema. The qualitative and interpretive nature of this study obviates a clinical diagnosis, while its theoretical synthesis proposes a compelling model to understand literary characters' historically specific configurations of psychological vulnerability.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Funding

This research received no external funding.

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