



22145707



**PSYCHOLOGY
HIGHER LEVEL
PAPER 3**

Thursday 8 May 2014 (morning)

1 hour

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Do not turn over this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Read the passage carefully and then answer all the questions.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is *[30 marks]*.

The stimulus material below is based on a research article that describes the differences between the portrayal of love and romance in Western culture and women’s actual experiences.

In Western culture, romance is the main theme of many movies, songs and books. However, the media’s representations of love are not often what people experience in their own lives. This may be a source of frustration.

5 The aim of this qualitative study was to investigate the extent to which heterosexual women’s perceptions of romantic love matched what they had experienced in their own romantic love relationships. The researcher was a female psychologist who also worked as a couples’ therapist. She said that her reason for doing the study was that ever since she was a young woman she had tried to understand her own emotional responses when she was in love. She had seen other women struggling with the same questions and emotional responses as she herself had experienced.

10 This study was conducted in New Zealand. The purposive sample consisted of eight heterosexual women who were either therapists or psychology students. They were recruited through the researcher’s own social networks.

The data were collected using semi-structured interviews. With the permission of the participants, the interviews were recorded on audiotape and later transcribed. The transcriptions were shown
15 to the participants to ensure that they were accurate. The transcripts were then analysed using inductive content analysis. The analysis revealed themes such as “romantic love is an illusion” but also that “romantic love provides intimacy and physical closeness”. All the women talked about how they have to “struggle for equality” in their romantic relationships, and that there is a “danger of losing friends and of giving up other interests” through focusing too much on their
20 partners. The researcher acknowledged in the research article that reflexivity was important in this study.

The study revealed that the women had mixed perceptions of romantic love. On the one hand, they desired to experience and express love fully, but at the same time they did not want to give up their independence. Negative experiences in previous romantic love relationships had taught these
25 women to resist being too dependent on their male partners and not to give up their own friends and interests. According to these women, maintaining some degree of independence results in more equal and satisfying love relationships. The researcher concluded that these women’s experiences of love are different from stories about love in literature and the media.

*Answer **all** of the following three questions, referring to the stimulus material in your answers. Marks will be awarded for demonstration of knowledge and understanding of **qualitative** research methodology.*

1. Evaluate the sampling technique used in this study. *[10 marks]*

2. Explain why reflexivity is relevant to this study. *[10 marks]*

3. Evaluate the use of semi-structured interviews in this study. *[10 marks]*