

ABSTRACT

This study examines how patriarchal structures are constructed within a marriage and how a wife's resistance against them unfolds and affects that relationship. The study addresses four problems: the forms of patriarchal structures present, the ways patriarchy is subverted, the reasons behind this subversion, and its effects on the marriage. This study uses a feminist literary criticism approach, combining close reading with Simone de Beauvoir's concepts of immanence, transcendence, and the Other from *The Second Sex*. The findings show that patriarchal control operates through marriage as an institution, through gender role expectations such as the demand to perform an idealized femininity, and through social scrutiny that judges a wife's conformity. The wife resists not through open confrontation but through manipulation, strategic victimhood, and a reversal of suspicion onto her husband, driven by his infidelity, her progressive loss of autonomy, and accumulated resentment. This resistance succeeds in dismantling her husband's patriarchal privilege, yet it does not produce genuine liberation; it replaces one structure of domination with another, sustained through fear and coercion. The study concludes that resistance built on domination rather than mutual recognition cannot escape the patriarchal logic it sets out to challenge.

Keywords: patriarchy, feminist literary criticism, subversion, marriage, gender performance, power dynamics