



Love and Belonging Needs of the Main Character in The Movie "500 Days Of Summer":

Psychological Approach

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Abstract

This research aimed to describe and analyze psychological needs from the hierarchy of needs proposed by Abraham Maslow of the main character in the movie "500 days of Summer". This research is descriptive qualitative and the original data from the movie "500 days of Summer" by Scott Neustadter and Michael H. Weber, published in 2009. The researcher used non-participatory observation as a method of collecting data. Moreover, categorization was used to analyze data. The researcher found data on the hierarchy of needs of the main character. The researcher found the data divided into three aspects love and belonging needs, 41 data from intimacy, 35 data from friendship, and that there were no scenes in which the main character interacted with his or her parents, siblings, or biological relatives. Based on the conclusion, the hierarchy of needs was unsatisfied love and belongingness, and the researcher found 76 data of unsatisfied love and belonging needs.

Keywords: Abraham Maslow; Hierarchy of needs; 500 days of Summer

Introduction

According to Thalberg & Maslow, (1964), Psychology is founded on the experiences of individuals who have had negative encounters with their unsatisfied desires. The critical approach to literature investigates the relationship between particular works and society and culture. Discovering the critical perspective will assist the researcher in seeing literary works as multi-layered compressions of meaning. The author's works allow us to comprehend the psychological condition of the writer's film. Everyone wants to meet their life's requirements effectively. The

term 'need' defines a scenario in which an individual desire something. There are many topics of interest in studying psychology and literature about people. Psychology is concerned with actual conditions, whereas literature is concerned with human expectations. By evaluating the author's work, individuals can gain insight into the author's psychological state and the problem or condition of the main character.

Additionally, the researcher discovered that one of the stories addresses unfulfilled love and a sense of belonging. This tale is from the Leo Tolstoy film *Anna Karenina* (2012). The film depicts the lives of Anna and Alexei Karenin. Anna Karenina eventually felt love and belongingness in someone she had just met, Count Vronsky, a military man who managed to capture Anna Karenina's heart. The trouble had begun because of unfulfilled love and belongingness. They were involved in a covert romance, which Alexei eventually discovered. Anna Karenina persevered, though, in maintaining her friendship with Vronsky. They tied the knot and had a daughter. Anna thought that, as time passed, Vronsky's affection for her diminished in comparison to when they initially met. It was when Anna believed Vronsky no longer loved her, leading to self-destruction and frustration. Anna Karenina committed suicide in the end.

Pastorino & Portoillo, (2006), instead of internal or external influences, the humanistic psychology approach stresses free will in personality, personal choice, and personality configuration. In the literature, the researcher employs a humanistic psychology method, according to this publication. Abraham Maslow was a well-known psychologist who made substantial contributions to the evolution and development of human psychology. Abraham Maslow demonstrated this by analyzing contemporary human aspirations and motivations. Therefore, Abraham Maslow is one of the most well-known researchers of the humanistic cause in modern society.

The researcher utilized the hierarchy of needs to evaluate the psychology of human needs in *500 Days of Summer's* main character. Abraham Maslow is the psychologist who categorized the psychology of human needs into five levels of hierarchy, with individuals needing to meet each level from the first to the fifth in order to achieve life satisfaction. There are physical and psychological requirements for human survival. Psychological requirements include safety, enjoyment, attention, affection, and self-esteem. Physical needs include food, drink, shelter, clothes, air, and water.

Consequently, people must satisfy both bodily and psychological needs to exist and continue living. Nonetheless, this phenomenon may also be observed in literary works. According to Pastorino & Portoillo, (2006), psychology is the study of human mental activity and the comprehension of the human mind, making it a discipline well-suited for assessing the personality of literary characters. The researcher is interested in investigating the film "*500 Days of Summer*" to identify the psychology

of the film's main character.

The hierarchy of needs by Maslow's theory has regulated human conditions in the scale form. According to Hjelle & Zielger (1976), As soon as people are pleased with their current needs, new desires arise, and they must fulfill themselves again. Long-term denial and neglect motivate individuals to satisfy their needs. They also get more driven as time passes without their needs being addressed. McLeod, (2020). According to Hjelle & Zielger (1976), It is a characteristic of the human condition to want something continually. Humans have a tendency to satisfy their needs. Therefore, any criterion may be met if the preceding levels have been mostly met. Human needs are arranged in tiers, beginning with the most fundamental and progressing to the more complex ones. Human requirements are categorized into five levels:

1. Physiological needs

Stoyanov, (2017) says that needs start the first step of motivation, called physiological drives, which talks about homeostasis, finding what tastes good or the food they like. The first level consists of physiological needs: The first lower need in the id-driven Maslow hierarchy is the physiological need. This urge is an effective indicator of bodily existence. Food, water, oxygen, activity, rest, temperature regulation, sex, and stimulant sensory are examples of physiological demands. Physiological needs are essential for life and include oxygen, exercise, rest, temperature regulation, sex, and stimulation. These fundamental human requirements include food and drink, sufficient rest, clothes and shelter, general health, and reproduction. Feist & Feist, (2006) Maslow believes that these basic physiological needs must have met before humans reach the next level of fulfilment.

2. Safety needs

Safety requirements are a secondary concern. Safety criteria include avoiding violence and theft, maintaining mental stability and well-being, protecting one's health and safety, and protecting one's finances. A replacement set may categorize safety requirements when physiological needs are mainly addressed. Stoyanov, (2017) states that physiological and safety needs are basic human needs to protect life. Security requirements include physical security, stability, dependence, protection, and freedom. However, law, order, and structure are also security needs.

3. Love and belongingness

Maslow's third stage involves social interaction. They want friends and family. Each biological relationship (parents, siblings, and offspring) determined their circle of kin (spouses and partners). Physical and emotional closeness, from sexual to emotional bonding, is key to kinship. A social club adds to this requirement, from belonging to a group of employees to developing an identity in an organization, club, or hobbyist institution. They desire to give and receive love and have close

relationships. These wants include belonging and affection (from family), fantastic friends, neighbors, and soulmates. Maslow's concept of belonging combines the competing needs to give and receive affection. According to Hasol, (2019), showing love is seeking to prevent feeling empty by trying to understand and accept the choices made by other people. The aches of loneliness and rejection may be alleviated by being loved and accepted. The requirements of love and belonging needs may be acquired through three different scopes, according to Maslow's classification of love and belonging needs hierarchy. These scopes are one's circle of family, friendships, and intimate relationships.

4. Self-esteem

Esteem is the fourth need, which follows self-respect and respect. Self-esteem (the belief that one is worthwhile and deserving of dignity) and self-esteem (confidence in one's development potential and personal performance) are the fundamental components of respect. Self-esteem requirements are the typical human need to be liked and appreciated by others. People must commit to acknowledge and carry out events or acts in exchange for a gift. A feeling of dedication, of being respected and welcomed. Feelings of self-worth and others shape self-esteem through status, recognition, pride, self-respect, and social achievement. Maslow underlined that there are two sorts of self-esteem: regard based on respect and appreciation for others and self-respect. The culmination of self-respect. After achieving the fourth level, people go to the last level of the pyramid: self-actualization.

5. Self-actualization

Self-actualization is the fulfillment of a person's full potential. Self-actualization is the peak of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Self-actualization needs include education, skill development, and skills in music, athletics, design, cooking, gardening, and caring for others, as well as bigger aspirations such as learning a new language, traveling to new places, and receiving recognition. Maslow brilliantly stated these demands in the following sentences: who is an average person? A dancer must dance, a musician must produce music, an artist must paint, and a poet must compose. After satisfying their fundamental demands for scarcity, individuals will have this mild and enduring need to enhance their potential. They are considered the ultimate objective of human requirements.

Different academics have written two journal publications on the hierarchy of needs. The first journal publication on Maslow's hierarchy of needs was from Farlina & Khaleda, (2019). This study uses qualitative approaches and descriptive analysis to examine the desire for love and belonging. This investigation aims to determine that Rachel Watson is the protagonist of the girl on the train and that she seeks to fulfill her desires for love and belongingness by riding the train every day. In addition to the protagonist's membership requirements, according to Abraham

Maslow's notion of the "hierarchy of needs." This study demonstrates that Rachel Watson is the protagonist, with significant traits like wit, drunkenness, and lying. These obligations compelled Rachel to murder her ex-husband.

Nonetheless, she satisfied her desire for affection and belonging and attempted to attract her ex-husband, Tom Watson, and Scott Shipwell, before catching the train daily. Finally, Rachel recognized that neither her ex-husband nor her friends could provide her with affection and a feeling of belonging. Katie, her companion, adored her. Rachel fulfilled her needs via the third level of Maslow's hierarchy: the desire for love and belonging.

In addition, another study was conducted by Pangastuti & Murtiningrum, (2021). The idea of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs was explored in the study of the movie "500 Days of Summer." The study was centered on analyzing Summer Finn, the primary character in the story, and her hierarchy of requirements. The researcher used a qualitative approach, and the data collection process consisted of reading the screenplay and seeing the film. This study confirmed Abraham Maslow's idea that there is a hierarchy of wants in character by locating them in a specific order. The researcher demonstrates, by their findings in this study, that the character Summer Finn has already satisfied all of the levels of demands in the hierarchy of needs, beginning with the first level and going all the way up to the fifth level.

There are variances and parallels between the prior research and the current study. The first study used a book as its object and evaluated the main character to determine the need for love and belongingness, but this study utilized a film as its object and investigated the main character to determine the need for self-esteem, according to Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. Using qualitative and descriptive analysis to collect data was comparable to the first study. The second study used the same Abraham Maslow hypothesis. The researcher also used the same film, "500 Days of Summer." This study also used qualitative methods to collect data. However, the second study analyzed the woman's character hierarchy of requirements, but this study analyzed the man's character hierarchy of needs and found the consequence of being unsatisfied with self-esteem needs.

Method

The investigation uses a qualitative research strategy to analyze the data and explain and describe the findings thoroughly. The qualitative research method is more natural and results in descriptive data that may be written, spoken, or produced in various formats. According to Sugiyono, (2012), Qualitative research is distinguished by its naturalistic environment and direct data collection from the subject of study. The character is the object's essential tool for the researcher. Qualitative research is already descriptive in and of itself. In qualitative research, data are gathered primarily in the form of words, as opposed to numbers. Qualitative research focuses on the process, not the findings or products. Additionally, qualitative research assesses earlier data and analyzes it inductively until the meaning is saturated. That is the qualitative method used in this study.

Results and discussions

Tom Hansen is the most prominent character in *500 Days of Summer* and propels the plot forward. Tom Hansen is the central character since the film focuses on his life and perspective. Tom first recognized love when he met Summer. However, Summer did not believe in relationships and just let things be. Tom and Summer transcended the status of mere friends due to their relationship's difficulties. In this discussion, the researcher discovered dialogues, including the reasons for unmet requirements. Tom Hansen's unsatisfied needs may be attributed to the following quote.

1.1 Love and belongingness

Data 1

Tom: I don't know, man. This is official. I'm in love with Summer. I love her smile, and I love her hair, I love her knees, I love the heart-shaped birthmark she has on her neck, I love the way she sometimes licks her lips before she talks, I love the sounds of her laugh, I love the way she looks when she is sleeping, I love how I hear this song every time I think of her, I love how she makes me feel like anything is possible or like, I don't know like life is worth.

Paul: this is not good. (13:38-14:19)

This scenario demonstrates that Tom is too fond of summer. However, Paul is aware that Summer views their connection as only platonic, so when Summer eventually leaves Tom's life, he will experience regret. In addition, this is one of the instances in the dialogue that will lead to self-destruction due to unmet demands for love and belonging. Moreover, Paul cares for Tom as a friend, which demonstrates that Tom's friendship in love and belongingness is satisfied since his friends constantly care for him. According to Hasol, (2019), who has so many close friends and is cherished is able to withstand hostility and rejection.

Data 2

Tom: she likes Magritte and Hopper, and we talked about banana fish for like 20 minutes. We are so compatible. It is insane. She is well, she is not like I thought at all, and she is amazing.

Rachel: oh, boy

Tom: what?

Rachel: just cause some cute girl likes the same bizarro crap you do, that does not make her your soul mate, Tom

Tom: what do you mean? (14:24-14:45)

In her initial discussion with Summer, Rachel expresses her desire that Tom's words not be taken too seriously, since her best friend's shattered

heart is driving her insane at the time. However, this is one of the events in the film that would cause Tom Hansen to get disappointed in love and believe he has a blogging partner. In this moment, Rachel explains to him that Summer's loving the exact item as Tom does not necessarily indicate that she loves him.

Data 3

Summer: hey I just want to tell you that, um, I'm not really looking for anything serious is that ok?

Tom: yeah

Summer: cause some people kind of freak out when they hear that

Tom: no, not me

Summer: you sure?

Tom: Yeah, like casual, right? Take it slow

Summer: right, no pressure

(29:39-30:21)

Summer first indicated that they do not need to take their relationship seriously about this matter. It indicates that there is no link in the relationship. She says it is only a casual acquaintance, so she does not place affection and belongingness. However, Tom finds it acceptable. When the time comes, Summer will experience affection and a sense of belonging since Tom already has a crush on her. This is true so long as she has the opportunity to get closer to Summer regularly. Summer was aware that this is not the typical way for people to see a relationship, therefore, she said that some people stress out when they hear her affirm it. However, she now finds a guy who can follow her lead.

Data 4

In this scene, Tom is talking to himself through a mirror.

Tom: Ok, settle. She is just a girl, just a girl, she wants to keep it casual which is why she is in my bed right now but that's casual. That's what casual people do. That is fine, that is great.

(31:01-31:18)

This dialogue is the individual talking to himself in the previous chat. It occurred as Summer was lying in her bed just before they engaged in sexual activity together. Despite this, Tom was taken aback when Summer said that they were only friends, and he promptly left the room to use the toilet. Even though she was in her bed, he knew that what she meant by the words she said did not mean that Summer loved him. He also knew that this was not her first time doing this because she wanted to keep it casual, which is based on the theory of Maslow's Hierarchy of needs. He knew that even though she was in her bed, what she meant by the words

she said did not mean that Summer loved him. Because sex is on the first level of the hierarchy and love is on the third level, the fact that someone has met their first level, which is the sex level, on the hierarchy of needs does not imply that they have met their third level, which is the love level on the hierarchy of needs. According to the findings, this is one of the indications that a person's desire for love is not being met.

Data 5

McKenzie: so, did you get her back yet, or what?

Tom: working on it

McKenzie: Hey, maybe you should write a book

Tom: What?

McKenzie: well, you know, Herry Miller said the best way to get over a woman is to turn her into literature (33:46-34:04)

The conversation demonstrates that Tom no longer has her in his life. When Summer finally gets in touch with Tom again after some time has passed, you'll see Tom acting cheerful; this is the moment when he displays his sadness. Because Tom's life is dependent on Summer at this point, the rapidity with which she alters Tom's feelings poses a potential risk to Tom's safety. This particular instance demonstrates that Summer is the root of Tom's misery.

Data 7

Tom: So, what should I do?

Rachel: you should ask her

Tom: (exhale)

Rachel: what?

Tom: Well, why rock the boat is what I'm thinking I mean, things are going well, you start putting labels on it. That is like the kiss of death. It's like saying I love you.

Rachel: yeah, I know what you mean. That's what happened between me and Sean.

Tom: who the hell is Sean?

Rachel: my boyfriend before Mark

Tom: never mind, so, what you are saying?

Rachel: I'm saying you do want to ask her. Obviously, you are just afraid you will get an answer you don't want, which will shatter all the illusions of how great these past few months have been. Now look, if you were me, I would find out now before you show up at her place and, well, she is in bed with Lars from Norway

Tom: Who is Lars from Norway?

Rachel: just some guy she met at the gym with Brad Pitt's face and Jesus abs (at this moment, unfortunately, Rachel get called by her coach, and

she must get into the football field)

Tom: wait, we are not done yet

Rachel: Look, it's easy, Tom, don't be stupid

(41:24-42:21)

Tom expresses his frustration at what he has gone through with Summer during their conversation. In addition to this, Tom does not want there to be a rift in their connection with Summer. despite the fact that Tom is not certain that all she has done to him is because Summer loves him, Summer has been exceedingly affectionate toward him. Rachel was reliable in every other respect, despite this one flaw. This is essential information in the event that Tom chooses to stay with her despite the lack of status or to maintain the status despite the danger. It's possible that she may escape his life. It is clear to all of us today that Tom never really appreciated his life until he met Summer.

Data 08

In this scene, Tom and Summer are on their way to the movie theater

(Tom is daydreaming and exhaling while he is driving)

Summer: you ok?

Tom: yeah

Summer: you sure?

Tom: Summer, I have got to ask you something.

Summer: what?

Tom: What are we umm... what are we doing?

Summer: I thought, we are going to the movies

Tom: yeah, no, I mean, like, what are we like, what is going on here, with us?

Summer: I don't know, who cares? I'm happy, aren't you happy?

Tom: yeah

Summer: good

(42:41-43:14)

Now that he is in a relationship with Summer, Tom never stops feeling awkward about the situation and continually doubts everything. The relationship is not progressing as smoothly as it did in the beginning. Everything shifts when Tom realizes that his desire for love and belongingness is not being met, and this realization causes him to alter.

Data 9

Tom: hey, what's the matter?

Summer: I just can't believe you

Tom: you can't believe me?

Summer: you are so completely, completely uncool in there

Tom: wait, are you mad at me? I just get my ass kicked for you

Summer: oh really? Was that for my benefit?

Tom: yes, it was

Summer: ok, well, next time don't, because I don't need your help you know what? I'm really tired, can we talk about this tomorrow?

(45:42-46:12)

Tom's attempts to shield Summer from an unknown patron who is interested in approving her presence at the pub are met with disapproval from Summer. The first time they argue, it's because they have opposing points of view about the situation. The fact that Summer has a character that suggests no one should help her with her problem and that she should be allowed to solve it on her own is, however, a trigger that causes Tom to believe that he is not a man who can help her, that Tom is not the man she loves, and that he is not the relationship he desired. Tom believes this because Summer has a character that suggests no one should help her with her problem and that she should be allowed to solve it on her own.

Data 10

Tom: no, you know what? I'm not going anywhere till you tell me what is going on

Summer: nothing is going on, we are just...

Tom: what? We are just what?

Summer: we are just friends

Tom: no! Don't pull that with me! Don't even try to. This is not how treat your friend, kissing in the copy room? Holding hands in the IKEA? Shower sex? Come on...!

Summer: I like you, Tom, I just don't want a relationship

Tom: well, you are not the only one that gets a say in this! (Talk loud) I do too!, and I say we are a couple, goddamn it!

(46:26-47:11)

The point at which Tom questions everything that he has previously questioned. When he has the opinion that this partnership functions without love, he expresses it in a manner that is both loud and impolite. Tom is unable to comprehend Summer's attitude on relationships, which is that they should not be taken too seriously by either party. This causes Tom to feel upset. However, Tom requires a confession that he is the priority in order to demonstrate love and belongingness. When his needs are not satisfied, Tom becomes frustrated and begins to believe that Summer does not even love him and that Tom does not belong to Summer. Tom also believes that he does not belong to Summer.

Data 11

Manager: has something happened to you recently?

Tom: What do you mean?

Manager: a death in the family, someone is taken ill, anything like that?

Tom: No

Manager: look, I don't mean to pry but does this something to do with Summer leaving?

Tom: who?

Manager: my assistant, Tom, everyone knows, never mind, the reason I'm asking is likely your work performance has been a little off

The moment that demonstrates the influence that it has on one's life when their basic needs of love and belongingness are met. Tom received a phone call from the manager who informed him that his performance had declined. Tom overreacted, spoke in a loud and rude manner, and then made a poor choice because he started overthinking that his manager hated him because the manager knew and understood that Tom was suffering from a broken heart. The manager wanted to offer some advice to Tom but Tom acted out, spoke in a loud and rude manner, and then made the poor choice. At some point, he reveals that he intends to quit from his position.

Conclusion

Based on the examination of the collected data. Using Abraham Maslow's psychological hierarchy of wants, the researcher uncovered some evidence about love and belongingness. The researcher analyzes the film 500 Days of Summer's main character. (2009). Love and belonging are associated with the main character in the film "Tom Hansen." Tom worked so hard to satisfy his desire for affection and connection. The researcher deduced from the data that Tom Hansen desired the third level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Tom tried to fulfil the love and belonging needs and approached Summer, the new employee in the company where they work together. The way Tom tries to approach Summer, who does not believe in relationships, means too profoundly. It shows that their character and needs are different, and their characters are opposite. In the hierarchy of needs theory. Love and belonging need to be divided into parenting, friendship, and intimacy. The researcher found the data that Tom does not fulfil the love and belonging needs of his parents because no scene shows that his parents were involved in Tom's life in the movie, but besides that, Tom has so many deep friends, and all his friends always help Tom in every bad situations even in his sorrow moment and broken heart with Summer. Tom Hansen's life is tough to get to the third level of the hierarchy of needs. Moreover, until the end, Tom Hansen still tries to fulfil the love and belonging needs of the new girl he met. Furthermore, the last intimacy is the focus of this research.

In order to solve the psychological conundrum that can be seen in this film, the researcher suggested that future researchers who are interested in analyzing the same item study could utilize a different theory and point of view to do so. Because

the researcher discovered some more things that can be found in the characters or anything in this movie, and because the researcher uncovered these things. Everyone is interested in psychology since this object is so interesting to use.

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