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Wired Hearts And Silent Bodies: A Comparative Study Of Emotion, Control, And Resistance In A Technological World

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Abstract

This study examines the emotional and psychological representations of female characters in selected global literary texts and films, with a comparative focus on human women and artificial female figures. Drawing on feminist theory, posthumanism, affect theory, and trauma studies, the research analyzes how emotions function as central tools in constructing gendered identity, agency, and subjectivity. Through close reading and discourse analysis of works such as Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), Buchi Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood* (1979), Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions* (2008), Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968), and films including *Black Swan* (2010), *Frida* (2002), *Ghost in the Shell* (1995), and *Ex Machina* (2014), the study explores how emotional depth shapes autonomy and resistance in human female characters, and how emotional simulation complicates identity in artificial beings.

The findings suggest that emotional representation is not merely a personal trait but a cultural and political construct that influences societal perceptions of femininity. While many narratives reinforce traditional stereotypes of women as nurturing, vulnerable, or emotionally excessive, others present emotional self-awareness and psychological resilience as forms of empowerment. The analysis of artificial femininity reveals that programmed emotions often reproduce gender norms, yet these figures also challenge the human machine divide by asserting agency. By integrating literary analysis with discussions of emotional artificial intelligence, the study contributes to ongoing debates in gender and technology studies and highlights the need to critically examine how emotion continues to define identity in an increasingly technologized world.

Keywords: emotional representation, gender identity, posthumanism, artificial intelligence, feminist theory, affect theory.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Context

Emotional and psychological representations of female characters in global literature and media have played an important role in shaping ideas about womanhood. Across novels, films, and digital narratives, women are often portrayed through their emotional lives. Emotions such as love, care, anger, sacrifice, and vulnerability are frequently linked with femininity. Feminist scholars have argued that emotions are not merely personal feelings but are shaped by social and cultural forces. For example, Sara Ahmed explains that emotions circulate within society and help construct collective identities (Ahmed 2004). This means that the way female characters express emotions in literature and media contributes to how society understands what it means to be a woman.

The significance of emotions in constructing gendered identities is central to feminist theory. Emotions are often used to define women as nurturing, empathetic, and emotionally expressive, while men are portrayed as rational and emotionally controlled. This division reinforces traditional gender roles. Ahmed argues that emotions “stick” to bodies and shape how individuals are perceived in social spaces (Ahmed 2004). Similarly, Judith Butler states that gender identity is not natural but performed through repeated acts shaped by social expectations (Butler 1990). Emotional expression becomes one of these repeated acts through which femininity is constructed and maintained.

At the same time, contemporary literature and media have introduced non-human female figures such as robots, cyborgs, and artificial intelligences. The human and robot divide is evolving in the age of advanced technology. Donna Haraway’s concept of the cyborg challenges the strict boundary between human and machine and questions fixed ideas of gender and identity (Haraway 1985). Female robots are often designed to simulate emotions, which raises important questions about authenticity, agency, and embodiment. The comparison between human female characters and female robots allows us to examine how emotional depth and psychological complexity are distributed differently across human and non-human representations.

1.2 Research Problem

The central research problem of this study is to examine how emotional portrayals shape identity, agency, and relationships in representations of both human and non-human female characters. Emotional expression often determines whether a character is seen as strong or weak, independent or dependent. If a female character is portrayed as overly emotional, she may be perceived as lacking rationality or authority. On the other hand, when female robots are programmed to display controlled or artificial emotions, they may be seen as efficient but lacking genuine subjectivity.

There are significant differences between human and non-human female representations. Human female characters are often associated with emotional labour, care work, and relational identity. In contrast, female robots are frequently portrayed as objects of desire, tools of service, or technological companions. N. Katherine Hayles argues that in the posthuman condition, boundaries between human and machine are redefined, but power structures still influence representation (Hayles 1999). This suggests that even technologically advanced female figures may reproduce traditional gender stereotypes. The research problem therefore lies in understanding how emotional and psychological portrayals contribute to or challenge these patterns.

1.3 Research Questions and Objectives

This study is guided by the following research questions. First, how are emotions gendered in literary and media narratives. Feminist theory suggests that emotions are culturally coded as feminine or masculine. The objective here is to analyze how narratives assign specific emotional traits to female characters and how these assignments shape their roles within the story.

Second, how do psychological portrayals affect agency and subjectivity. Agency refers to a character’s ability to make choices and act independently. If a female character’s psychological state is presented as unstable or dependent, her agency may be limited. Butler argues that subjectivity

is shaped within social norms that regulate identity (Butler 1990). This study aims to explore whether emotional depth strengthens or weakens a character's autonomy.

Third, how do these representations influence societal perceptions of femininity. Literature and media do not exist in isolation. They reflect and shape public attitudes. Ahmed notes that emotions align individuals with collective values and social structures (Ahmed 2004). By examining emotional and psychological portrayals, this research seeks to understand how cultural narratives contribute to broader ideas about femininity, technology, and identity in contemporary society.

Overall, the objective of this study is to provide a comparative analysis of emotional and psychological representations of human female characters and female robots. By using feminist and posthuman theoretical frameworks, this research aims to reveal how emotions function as a powerful tool in constructing gendered identities across global literature and media.

2. Literature Review

Understanding how gender, emotion, and identity are represented in literature and media has been a central concern of feminist scholarship for several decades. Early feminist critics focused on how women's bodies were framed visually, but later scholars expanded this discussion to include emotional life, psychological depth, and technological embodiment. These developments help us understand how female characters, both human and non-human, are shaped by cultural expectations about emotion and subjectivity.

One of the foundational texts in feminist media studies is Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (1975). In this essay, Mulvey argues that mainstream cinema positions women as objects of visual pleasure for a male viewer. Although her focus was on the gaze, her work opened the way for later scholars to ask how emotions and interiority are also structured by gender. Around the same time, Arlie Russell Hochschild's *The Managed Heart* (1983) introduced the concept of emotional labor. Hochschild explains that women are often expected to manage their own feelings and the feelings of others in both private and professional spaces. This idea became influential in literary and cultural studies because female characters are frequently portrayed as emotional caregivers.

In the mid 1980s, feminist theory began to engage more directly with technology. Donna Haraway's "A Cyborg Manifesto" (1985) reimagined the female figure as a cyborg, a hybrid of human and machine. Haraway argues that the cyborg challenges fixed categories of gender and identity. Her work is important for understanding how female robots and artificial intelligences complicate traditional ideas of femininity. Around the same period, Linda Williams in *Hard Core: Power, Pleasure, and the "Frenzy of the Visible"* (1989) analysed how visual culture frames women's bodies in relation to power and desire.

The year 1990 marked a major turning point in feminist theory. Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990) introduced the concept of gender performativity. Butler argues that gender is not something one is born with but something that is repeatedly performed through acts, gestures, and expressions. Emotional expression is part of this performance. When female characters are shown as nurturing, emotional, or vulnerable, they are performing culturally accepted forms of femininity. In the same year, Sandra Bartky's *Femininity and Domination* (1990) examined how social norms discipline women's bodies and behaviors, including emotional conduct.

The early 1990s also saw an expansion of work on the body and psychological representation. Barbara Creed's *The Monstrous Feminine* (1993) explored how horror cinema often links female bodies with fear and danger. Susan Bordo's *Unbearable Weight* (1993) examined how cultural pressures about beauty and thinness shape women's identities and self-perceptions. Elizabeth Grosz's *Volatile Bodies* (1994) argued that the body is not passive but active and dynamic in shaping identity. These works collectively show that emotion, body, and identity are closely connected.

In the mid 1990s, feminist and posthumanist thought began to merge. Judith Halberstam and Ira Livingston's edited volume *Posthuman Bodies* (1995) examined how technology, race, and gender reshape the idea of the body. Anne Balsamo's *Technologies of the Gendered Body* (1996) explored how emerging technologies transform women's experiences of embodiment. Rosalind Picard's *Affective Computing* (1997) introduced the idea that machines can recognize and simulate human emotions. This development is significant because many emotional AI systems are designed with feminine voices and personalities, which can reproduce gender stereotypes.

N. Katherine Hayles' *How We Became Posthuman* (1999) argued that even in digital contexts the body remains central to identity. Hayles warns against separating the mind from the body in discussions of artificial intelligence. Her work is important for understanding the difference between emotional authenticity in human characters and emotional simulation in artificial ones.

In the early 2000s, Margrit Shildrick's *Embodying the Monster* (2002) explored how non normative and hybrid bodies challenge traditional ideas of wholeness and femininity. Sherryll Vint's *Bodies of Tomorrow* (2007) analysed how science fiction represents technological futures and reimagines gendered embodiment. These works are especially useful for studying female cyborgs and artificial women in literature and film.

The 2010s brought renewed attention to posthuman identity and technological ethics. Sherry Turkle's *Alone Together* (2011) examined how people form emotional bonds with machines that only simulate feeling. Rosi Braidotti's *The Posthuman* (2013) argued that we must rethink what it means to be human in an age of biotechnology and artificial intelligence. Pramod K. Nayar's *Posthumanism* (2014) provided an accessible introduction to how digital culture reshapes identity and embodiment. Helen Hester's *Xenofeminism* (2018) encouraged feminists to use technology as a tool for social transformation rather than reject it.

Recent scholarship has also focused on gender bias in artificial intelligence systems. Joy Buolamwini and Timnit Gebru's article "Gender Shades" (2018) demonstrated that commercial facial analysis systems perform poorly on darker skinned women compared to lighter skinned men. This study showed that technological systems can reproduce existing social inequalities. Research such as Sainz de Baranda Andújar et al.'s "Gender Biases in the Training Methods of Affective Computing" (2022) further highlights how emotion recognition systems may encode gendered assumptions. More recent interdisciplinary studies such as Miranda Calero et al.'s "WEMAC: Women and Emotion Multi modal Affective Corpus" (2024) attempt to address representational gaps in emotional datasets.

Overall, from Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (1975) to contemporary studies on emotional AI in the 2020s, feminist and posthuman scholarship has consistently shown that emotion, body, and technology are deeply connected. Emotional representation is never neutral. It shapes how female characters are understood in terms of agency, vulnerability, and authority. By bringing together feminist theory, psychological frameworks, and research on affective computing, this body of work provides a strong foundation for examining the differences between human and non-human female representations in global literature and media.

3. Methodology

This study follows a qualitative and comparative research design based on close textual and media analysis. The selected corpus includes global literary works such as Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), Buchi Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood* (1979), Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions* (2008), and Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968). It also includes films such as *Black Swan* (2010), directed by Darren Aronofsky, *Frida* (2002), directed by Julie Taymor, *Ghost in the Shell* (1995), directed by Mamoru Oshii, and *Ex Machina* (2014), directed by Alex Garland. These texts and films are selected because they foreground emotional intensity, psychological complexity, and questions of embodiment. The comparative

framework allows the study to examine differences between human female characters and artificial female figures, especially in relation to emotion and agency.

The theoretical framework combines feminist theory, posthumanism, affect theory, and intersectional analysis. Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990) supports the understanding that gender is performed through repeated acts, including emotional expression. Sara Ahmed in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2004) argues that emotions are shaped by cultural and political forces and attach to specific bodies. Donna Haraway's "A Cyborg Manifesto" (1985) provides a conceptual foundation for examining artificial female figures such as the android in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968) and Ava in *Ex Machina* (2014). N. Katherine Hayles in *How We Became Posthuman* (1999) emphasizes that identity in technological contexts remains connected to embodiment, which is crucial for analyzing the emotional authenticity of human and non-human female characters.

The methods of analysis include close reading, discourse analysis, and structured comparison. Close reading is used to examine narrative voice, imagery, symbolism, and representations of trauma and desire in works such as *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) and *The Joys of Motherhood* (1979). Discourse analysis is applied to films such as *Black Swan* (2010), *Frida* (2002), and *Ghost in the Shell* (1995) to study how camera angles, dialogue, and visual framing construct femininity and psychological depth. Finally, a comparative framework evaluates how emotional expression, mental instability, resilience, and artificial simulation are distributed across human and robotic figures. This integrated methodology makes it possible to examine how emotional representation shapes identity and influences cultural understandings of femininity in both literary and technological narratives.

4. Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Emotional Construction of Gendered Identity

Emotion plays a central role in shaping gendered identity across the selected literary texts and films. Feminist scholars have long argued that women are culturally associated with emotional expressiveness, care, sacrifice, and vulnerability. These emotional traits are often presented not as individual characteristics but as defining features of femininity itself. Sara Ahmed explains in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2004) that emotions circulate within social systems and attach themselves to certain bodies. In many narratives, emotions such as fear, love, guilt, and devotion are attached to female characters in ways that define their social roles and moral worth.

In Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), the protagonist Offred lives in a dystopian regime that strictly controls female bodies and emotions. The state regulates not only reproduction but also emotional expression. Offred must suppress anger and desire in order to survive. Her inner monologue, however, reveals fear, longing, irony, and quiet resistance. These emotions shape her identity. She is forced to perform obedience, but internally she preserves memory and desire. Judith Butler's argument in *Gender Trouble* (1990) that gender is produced through repeated acts helps explain Offred's situation. Offred must repeatedly perform submission. Yet her private emotional life disrupts that performance. Emotion becomes both a tool of oppression and a form of resistance.

Similarly, Buchi Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood* (1979) presents Nnu Ego as emotionally defined by her role as a mother. Her identity is shaped by sacrifice and devotion to her children. Society measures her value through her ability to nurture and endure hardship. Arlie Russell Hochschild's concept of emotional labor in *The Managed Heart* (1983) is relevant here. Nnu Ego must constantly manage her feelings to fulfill expectations of motherhood. Her suffering is normalized as a natural part of womanhood. The title itself is ironic, suggesting that motherhood is presented as joy, while the narrative exposes emotional exhaustion and unrecognized labor. Emotional coding in this text reinforces a traditional stereotype of feminine sacrifice, yet it also reveals the cost of such expectations.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions* (2008) offers a revision of epic mythology from Draupadi's perspective. Unlike traditional retellings that silence her interiority, this novel foregrounds her emotional and intellectual voice. Draupadi expresses anger, jealousy, ambition, and desire. She questions the injustice of her treatment and reflects on the limitations placed on her. This expanded emotional range challenges the stereotype of passive femininity. Ahmed's idea that emotions align bodies with social norms is useful here. Draupadi's anger does not simply mark her as irrational. It becomes a sign of political awareness. Emotional expression thus becomes empowering rather than limiting.

In cinema, emotional construction is also central to gendered identity. In *Black Swan* (2010), directed by Darren Aronofsky, Nina is defined by emotional intensity and psychological fragility. Her identity is built around perfection, obedience, and suppressed desire. The film associates femininity with bodily discipline and emotional instability. Nina's emotional breakdown reflects the pressure of idealized beauty and purity. Butler's theory of performativity in *Gender Trouble* (1990) helps interpret Nina's experience. She performs the role of the perfect ballerina and the innocent woman. This performance demands emotional repression. When she attempts to access darker emotions, her identity fragments. The film suggests that rigid gender ideals can lead to psychological collapse.

In contrast, *Frida* (2002), directed by Julie Taymor, portrays emotional intensity as creative strength. Frida Kahlo's pain, passion, and political commitment are central to her identity as an artist. Her emotional life is not presented as weakness. It becomes a source of artistic expression and personal agency. Trauma shapes her body and mind, but it does not erase her voice. Through this representation, emotional depth becomes empowering rather than limiting.

Across these texts and films, emotional coding shapes female identity in complex ways. In some cases, emotions reinforce stereotypes of vulnerability and sacrifice. In others, emotions become tools of resistance, creativity, and self-awareness. The narratives demonstrate that emotional construction is not neutral. It reflects broader cultural attitudes toward femininity and power.

4.2 Psychological Depth and Agency

Psychological depth significantly influences the degree of agency granted to female characters. Agency refers to the ability to act independently and make meaningful choices. When a narrative grants access to a character's interiority, it often allows for a more complex understanding of her motivations and desires.

In *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), Offred's psychological interiority is central to her survival. Although she lacks public power, her inner reflections preserve her sense of self. Memory becomes a form of psychological resistance. Cathy Caruth argues in *Unclaimed Experience* (1996) that trauma disrupts linear memory and identity. Offred's fragmented narrative structure reflects this disruption. Her recollections of her past life reveal both loss and resilience. Trauma limits her freedom, yet her psychological depth prevents complete erasure.

In *The Joys of Motherhood* (1979), Nnu Ego's psychological world is shaped by disappointment and societal expectation. Her dreams of fulfillment through motherhood gradually collapse. The narrative reveals her internal conflict between duty and desire. Her limited autonomy reflects structural constraints rather than personal weakness. By presenting her emotional suffering in detail, the novel critiques cultural norms that define women solely through maternal sacrifice.

Draupadi in *The Palace of Illusions* (2008) displays strong psychological agency. She questions destiny and reflects critically on her own choices. Her narrative voice allows readers to see her as an active subject rather than a passive figure in male dominated epic tradition. Emotional self awareness strengthens her agency.

In *Black Swan* (2010), psychological depth is portrayed through hallucination and paranoia. Nina's desire for perfection leads to self destruction. Her agency appears limited by internalized expectations. The film presents a fragmented self that cannot reconcile innocence with desire. Butler's theory of performativity in *Gender Trouble* (1990) illuminates how Nina's repeated

performance of ideal femininity shapes her identity. Her breakdown reveals the psychological cost of rigid gender norms.

In *Frida* (2002), psychological depth is connected to creative autonomy. Frida Kahlo transforms personal pain into artistic production. Trauma does not silence her. Instead, it shapes her public identity as a revolutionary artist. Caruth's discussion of trauma in *Unclaimed Experience* (1996) suggests that trauma can reshape identity. In Frida's case, psychological fragmentation becomes a source of expressive power.

These narratives show that psychological portrayal influences whether a female character is seen as empowered or constrained. Interior monologue, memory, and emotional self reflection create space for agency. When narratives deny such depth, characters risk becoming stereotypes.

4.3 Artificial Femininity and Emotional Simulation

The representation of artificial female figures complicates the relationship between emotion and identity. Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968) presents androids who struggle to pass as human. The central test of humanity in the novel is empathy. Androids are judged by their emotional responses. This framework suggests that emotional capacity defines moral worth. N. Katherine Hayles argues in *How We Became Posthuman* (1999) that technological narratives question the boundaries between human and machine. Dick's novel dramatizes this boundary by linking authenticity to emotional experience.

In *Ghost in the Shell* (1995), directed by Mamoru Oshii, Major Kusanagi is a cyborg who questions her own humanity. Her body is artificial, yet she experiences doubt, curiosity, and existential reflection. Donna Haraway's "A Cyborg Manifesto" (1985) suggests that the cyborg challenges rigid identity categories. Major Kusanagi embodies this challenge. Her emotional awareness complicates the idea that artificial beings lack subjectivity.

In *Ex Machina* (2014), Ava is an artificial intelligence designed with a female body and voice. Her emotions appear programmed. However, she uses emotional performance to manipulate her creator and secure freedom. Rosalind Picard explains in *Affective Computing* (1997) that machines can simulate emotional recognition and response. Ava's behavior demonstrates how simulation can appear authentic. The film raises the question of whether emotional authenticity is necessary for agency. Ava's strategic use of emotion suggests that performance alone can produce power.

Artificial femininity in these texts often reflects male design and control. Ava is created to be attractive and compliant. The androids in Dick's novel are designed for service. Major Kusanagi's body is technologically produced. Yet each figure develops forms of autonomy that challenge control. Haraway's vision of the cyborg as a figure of resistance is visible in these narratives (Haraway 1985). Artificial women may begin as objects, but they often become subjects who question their creators.

The issue of emotional simulation also connects with real world concerns. Joy Buolamwini and Timnit Gebru demonstrate in "Gender Shades" (2018) that facial recognition systems misidentify darker skinned women at higher rates than lighter skinned men. Their findings show that technological systems encode gender and racial bias. Fictional portrayals of artificial women designed for emotional service reflect similar patterns. Emotional AI often reproduces stereotypes of feminine helpfulness and compliance.

4.4 Comparative Insights

Comparing human and non-human female characters reveals both differences and similarities. Human characters such as Offred, Nnu Ego, Draupadi, Nina, and Frida are shaped by social structures that regulate emotion and behavior. Their emotional lives are historically and culturally situated. Trauma, memory, and desire influence their choices.

Artificial figures such as Ava and Major Kusanagi begin as technological constructs. Their emotional expressions are initially limited by programming or design. However, these narratives often grant them increasing autonomy. Ava's escape in *Ex Machina* (2014) represents a shift from

object to subject. Major Kusanagi's existential questioning in *Ghost in the Shell* (1995) challenges biological definitions of humanity.

Judith Butler's theory in *Gender Trouble* (1990) suggests that all gender identities are performed. In this sense, both human and artificial women perform femininity. Human women perform according to social expectation. Artificial women perform according to code and design. Sara Ahmed's concept of emotional alignment in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2004) helps explain why both forms of femininity are shaped by cultural norms. Emotions attach to bodies and define belonging.

The comparison also highlights differences in emotional autonomy. Human characters often experience uncontrollable emotions shaped by trauma and memory. Artificial characters may simulate emotion strategically. Yet some narratives blur this distinction by granting artificial beings genuine self-awareness. These comparisons challenge rigid boundaries between authentic and artificial feeling.

4.5 Societal and Cultural Implications

The representations analyzed in this study influence public perceptions of femininity. When women are consistently associated with emotional sacrifice, vulnerability, or instability, stereotypes are reinforced. When narratives present women as intellectually and emotionally autonomous, cultural expectations shift.

Technological narratives also shape how society understands the relationship between humans and machines. Hayles argues in *How We Became Posthuman* (1999) that technological change forces us to rethink identity. Fictional portrayals of artificial women who desire freedom challenge the assumption that emotion is exclusively human. At the same time, real world studies such as Buolamwini and Gebru's "Gender Shades" (2018) remind us that technological systems often reproduce existing inequalities.

The human machine boundary is therefore both challenged and reinforced. Artificial women in fiction often reflect traditional stereotypes, yet they also expose the constructed nature of those stereotypes. Haraway's vision of the cyborg as a hybrid figure suggests that identity is not fixed (Haraway 1985). These narratives encourage readers and viewers to question essentialist ideas about emotion and gender.

Overall, the analysis demonstrates that emotional representation is central to constructions of femininity in both literary and technological contexts. Feminist theory, posthumanism, trauma studies, and affect theory together reveal that emotions are cultural and political forces. By examining human and non-human female characters side by side, this study shows that emotional autonomy remains a key factor in defining agency and identity. The selected texts and films illustrate that femininity is not biologically determined. It is shaped through narrative, performance, memory, and technology. Through this lens, the evolving relationship between women and machines becomes a powerful site for rethinking gender in the contemporary world.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

This study has examined emotional and psychological representations of female characters in selected global literary texts and films, including both human women and artificial female figures. The analysis demonstrates that emotion plays a central role in constructing gendered identity. In texts such as Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) and Buchi Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood* (1979), emotional expression is closely linked to social control, sacrifice, and survival. Female identity is often shaped through fear, endurance, and relational responsibility. However, in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions* (2008) and Julie Taymor's *Frida* (2002), emotional depth becomes a source of resistance and creative power.

The study also finds that psychological interiority significantly affects agency. When narratives provide access to memory, trauma, and self reflection, female characters are granted greater complexity. Cathy Caruth's argument in *Unclaimed Experience* (1996) that trauma reshapes identity is visible in characters such as Offred and Frida Kahlo. Emotional and psychological depth allow these figures to maintain a sense of self even under oppressive conditions. In contrast, Darren Aronofsky's *Black Swan* (2010) illustrates how rigid gender expectations can fragment identity and limit autonomy.

The comparison between human and artificial figures, including Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968), Mamoru Oshii's *Ghost in the Shell* (1995), and Alex Garland's *Ex Machina* (2014), reveals that emotional simulation complicates traditional definitions of humanity. Artificial female characters are often designed to perform emotional service, yet they frequently develop forms of autonomy that challenge control. As N. Katherine Hayles argues in *How We Became Posthuman* (1999), technological narratives reshape our understanding of embodiment and identity. The findings suggest that emotional authenticity and agency are not limited to biological humans but are constructed through narrative and cultural meaning.

5.2 Theoretical Contributions

This research contributes to feminist literary and media studies by integrating feminist theory, posthumanism, affect theory, and trauma studies within a comparative framework. Judith Butler's concept of gender performativity in *Gender Trouble* (1990) has been extended to include both human and artificial figures. The study shows that not only human women but also artificial women perform gender through repeated emotional acts. Femininity emerges as a constructed category shaped by narrative and social expectation rather than biological essence.

The study also builds on Sara Ahmed's argument in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2004) that emotions circulate socially and attach to specific bodies. By applying this concept to both literary women and artificial intelligences, the research demonstrates that emotional coding is a cultural process that defines belonging and value. Furthermore, Donna Haraway's vision in "A Cyborg Manifesto" (1985) of the cyborg as a boundary breaking figure is supported through the analysis of characters such as Ava and Major Kusanagi. These figures blur the distinction between human and machine and reveal the instability of fixed identity categories.

By combining these theoretical perspectives, the study contributes a model for analyzing emotional representation across biological and technological forms. It demonstrates that emotional construction is central to understanding agency, subjectivity, and power in contemporary narratives.

5.3 Implications for Gender and Technology Studies

The findings have important implications for gender and technology studies. Literary and cinematic representations influence how society imagines artificial intelligence and robotic bodies. When artificial female figures are consistently designed as compliant, attractive, and emotionally supportive, they reflect and reinforce gender stereotypes. Joy Buolamwini and Timnit Gebru show in "Gender Shades" (2018) that technological systems can reproduce gender and racial bias. Fictional portrayals of artificial femininity often mirror these real-world inequalities.

At the same time, narratives such as *Ex Machina* (2014) and *Ghost in the Shell* (1995) demonstrate the possibility of resistance and autonomy within technological embodiment. These representations encourage audiences to question assumptions about authenticity, emotion, and control. As affective computing continues to develop, Rosalind Picard's work in *Affective Computing* (1997) reminds us that emotional simulation is a technical design choice rather than a natural phenomenon. Therefore, designers and scholars must critically examine how gender norms shape technological creation.

The study suggests that gender and technology studies should move beyond a simple opposition between human authenticity and artificial simulation. Instead, attention should focus on how emotional narratives influence ethical debates about AI, embodiment, and agency.

5.4 Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study has certain limitations. The corpus, although diverse, is selective and cannot represent all global narratives of femininity and technology. Future research may expand the analysis to include additional regional literatures, non-western films, and emerging digital media forms. Furthermore, this research has primarily focused on female coded artificial figures. Comparative studies involving male or non-binary artificial identities could provide deeper insight into how gender coding operates across different embodiments.

Another limitation lies in the interpretative nature of qualitative analysis. While close reading and discourse analysis provide depth, they do not measure audience reception. Future studies could combine textual analysis with audience studies or empirical research on AI design practices.

Future research may also explore how contemporary developments in artificial intelligence, robotics, and emotional AI reshape narrative representation. As Hayles suggests in *How We Became Posthuman* (1999), technological change continually transforms our understanding of identity. Continued interdisciplinary dialogue between literary studies, feminist theory, and computer science will be essential for examining how emotion, gender, and technology evolve together.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that emotional and psychological representation remains central to constructions of femininity in both human and artificial contexts. By comparing literary women and artificial female figures, it reveals that identity, agency, and authenticity are not fixed qualities but narrative and cultural constructions. Through feminist and posthuman frameworks, the research highlights the need to critically engage with the emotional coding of gender in an increasingly technologized world.

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