

A HORNEYAN READING OF LOLA SHONEYIN'S *THE SECRET LIVES OF BABA SEGI'S WIVES*

By
JAMES E. ONYEASHIE*

Abstract

This is a Horneyan reading of Lola Shoneyin's *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives* (2010). This paper adopts the use of Karen Horney's Psychoanalytic Social Theory as its framework. It argues that characters' personalities are influenced by past traumatic experiences and pressures from family or society with the objective of fitting them into existing stereotypes already created by the society. This paper reveals that cultural or traditional and societal practices play a very important role in the formation of an individual, whether fictional or real. It also identifies how patriarchy and societal expectations have an effect on the characters examined. It also shows that individuals adopt certain ego defence mechanisms to cope with whatever problems they encounter. These mechanisms also known as neurotic needs, are chosen based on what helps the character to feel comfortable and satisfied in his environment. This entails moving towards, against, or away from situations and people in general. The paper recommends the application of Horney's psychoanalytic social theory in literary analyses because it gives insight into why certain characters behave in a certain way and manner in literary texts and even real life situations.

Keywords: Neo Freudian, personality,

Introduction

Karen Horney (16 September 1885- 4 December 1952). Horney is a Neo-Freudian; her approach to psychoanalysis is stemmed from the Freudian and Adlerian concepts. She and other neo-Freudians such as Erik Erikson, and Harry Stack Sullivan added newer social and psychological dimensions to the already existing Freudian analysis. Horney questioned some of Freud's traditional views such as his theory of psychosexual stages but was particularly troubled by the concept of "penis envy". She opined that the jealousy between the sexes was not an innate psychological complex but that it results from gender power

* Department of English, Augustine University, Ilara-Epe, Lagos.
Email: jamesonyeashie@augustineuniversity.edu.ng

imbalances; the hierarchical status people have within the society based on their gender roles.

Horney's primary approach to psychoanalysis is one that deals with basic anxiety, basic hostility and interpersonal strategies of defence which involve neurotic needs. She opines that basic anxiety is the child's feeling that the world is hostile and dangerous. She places focus on the surrounding or environment the child is brought up and grows in including the way the parents or relatives relate with the child. Her approach to neurosis is to see it as an attempt to make life more bearable by adopting some interpersonal skills to help them control and cope with the basic anxiety and hostility individuals face. Horney asserts that safety and security are also important in the study of one's personality. This is because cultural and environmental forces have a significant role to play in determining an individual's behavioural pattern which when studied over time can be termed as the individual's personality trait. For instance, if one feels unloved or unsafe in a family, cultural society etc., such an individual will overtime develop anxiety which leads to basic hostility and then results in neurosis. This means that the individual will adopt some interpersonal control and coping mechanisms which Horney has termed neurotic needs. These mechanisms afford the individual relief in the sense that they have been able to manage the anxiety through the adoption of a certain interpersonal strategy of defence.

Horney's concept of neurosis has made an important contribution to personality theory. She believes, like Freud, that there are certain unconscious intra psychic conflicts, and, like Adler, she believes that the environment plays an important role in the life of an individual. Her psychoanalytic social theory is one that explores how people adopt certain interpersonal methods to cope with basic hostility which overtime turns to anxiety is a psychological need. These interpersonal methods are known as neurotic needs. In her book *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time* (1950) she believes that basic anxiety in people who do not have favourable conditions for growth causes them to develop "profound insecurity and vague apprehensiveness". This explains that people who have not been familiar with a positive environment for growth, that is having awareness or knowledge about certain concepts which may appear in the future often view the future as scary and fearful place. It results in anxiety because they are overwhelmed by feelings of helplessness or isolation. She believed that the society plays a large role in the occurrence of neurosis in individuals because it places so much emphasis on unhealthy competition. She agrees that unending competition creates room for basic hostility because demands of success by the

society are unending; everybody desires to outdo the other by any means possible. When the individuals involved feel threatened or feel like failure it brings about anxiety in them.

Horney explains that it is mostly at childhood that neurosis begins, however it can still occur at any age in an individual's life. To avoid neurosis, genuine love and discipline help the individual develop feelings of safety and satisfaction. This is obviously lacking in an environment where everyone is driven by number of achievements or highest number of material possessions. "Everyone is the real or potential competitor of everyone else". This already breeds enmity in the persons in the society because everyone desires to be recognised as the person with the highest number of achievements or material possessions. One that has attained that position would do anything to remain there and others would aim to overthrow the person by all means possible.

Neurosis is a condition of the mind that relates to socialisation. The individuals that suffer from anxiety or who have experienced hostility are in intense need for affection. They attempt to discover ways to cope with the difficulties they face such as failing to reach a goal cut out for the individual by the society. In order to overcome these difficulties, the individual adopts certain coping strategies. In Horney's book *Self Analysis* (1942), she outlines her theory of neurosis; she also says that different types of the behavioural patterns the neurotic individuals possess are due to over usage of the coping mechanisms to deal with basic anxiety or hostility. In her two books *The Inner Conflict* (1945) and *Human Growth* (1950) she further explained the interpersonal trends. These coping mechanisms/ strategies are used as normal mechanisms of defence by every individual but neurotics overuse them and so they take up the form of neurotic needs as explained by Horney.

Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell (2010) quoted by Debbie Barry (2014) opine that psychoanalytic criticism of literature "focuses on a work of literature as an expression in fictional form of the inner workings of the human mind. The idea expressed in this quotation is that the text is only a mere fictitious representation of the thoughts and behaviour of the human mind and the human. Literature is almost like psychology because "it is only the study of literature that allows us the glimpse anything like the 'whole' of human experience, the 'whole' a person- the rational, emotional, sacred and profane dimensions of being human" Robert Davis & Ronald Schleifer, (1998). Based on Rene Wellek and Austin Warren (1963) quoted by Gosken Aras (2015: 253), one can say that psychology is an important aspect because certain methods and approaches have been adopted to analyse the author or character and or the

psychological types that are present within the text. "Psychoanalytical criticism deals with the characters, who serve as the symbols of the world and existence to be presented as exemplary figures to expose the meaning of life" (Gosken Aras 2015).

Lola Shoneyin's *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives* Ishola Alao (Baba Segi)

Baba Segi is ruled by what society expects of him because he bases his self-worth on his achievements. He possesses personality traits such as insecurity and dependency which he usually masks by being proud, pompous, rude, demanding and possessive. The novel begins with its first chapter titled 'Bellyache'. It refers to the uneasy feeling Baba Segi experiences, because of the inability of his fourth wife to conceive.

When Baba Segi awoke with a bellyache for the sixth day in a row, he knew it was time to do something drastic about his fourth wife's childlessness. He was sure the pain wasn't caused by hunger or trapped gas; it was from the build-up of months and months of worry (1).

Baba Segi is greatly troubled by this issue because of his belief that a man's worth is determined by the number of children he possesses and wealth he acquires. He is restless because he boasts to his male associates about marrying Bolanle "a university graduate" as a fourth wife. He was embarrassed opening up to the men about the issue, but needed Teacher's advice. Teacher had helped him in the past with advice on his first wife, Iya Segi, which yielded good results. He believes that Teacher's advice would get him out of this situation a second time.

It annoyed him that Bolanle was the reason he had come, when just two years before, he boasted of his conquest: how Bolanle was as tight as a bottleneck, how he pounded her until she was cross-eye; and how she took the length of his manhood on her back- splayed out and submissive. He didn't quite know how he would tell the men that all his pounding had proved futile." (4)

Baba Segi was raised in a society that believe a woman is automatically responsible for a couple's childlessness. This is perhaps the reason why Baba Segi keeps on pointing accusing fingers at Bolanle for most part of the novel claiming she is the one who is infertile. He insists she is the cause of her childlessness.

The author intelligently made the readers deduce Baba Segi's actual character other than the façade he puts up. He is very insecure, vulnerable, dependent and possessive but tries to mask it by arrogance, rudeness, mockery, dominance. Baba Segi, as the man and benefactor, lords over his wives and his

wishes are their command. He believes this is the norm and it is right because of his background and environment for growth. Baba Segi constantly felt the need to show his dominance over his wives and children, for instance, "Only Baba Segi's armchair faced the TV directly; his wives (except Bolanle who hadn't earned her right to an armchair) kept their seats at the angle their husbands insisted on." (11). A woman is expected to be submissive to her husband and "Father" of the house.

The writer cleverly ridicules the almighty Baba Segi "The man of the house" making him a character that could not contain his body waste when he encounters distasteful news.

The children huddled closer together and concluded that the news had induced maternal madness. But their father too sat transfixed... Baba Segi felt his stomach growling and made to grab the bowl of hand-wash water. He missed the bowl completely and covered the cream-coloured rug with his undigested supper. Iya Segi and Iya Tope ran to his side and fluttered around him like harried hens. They lifted Baba Segi by his arms, guided him to his bedroom and covered him with a light sheet, leaving Iya Femi to salvage the rug with soapy water and Dettol. (12)

Baba Segi is in constant need of but attempts to hide it under the fact that he is entitled to such treatment from his wives. The whole house saw the bad news with him, the mothers cursed and cried but he gave them a show of throwing up all over the rug and waited for his wives to come to his aid. A man according to his society is not expected to show weakness or co-dependency, but this he does constantly. It is perhaps his coping mechanism but it is an opposite behaviour of what he constantly tries to portray.

Baba Segi makes it a point of duty to always ridicule Bolanle for her assumed barrenness. He assumes the fault is not his because he is clearly father to seven children. "What do you know about what you saw? A woman cannot know the weight of a child until she carries one in her womb." (13) "Your barrenness brings shame upon me. And I am sure that you, as well, are saddened by it." (14). Baba Segi used to think of Bolanle as perfect before he got to know of her "barrenness". It gives reasons as to why he barely shows her affection and pressurises her. He is clearly disappointed especially after finding out that she has had abortions in the past:

Listen to yourself!' he shouted. 'Does your blood not boil when you see other women carrying babies on their backs? Do tears not fill your eyes when you see mothers suckling infants? You of all people should be willing to try everything!

Offspring make our visit to this world complete! Do you want to remain a barren maggot? (43).

Baba Segi's marriage to Bolanle is meant to continue upholding his name in the society as an illiterate who is able to marry a university graduate and a father to many more children that she would bear him. Baba Segi finally sees a flaw in her and is not going to let the opportunity to dwell on it pass him by; after all, this makes him feel a bit better about his own insecurities especially his illiteracy. His attitude at the hospital is very domineering, proud and rude. Unknown to him, the "strength" he thought he exuded with this behaviour rather illuminated his weakness. He was bothered by the way other men looked at Bolanle. "Furious at the way the doctor stared at his wife, Baba Segi grabbed Bolanle by the elbow. 'Go your way! We'll find it ourselves!'" (32).

Baba Segi felt insecure and paranoid because he was the only illiterate around them. He constantly answers all the questions directed to Bolanle to show that he knows her and she belongs to him. Some excerpts from the novel to show his domineering attitude include:

'What is your name?' The nurse brought out a fresh pink folder from the desk she rested on. 'Bolanle Alao', Baba Segi replied. 'Date of birth?' The nurse looked at Bolanle strangely. '19 January, 1976!' Baba Segi blurted again. 'Sir is there any reason she cannot answer herself? Is she deaf?'... 'I am her husband.' (33).

The nurse's eyes shot up in surprise and then glanced briefly at Baba Segi. 'Next of kin?' For a moment Bolanle went blank... 'Please write Mr Ishola Alao!' Baba Segi shouted now. 'I am her next of kin. You should have stayed in your father's house if you wanted your mother to be your next of kin!'... (34).

He felt like every personal question asked or medical term that was used in the consultation meant the doctor was flirting with his wife or usurping. The doctor questioned Bolanle about her relationship with Baba Segi (Mr Alao), "I presume you are husband and wife?" the doctor enquired... 'Yes. She is my wife.' (36). 'Your patient?' Baba Segi sneered. 'She is my wife. I am the one that married her. Why would you care?' (38). The way Baba Segi responds to the question that is directed to Bolanle makes it clear that he is very insecure; he not only affirms that they are married but goes further to add the phrase 'my wife'. Bolanle, how old were you when you started menstruating?... 'And how long do you menstruate for? How many days each month, I mean? 'Four to five days.', 'Heavy? Light?' Baba Segi could not hold back. 'Do you not know that you are talking to another man's wife? All these questions you are asking are meaningless. She is barren. (36)

Even after the doctor explains the reason for the questions Baba Segi is still sceptical and simply uninterested in the explanations. He said: 'Just remember she is someone's wife.' (36). Even when the doctor asks about their sexual life but uses a more appropriate medical term for it, Baba Segi flips because he believes they are speaking in code so he does not understand. 'Good. Do you and your husband have regular coitus?' 'What is the meaning of coitus? Don't think the two of you can bamboozle me because I did not go to the university!' Baba Segi said. (36).

He continues to point it out to anyone who wants to hear that it is Bolanle who has a problem. 'I have never had any reason to come here before, Ogun bears me witness,' Baba Segi blurted.... 'Sister it is this wife of mine that needs your help,'... Bolanle knew what Baba Segi wanted to hear, "I am barren." (32 & 33).

Baba Segi's insecurity leads him to ensure that the doctor is aware of his ability to control and satisfy his wives; but most importantly his ability to impregnate a woman. 'She gets her ration on Tuesdays, and sometimes she gets an extra day. No less, no more than any of my other wives. It is her womb that is not working.'... 'many more than five.' but fewer than ten?' 'I would have had more than ten now if this woman's womb was not hostile to my seed.' (37). He capitalises on her supposed barrenness to belittle her as much as he can; this act helps him feel secure around her and helps him boost his ego and self-esteem.

When Baba Segi learns about Bolanle's abortion, he is shocked and disappointed. It brings him so much pain but he decides to keep her as one of his wives. In pain he says:

Doctor when you buy guavas in the marketplace you cannot open every single one to check for rottenness. And where you find rottenness, you do not always throw away the guava. You bite around the rot and hope to quench your craving. (39)

It is plausible to say that Baba Segi understands the advantages of being married to Bolanle. It earns him respect and gives him fulfilment because it is an achievement. "Where you find rottenness, you do not always throw away the guava" (39), this is him deciding to not let go of her in order to continue to feed on the respect and sense of fulfilment staying married to her brings him.

Baba Segi is egoistic; he uses the mechanism of moving against people to deal with anxiety caused by pressure from his society. Growing in that same society, he aspires to achieve all that is expected of him as a male in order to gain respect and attain a high status in the society. Baba Segi attains wealth

which is the first thing expected of him and then gets married. He marries four wives, the fourth of whom is unable to bear him children. Fear of failure to achieve what society expects which is bearing children, causes Baba Segi to suffer from basic anxiety. He adopts the compulsive use of the moving against mechanism to mask his insecurities. His want for personal achievement, public recognition and prestige influence his relationship with others. He cares for his wives mostly because they bore him children and because he wants to be seen as the type of man society expects him to be which is one who protects and provides for his family. These children are his pride and joy; they enable him enjoy the respect that comes with such an achievement. It is obvious he had married Bolanle, his fourth wife, to boost his ego. His being able to marry a university graduate when he is himself illiterate is quite a huge achievement because it is rare to find a university graduate who will agree to marry a man of his age who is an illiterate and also the head of a polygamous home. This brings him great joy, recognition and respect amongst his friends. Being egoistic, he feels ashamed to talk about Bolanle's infertility amongst his group of friends and also to ask Teacher for advice. He however, braces himself and asks for help with the intention of not being a laughing stock to the larger society.

Baba Segi repeatedly makes it clear in the hospital that Bolanle is the one with the problem so as to protect his ego. The individuals who adopt this coping mechanism despise embarrassments. Baba Segi who is overwhelmed by his insecurities begins to act rude, domineering and unnecessarily angered by anyone or anything. Baba Segi sees no wrong in whatever attitude he puts up because he is only being the man society expects of him: showing dominance and protecting his family. He felt really bitter, finding out that he is sterile and not the biological father of the children he had fathered all along. He has failed to achieve one of the main roles society expects of him; hence he suffers shame, embarrassment and a deflated ego. His exaggerated sense of self perception (egoism) and fear of embarrassment influenced his decision of letting his wives stay in order to avoid the news of his infertility getting to public ears.

In summary, Baba Segi's personality, behaviour and decisions are clearly influenced by the pressure exerted on individuals to live up to the expectations of the society. He tied his self-worth to his achievements and applause by the society. He got comfortable dominating and exploiting people to achieve his goals. He only really cared about things that brought him admiration and prestige. He exploited his wives and children because he wanted the recognition that would accrue from being associated with them. This shows that the pressure society constantly puts on individuals has an effect on them. Baba

Segi did not focus on himself as an individual but tied his self-worth to his achievements and applause by the society at large.

Iya Segi

According to Kare Horney, a child who does not have a favourable condition for growth will most likely have apprehensions and develop a sense of insecurity. Iya Segi adopts the (moving against mechanism) to cope with basic anxiety and pressure from the society. She manipulates and exploits Baba Segi throughout the novel. She hides her intentions clearly by marrying Baba Segi and controls her property in his name. She has anxiety from being torn between satisfying society's expectations and her dreams. Her thirst for power and recognition makes her a bully; she dominates and exploits the other wives, especially Bolanle. Iya Segi desires to be in charge of everything because she has an exaggerated perception of herself. Iya Segi's insecurities cause her to be envious of Bolanle; she feels threatened because Bolanle is educated and she is not. It infuriates her and plays with her self-image.

Iya Segi also exploits Baba Segi by her infidelity and by misleading the other wives to do the same. She goes against Bolanle and even her own daughter Segi, although unintentionally, to make sure her plan is achieved. Iya Segi also manipulates Baba Segi into discarding his initial plan of sending them away after finding out the truth about the paternity of the children. Perhaps, to move forward with her initial plan of recovering her wealth.

Society shares part of the blame because unnecessary gender roles and other rules were not put in place, some unhealthy competitions and exploitations amongst individuals would have been avoided. In order to achieve what she wants as well as satisfy the expectations of society and her mother, Iya Segi goes through extreme ways by going against others.

Bolanle

Bolanle had a very nasty experience at a young age, she lets this experience influence and determine her life. Her mother toils day and night to provide for her children. For this reason, she expects only the best from her daughters; she expects perfection in all they do.

'I am not bringing my children up to be beggars. I am working myself to death because of you and that glutton sister of yours to own houses and cars. I am bringing you up to be able bodied-women who will fight for prosperity and win.' (93)

The traumatic experience Bolanle had in the past coupled with her mother's sense of perfectionism makes her believe she is no good for anyone. She believes she will not be judged or cajoled to speak up on her past and so she accepts Baba Segi's marriage proposal to be away from her mother and begin a fresh start.

Bolanle's childhood was very perfect; she was the type of child every parent wanted because of how she excelled in every part of her life. She describes her childhood saying 'Those were the days when I was my mother's beloved child' (110). She was as perfect as her mother wanted her to be up until her rape incident. Being naïve and having faith in the stranger she accepts his offer of taking her home in his car, saving her from the pouring rain. It was too late when she realised the man's true intentions; her struggling to cry for help made the man threaten to kill her. Out of fear and fatigue she gives in and he had his way with her. After the experience, in tears, she responds to his questions:

'No, sir. I just want to go home. I don't want anything else sir,' I whimpered
... I was so sure I was going to die because I couldn't breathe. I could hear my heart beat slowing

... What I had hoped to save for my husband had been wrenched from me... I stared out of my window, trying to reconcile the person I was now with the girl who stood, cold and wet beneath the *agbalumo* tree...who are you? I asked myself. (114-116)

She did not have the courage to let her mother know about the rape incident for fear of being judged by her mother. She knows she has failed and disappointed her mother and she is no longer the perfect child she has always been. Bolanle could not handle the shame and disappointment especially while living with her mother in the same house.

When Bolanle meets Baba Segi through a friend, he immediately likes her and she decides to go for him. She believes she is just a mere addition to his collection, besides he desires her like a trophy. She believes being a university graduate covers up for her defects especially in his eyes. She leaves for her new home having a positive mind-set although her mother does not approve of it. Bolanle was too engulfed in her grief that she cared less about what the society will think about her decisions which is influenced by her emotions. She comes into the Alao family cheerfully with the aim of relating nicely with everyone. This attitude she put up is not reciprocated; she is treated coldly right from her arrival. Bolanle on her part, still tries to be nice to everyone amidst the ill treatment; she even offers to hold literacy lessons for the other wives and their children. "It's not as if I haven't tried. I offered to teach the wives to read...I have

tried to help the children, too. I once told them to assemble in the dining room every evening so I could read to them.” (22)

Bolanle continues to endure all the harsh treatment she is given. She remains in the Alao household because it is for her a safe place amidst all the chaos. Inasmuch as she is frustrated by their behaviour, she blames it on illiteracy and thus appreciates her education more. She still hoped to be accepted by them.

One day, they will all love me. I will buy their affection with the money Baba Segi gives me if I have to!... I will be a big sister to her. I will tell her everything I know about the world outside so she doesn't make the same mistakes I made.

One day they will accept me as a member of this family. One day, I will have a child of my own and everything will fall into its place. My husband will delight in me again; the way he did before my barrenness ate away at his affection. (23)

After a while, Baba Segi is frustrated by her inability to give him children; and decides to take her to the clinic for tests. Even after being ridiculed and shamed, they both realise that the problem is not from her.

Bolanle decides to pay her mother a visit especially after learning about her ill health. Her mother associates her illness to being disappointed and sad from the terrible life choices her children have made. Bolanle's mother blames her for influencing her sister negatively 'And now your sister has followed the path you opened for her'. (148) 'Bolanle, you are the biggest disappointment the world has seen. You are ruined! Damaged! Destroyed!... Reward your mother for all the hard work she did for you! Other than that, there is nothing more to know' (148-149). These words her mother spoke hit a nerve. She decides to speak up on her rape incident which she had kept from her mother for years. In a harsh tone she speaks:

'I was raped, Mama! Did you know *that*? I was raped when I was fifteen years old'

... 'You are right, Mama. I am ruined, damaged, destroyed. I am all those things you said. My life was wrecked and I didn't know how to fix it. I *still* don't know.'

I wanted to be your perfect daughter. I didn't want to disappoint you. I didn't want you to hate me'

... mama you were living with an empty shell. Everything was scraped out of me. I was inside out.' (150)

Bolanle did give her mother a chance to exonerate herself or explain her behaviour. She feels speaking to her mother will set her free and will also give her reasons why she accepted to marry Baba Segi:

That *buffoon* was prepared to take me as I was. He didn't ask me any questions. Neither did he know a past he could compare my present with. I was lost and didn't want to do anything with my life. He was satisfied with who I was. All he wanted was for me to be his wife. Imagine how appealing that was to me!' (150-151)

In the Alao household after sometime, Akin and Segi begins to respect Bolanle and warm up to her despite all the warnings the other wives gave. Segi especially bonds with Bolanle, they do everything together. It greatly angers Iya Segi, who becomes furious and jealous. It pushes her to her final plan to eliminate Bolanle for good. In their bid to eliminate her, Segi is the one affected by the poison. Bolanle stays with the family through all the trying times. She however decides to leave after the truth of Baba Segi's infertility has been realised and after the death of Segi. She admits that she never fitted in as part of the family and will never be accepted. She decides to pick up her life using all that she has learned in and from the Alao household as a guide. Bolanle begins a fresh start bearing in mind that life has its challenges but vows to never be held down by them again:

'I will remember Baba Segi... I have learnt many things from the years I spent under his roof. It was being in his house that shook me awake. I will be thankful for that

...Don't think I can't see the challenges ahead of me. People will say that I am a second-hand woman. Men will hurt and ridicule me, but I won't let them hold me back. I will remain in the land of the living. I am back now and the world is spread before me like an egg cracked open. (245)

Bolanle is the only character of the new school that is bothered more about her mother's expectations rather than society's. Her mother was so focused on giving them the good life and pleasing the society that she barely cares about the mental and emotional state of her children. She was focused on making them perfect. Bolanle's decision to marry Baba Segi is influenced by her traumatic rape incident and the thought of escaping her mother's judgemental behaviour. Her lack of genuine love especially from her mother affects her psyche. She adopts the (moving towards strategy) to deal with the basic anxiety caused by the trauma from the rape incident and pressure from her mother.

Bolanle clings unto Baba Segi as a partner because it helped her feel better about herself. Like Kate Horney points out, the individuals that adopt the (compulsive moving towards strategy) usually limit themselves. This exactly is Bolanle's case because even after acquiring her education, she still feels ruined. She tossed the degree to the side to go be a housewife; she felt like she had

already failed. She limits herself by remaining in the household even after being ridiculed and insulted. Bolanle knew she had the power to leave but she depended on them to keep her alive. At the end of the novel, she is the only character that breaks away from her coping mechanism. Bolanle's situation with her mother explains to us that societal pressure can indirectly influence an individual. Her desire to achieve society's expectations as a mother influenced her attitude towards her daughters.

Conclusion

In conclusion, these psychoanalytic readings have shown that the environment of a growing child which includes their parents and the society at large has an effect on the formation of the individual's personality. Children who have not experienced genuine love while growing up often experience basic anxiety. They adopt compulsive coping mechanisms to deal with these anxieties. Individuals who are overwhelmed by pressure of what society expects them to achieve adopt these compulsive coping mechanisms as well. The individuals may adopt the moving towards, against or away as coping mechanisms when dealing with others. Findings from this analysis support Karen Horney's Psychoanalytic Social Theory which claims that an environment, society, family or situation an individual is raised in surely has an effect on that individual which may be positive or negative.

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