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İSTANBUL YENİ YÜZYIL UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE DEPARTMENT

ANGLO-AMERICAN AND CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAMME

THE PERSPECTIVES OF SELF-ACCEPTANCE IN FATIMA MIRZA'S *A PLACE FOR US* AND TAYARI JONES'S *SILVER SPARROW*: A PSYCHOANALYSIS STUDY

MA THESIS

DHUHA THAMER ALI

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İSTANBUL, DECEMBER 2024

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İSTANBUL YENİ YÜZYIL ÜNİVERSİTESİ

SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ

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ETHICAL STATEMENT

I prepared my project following the thesis writing rules of the Institute of Social Sciences at Istanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University, and I hereby declare that;

- I have obtained the data, information, and documents provided within the thesis according to academic and ethical rules,
- I have submitted all information, documents, evaluations, and results under the requirements of scientific ethics and moral rules,
- I have cited all works that I have used in the project by appropriately referring to my sources,
- I have not made any changes to the data used,
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if found otherwise, I accept all loss of rights that may occur.

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DHUHA THAMER ALI

PREFACE

The path to completing this thesis was full of personal challenges. I am deeply grateful for the continuous support of my supervisor Asst. Prof. Dr. Uğur DİLER for his valuable help, support and guidance in the completion of my modest work. There are no words I can use to express the gratitude that he deserves. Dear Supervisor, your efforts are highly appreciated. Words are not enough to thank the teaching and administrative staff of the University, especially Prof. Dr. Günseli SÖNMEZ İŞÇI, for their invaluable support and guidance over the past years, which made studying in Türkiye one of the most fulfilling and enriching experiences of my life.

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ISTANBUL, 2024 DHUHA THAMER ALI

ÖZET

FATIMA MİRZA'NIN BİZİM İÇİN BİR YER VE TAYARI JONES'İN GÜMÜŞ SERÇESİNDE KENDİNİ KABUL ETMENİN PERSPEKTİFLERİ:BİR PSİKOANALİZ ÇALIŞMASI

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Çalışma, hem Fatima Mirza'nın *A Place for Us* adlı eserinde hem de Tayari Jones'un *Silver Sparrow* adlı eserinde kendini kabul kavramının incelenmesi amacıyla belirlenmiştir. Çalışmanın genel amacı, bilinçlilik, "Kimlik ve Rol Karışıklığı", "Güven ve Güvensizlik", "Özerklik ve Utanç ve Şüphe" gibi psikolojik ve sosyal kavramları kullanarak kendini kabule bakış açılarını tartışmaktır. İnsanların karakterlerini, benliklerini ve kimliklerini, ebeveynleri ve dış dünyayla ilişkilerinin bir sonucu olarak nasıl geliştirdiğini göstermek için Erikson tarafından geliştirilmiştir. Çalışmanın temel argümanı, kendini kabullenmenin, egonun gelişimiyle karşı karşıya kalan dış tehditlere üstün gelmenin bir sonucu olduğudur. Dış tehditlerle başa çıkma becerisine sahip olanlar, ebeveynlerin ve sosyal çevrenin kendilerine uygulamaya çalıştığı sosyal kısıtlamalardan uzakta, kendi yaşam tarzlarını takip ederek, kendini kabullenme perspektiflerini gerçekleştirebilir. Bu çalışma, Amar, Hadia ve Dana'nın aile baskısına rağmen kendini kabul ettirmeyi başarmış güçlü karakterler olduğunu ortaya koyuyor. Örneğin Hadia, kararlarından hoşnut bir şekilde yaşayan ve ailesinin tahakkümüne direnerek huzur bulan biri olarak tasvir ediliyor. Benzer şekilde, Amar da ataerkil tahakkümden uzaklaşıp Amerikan yaşam tarzını benimseyerek bağımsızlığını ortaya koyuyor ve ailesinin kendisini reddetmesinin onun için pek bir önemi olmadığını gösteriyor. Bu bulgular çalışmanın üç ana bölümünde daha detaylı olarak incelenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Farkındalık, Güven, Kendini kabullenme, Kimlik, Özerklik.

ABSTRACT

THE PERSPECTIVES OF SELF-ACCEPTANCE IN FATIMA MIRZA'S *A PLACE FOR US* AND TAYARI JONES'S *SILVER SPARROW*: A PSYCHOANALYSIS STUDY

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The study has been determined to examine the notion of self-acceptance in both Fatima Mirza's *A Place for Us* and Tayari Jones's *Silver Sparrow*. The general aim of the study is to discuss the perspectives of self-acceptance by means of deploying psychological and social concepts like-mindedness, Identity vs. Role Confusion, Trust vs. Mistrust and Autonomy vs Shame and Doubt that have been developed by Erikson to show how human beings develop their characters, selves, and identities as a result to their relationship to their parents and outer world as well. The study's main argument is that self-acceptance results from prevailing external threats that encounter ego development. Those who can overcome external threats can accomplish the perspectives of self-acceptance by means of following their own lifestyles away from the social restrictions that parents and social surroundings try to apply to them. The study reveals that Amar, Hadia, and Dana are strong characters who have achieved self-acceptance despite familial control. For instance, Hadia is portrayed as someone who lives contentedly with her decisions and finds peace by resisting her family's domination. Similarly, Amar demonstrates autonomy by distancing himself from patriarchal domination and embracing an American lifestyle, showing that family rejection holds little significance for him. These findings are explored more deeply across the study's three main chapters.

Keywords: Autonomy, Identity, Mindedness, Self-acceptance, Trust

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INTRODUCTION

Many writers have sought to explore these dimensions, revealing the interplay between internal emotions and external realities. Psychoanalysis, one of the most influential theoretical frameworks, offers a critical perspective for exploring human behaviour, development, and interaction. Originating from Sigmund Freud's work on the unconscious, psychoanalysis has evolved through the contributions of later thinkers like Erik Erikson and Jacques Lacan, who have incorporated social and developmental dimensions. As one of the most prominent approaches to understanding human behaviour, psychoanalysis delves into the unconscious mind and examines the stages of human development. This framework is particularly significant for analyzing human interactions, traumatic experiences, and behavioural patterns across different life stages. Moreover, its application extends beyond theoretical exploration to therapeutic practices, addressing various mental challenges, as noted by Dianna Kenny (2016).

Erikson's psychosocial theory, a critical evolution of Freud's foundational ideas, emphasizes how individuals navigate identity formation amidst external societal pressures. This study applies Erikson's concepts, such as 'Identity vs. Role Confusion' and 'Trust vs. Mistrust,' to analyze the themes of self-acceptance and autonomy in Fatima Mirza's *A Place for Us* and Tayari Jones's *Silver Sparrow*. By examining the interplay between patriarchal norms, cultural identity, and individual resistance, the study underscores how self-acceptance emerges as a response to external threats, revealing broader societal and psychological dynamics.

Building on Freud's foundational contributions to psychoanalysis, Henry Lothane (2006) emphasizes that the theory functions primarily as an investigative tool for examining unconscious behaviours (Lothane, 2006, p. 711). Freud (1856-1939) introduced groundbreaking ideas about human instincts as the primary drivers of behaviour, fundamentally challenging traditional views that saw humans as creatures of reason and logic. Instead, Freud (1908/1915) argued that instinctual drives and the unconscious—housing thoughts, feelings, and ideas beyond conscious awareness—play a critical role in shaping behaviour. This paradigm shift paved the way for new interpretations of human life and inspired subsequent thinkers to explore the human self and behaviour from diverse perspectives.

Freud is considered the godfather of the theory, particularly with his concept of the unconscious, which provides various predictions about human behaviour. Freud (1914) suggests that examining the notion of the unconscious is the cornerstone of psychoanalysis and the aiding agent of interpreting the self that produces certain behaviours under the effects of repression (Freud, 1914, p. 16). As suggested by Freud, the notion of the unconscious refers to the presence of thoughts, ideas, and feelings of which human beings are seen as unaware. To some levels, those feelings motivate, prevent, and direct or misguide human behaviour. The contents or meanings of the unconscious are consistently practiced and experienced through pain, suffering, deprivation, or prohibition. Consequently, Freud refers to repression to decrease the associated levels of guilty or anxious feelings. Mahroof Hossain (2017) asserts that Freud sees a mechanism of a part of the mind in the unconscious, which is vague because of the repression that remains a painful feeling in consciousness (Hossain, 2017, p. 42). He adds that Freud's psychological interpretations paved the way for later scholars like Lacan and others. Consequently, repression emerges as a tool to defend human beings. This reflects the effects of Freud on the development of branches of psychoanalysis. Many psychoanalysts have built their views on Freud's to deliver new and developed theories like trauma or postmodernist therapy.

Sandler et al. (1973) argue that the general aim of psychoanalysis as a theory is to strengthen and enhance the ego through increasing self-knowledge. Therefore, all types of psychological interpretations go under the job of the analyst, whose aim is to increase the awareness of his patients to be familiar with the repressed prospects of their minds. Pietro Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1986) asserts that the process that psychoanalysis deals with involves certain changes where the loss of control and danger of losing one’s identity, separateness, and wholeness are recognized clearly through human behaviour (Castelnuovo-Tedesco, 1986, p. 262). Such changes in human behaviour have been a source for the development of later psychological theories about the self and the social behaviours that it shows. Heinz Hartmann (1939) suggests that human beings need to live, interact, and survive both psychologically and physically in an environment with which they are already born to interact and recognize. This shows the social interests of psychanalysis, which presents itself as a social science which traces the social behaviour of the self. For Harry Sullivan (1953), psychoanalysis deals with human personality by

recognizing the aspects of the interaction between the self and those in the same environment.

The massive research in the field has led to the development of what Freud and his colleagues have constructed. Therefore, psychoanalysis has become a theory that is not limited to dealing with the human self alone. Moreover, it becomes interested in interpreting the self within society, and social issues have become essential parts of the theory, particularly with the emergence of psychoanalysts like Erik Erikson, who has built on the previous suggestions of the theory and developed many new concepts.

Psychoanalysis has always been interested in human behaviour within the social surroundings; therefore, the human self has been a fundamental issue for many psychoanalysts, who have produced many contributions in the field. Terry Eagleton (1996) clarifies that psychoanalysis has been a tool to understand conscious and nonconscious behaviours that result from the social forces applied to the self. In this regard, he comments on Freud's theory: "Where men and women were in the paralysing grip of forces which they could not comprehend, their reason and self-mastery shall reign." (Eagleton, 1996, p. 139). It is the human self that develops by the means of social drive and interaction. Moreover, Eagleton adds that "psychoanalysis as a medical practice is a form of oppressive social control." (Eagleton, 1996, p. 141). Therefore, psychoanalysis tries to clarify the prospects of social domination that certain social groups apply to others and how these social practices affect human psychology.

Furthermore, Eagleton deals with the human responses to the outer dominants and refers to Althusser's theories (1969) of ideology and social domination, where individuals control the state apparatuses. He compares the effects of that social domination to what Lacan has suggested in the mirror stage of human development and responses to the outer world. Eagleton comments that the relation of an individual subject to society as a whole in Althusser's theory is rather like the relation of the small child to their mirror image in Lacan's (Eagleton, 1996, p. 150). The development of the human self comes under many stages, depending on the human responses towards the society, which might cause pain or suffering to individuals because of applying specific norms on their characters. Eagleton sees in Freud's theory of psychoanalysis a social response that requires the avoidance of pain and the gaining of pleasure, which society

causes to individuals (Eagleton, 1996, p. 166). Thus, self-acceptance appears as a way of satisfaction that is motivated by the individual/to feel satisfied with the state in which they live.

Bernard (2011/2013) distinguishes between two different concepts: self-acceptance and self-esteem. The distinction appears according to the fact that self-esteem indicates personal judgement of the self and this judgement depends on comparing with others. On the other hand, avoiding taking things personally increases confidence and helps to change unrequired things. Human beings need to forget about failure as a continuous threat to their well-being or mental safety. This way, they might overcome depression and anxiety and feel calm and satisfied with the sort of life they lead. Such concepts of social identity are represented in Fatima Farheen Mirza's *A Place For Us* (2018) and Tayari Jones' *Silver Sparrow* (2011).

To fully grasp the significance of these findings, it is crucial to consider the novels' dual function as literary narratives and socio-cultural critiques. This study highlights the pervasive effects of social domination and the resilience required to overcome such external threats by juxtaposing the experiences portrayed in *A Place for Us* and *Silver Sparrow*. Both novels portray struggles for self-acceptance and identity development against patriarchal authority and societal constraints, offering a profound commentary on the universal human pursuit of autonomy and individuality.

Both novels explore how individuals navigate their self-worth and identity amidst cultural and familial expectations. Fatima Farheen Mirza, for instance, delves into these themes through her portrayal of an Indian-Muslim family in *A Place For Us*. Born in 1991 and raised in California by Indian immigrant parents, Mirza brings a deeply personal perspective to her work. A member of the Writers' Workshop and a Teaching-writing fellow, she achieved widespread recognition with her debut novel, *A Place For Us* (2018), which became an instant New York Times bestseller and has been translated into eight languages. The novel intricately depicts the experiences of a Northern Californian Indian-Muslim family grappling with cultural and religious expectations. Mirza constructs her narrative to examine the patriarchal domination of the father, Rafiq, who imposes strict cultural norms on his children, Amar and Hadia, as a means of maintaining control. In their struggle against these constraints, the siblings exemplify

the pursuit of self-independence and self-acceptance, themes central to Bernard's conceptual framework.

The other novel in this study is Tayari Jones' *Silver Sparrow* (2011). Jones was born in 1970 and raised in Cascade Heights, Atlanta, by her parents, Mack and Barbara Jones, who both participated in the civil rights movement in 1960. Jones's *Silver Sparrow* is her third novel that clarifies the delicate relationship between two families of the same man. Jones highlights the representations of bigamy and its influences on his family. Against the traditional and religious norms, the father has two women under his legal control. The American society socially and religiously forbids these marital practices. Therefore, the father must hide Dana, the second-marriage daughter, from society. Thus, the girl becomes a victim of losing the real identity of the father's family. Like Amar and Hadia, Dana tries to confirm her existence as a reality.

However, Fatima Mirza's *A Place for Us* depicts the development of the social identity of the Indian children of Rafiq, who live in the United States as Asian immigrants. Mainly, the depiction of Mirza puts forth the characters of Hadia, who rejects marrying conventionally according to the patriarchal norms of her father, who believes in the religious and social traditions of his country, and Amar, who seeks the stereotyping prospects of Western living. Like Mirza, Tayari Jones depicts the social domination of the father who wants to hide his second marriage. Therefore, his daughter Dana is obliged to live in the shade because of the fear of discovering the father's bigamy and cheating.

This study examines the impact of patriarchal, cultural, religious and traditional norms on the characters' experiences in both novels, focusing on the challenges of living in Western societies. It also adopts Erik Erikson's psychoanalytic framework to explore self-acceptance. Building on Freud's foundational theories, Erik Erikson expanded psychoanalysis to encompass social and developmental dimensions. His psychosocial stages offer a comprehensive perspective for examining how external societal pressures and internal psychological struggles shape identity and self-acceptance.

Erik Erikson (1902-1994) was among those who had deep theorizations about the development of the human self, which occurs on different levels or stages. In his *Childhood and Society* (1951), Erikson delivered a comprehensive and distinguished

analysis of human development according to social interactions and behaviours that seem vital in shaping the human personality. The concept of self-acceptance has gained its cultural significance as one of the aspects of human living under certain difficult circumstances and the constant pressure of the surroundings. He suggests that human personality needs stages to achieve the perfect constructions controlled by social interaction. To clarify his concepts of the psychological development of human personality, Erikson highlights the stages of that development in the form of dualisms that work together. For him, any psychological development starts with the prospects of Trust vs. Mistrust, which Erikson clarifies as the firm establishment of enduring patterns for the solution of the nuclear conflict of basic trust versus basic mistrust in mere existence is the first task of the ego, and thus first of all a task for maternal care (Erikson, 1951, p. 223-4). This is Erikson's first stage, which shows how early human relations that start within the family borders enable children to gain confidence in those who are active in their surroundings. In this statement, the child activates through the expectations of the family that have deep effects on his psychology. Erikson adds, "This forms the basis in the child for a sense of identity which will later combine a sense of being 'all right', of being oneself, and of becoming what other people trust one will become." (Erikson, 1951 p. 224). Thus, the family has a fundamental role in developing their children's positive and negative characteristics.

Furthermore, the existence of self-esteem is shaped by the prospects of Autonomy vs Shame and Doubt, which Erikson clarifies as "From a sense of self-control without loss of self-esteem comes a lasting sense of goodwill and pride; from a sense of loss of self-control and of foreign over control comes a lasting propensity for doubt and shame." (Erikson, 1951, p. 228). This reflects the role of the social surroundings in creating the firmness that, in turn, leads to individual autonomy in an environment that encourages him to stand on his own feet (Erikson, 1951, p. 226). Erikson adds that the dualism of Initiative vs. Guilt, which appears when parents allow their kids to investigate the world within reason, encourages their decisions, ambition, and responsibility in the child (Erikson, 1951, p. 230). This shows the guidance role of the parents in directing their children within their parents' scopes of the world. Erikson sees in this parental guidance a social behaviour that supports and increases self-observation, self-guidance, and self-punishment to create the psychological personality that can distinguish the

prospects of good and evil (Erikson, 1951, p. 230). Additionally, psychological development is seen through Erikson's clarification of the dualism of Identity vs. Role Confusion, which forms a sense of self that shapes the primary responsibility of adolescents (Erikson, 1951, p. 235). This reflects the individual feeling of the human being towards his existence by evaluating themselves according to their perspective. Consequently, positive evaluation of the self increases the standards of social satisfaction and self-acceptance.

The earlier psychosocial stages serve as foundational steps leading to Erikson's fifth stage, Intimacy vs. Isolation, which significantly influences the early stages of adulthood. This stage emphasizes the importance of forming intimate, meaningful connections with others, which are essential for psychological growth and emotional stability (Erikson, 1951, p. 237). Parallel to this, Erikson introduces the sixth stage, Closeness vs. Solitude, which underscores the balance between fostering close relationships and maintaining individuality. Failure to establish such intimate bonds often results in isolation, a state Erikson associates with a fear of ego loss, leading to self-absorption and emotional withdrawal (Erikson, 1951, p. 237). A lack of these psychological and emotional connections can culminate in the dualism of Integrity vs. Despair, which marks the final stage of Erikson's psychosocial development. This stage reflects on whether an individual finds fulfilment and meaning in life or succumbs to regret and dissatisfaction. Together, these stages provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the trajectory of human personality development, emphasizing the interplay between intimate connections and personal identity.

Building on this theoretical foundation, the study applies Erikson's psychosocial framework to analyze Fatima Mirza's *A Place for Us* and Tayari Jones's *Silver Sparrow*, vividly portraying the intersection of psychological development and societal constraints. These novels delve into critical themes such as patriarchal domination, cultural identity, and individual resistance, making them ideal for exploring how Erikson's stages unfold in different cultural and social contexts. Erikson's theory of psychological development has long been recognized for its versatility and is widely applied in various disciplines, including literature and education. For instance, Sun and Sun's (2021) study, *Research on Lifelong Education Based on Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory*, illustrates how the theory can illuminate the lifelong process of

education and identity formation, underscoring its relevance beyond the confines of literary analysis. The study praises Erikson's theory for covering all the stages of human life. It adds that the theory prevents human beings from being captured in their past. Instead, they can look into their future, making the theory possible to examine education in the family, school, and society. The findings show that human beings are in a continuous experience of education that covers all their life till death. All the educational stages aim to improve the quality of human beings and make them accepted by society.

Rawiadji and Limanta's (2021) study, Children's Picture Book Series on Exploring Children's Development of a Balanced Identity, utilizes Erikson's theory of psychological development to investigate identity formation in children. The research explores how illustrated books influence children's understanding of identity by addressing the causes of crises they face during development. The primary objective of this creative work is to shed light on how young children navigate and overcome these crises, ultimately building a balanced and resilient sense of self. The findings reveal that children who successfully confront and resolve developmental crises establish a strong foundation for subsequent stages of identity development.

Similarly, Suarni and Syafei's (2022) study, Seeking for Identity in the Novel Less (2017) by Andrew Sean Greer, employs a psychoanalytical approach to examine social identity formation. The study focuses on how the novel portrays themes of failure and resilience, emphasizing the protagonist's struggle to rebuild his identity after significant setbacks. By leveraging the psychoanalytical concept of instinct, the research uncovers the role of self-motivation in achieving personal growth and identity. The findings demonstrate that the protagonist's ability to rise above failure and avoid dwelling on traumatic memories showcases a compelling journey of overcoming social and identity crises.

Another study is Identity vs. Role Confusion: Exploring Identity in Arun Joshi's *The Last Labyrinth* by Snekhasri and Deepa (2023). The study has examined the notion of identity formed according to psychological complexities and difficulties in modem Indian society. Erikson's stage of Identity vs. Role Confusion examines the life of the main characters in the novel. It deeply highlights the social conflicts that the characters are forced to be involved in to meet their family expectations and their aims to acquire

their social identity. The findings indicate that identity, as a topic of social interest in Indian society, operates under two dimensions: the individual themselves and the society, which attempts to hinder their efforts to reconcile the socially conflicting prospects that burden them. Suraj's conflicts and later victory reflect the universal issue of social meanings and identity.

Building on such studies, this research focuses on the interplay between self-acceptance and social domination, particularly in how they shape the development of individual identity. By integrating psychological and social perspectives, this study offers a unique perspective to explore the resilience required to overcome external pressures. Through a comparative analysis of Fatima Mirza's *A Place for Us* and Tayari Jones's *Silver Sparrow*, the research highlights the nuanced portrayal of social domination in the works of both authors, shedding light on how patriarchal and societal forces influence identity formation and self-acceptance.

The main concepts deployed in the study are the external threats that try to hinder the ego from achieving the perspectives of the correct development because of the negative interference of others. Therefore, the notion of mindedness as a social threat is deployed to examine the features of the external threats on the main characters of both novels under study. For Mirza's *A Place for Us*, it is quite evident that the notion of mindedness that comes from the patriarchal domination of the father resembles the external threats that influence the development of the ego or the self of his daughters and son. As for Tayari Jones's *Silver Sparrow*, the same notion can be noticed in the father's domination of the life of Dana, who suffers from acquiring the perspectives of the strong ego due to the external threats of the father.

This study also incorporates Erikson's stages of psychological development, specifically "Identity vs. Role Confusion,""Trust vs. Mistrust," and "Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt." Erikson views these stages as presenting significant challenges in life as individuals strive to accomplish tasks and navigate opportunities for personal growth. Notably, these stages reflect the search for optimal conditions for success and self-acceptance. During adolescence, individuals typically seek to establish their uniqueness and create a distinctive life path, which contributes to developing their social identity. This social identity shapes their personal traits and influences their behaviour

within society. In this context, human beings can overcome external threats to build a healthy and resilient sense of self.

However, the notion of Identity vs. Role Confusion, which eventually leads to the healthy development of the ego and self, can be seen in both novels. For example, Hadia and Amar reject their father's domination and follow their lifestyle in the American community. This represents the ability to accomplish the perspectives of developing their identity away from the father's domination, which can be considered an external threat in the face of their independence. The same is seen in the life of Dana, who follows her lifestyle away from her father's restrictions and tries to keep her hidden with no identity.

Overall, the study prioritises showing the notion of human resistance to the external threats that threaten their ego development and prevent them from acquiring higher levels of self-acceptance. The study argues that self-acceptance results from prevailing external threats that encounter ego development. Those who can overcome the external threats can achieve self-acceptance by following their own lifestyles away from social restrictions.

However, the human ego is adaptable and evolves through internal and external conflicts. Therefore, the self can be changed and adapted according to the power of the conflict between the unconscious power that stems from the internal demands of the individual and the requirements of others that want to modulate and influence the behaviour and personality of that individual. Self-acceptance is the result of the internal power that enables the individual to have a strong ego, and the result is feeling satisfied with the accomplishments in life. All these psychological conflicts between the internal and external demands are the main concerns that both Mirza and Jones depict in their novels *A Place for Us* and *Silver Sparrow*.

The study is structured to build a comprehensive analysis progressively. The first chapter lays the groundwork by introducing the main theoretical frameworks: psychoanalysis, Erikson's psychosocial stages of development, and the concept of mindedness. It also provides an overview of the literary contributions of Fatima Mirza and Tayari Jones, contextualizing their works within broader sociocultural and psychological discussions. By establishing these theoretical foundations, the chapter

analyses the novel's identity formation and self-acceptance complexities.

The second chapter focuses on *A Place for Us*, exploring the patriarchal and cultural tensions within an immigrant family. It is purposefully concerned with analysing the perspectives of patriarchy and tradition that Rafiq uses against his children as an external threat that encounters the development of the children's identity and tries to prevent their self-acceptance. Instead, it deals with the opposing wills and the women's suffering.

The third chapter turns to Tayari Jones's *Silver Sparrow*: *Dana and the Complex of Bigamy*, focusing on the psychological impact of secrecy and societal marginalization. James, the father, conceals his second family, forcing Dana, his daughter, to live a life of partial recognition. It aims to examine the perspectives of social norms and bigamy, hiding identity and living with two families, and social satisfaction and accepting reality. Eventually, the conclusion provides the findings with further suggestions for later studies on the novels. The study concludes by synthesizing insights from both novels, emphasizing the universality of self-acceptance as a dynamic and evolving process. It highlights how Erikson's psychosocial stages provide a perspective for understanding the characters' struggles and growth, offering a broader narrative about the intersection of individual agency, psychological resilience, and societal expectations.

To bridge the literary gap between the texts, this study focuses on Mirza's *A Place for Us* and Jones's *Silver Sparrow*, aiming to deliver new contributions through the psychoanalytical perspective. Drawing on concepts of like-mindedness, external threats, and Erikson's psychosocial stages—Identity vs. Role Confusion, Trust vs. Mistrust, and Autonomy vs. *Shame and Doubt*—the study highlights the difficulties of integration in Western communities. Bigamy and patriarchy are explored as powerful external threats that hinder the psychological development of the characters, challenging their journey toward self-acceptance. External threats in both novels serve as fundamental obstacles to identity confirmation, forcing the main characters to confront societal and familial pressures. Amar, for instance, finds solace in embracing an American lifestyle, distancing himself from his family's patriarchal domination. Similarly, Hadia carves her own path, making independent decisions about her life and marriage. In *Silver Sparrow*, Dana faces a unique struggle, contending with her father's

secrecy and the societal rejection of her identity. Despite these challenges, all three characters exemplify resilience, achieving varying degrees of self-acceptance.

The exploration of self-acceptance in both novels underscores a broader discourse on the interplay between individual autonomy and societal pressures. By illustrating the psychological struggles of the characters, the narratives reflect deeper cultural dynamics. Both *A Place for Us* and *Silver Sparrow* reveal how cultural and social contexts impose constraints, shaping psychological development and the pursuit of identity. Together, these works emphasize the resilience required to overcome external pressures and achieve a sense of self amidst societal expectations.

Moreover, the psychoanalytic framework, particularly Erikson's stages of psychosocial development, provides a profound understanding of these dynamics by emphasizing the dualisms that shape human growth. The tension between individual aspirations and collective expectations is a theme in these novels and a universal aspect of the human experience. These stories invite readers to reflect on how societal constructs such as patriarchy, cultural norms, and familial expectations influence personal development and the capacity for self-acceptance.

This research makes a significant contribution to the field of psychoanalytic literary analysis by showcasing how literature provides a rich framework for examining the intricate process of identity formation. It emphasizes that self-acceptance is not a static achievement but an ongoing negotiation shaped by the dynamic interplay between internal desires and external pressures. This enduring theme transcends cultural and historical boundaries.

This study aims to explore the dimensions of self-acceptance as a response to social domination, emphasizing how this process contributes to the confirmation of identity for individuals. This research integrates the psychological and social factors shaping the lives of individuals navigating oppressive societal structures by investigating the interplay between psychological resilience and external pressures. In doing so, the study offers a comparative analysis of the novels *A Place for Us* by Fatima Mirza and *Silver Sparrow* by Tayari Jones, focusing on the mechanisms of social domination as depicted by both writers.

The importance of this study lies in its interdisciplinary approach, which combines psychological and social dimensions in literary analysis. Drawing from psychoanalysis as a foundation, the study incorporates key concepts such as mindedness, identity formation, and Erikson's developmental stages to offer a comprehensive framework. This innovative model broadens the scope of psychoanalytic literary studies, enabling a deeper understanding of the multifaceted influences on human behaviour and identity development. Furthermore, the research extends its relevance to the field of social studies by examining how psychological factors impact individual responses to external domination. Expanding the boundaries of psychoanalytic literary analysis, this study highlights how literature captures the complex relationship between psychological development and societal influences. Using Erikson's psychosocial theory, it explores how identity is shaped in response to external challenges, familial demands, and cultural constraints. Through an in-depth analysis of *A Place for Us* and *Silver Sparrow*, the research demonstrates the universal nature of self-acceptance as a continuous process influenced by both personal resilience and external factors. These narratives reveal that self-acceptance is an individual journey and reflects broader societal dynamics, underscoring the interconnection between personal autonomy and communal expectations.

This approach deepens our understanding of the psychological dimensions of literature and sheds light on the pivotal role of cultural and familial systems in shaping identity across diverse contexts. Ultimately, the study posits that literature is essential for examining the human experience, illustrating how individuals navigate the complexities of identity, belonging, and autonomy amidst societal and personal challenges. In doing so, it reaffirms the lasting importance of psychoanalysis as a bridge between psychological insights and sociocultural realities.

1. PSYCHOANALYSIS AND THE HUMAN SELF

The beginning of the 20th century marks the initial steps of developing psychological interests and psychological analysis as a new approach to examining literary texts. The contributions of Otto Rank, Alfred Adler, Carl Jung, and the ever-celebrated psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud have had a fundamental role in developing the psychoanalysis concepts that deal with human behaviours. However, the initial efforts of the theory can be traced as a method, which has been concerned with providing a therapy for certain human disorders by Freud. Later, the field was expanded to cover many areas related to human history and civilizations that contain perspectives of warfare, religion, mythology, and literature. According to the relation between psychoanalysis and literature, it can be noticed that psychoanalysis is used as an approach to interpreting fictional production under the light of the human personality and mind of the author and the characters as well.

Returning to the history or old roots of psychology, one can notice that psychoanalysis started due to the medical careers that have tried to examine the perspectives of disturbance in patients. Later, these concerns of shedding light on the disorders have been used to read literary production as an approach. Accordingly, the essence of the approach can be seen through the notion that human beings' behaviours are a domain for interpreting events in their lives. This same notion is suggested by Monte (1977), who argues that "Psychoanalytic theories assume the existence of unconscious internal states that motivate an individual's overt actions." (Monte, 1977, p. 8). Therefore, human behaviours resemble the main concerns of psychoanalysis.

Psychoanalysis as a theory owes much of its development to the pioneering efforts of Sigmund Freud (1859-1939). However, one of his later students, Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), has provided new insights into redirecting Freudian concepts to suit the perspectives of the social milieu that interprets human behaviour within social interactions. Consequently, Jung's efforts are considered the basic domain of dealing with human behaviours, as depicted in legends or myths.

A later change is seen in the development of psychoanalysis by Alfred Adler (1870-1937), who asserts that man is a social being who behaves according to the demands of his social surroundings. The same notion is shared by McConnell (1980), who asserts

that human beings are constantly motivated by their social demands: "We are self-conscious and capable of improving ourselves and the world around us." (McConnell, 1980, p. 250). In this context, human beings can develop themselves according to the views of the society where they live. Moreover, the later developments of the theory have produced the field of psychoanalytic therapy, which is identically concerned with the process of re-narrating an individual's life. Thus, the importance is seen in this process between the unconscious and the haunting thoughts. The approach shows that awareness presents a method to interpret human motives as depicted in literary texts on both levels: the writings and the character that moves according to the demands of that writing. Accordingly, psychoanalysis examines the relationship between meanings and the development of human identity due to the perspectives of both psychological and cultural domains. Psychoanalysis has had its significance according to the perspectives of curing mental disturbances by examining the interaction between both the conscious and the unconscious factors that affect human minds.

Historically, psychoanalysis has been developed to cover the contributions of Freud's and Lacan's theories, which are distinguished. While the Freudian theory resembles the early start of psychoanalysis, the Lacanian theory is considered a complementary effort to what Freud has suggested. However, Freud's psychoanalysis reflects a radically contemporary perspective that deals with the features of the abnormal behaviours during many stages of human development. In his The Interpretation of Dreams (1900), Freud argues that human neurotic behaviour is not by its so far goals meaningless or random. Instead, all human behaviours are goal-directed by the motives or the demands of satisfying the pleasure principles or the sexual desires of human beings (Freud, 1900, p. 260). Freud has reduced all human behaviours to the sexual demands or desires that reflect a kind of mental disorder when these desires are oppressed or prevented from being fulfilled.

In this regard, in his The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis (1978), Lacan deals with Freud's notion of the Oedipus complex and adds that the development of the human psyche is the result of the distinction between the human self and the outside world. More clearly, Lacan clarifies the role of imagination in developing the human psychological side. The early stages of the distinction between the human self and the outside world are the mirror stage Lacan sees in the initial feelings of the human self.

The later developments of the theory have shown new interests in the stages of the human development of the self. The early notions of Freud show that the newly born infant lacks life experiences and, therefore, has no independent ego or self. Accordingly, the role of the unconscious presents a domain in the psychoanalysis. Contrary to that, Daniel Stern (1985) presents a radical shift in the conceptualization of theory due to his suggestions that reject the essential roles of biological or instinctual desires in the development of human psychology.

However, Stern's theory reflects that the development stages of the human identity involve the sense of oneself. He asserts that when birth occurs, the infant has its emergent self that develops and results in the infant's self at two or three months (Stern, 1985, p. 38). Stern clarifies that four distinguished experiences help the human psychological development. The first experience that the individual shows goes through self-agency. In such feelings, the individual feels the authorship of their actions and lacks the same perspectives of domination of those actions conducted by others. The second experience is the self-coherence, which resembles the physical wholeness of the individual that is restricted by boundaries. Moreover, the third experience is self-affectivity, which reflects the perspectives of the human subjective experience that, in turn, reflects patterned styles of the inner qualities. The eventual experience that affects human psychological development is the self-history, which involves the perspectives of continuity and endurance that enable the individual to face the flows of changes and events in the individual's life.

Accordingly, the traditional thoughts about the start of the infant's life without any form of awareness or recognition of itself are no longer suitable in the modern age. The development of individuals starts with a weak ego-structure, which is by its nature vulnerable. Later, the weak ego might be changed to become more solid and less vulnerable. In this meaning, a healthy development of the human characters presupposes and involves a correct building up of the individual's self. Even though the self might usually become stronger when human beings become older, The poor ego has worse things: it serves three severe masters and does what it can to bring their claims and demands into harmony with one another (Freud, 1932, p. 77). This represents the role of the outside world that affects the super-ego. Furthermore, Freud proposes a specific psychological conflict triggered by the unconscious mind.

Therefore, the initial task suggested to accomplish the psychological development perspectives is building a strong ego structure. According to Anzieu (1989), the process of building up the strong ego involves human experience. He has provided a new conception about the development of the ego, suggesting a new approach to a psychic skin-ego. For him, the skin can be seen both as an organic part of the body and, at the same time, as an imaginary order of protection for the other parts of the body, such as the bones and muscles. This same notion is mentioned by Freud, who asserts that the ego is bodily created by its biological motives: "The ego is first and foremost a bodily ego; it is not merely a surface entity but is itself the projection of a surface." (Freud, 1932, p. 26).

The two fundamental domains in forming the skin-ego might be the function that the skin fulfils and the initial feelings of the infant's care. The skin-ego preserves the psyche since the caregiver enables the infant to experience the surroundings safely. Anzieu argues that when the skin ego is not acquired well, sexuality becomes a kind of traumatic experience because of the lack of security: "Sexuality is accessible only to those who acquired a minimum sense of basic security within their own skins." (Anzieu, 1989, p. 39). Accordingly, the lack of safety presents an individual's difficulty when they try to fulfil their bodily desires. Overall, human experiences work as agents that form the development of the human self, which is shown as a socially distinguished identity.

However, the main notion of the human self or the so-called identity represents not only a logical term that is used to represent self-understanding according to human experiences within the collective belonging. Rather, the concept of the self is repeatedly used in the common social sciences. Generally, the features of the human self or the social identity are developed within categories, groups, or social entities, where the classification is based on ethnicity, gender, age, and lifestyle. In this meaning, the fundamental discussions examining the human self and the development of identity include certain domains like political and social issues that determine how human beings live and interact. Both Alcoff (2006) and Connell (2006) assert that the development of the human self is a psychological process that is influenced by conflicts, affinity, or disturbances. In this meaning, the self is developed due to the perspectives of reasoning among the groups when the individual finds themselves forced to behave according to the collective norms or to compare themselves to others in their social surroundings.

Historically, the notion of the human self is among the potential of Freud's psychological theory, which has shown that the ego represents the self as an element of the human psyche. For Freud (1955), the ego reflects the defensive perspective of the neurotic conflict since it can be considered the place of the defensive mechanisms and the ultimate seat of signal anxiety (Freud, 1955, p. 116). Therefore, the human self is constituted by the prospects, including an internal split or division, resulting from a defensive process that the ego has installed. Moreover, Freud asserts that the ego is affected by the original emotions determining the relationship between the child and his parents, the earliest and original form of emotional tie (Freud, 1955, p. 107). Freud seems a pioneer in addressing the social influence of self-development by suggesting the external world and its direct influence on the ego that tries to convey the demands of the external world to make the human self adapt consciously to the requirements of that external world. Thus, the self is not a fixed material that follows assigned roles only. Instead, the human self is a changeable one since the defensive mechanisms of the ego can work to protect the self against the external requirements.

Freud's suggestions about the external role of influencing the human self have led many psychologists to deal with the notion that the external world has a main role in the development process of the self. Thus, the notion of psychological mindedness has appeared to reflect the role of others in developing the individual's self. However, the notion of the psychological mindedness is defined by Appelbaum (1973) as A person's ability to see relationships among thoughts, feelings, and actions, to learn the meanings and causes of his experiences and behaviour (Appelbaum, 1973, p. 36). In this light, such a definition shows how human experiences affect the development of the human self.

For Farber (1985), the application of mindedness resembles a trait which has at its core the disposition to reflect upon the meaning and motivation of behaviour, thoughts, and feelings in oneself and others (Farber, 1985, p. 170). Hence, the human behaviour of others is judged according to the individual's experiences and traditional beliefs. Erikson (1994) shares the same notion and asserts that children are affected by the determination of their parents, who want to direct their children and control their behaviours. This is one of the development stages of the human self.

The stage of maturity is Ego Integrity vs Despair, which represents the higher levels of human maturity and covers the later years of human life. Erikson (1994) has developed his notion about the last stage of psychological development by presenting the fear of death that, in turn, makes human beings confronted with the fearful expectation of dying and mortality. Typically, this stage carries the final judgement of life by the individuals themselves. They try to reflect on their life, whether it has been successful with big achievements or not. The psychosocial task for people under this stage is to build on their previous life experience to enrich their children and the next generation with the prospects of good living. In this stage, Erikson (1994) sees a way to confirm the individual identity as a leader or an important person to the family community. Consequently, those individuals try to examine and rethink their life choices to achieve a meaningful life.

Suedfeld et al. (2005) argue that humans accept their choices over a lifetime and try to avoid regretting them. They present themselves as a transitional agent for the next generation, depending on their long-life experiences. However, those who fail to achieve this stage well seem to be captured with regret about their life choices and their lost dreams. They prefer to be isolated from society because they consider it the main reason for their failure. In contrast, the success of achieving this stage is based on the way the society considers and views members. Those valued and praised by their society might have a satisfying life, and their end seems good.

Such a state is seen in collective societies that show great respect and regard for elderly people. Those people are considered the wise men of society, and their experiences are highly appreciated by their society and the next generations. Elderly people are the individuals who preserve the values of the society. The opposite view is seen in individualistic societies, as clarified by Gardiner and Kosmitzki (2011). These societies consider the elderly people a burden for the youth, who try to live freely out of the domination of the old generations.

Deveaux (1994) suggests that women in the patriarchal community are influenced psychologically due to the patriarchal domination of their lives. He adds that women suffer both physically and psychologically from the men's practices and demands to be a guide and supervisor on their behaviours, which affect their development of themselves. Therefore, they need to understand their experiences to get rid of the suffering that results

from male domination (Deveaux, 1994, p. 227). In this sense, women who can understand the demands of the external world are the strongest ones since their ego shows higher levels of resistance. Accordingly, their social identity develops correctly regardless of the attempts of the external world to dominate them.

In this regard, Lacan (1973/1998) deals with the perspectives of human self-development, suggesting the mirror role as a reflection of the external world and its influence on development. Accordingly, human experiences are potentials that affect the development of human beings. Like Freud, Lacan shows the role of desire as a motive that affects the self or identity. Instead, his conceptualization of the desire is not the individual's desire but the demands of others that want the individual to accomplish to feel satisfied. Accordingly, the self is affected by the levels of anxiety that appear as a result of the mental thoughts about what others want from me. Or how can I create satisfaction in them? For Lacan, when the individual feels that the demands of others are their control, the problematic anxiety becomes less and less, and the demands of others no longer threaten the human self. Hence, the demands of others make the ego feel both satisfactory and loved while interacting with others (Lacan, 1973/1998, p. 257). The individual's experience of the ego or the self is formed by identifying others' desires about the person. When the individual does not accomplish these requirements of others, or they do not reflect a satisfactory feeling, Lacan suggests a state of turning into alienation in society.

Consequently, the human self is the result and product of the interaction between the individual's perceptions of their internal thoughts and the representations that the external world presents on the individual. In this meaning, the self develops by testing realities about the situation through achieving adapted criteria between the individual and others. Fonagy and his companions (2002) assert that the individual might see the self as originally an extension of the experience of the other (Fonagy et al., p. 266). In contrast, Freud seems to take the opposite position. In this saying, the development of the self is determined by the features of the individual's detection of the social biofeedback that others provide the individual with (Fonagy et al., p. 221). Interaction with others presents a domain in the psychological development of the self.

Accordingly, the parental role seems essential to the early interactive procedures within the family. One of the notions Fonagy and his friends suggest is the realization of the unreal reactions resulting from the individual's internal thoughts. The perspectives of unreality result from the exaggerated thinking of the parents towards their children. Fonagy and his companions argue that there is a notable social gap that results from the attempts to have control that change the self into an alien self that is split from the other side of the individual psyche or the true self (Fonagy et al., 2002, p. 15). The result of the unbridged gap is acquiring a new identity that tends to defend the individual's demands of independence against others' threats.

In his Descartes (1986), John Cottingham clarifies many notions about the self, which is, for him, a substance known as the soul by which I am what I am (Cottingham, 1986, p. 115). In this regard, Bertrand Russell (1912) sees in the human self a complex notion because of the various thoughts that affect the human psychology. He argues that the human self is not any one idea because of the several impressions and ideas that demand connection to an existing reference in life (Russell, 1912, p. 251). Human experiences and/interactions with others dominate the general process of self-formation. Therefore, the self forms a system of different perceptions or different experiences, and all these experiences and psychological feelings seem connected directly to notions of cause and effect (Russell, 1912, p. 261). The results of such conscious feelings of the cause and effect are kept in the mind to form connections and logical sequences of incidents. Russell compares the human mind to a theatre, which allows the presence of several perceptions (Russell, 1912, p. 253). Thus, the human self and the social identity are formed due to the human perception of their life experiences with others. In this meaning, it is clear by means of the chain of causes and effects that the human self or person is formed (Russell, 1912, p. 262). It is the same idea as that of Heinz Kohut (1971), who asserts that the human self is not fixed and constantly changes because of different experiences, ideals, or ambitions. Therefore, the human self-changes to create a new identity according to the sort of life that each individual tries to achieve and the number of difficulties that stand in the face of achieving it.

In the same way, Henry Guntrip (1971) suggests that the human self or identity needs the restoration of psychic wholeness to preserve the safety of the individuals in their society (Guntrip, 1971, p. 94). His suggestions of the wholeness of the human self-have

met many a lot of criticism because that wholeness requires the human search for perfection, which is impossible. The completeness of human beings or their search for perfection is more emotional than logical. In this light, the human self can be judged by others, and the result of such judgement is how one feels about oneself. In other words, how individuals think about themselves is what psychoanalysts call self-acceptance, which shows the satisfaction levels about one 's life in a certain society.

Munfangati and Ramadhani (2020) deal with the notion of self-acceptance in literature and assert that it involves understanding oneself and a reasonable perception of one's strengths and weaknesses (Munfangati & Ramadhani, 2020, p. 222). Therefore, the self-acceptance aspects need the individual's own feelings about their character in society. For Elizabeth Hurlock (1974), self-acceptance can be categorized into two distinguished groups. The first group includes those individuals who recognize the good and bad inside themselves and act in society according to their own standards of satisfying behaviours. To a high level, they feel self-confidence and satisfaction while interacting with others because they judge themselves before being judged by others. Hurlock sees positive, free, optimistic behaviours in this kind of human that help the development of the self psychologically and socially. Contrary to that, Hurlock suggests that those individuals who need others to judge them lack the aspects of self-acceptance because they find themselves in fundamental need of others to accept them socially. The difference between the two types of individuals appears due to the priority of others in one's life. Those who feel higher levels of self-acceptance see others' acceptance as a secondary subject in their life because they can judge themselves before the interference of others in their own life. They live peacefully with others and accept others, while the other type lives isolated and fears the others' judgement.

Philip Bromberg (1996) comments on the classical way of dealing with the notion of the self and considers it lacking in the aspects of pragmatics. For him, self-acceptance can be fully understood through understanding the notion of the decentred self, one of psychoanalysis's main interests (Bromberg, 1996, p. 510). He clarifies that the prospect of the decentred demands one 's feeling of being a part of his surroundings. This same notion has already been shared by Theodore Sturgeon (1953), who argues that "As your parts know they are parts of you, so must you know that we are parts of humanity." (Sturgeon, 1953, p. 232). This saying shows the importance of others in one's life and that judging

the self is not a complete process without accepting society. Therefore, self-acceptance as a notion has dualistic features, namely, the satisfaction of the self and others. Sherry Turkle (1978) asserts that any individual is not by nature an autonomous self (Turkle, 1978, p. xxxii). This reflects a big criticism of the early interests of psychoanalysis that tries to deal with the patient by recognizing their areas away from their social existence. According to Turkle, the self cannot be examined, developed, or saved without the presence of the role of society in life. Human beings are social creatures; therefore, their experiences should be seen according to the perspective of where they live and who they interact with. Ignoring these aspects leads to misguiding interpretations of human behaviours.

Psychoanalysts like Fairbairn (1952), Sullivan (1953), Laing (1960), and Balint (1968) have shared the notion of the many personalities that each individual has according to their social experience. Each social situation requires a specific response, resulting from the repeated responses living with different personalities. For example, Sullivan argues that every human being has as many personalities as he has interpersonal relations (Sullivan,1953, p. 221). The deep research of various thinkers in the field of examining self-development and the aspects of human identity has led those thinkers to suggest that individuals' satisfaction levels affect their lives psychologically and socially. The prospects of self-awareness show the individual's ability to lead a specific life with good social interaction through good feelings of satisfaction about that individual's role in society. Walter Young (1988) argues that human beings interact with others well under normal conditions, increasing the levels of the integrating functions of the ego (Young, 1988, p. 35). For the young, social integration results from a normal life, where self-acceptance is increased through social stimuli. Consequently, dissociation in oneself presents how individuals accept themselves and preserve their coherent life and social integration.

Slavin and Kriegman (1992) argue that the aspects multiple versions of the self-exist within an overarching, synthetic structure of identity. (Slavin and Kriegman, 1992, p. 204). The evident fact about living with multiple versions of the self presents a social difficulty for the prospects of social integration that demands smooth relational interaction with others. The result of such integrative difficulties is that human beings suffer from identity diffusion and fragmentation. The lack of integration or social rejection leads to traumatic feelings about environmental failure.

Gunnar Karlsson (2016) argues that the old notions of the development of the self, which suggests that awareness is the initial procedure for the infant to undergo, are totally outdated. For him, self-development starts with a weak state of ego-structure, and this state becomes more solid in later life. Karlsson asserts that the development of the self-demands the prospects of healthy development. Even when the self naturally becomes stronger as the individual grows older, the psychological experiences still reveal something about the weaknesses of the ego. The same notion is mentioned by Freud (1932), who argues that "The poor ego has things even worse: it serves three severe masters and does what it can to bring their claims and demands into harmony with one another." (Freud, 1932, p. 77). What matters for Freud is the claims that come from the external world. This shows the role of the outer world in the development of the self. It illustrates the social demands as a vital component of the development process.

Michael Bernard (2011/2013) has been concerned with examining the notion of self-acceptance and the state of satisfaction that the individual feels about social living and interconnection. He sees self-acceptance as a feature of mental safety. For him, self-acceptance means a direct attitude towards recognising the incompleteness that all human beings share and being satisfied with that feeling. Normally, all human beings might commit mistakes and accomplish achievements in life. The recognition of such fact involves the feeling of accepting mistakes and seeking correctness for them. Naturally, human beings have the sense of judging their actions and finding the mistakes in their characters. Hence, self-acceptance reflects a personal procedure that urges the individual to criticize their behaviours before being criticized negatively by others in the society. The result of that criticism is a continuous change for the self, which develops by the large amount of personal criticism that leads to eventual happiness and satisfaction. Bernard adds that self-acceptance does not present a justification or personal excuses for inappropriate or bad behaviours. Instead, self-acceptance forms a correct way for realistic evaluation, which makes an individual avoid being defeated by recurrent personal mistakes.

Erik Erikson has been an influential psychoanalyst whose general efforts have concerned the development of the human self. His theoretical framework, which illustrates many concepts of human beings, represents a new form of research in the field of psychoanalysis. His psychological contributions shed light on the possible means or the

significant ways that enable young children to negotiate their early lives. Jacobus Maree (2021) clarifies that the prospects of the development of the human being need to be seen through an inclusive humanistic and phenomenological perspective and not only through a psychosexual and mechanistic perspective as suggested by many psychoanalysts (Maree, 2021, p. 2). This represents the social elements in the development of the self, which cannot be achieved by examining human beings separately from their social circumstances.

Many critics argue that Erikson's theory of psychosocial development (1968) forms a vast framework that helps study how humans develop and acquire their social identity. Accordingly, Erikson's theory is not limited to the early years of development. Instead, it includes an entire life duration since his psychosocial theory represents the role of education and social relationships in constructing and sustaining the human identity in different periods of the individual's long life, as clarified by Maree, a paradigm shift in global perspectives on the construct of personality (Maree, 2021, p. 2). Such global perspectives of Erikson's contributions to the field of psychoanalysis reflect the international importance of the theory of psychological development.

Erikson (1963/1968) has illustrated many notions of the development of human psychology and acquiring social identity. Many critics see Erikson's suggestions about human identity as a revolutionized effort that has shifted psychoanalysis from traditional views into dealing with the social life of individuals. Erikson depends on epigenetics as a field for his studies to clarify his notions of the stages of human development. Kerpelman and Pittman (2018) assert that Erikson's contributions concern the development of human identity, a continuous process throughout life (Kerpelman & Pittman, 2018, p. 311). The stages of human development represent how human beings develop psychologically and socially according to their psychosocial crises, which affect the process of developing the self or the identity negatively.

Erikson depends on how much care the infant receives during his early years to form its main psychological feelings of trust in the surroundings. When those feelings of care are lost because of the neglect of the infant's demands, it changes to lose faith, leading it to be anxious since its main feelings become mistrusting others and suspecting them. Accordingly, an infant's psychosocial role is to seek certain levels of trust in those in the

surroundings who play the role of the caregivers. Consequently, this initial stage of human life reflects the role of the surroundings in bringing security into the human self and sustaining that security through supporting human beings and providing for their demands. Suedfeld et al. (2005) argue that this initial stage of human life is featured by establishing a required feeling of safety. The feeling of safety for the human being is essential since it represents the first response of the outer world towards that human being. At the same time, positive responses represent the early healthy psychological feeling towards the world. In contrast, the feelings of lack of security in the world represent the first failure for human beings to create bonds and connections with others. The result of that failure is isolation, which, in turn, affects the healthy psychological development of human beings. Those who fail to connect well with others in this stage seem unable to communicate easily later in life since they suspect and fear others. The initial stage of life reflects the communicative abilities of human beings since it forms their first interpretation of the world from them. The caregivers' reactions to the infant's needs and demands determine the successful prospects of healthy development of the human self and influence the positive behaviours in mastering life crises and positively dealing with them.

The second stage of psychological development that Erikson (1950) suggests is Autonomy vs Shame and Doubt, which lasts two years from the second year to the fourth one. It is the stage in which the infant needs to gain a separate feeling of the self and complete control of their competencies to achieve their independence through developing their own will. The successful and perfect fulfilment of this stage leads to self-esteem. Now, human beings can find out about their social environment independently and without permission or interference from their caregivers. Instead, this stage is featured by the individual attempts to control and master the outer world and their physical reactions and responses towards it. Those who fail to achieve higher levels of body control independently produce a weak dependence, self-worth, or evaluation, and above all, a lack of self-esteem. Gardiner and Kosmitzki (2011) argue that societies like Western ones, which are individualistic societies, increase children's abilities to be more self-independent.

The next stage covers the period between 4-5 years old and is featured by the complete tasks the child conducts independently. The process of exploration of the self's abilities also characterizes it. This way, the child seems able to develop their determination

to achieve goals in life. According to Erikson (1950), human beings learn and develop abilities by taking initiative in life and trying something new. The result of the continuous attempts towards success is that guilt modulates human behaviour towards correction and perfection. Along the same line, Suedfeld et al. (2005) assert that to achieve general goals in life, the child competes with others. The competitive nature is the way to avoid guilt and the trigger for taking brave steps in life. Regarding the social perspectives, the competitive nature plays a vital and fundamental role in determining the leadership aspects of the human character because competition distinguishes between human abilities. Erikson (1950) sees that this stage shows a closeness of the child to one of his parents, always the same-sex parent. Instead, the connection is not limited to one of the two parents but also the whole family. However, certain failures in this period of life might lead to, enhance, and strengthen the deep feelings of dependency, recognizing the poor self, and above all, having poor judgment of materials and life. Despite the failure that accompanies certain attempts in life, this stage provides the child with a good chance to learn about their role in society. In this meaning, failure represents the first step for the child to accept themselves and to interact with others well and independently. For Gardiner and Kosmitzki (2011), similar to the second stage of self-development, the third stage, as designed by Erikson, shows the possible ways for the child to overcome problems and resolve crises independently. This resembles the child being ready for complete separation from their caregiver. The evident notice of the child's behaviour in this stage shows their interest in family life and concerns.

The fourth stage, which spans six to twelve years of ageing, is featured in the prospects of personal power because the child develops their abilities to accomplish certain tasks and achievements perfectly. Despite the prospects of independence that the child acquires in the previous stage, Erikson (1950) suggests that praising and encouraging are significant in increasing the human independence in this period. Suedfeld et al. (2005) illustrate that this stage is featured by the new search for task completion and mastery of those tasks and problems that the child encounters. During this period, new desires developed, like school competitions and athletic achievements. The main problem for the child's psychological development in this period is the lack of confidence. Erikson (1950) manifests that children in this stage are either leaders or followers of others in the society. The child can now understand society's social life by recognizing the norms. Furthermore,

the child interacts with others according to the expectations of their peers, who influence the child's life and lead them towards certain social tasks. Consequently, the child starts to feel the talent, which, in turn, enables them to live away from the peer group.

Generativity vs Stagnation is the seventh stage, which forms the human complete adulthood and covers 40–65 years of age. It is featured in the ability to care for the human self and others. Clearly, people in this stage do not seek a return of care or love that they show to others, as manifested by Erikson (1950). Human beings often have a sense of purpose and meaning in life in a developed way to previous stages. The prospects of purpose and meaning can be seen through the human demands of having children and caring for them. What matters for people in this stage is to create and convey their living legacy to their children. Suedfeld et al. (2005) see that in this stage, human engagement in certain activities promotes moral judgment and goodwill to be integrated positively into society. The main problem at this stage is the lack of caring for others and the incline to be self-centred without good social interconnection. Hence, individuals tend to be isolated with narrow social views because they do not achieve their psychological tasks well. However, this stage has not received big concern from critics since it is featured with cross-cultural interests. Instead, it is evident that isolation opposes the collective or plural spirit that individuals cannot achieve their good aspects of living without.

Erikson's theory of development has received both significant praise and criticism. For example, Elkind (2015) argues that Erikson was torn between two distinct perspectives while developing his psychological theory of development: the influential views of Anna Freud and those of his wife.

Meanwhile, Anna Freud tried to convince him to focus on human emotions and thoughts when human beings are isolated and reject society's integrative aspects. Erikson's other views were those of his wife, who emphasized emotional challenges arising from social experiences and circumstances.

However, these distinguished views have their influence on what Erikson claims in terms of social identity and integration. However, the opposed views that Erikson represents form a problematic issue for many critics who have been concerned with psychoanalysis in general. On the other hand, Erikson's psychological theory is praised for bringing in new concepts, such as the shift from psychosexual aspects that Freud has been

concerned with to advanced notions of psychosocial aspects of human experiences as asserted by Horney (1945), who clarifies the importance of sociocultural aspects and factors in human life, adulthood in particular. Syed and Fish (2018) assert that Erikson's theory is a perfect framework for psychoanalysis since it covers all the stages of human life.

2. FATIMA MIRZA'S *A PLACE FOR US: PATRIARCHY ANF INTEGRATION CRISIS IN THE WEST*

2.1. Patriarchy and Tradition against the Demands of Integration

Fatima Mirza's *A Place for Us* is a novel that delves into the complexities of family, identity, and belonging. Set against the backdrop of an Indian Muslim family living in the United States, the story unravels through multiple perspectives, shedding light on the struggles and joys of each member. At its core, the novel explores how cultural and religious traditions shape the family dynamics, particularly under the influence of the father, Rafiq, and how these traditions collide with the challenges of living in a Western society. The narrative intertwines love, loss, and reconciliation themes, offering a poignant exploration of what it means to find one's place in a rapidly changing world.

Mirza's *A Place for Us* provides the notion of tradition and patriarchal domination because of the influence of the father, Rafiq, who leaves India to live as an immigrant in the United States. He carries with him the traditional teachings of the Muslim Indians and tries to teach his family how to live and act under his patriarchal authority. Despite their living in one of the Western communities, the Muslim Indians' principles still exist in their life because of the father, who has assigned himself as the keeper of the family. His attempts are dedicated to separating his family from the Western community. Thus, the struggle between the family members starts due to the severe views of the father that are no longer suitable for the family that seeks integration in the United States.

The very beginning of the novel represents the existing conflict between the family members and the father. Hadia chooses to marry regardless of her father's consent, who suggests that the suitable way for a girl to marry is to follow the choices of her fathers. Thus, Rafiq believes in an arranged marriage, where girls have no right to choose their husbands. Mirza represents the perspectives of family conflict as Hadia and Rafiq saw as "What she had not even dared to believe possible for her was coming true: marrying a man she had chosen for herself." (Mirza, 2018, p. 4). Accordingly, the Muslim Indian representation of patriarchal domination is represented by Mirza as a domain in the life of Rafiq's family since the father refuses to allow his daughters to be integrated into the community to prevent any interaction between them and the other males in the American community. Consequently, Hadia and her sister suffer from the patriarchal domination in

the host country. Rafiq seems too far away from the other members of his family, and he refuses to discuss any issues related to the family with them.

However, the patriarchal practices of Rafiq represent his psychological mindedness, which is defined by Appelbaum (1973) as A person's ability to see relationships among thoughts, feelings, and actions, to learn the meanings and causes of his experiences and behaviour (Appelbaum, 1973, p. 36). In this light, such a definition shows how human experiences affect the development of the human self due to the practices of Rafiq and his attempts to apply his life experiences to his family. The conflict between him and the other members has become evident, and his son Amar leaves home to live by himself, away from the patriarchal teachings of his father.

At her wedding, Hadia, defying her father's will, decides to invite Amar to her wedding party after his years-long estrangement from the family. Amar's decision to live freely away from his father stems from Rafiq's treatment of him as a child, grounded in patriarchal values influenced by Indian Muslim traditions. These traditions prevent Rafiq from allowing his children to fully integrate into American society. This aligns with Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital, where patriarchal authority acts as a mechanism for preserving cultural norms within immigrant families, often at the cost of personal freedom (Bourdieu, 1984). Mirza illustrates Hadia's suffering under patriarchal domination through her internal conflict: "On the day she told her parents she would invite him. She had not allowed herself to pray, Please God, have him come, but only, Please God, let my father not deny me this" (Mirza, 2018, p. 4). The quote reflects how patriarchal control imposes psychological burdens, as Hadia's fear of her father's rejection symbolizes the suppression of agency within familial hierarchies. This aligns with Butler's concept of gender performativity, where patriarchal systems enforce rigid gender roles that dictate women's behaviour (Butler, 1990).

Patriarchal domination extends to the exclusion of women within the family. For Rafiq, daughters are denied the right to participate in discussions about family matters. Mirza highlights this exclusion: "Huda looked briefly hurt, she didn't ask Hadia to share what she was, and always had been, excluded from" (Mirza, 2018, p. 5). This exclusion reflects Spivak's concept of epistemic violence, where women's voices are systematically erased from spaces of authority and decision-making (Spivak, 1988). The psychological

suffering caused by this exclusion stems from Rafiq's belief in the subordinate role of women, as reflected in his interactions with his daughters. For instance, Rafiq's imposition of religious practices highlights his perception of male authority in maintaining family dignity: "Baba?"

"Hm."

"Do you think I should start wearing a scarf?"

"I think that you should. It would be good if you did. And it is wajib on you now, you know. It would be a sin not to." (Mirza, 2018, p. 82).

This interaction showcases how patriarchal ideologies rooted in religious interpretations are used to justify controlling women's autonomy. Scholars such as Kandiyoti (1988) have explored how patriarchal systems exploit cultural and religious frameworks to enforce male dominance, viewing such behaviour as a protective measure for family integrity. Rafiq embodies the archetype of the patriarchal father, leveraging his authority to dictate his daughters' lifestyle choices. His rigidity results in a social conflict that permeates the family dynamics, as seen in Amar's departure. Amar's rebellion against Rafiq's control reflects a rejection of patriarchal laws: "A family that wanted him to change who he was, to become a respectable man who obeyed his father's every word, and followed every command given by his father's God. Or what it was like to live with the knowledge that his father would disown him if he found something as harmless as a packet of cigarettes under his mattress. To not have that kind of love. To not even believe in it" (Mirza, 2018, p. 85).

This quote exemplifies the intergenerational conflict caused by patriarchal domination, where the father's harshness alienates his son and destabilizes familial bonds. Theoretical insights from Hegel's master-slave dialectic emphasize how oppressive systems, like patriarchal control, ultimately lead to resistance and the breakdown of authority structures (Hegel, 1807). Huda's critique of Rafiq further demonstrates how the father's inability to tolerate dissent fosters emotional and psychological suffering within the family. Rafiq's authoritarian role as the "master" who demands complete obedience highlights the destructive nature of patriarchal domination, which undermines both familial harmony and individual autonomy. According to Farber (1985), the application of mindedness resembles a trait which has at its core the disposition to reflect upon the

meaning and motivation of behaviour, thoughts, and feelings in oneself and others (Farber, 1985, p. 170). Accordingly, the human behaviour of others is judged according to one's own experiences and beliefs. This same notion is shared by Erikson (1994), who shows parents' determination to direct and control their children. This is one of the development stages of the human self. The stage of maturity is Ego Integrity vs Despair, which represents the higher levels of human maturity and covers the age of later years of human life. Erikson (1994) has developed his notion about the last stage of psychological development by presenting the fear of death that, in turn, makes human beings confronted with the fearful expectation of dying and mortality. Typically, this stage carries the final judgement of life by the individuals themselves. They try to reflect on whether their life has been successful with big achievements. The psychosocial task for people under this stage is to build on their previous life experience to enrich their children and the next generation with the prospects of good living. Erikson (1994) sees this as a way to confirm the individual's identity as a leader or an important person to the family community. Consequently, those individuals try to examine and rethink their life choices to achieve a meaningful life. Suedfeld et al. (2005) argue that human beings accept their choices over a lifetime and try to avoid regret about that. They present themselves as a transitional agent for the next generation, depending on their long-life experiences. However, those who fail to achieve this stage well seem to be captured with regret about their life choices and their lost dreams. They prefer to be isolated from society because they consider it the main reason for their failure. In contrast, the success of achieving this stage is based on the way the society considers and views members. Those valued and praised by their society might have a satisfying life, and their end seems good. Such a state is seen in collective societies that show great respect and regard for elderly people. Those people are considered the wise men of society, and their experiences are highly appreciated by their society and the next generations. Elderly people are the individuals who preserve the values of the society. The opposite view is seen in individualistic societies, as clarified by Gardiner and Kosmitzki (2011). These societies consider the elderly people a burden for the youth, who try to live freely out of the domination of the old generations.

Mirza depicts the familial conflict between Rafiq's two attitudes and those of his family. It can be noticed evidently that the old immigrant generation has come to the United States with the Muslim Indian traditions, and the second generation is attracted by

the Western perspectives of lifestyle that enable children to behave freely. The prospects of the existing conflict have been triggered by Rafiq, who is haunted by the tradition of the authority of the father. As a Muslim Indian man, Rafiq still believes in the fundamental male role in the community. Contrary to his determination to keep his children under his scope and supervision, they try to achieve certain perspectives of social integration in the American community that seem attractive to them because it grants them liberation from the patriarchal authority of the conservative thoughts and norms of the father. Consequently, Rafiq does his best to prevent them from achieving social interaction or communication with others. He fears that his daughters might commit mistakes because of the integration since that integration provides them with a chance to have male interaction, which is totally unacceptable for him. He clarifies his beliefs about social integration "There is no chance of my daughter going to a party where there will be dancing and boys present." (Mirza, 2018, p. 98). Thus, Rafiq has assigned himself as the sovereign or the protector of the family that should follow his orders to be safe in the host community. Rafiq cannot forget about his patriarchal role. Therefore, he seems upset with his daughter Hadia, who insists on having a husband according to her own choice. Rafiq blames her because she is the elderly daughter and her sisters consider her a model for their life, as seen in the following:

> Look at the example you are setting for your brother and sister. The way you are behaving tonight. How many times have I told you, Hadia? If you are good, they will be good. If you are bad, they will follow you—more than they will ever follow my example (Mirza, 2018, p. 98).

Rafiq expresses his resentment towards his daughter because she has broken the patriarchal rule of him. Moreover, he prevents his children from escaping his authority and domination. In this context, Hadia is severely blamed for spoiling his strategies of preserving the family under his orders and control. Rather, Rafiq does not accept the behaviours of his children that are considered by him a kind of violation of his world. It is the tradition that Rafiq believes in and suggests the parents' righteousness in arranging their children's lives. However, his wife Layla is another example of a woman suffering because of patriarchal domination, as she manifests in the following when her parents

force her to marry a man that she does not know about:

> I married when my parents said it was time to marry. I prayed almost every single prayer. Even the ones I missed I made sure to make up later. I never said no to my parents. Not once, not even 'uff.' They said he lives in America. I said, whatever is your wish, whatever you say is best. "I could have gone—like you—to more school and more school. I could have said this is my life. This is my room. My privacy. My business. "I did not get one job. Your baba said, 'If I can support you, Layla, why don't you stay at home with the kids?.' (Mirza, 2018, p. 180).

Unlike her children, Layla is deeply affected by the Muslim culture and tradition. She seems passive in the novel because she has the only limited role in life: being a housekeeper. She accepts that role because she is under the domination of the patriarchal norms of her family. In this sense, the Muslim Indian women are misbehaved and considered the second rank gender that requires the domination of man and his guidance. Consequently, Layla and her daughters have become victims of the patriarchal practices that have affected them psychologically and turned them into weak creatures who cannot do anything without the guidance of Rafiq. Eventually, Rafiq reaches the final stage that Erikson (1994) suggests as Ego Integrity vs Despair by means of his patriarchal beliefs that have put him under the control of the traditional thoughts of guiding children to follow his life experiences, which represents the higher levels of human maturity and covers over the age of later years of human life.

2.2. Psychological Suffering and Resistance

Identity vs. Role Confusion is another stage of human psychological development, which has been suggested by Erikson (1994). Erikson sees in this stage a form of a challenging perspective of life because human beings try to accomplish tasks when possible. The key point is that this stage represents the search for the best opportunities to make life achievements. Adolescents usually try to establish their uniqueness and distinguished life to develop a social identity, which forms the personal features and the way they behave in society. Suedfeld et al. (2005) comment on this stage and illustrate how dangerous it is for a human being to feel fragmentation of the self after failures in

making achievements in this stage or after feeling the lack of acceptance by the peer group. This leads to severe psychological suffering when human beings are prevented from achieving their goals. Erikson (1994) suggests that the social and psychological identity development involves the prospects of the autonomous search and exploration of the self.

For many critics, this stage neglects the ethnic identity, which is significant for the cultural recognition of the human being. Thom and Coetzee (2004) suggest that cultural and ethnic identity is formed during this sensitive and critical developmental period of human life. They highlight the fact that marginalized groups of people tend to confirm and prove their identity through their cultural heritage. This is the same for Rafiq, who feels that his cultural identity should not vanish in the new country. Thus, he attempts to preserve his cultural identity by the means of bringing up his children according to his own beliefs. However, the case is different for his children, who seem attracted to the Western style of life in the American community.

Deveaux (1994) asserts that the psychological suffering of women in the modem era has been due to patriarchal domination. Therefore, women start to reject the perspectives of man domination and his recurrent attempts to exile them from their social role "This power paradigm has proven particularly helpful for feminists who want to show the diverse sources of women's subordination as well as to demonstrate that we engage in resistance in our everyday lives." (Deveaux, 1994, p. 231). In this regard, women have turned to form their social identity in order to preserve the psychological safety that the oppression of men has influenced. On the same line, Mirza depicts the perspectives of oppression and punishment in her *A Place for Us*.

It is Rafiq who dominates and psychologically affects his family because of his unjustified or unwarranted fears that stem from his religious principles or his rejection of cultural integration. Mirza describes how religious domination has burdened the life of the family in the United States. The psychological suffering of the girls is depicted by Mirza by showing the anxiety of Hadia, who fears the responses of her father when she decides to marry what she had not even dared to believe possible for her was coming true: marrying a man she had chosen for herself (Mirza, 2018, p. 4). Hadia feels psychologically fragmented between the will for liberation and the opposing attitudes of her father, as he considers women to have no right to express opinions on matters like marriage.

Furthermore, the suffering of fragmentation is seen in the character of Hadia when she decides to invite Amar to attend her wedding party. The girl seems afraid of the harsh father because she recognizes that he might not tolerate such activity. Her mind has become haunted by anxious feelings because she expects to receive a harsh punishment from her father.

Mirza depicts another example of the psychological suffering of the character of Amar. Amar lives in the Western community and finds the perspectives of the American lifestyle suitable for him. Being encountered with the domination of his father, Amar feels totally fragmented due to his psychological conflict. He wants to enjoy liberty and live as he likes in American society, a thing that is totally rejected by his father, who suggests the Muslim Indian lifestyle is the best for him. Accordingly, the conflict between Rafiq and Amar has increased, and eventually, Amar rejects being dominated by the norms of his father. Mirza depicts the prospects of the Muslim Indian lifestyle that Amar rejects as follows:

> A family that wanted him to change who he was, to become a respectable man who obeyed his father's every word, and followed every command given by his father's God. […] To not have that kind of love. To not even believe in it (Mirza, 2018, p. 85).

Rafiq is an example of a Muslim Indian man who activates according to his religious knowledge. Instead, he wants other members of his family to follow the same knowledge. Mirza depicts the perspectives of resistance through Amar and Hadia's characters since both are not satisfied with the father's domination and his attempts to burden them. For example, the representations of resistance to Rafiq's principles are seen by means of Amar's rejection of what his father has imposed upon him as respectable behaviours. When Amar cannot stand his father's restrictions indoors, he prefers to leave the family to live free from the domination of the Indian traditions. Like Amar, Hadia rejects the arranged marriage that her father tries to impose upon her and decides to marry the man she has been in love with, regardless of her father's consent. Thus, both Amar and Hadia represent their revolt against their father. To a great extent, this represents the challenging perspectives of the psychological development of identity that Erikson (1994) suggests. Hadia has achieved the perspective of resistance; the ultimate result is that she

has acquired her new identity as a liberated girl in American society. Hence, she breaks away from her father's strategies to define the course of her own life, as clarified by Mirza in the following: The map of her life would never extend beyond the few places her parents dragged her to. She was fifteen already, and soon she would be eighteen; she might attend a local university or community college, but either way, a proposal would come (Mirza, 2018, p. 102). Hadia opposes the map of her parent's life that they have determined or assigned her to follow. She is totally against her parents' arranged marriage. The same is true of Amar, who has achieved social development through social integration in American society.

Another feature of the psychological suffering in the novel is expressed by Hadia, who sees in her mother a model of the oppressed woman in the Muslim Indian community. She is totally dissatisfied with the way her mother lives. She sees in her surrendering acceptance of her husband, Rafiq, a mistreating prospect that each woman in their native community suffers from. For this strict reason, Hadia fears being a wife that her role is only to give apologies to her husband "She does not want it to be Mumma. She has begun to expect nothing of Mumma, who would only make her apologize to Baba." (Mirza, 2018, p. 102). Hence, Hadia rejects the weak role of woman that the patriarchal community suggests and praises. In the same line, she criticizes her mother for accepting such a surrendering role in the family. Women should have their own right to provide a heard voice in the community because men have caused them much psychological suffering due to their harsh practices and illogical behaviours against them. Deveaux (1994) asserts that women in the patriarchal community physically and psychologically suffer from the men's practices. Therefore, they need to achieve an understanding of their experiences. In order to eliminate the suffering that results from male domination (Deveaux, 1994, p. 227). Thus, Hadia represents herself as a model of a resisting woman who overcomes her social sufferings and works hard to liberate herself against the father, who considers his daughter a weak creatures and not have the ability to act independently in the community, as seen in the following:

> As if marriage were the ticket, not to freedom exactly, but something close to it. Even Baba doubted her ability to make decisions for herself by stating: you are our responsibility until you are your husband's. Or: no, you cannot do so unless you are

married, and then it is up to your husband to decide with you(Mirza, 2018, p. 125).

The psychological suffering is quite evident due to the practices of Rafiq, who does not accept any kind of independence for them. Hadia, her sisters, and her mother all suffer from their father's practices. Identity vs. role confusion Erikson (1994) suggests that Hadia, who seeks to create her own identity, achieves an essential development stage and does not accept domination and suppression from whoever. She has turned her life into a kind of achievement by the means of deciding on the way she prefers to live and to get rid of her suffering as a suppressed woman in the family.

The same perspective of resistance to the father is seen in the character of Amar. Amar has suffered a lot because of his father. In the end, Amar has become a brave man who can encounter his father and reject his behaviours in the new community. He criticizes the way his father dressed and appeared in the American society. Therefore, he tells his sisters to inform his father that this country does not suit patriarchal people like his father: "But Baba did nothing to change his own appearance. […] It would be no different than his sisters taking off their scarves. Amar tells them they told him to go back to his country." (Mirza, 2018, p.117-19). This represents the resisting role against the domination of the father.

Furthermore, the psychological suffering is represented in the novel because of Layla, who tries to enhance the separation between her children. All her efforts are dedicated to dealing with her son, Amar, as the best in her family, neglecting the psychological suffering of the daughters of her practices. However, it is quite evident that the Indian tradition has classified families, suggesting that the superiority in the family is the males, while girls are treated as inferior children. Males have the right to inherit all properties of the family. Contrary to that, daughters are always excluded and exiled because they are not males. Even Indian mothers neglect their daughters, and this causes them much psychological suffering and prevents them from achieving their independent identity in the community. In the same meaning, Layla is closer to Amar; Mumma always says to Amar, mera beta, my son, but never says meri beti to Hadia or Huda, as though daughters are unworthy of being called mine. (Mirza, 2018, p. 159). Rafiq and Layla form the Indian Muslim thoughts that believe in the traditions of their community. Mirza shows that the separation between Rafiq and his children, Amar and Hadia, is the result of their

psychological suffering from his domination. Such suffering results from the father's beliefs. Rafiq considers his religious norms, values, and principles more important than caring for his children and dealing with them well. Mirza depicts the suffering of the Indian Muslim children in the American community because of the traditional norms that their parents have brought with them from their native country. This has prevented their children from integrating into the American community. Those fathers are depicted as tyrants who do not care for the psychological safety of their children in the new Western countries. She knows her father. His pride, his values, his adherence to the religious rules. They are more important than love. More important than loyalty to one's child. (Mirza, 2018, p. 178). Such tyrant practices have pushed Amar and Hadia to live isolated from their father to achieve higher levels of ego and independence.

2.3. Achieving Self-Acceptance

Self-acceptance is among the psychological features of satisfaction that human beings achieve in their community. According to McCallum and Piper (1996), the perspectives of the mindedness show how human beings overcome hurdles in life and achieve success by developing their defensive abilities. These achievements in life can result from lessening the stress in human life. Individuals with higher levels of mindedness seem psychologically flexible and enjoy the features of mental drive that enable them to observe the behaviours of others and react according to those behaviours. In this sense, individuals reach a sense of satisfaction or self-acceptance that results from their conscious recognition of the incidents or behaviours that affect their lives. Those who can overcome their social phobia have the ability to keep a positive image and reach the perspectives of self-acceptance. The secure and safe attachment between family members might lead to social self-reflection towards the society and the family.

The defensive prospects in the novel that have led to self-acceptance can be traced to the behaviour of both Hadia and Amar. Both characters actively work to rid themselves of the patriarchal domination imposed by their father, Rafiq, whose traditional values they find oppressive. Their defensive attitudes serve as mechanisms to reduce the psychological stress caused by their father's domination, which manifests through teachings, blame, and threats of punishment. This aligns with Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, where achieving autonomy is critical to overcoming conflict and

establishing self-acceptance (Erikson, 1968). The psychological suffering and stress that Hadia and Amar experience reflects the broader conflict between two immigrant generations: one adhering to traditional values and the other navigating the cultural demands of American society.

Both Hadia and Amar succeed in reducing their stress by limiting their father's influence on their lives. They view his religious and cultural values as constraints that have hindered their integration into American society. Their rejection of these values represents what Bell Hooks describes as the "act of resistance" necessary for dismantling patriarchal authority and achieving personal liberation (Hooks, 1984). By challenging Rafiq's control, Hadia and Amar attain a significant milestone: their own liberation and self-acceptance.

In contrast, Layla, their mother, remains trapped in the restrictions imposed by her husband. Unlike her children, she is unable to achieve autonomy or resist patriarchal domination. Rafiq enforces rigid gender roles, such as preventing his daughters from pursuing higher education and forbidding his wife from working. As Beauvoir (1949) argues, such systemic control reduces women to mere instruments of domestic servitude, stripping them of individuality and agency. Layla's psychological suffering stems from her instrumentalization by Rafiq, who confines her to a life of caregiving and isolation. Despite agreeing to stay at home with the children, Layla appears to justify her situation as an act of choice, masking her sense of entrapment. Her isolation and internalization of patriarchal norms are reflected in the following statement:

> If I can support you, Layla, why don't you stay at home with the kids?' And I agreed. I would stay with you three. I wanted to. I was lucky; other mothers cannot even if they want to, but I wanted to (Mirza, 2018, p. 180).

Layla claims she wants to be with the children to justify her constrained situation. However, her statement appears to reflect an attempt to satisfy her husband rather than a genuine desire. Layla's feelings of self-acceptance and submission to domination stem from her upbringing in a patriarchal Indian family, where traditional norms dictated women's roles. This aligns with Simone de Beauvoir's assertion that women

in patriarchal societies are often socialized to accept subjugation, viewing their domestic roles as a form of fulfilment rather than oppression (Beauvoir, 1949). Layla internalizes these norms, which prevents her from seeking liberation or challenging the restrictions imposed by her husband.

In contrast, Hadia and Amar, raised in an American community that values women's independence and societal engagement, resist the same patriarchal domination. Their upbringing in a society that praises autonomy and work outside the domestic sphere enables them to challenge the expectations placed upon them. As Bell Hooks suggests, questioning and resisting patriarchal norms is critical to achieving personal freedom and self-acceptance (hooks, 1984). To attain self-acceptance, Amar and Hadia embark on a journey to define their place in a community where they feel culturally displaced.

Their father, Rafiq, continually seeks to prevent them from achieving social integration, fearing that it would erode their cultural identity. His efforts to maintain control reflect Fanon's concept of cultural alienation, where immigrants struggle to reconcile their inherited traditions with the demands of a new sociocultural environment (Fanon, 1952). Mirza portrays the enduring influence of Eastern traditions on Indian immigrants and how these traditions often clash with the expectations of American society, as shown in the following:

In our family, in the culture of our home, and indeed in the texture of our religion, there was the truth and there was the lie. There were sins and there was a steadfast adherence to faith […] I can ignore everything I do not wish to respond to, point to my ear if I am later accused (Mirza, 2018, p. 357-8).

Rafiq wants to force his family to preserve the perspectives of the Muslim Indian culture that depend on religious beliefs. Thus, he tries to enhance his authority of control because of his fears of integration into the American community that enjoys a different culture. Rafiq enjoys the feeling of domination that has burdened both Hadia and Amar because they refuse to live according to the cultural demands of their father. All their concerns are to achieve self-acceptance that enables them to be free. It is evident when Hadia sees Amar three years after his departure; she realizes that Rafiq is not happy with her invitation to Amar to attend her wedding party. Despite that, Hadia does not care about her father's anger. Instead, she feels happy and satisfied with the advent of her brother. Accordingly, Hadia seems pleased but does not care what her father wants. This represents her achievement of self-acceptance by achieving success in life. Mirza depicts how Hadia is happy and does not care for the father, who has shown his resentment for her invitation to Amar, as seen in the following:

> She refuses to meet his eyes even though she knows he is looking at her. He has always prided himself on discerning how Hadia is feeling by studying the look on her face, the way she carries herself, and what she does not say. But tonight it is impossible to make sense of her (Mirza, 2018, p. 86).

In the same sense, Amar attends his sister's wedding party even though he knows his father does not want to meet him again. Mirza depicts Amar and Hadia as brave characters who are satisfied with their actions. Both of them seek tranquil living and happiness in life that cannot be achieved with the domination of their father. Amar expresses his admiration for Hadia, who behaves without fear of the patriarchal father. She has broken all the rules that Rafiq has restricted the family with: "She might be the bravest person Amar has ever met, saying what she thinks and feels without fear or hesitation." (Mirza, 2018, p. 88). She has reached higher levels of self-acceptance by presenting herself as a liberated woman who believes in power and independence. Mirza seems concemed with providing a new image of the Muslim Indian woman in the American community by showing how Hadia has succeeded in creating her own lifestyle to live peacefully, as seen in the following:

> She could learn something that would change how she saw the whole world and her place in it. There is even the private hope that if she works as hard as she absolutely can, there is a chance she will be able to sway the outcome of her life, and maybe one day, a door will be presented to her and an opportunity to walk through it (Mirza, 2018, p. 102).

The perspectives of self-acceptance are seen through achieving the development stage of intimacy vs isolation that Erikson (1994) suggests. However, close and trustful people are important for the healthy development of the human self or identity. In this meaning, relational life forms a fundamental factor for gaining the integrative identity that accepts others and is accepted by them. Adults often have the task of negotiating their social identity and achieving intimate relationships with others in the society. Accordingly, their main concern is to meet other individuals with the same qualities. Those who share the same qualities have lasting and long relationships. In this sense, Hadia sees in her brother Amar the same interests of liberation that she seeks. For this reason, her relationship with Amar has become stronger. What Erikson (1994) suggests is the role of the relationships in the society since many cultures restrict the relational life of their members according to certain prospects like gender, ethnicity, class …, etc. Like the other adulthood stages, there are difficulties in achieving a healthy identity because of the family expectations that, to a high level, might affect the individual's life. Hadia does not care for the expectations of her family. Instead, she seems satisfied with keeping in touch and interacting with her brother. Hadia rejects to keep the same cultural identity that Rafiq insists on. Hadia and Amar have a meaningful relationship because both search for self-acceptance in the new community. Accordingly, they create their own liberated identity that, in turn, results in feeling accepted by the self and the social surroundings.

Hadia is depicted as a self-accepted woman who enjoys sufficient power to reject and encounter the domination of her life. Because of her strong character, all her father's attempts to force her to marry according to his choices have failed. She believes that her life is her own responsibility, not others. Thus, she rejects all the marriage proposals her father offered her. She believes that marriage is an individual choice in life and not the family's responsibility to arrange it. Mirza depicts the conflict between Hadia and her

father because of her rejection to marry according to his choices in the following:

> It is terrifying to be reminded that the only thing standing between this moment—where his whole body still buzzes just from having walked up to her—and that blow—her life with another person, her destiny determined so irretrievably—is her continued decision to refuse these proposals (Mirza, 2018, p. 120-21).

For Hadia, human life is not determined by others and their interference. She considers life a way of enjoying interaction with those in the social surroundings without domination. All the arranged marriages are determined to control women, which Hadia rejects in total. As a self-accepted woman, Hadia believes in a marriage that results from love and sharing life. She wants a man who does not consider her an object at home. Hadia clarifies her philosophy about marriage that makes her happy in the following:

> I would never want to get married like that. To someone who just saw a picture of me and sent a proposal— […] I want it to be him not because of his job or good family but because of how he thinks about the world and how he moves through it. And how we feel about each other (Mirza, 2018, p. 121).

Hadia prefers to live separated from her father than according to his patriarchal domination. She is a resisting woman who sees the world in a different way than her father. Her world enables her to live peacefully and accomplish her goals in life.

In the same sense, Amar reaches his self-acceptance by resisting or encountering his father's domination. He goes away to live in the American community according to the American lifestyle. At his sister's wedding party, Amar ignores his father and does not greet him because he enjoys satisfaction and pleasure away from the father and his restrictions: "Amar ignored him. He did not want to see his father." (Mirza, 2018, p. 117). Amar has accomplished his goals by achieving a new identity in the American community. He seems to be a man of self-acceptance and happiness regarding his social behaviour. Amar seems more affected by how he has chosen for himself in American society than by what his father has always tried to force him to do. He is a different young man who believes in his power and independence. The patriarchal values that have restricted his life

for years have become something of the past. Now, Amar is a different person who can stand alone in the American community without the help or support of his father. All his concerns are to prove to his father that he is a man, not a boy, as his father still thinks of him. At the end of the novel, Amar seems stronger than his father, who confesses his mistakes in misbehaving with his children: "Everyone thought so little of me I was beginning to wonder if they were all justified and I was the delusional one to think otherwise." (Mirza, 2018, p. 364). While Amar and Hadia have achieved their self-acceptance, their father, Rafiq, fails to achieve it because he has realized that all his family members have rejected him. He confesses that he has committed a terrible mistake when he tries to dominate his children and prevent them from deciding on the way of life that suits them. Rafiq is psychologically ruined and frustrated because he realizes at the end that he has misguided his family in the American community. Now, Rafiq feels that the Muslim Indian traditions are no longer suitable for the new generations, whose big goal is to live freely and achieve their self-acceptance in American society.

3. TAYARI JONES'S *SILVER SPARROW*: DANA AND THE COMPLEX OF BIGAMY

3.1. Psychological Suffering and Isolation

Tayari Jones's *Silver Sparrow* provides a deep depiction of the psychological suffering of children due to the complex of bigamy that spoils their lives. Those children live under the influence of the splitting families with one father. The novel shows how the distinguished relational life with their father has impacted their life of Dana and caused her psychological suffering due to the lack of the role of an intimate father in her life. Instead, psychological suffering can be seen with severe influences on the mother, who is kept by the husband away from the social surroundings.

Anna Freud (1993) shows how individuals feel ashamed, humiliated, and so forth when they manifest themselves within a society that rejects them and their demands of living normally because of certain situations that prevent them from being normal members of their society (Freud, 1993, p. 18). Therefore, social repression might lead to feeling isolated to avoid the social rejection that always stems from moral or religious values. In this meaning, individuals prefer to live isolated when they want to avoid the blaming of others. Instead, their psychological suffering represents certain symptoms that show their disability to fulfil their plans of living normally or achieving high standards of integration with their society because they are haunted by feelings like fear and anxiety that, in turn, cause their inner conflicts.

In this regard, Jones depicts the psychological suffering of her protagonist, Dana, from the very beginning of the novel. Dana, who is used as the first narrator of the novel, describes her psychological suffering because of the complex of bigamy that has spoiled her life: "My Father, James Witherspoon, is a bigamist. He was already married ten years when he first clamped eyes on my mother." (Jones, 2011, p. 3). Jones purposefully uses such a description of her life to indicate Dana's complex life. Furthermore, Dana shows how bigamy forms a social crisis for families because of the social or religious norms that dominate people in her society. Dana shows how bigamy is rejected by her social surroundings that consider bigamy a kind of primitive activity and illegal practice: "When most people think of bigamy, if they think of it at all, they imagine some primitive practice taking place on the pages of National Geographic." (Jones, 2011, p.3). Consequently,

Dana suffers from the complex of bigamy in her life.

However, being rejected by their society, individuals turn to isolation to defend themselves. Freud asserts that isolation resembles a strategy for individuals to be safe from the blaming of others. She asserts that the mode of defense adopted in symptom formation by the ego of the obsessional neurotic is that of isolation (Freud, 1993, p. 18). Isolation enables individuals to relax and avoid social blaming. Accordingly, isolation represents a tactic of repression that enables the individual to dispose of the feeling of guilt and fear of being punished.

In this regard, Dana and her mother live isolated to avoid the criticism of their social surroundings. Her mother is seen as a guilty woman because of her marriage to a man who has already been married to another woman. The crisis of bigamy causes problematic perspectives in the family. Dana explains the difficulty of family life by showing how her mother is her father's second wife. It is the mother who has no equal or legal rights like the first wife because of the norms of the society that rejects bigamy. This indicates the features of isolation and psychological suffering of the family because of the norms that see the second wife as a guilty woman who does not deserve respect. Dana clarifies their social crisis as follows:

> It's a shame that there isn't a true name for a woman like my mother, Gwendolyn. My father, James, is a bigamist. That is what he is. Laverne is his wife. She found him first and my mother has always respected the other woman's squatter's rights. But was my mother his wife, too? […] However, to call her only his "wife a" doesn't explain the full complexity of her position (Jones, 2011, p.4).

The family crisis is the result of the father's practices and intention to fulfil his-mindedness features by keeping his family under control. Instead, his application of mindedness is the domain that has kept Dana and her mother isolated since he does not allow them to live normally as other families. Thus, isolation forms a potential in the life of Dana and her mother, who are often left alone.

As a strategy to avoid social blaming for his bigamy, the father has forced his second wife and her daughter to live in the shade, where no one knows who the real father of Dana is. Moreover, isolation is a way to avoid being blamed or criticized by others who are not satisfied with certain behaviours since the ego fears the outside world and tries to form a defensive tool motivated by dread of the outside world (Freud, 1993, p. 57). According to Freud, isolation is one defence mechanism to encountering the outer world's threats. Therefore, individuals tend to be far away from others. The ego works to distinguish itself from that world (Freud, 1993, p. 51). Distinguishing the self from others and living away from them soothes the anxiety from external threats against the individuals. Dana shows how her mother suffers while they lead their isolated life away from their social surroundings as follows:

> When she is tipsy, angry, or sad, Mother uses them to describe herself: concubine, whore, mistress, consort. There are just so many, and none are fair. Moreover, there are nasty words, too, for a person like me, the child of a person like her, but these words were not allowed in the air of our home (Jones, 2011, p. 4).

Both Dana and her mother are portrayed as victims of the father's bigamy and his efforts to keep them hidden from their social surroundings to avoid blame or criticism. This secrecy reflects the father's attempt to maintain his social image at the expense of his family's well-being. This aligns with Goffman's concept of "impression management," where individuals manipulate perceptions to avoid social stigma (Goffman, 1959). When Dana questions her mother about her legitimate existence as a daughter, her mother struggles to explain the complexity of their situation. This inability to provide clarity exacerbates the mother's psychological distress, as she is burdened by her child's yearning for a normal family life. The mother's isolation from Dana further underscores the emotional toll, as seen in Dana's observation: "My mother would curse at hearing me use that word, legitimate, but if she could hear the other word that formed in my head, she would close herself in her bedroom and cry" (Jones, 2011, p. 4-5). The mother's withdrawal highlights how the father's bigamy not only fractures family relationships but also inflicts lasting psychological harm.

Dana herself is deeply affected by the presence of her father's other family, particularly her feelings of jealousy and frustration toward her sister-in-law, Chaurisse, whom she views as her father's "real daughter" (Jones, 2011, p. 5). This dynamic reflects the broader implications of family secrecy and favoritism, where the unequal distribution of attention and care exacerbates feelings of alienation. Dana's frustration stems from her father's efforts to hide her and her mother, rendering them invisible within the community. These actions contribute to Dana's psychological suffering, as her sense of identity and legitimacy is repeatedly undermined.

The father's practices create a sense of vagueness and ambiguity in Dana's life, further intensifying her inner conflict. His failure to acknowledge Dana fully as part of his family leaves her feeling isolated and disconnected. This aligns with Erikson's theory of identity development, which emphasizes the importance of parental validation in forming a coherent sense of self (Erikson, 1968). Dana's feelings of betrayal are evident in her reflection: "My father was not my father and mine alone?" (Jones, 2011, p. 6). This quote encapsulates her emotional turmoil and highlights the psychological damage caused by her father's divided loyalties and manipulative behaviour.

The father's actions not only harm Dana's relationship with him but also position her as a marginalized figure within society. His decision to prioritize appearances over authentic connections reflects patriarchal values that often prioritize male authority at the expense of familial bonds. Dana's suffering exemplifies how such practices perpetuate emotional neglect and reinforce systemic inequities within family structures, as suggested by feminist critiques of patriarchal family dynamics (hooks, 1984). Her inner turmoil, stemming from her father's inability to provide care and recognition, underscores the lasting impact of such neglect on a child's psychological well-being.

The perspectives of psychological suffering result from the marginalization that the daughter suffers from. At the kindergarten, when Dana is still a small child, the teacher asks the pupils to draw their families. Her psychological suffering and feelings of isolation are seen by the means of her responses to the demands of her teacher. Dana draws her father with another family, while she and her mother are drawn in the margin: "I gave the girl a big smile, stuffed with square teeth. Near the left margin, I drew my mother and me standing by ourselves." (Jones, 2011, p. 6). Dana is psychologically affected by the

mindedness of her father, who cares only about how to keep her and her mother hidden from other people, as seen in the following:

> "Did you tell your teacher who was in the picture?" James said.
>
> I nodded slowly, the whole time thinking that I probably should lie, although Iwasn't quite sure why.
>
> "James," Mother said, "let's not make a molehill into a mountain. She's just a child." (Jones, 2011, p.7).

Nevertheless, Dana represents the extensive distance between her father and herself through her formal utterances that are used to show respect to foreigners. To show how she feels about the father who tries to keep her a secret, she calls him by name instead of saying' daddy' or' father.' Dana keeps mentioning her father 'James' or 'Sir', as seen in the following.

"Dana," he said, "you're not afraid of me, are you? You're not scared of your own father, are you?" His voice sounded mournful, but I took it as a dare. "No, sir," I said, taking a bold step forward. "Don't call me sir, Dana. I' m not your boss. When you say that, it makes me feel like an overseer." (Jones, 2011, p. 8).

Dana lacks an intimate connection to her father, whom she sees as a stranger. The eventual result of such terrible feelings within the borders of the family is the psychological suffering of isolation. As clarified in Chapter One of this study, Erikson explains how 'Intimacy vs. Isolation' represents a dualism that may parallel the dualism of 'Closeness vs. Solitude,' shaping the early development of adulthood in human psychology through the aspects of intimate connections between individuals (Erikson, 1951, p. 237). Therefore, the ultimate result of the lack of intimacy is the feeling of isolation that occurs as a popular result of the lack of intimate relations. Erikson asserts that avoiding such experiences because of a fear of ego-loss may lead to a deep sense of isolation (Erikson, 1951, p. 237). In this context, Dana feels frustrated with her father, who does not show her any intimate relationship.

Apparently, what matters for James is to keep Dana and her mother a secret. He tries to apply his mindedness features by the means of controlling his daughter and her mother. For him, it is not allowed for the little child to tell anybody about her real father: "You can't tell your teacher that my name is James Witherspoon. Atlanta ain't nothing but a country town, and everyone knows everybody." (Jones, 2011, p. 9). It is quite evident that James is haunted by the fear of his bigamy and having another daughter illegally. Moreover, the situation worsens for Dana, who asks him about his behaviour with his other family if it is the same as he does with her and her mother: "Your other wife and your other girl is a secret?" (Jones, 2011, p. 9). The psychological suffering of the little child has increased due to the vague answer of the father "No. You've got it the wrong way around. Dana, you are the one that's a secret." (Jones, 2011, p. 9). Dana's mother feels angry when Dana tells her that her father has told her that she is a secret "That motherfucker," she said. "I love him, but I might have to kill him one day." (Jones, 2011, p. 13). Dana's mother is psychologically influenced because she realizes the terrible situation of her daughter, who is deprived of enjoying a normal life with her father.

Another cause for the family's suffering is the shortage of economic support since Dana's father is not concerned with providing for his daughter's demands. Dana feels that her father dedicates himself to supporting her sister-in-law more than caring for her: "It seems, James, that you have money for what you want to have money for." (Jones, 2011, p. 34). Consequently, Dana and her mother are left without any support from the father. This has made Dana feel psychologically bad because she recognizes how her father is not interested in her life or well-being.

Dana is not satisfied with the practices of her father, who has made her live like a bastard. To hide his bigamy, he has made his brother Raleigh the legitimate father of his daughter. Thus, the girl suffers from living with two fathers. When Raleigh offers to marry Dana's father, the girl expresses her sadness about her complicated life as seen in the following when Dana and her mother discuss the marriage offer of her uncle:

"What about James? I can't have two daddies, can I?"

"James will always be your father."

"So what about Uncle Raleigh?"

“Okay”, my mother said. “It's like this. When you get older, you will say to people, 'My real father didn't raise me' (Jones, 2011, p. 139).

Dana is shocked about the way her father treats her and her mother. She inquires why she is forced to live this way while her sister-in-law and her mother live normally with her mother. Dana compares her life to the life of her sister-in-law and realizes that she means nothing to the father, who spends his life with the other family, leaving her and her mother under the protection of Raleigh. Dana expresses her rejection of her situation that results from her father's mindedness and his attempts to keep her hidden away from other people by making his brother the legitimate father on paper to his daughter. The girl feels that such practices of her father are unfair, as seen in the following:

“ It's not fair that they get to just have James all by theirself.”

“No,” my mother said. “It's not fair.”

“Why can't they be the ones to go be with Raleigh?” (Jones, 2011, p. 141).

As asserted by Farber (1985), the application of mindedness reflects a trait which has at its core the disposition to reflect upon the meaning and motivation of behaviour, thoughts, and feelings in oneself and others (Farber, 1985, p. 170). Therefore, behaviours are judged, criticized, or blamed according to the parents' beliefs. This same notion is shared by Erikson (1994), who shows parents' determination to direct and control their children. Accordingly, Dana is isolated from other social surroundings due to her father's beliefs. Her father fears that the public knows about his bigamy, which is something rejected officially, religiously, and traditionally in the area. Consequently, he tries to hide his bigamy and makes his brother pretend he is his daughter's real father. He does not care about the suffering of his daughter, who feels isolated because of his practices.

The effects of the mindedness that the father follows and tries to dominate Dana and her mother have deep psychological consequences on the young girl. Dana compares herself to her sister-in-law and mother, who live peacefully with her husband. During one of her visits to Chaurisse's mother's saloon, Dana asks her if she leads a happy life with her husband. Thus, Dana recognizes how she lacks the perspectives of care that the other family enjoys. When she sees Chaurisse's mother's sad after her question, she tells her that having

a perfect family with a father to her daughter is enough to make her feel happy: "You just have a history, that's all. Who you got a history with?" (Jones, 2011, p. 267). Dana suffers because she has no history for her family, who strive to live isolated because of the father's insistence to keep them in the shade.

The climax of feeling psychologically influenced is seen when James comes after blowing off the tyre of Chaurisse's car. Chaurisse and Dana are on their way to a party even though Chaurisse does not know that Dana is her sister-in-law. Dana goes inside the bathroom and refuses to come out when Chaurisse calls for James to come. Hence, James tries to withdraw with Chaurisse, leaving Dana alone in the bathroom. Chaurisse rejects to leave her friend kept in the bathroom, as seen in the following:

> "Are you okay?"
>
> "Just leave, all right. My mama is on her way. Please, Chaurisse, just get James and Raleigh to go." I could hear her crying through the door. […]
>
> "We can't leave her. She could be sick. She could be dead in there."
>
> "She's not dead," Uncle Raleigh said. "She's just scared."
>
> "I can't believe you are siding with Daddy on this."
>
> "We've got to hurry, Chaurisse," Uncle Raleigh said.
>
> Daddy said, "You have to go." He walked toward the limo (Jones, 2011, p. 280-82).

Dana and her mother are frustrated about the ambiguous behaviour of James, who just cares about Chaurisse and tries to prevent her from the reality that Dana is her sister-in-law. Dana's mother is terribly shocked by the behaviour of James, who does not care for her daughter's safety: "You were! You were going to just leave my child stranded out here in the middle of nowhere." (Jones, 2011, p. 287). Thus, Dana suffers isolation because she lacks a defending father. She is frustrated about her life, which has been spoiled because she is the fruit of bigamy, considered taboo in her community.

3.2. Competitive Nature and Identity

As seen in chapter one of this study, human identity is determined by the perspectives of social acceptance, where others play a vital role in the process. Erikson (1963/1968) has clarified that the competitive nature determines the development of human psychology and acquiring social identity. Accordingly, such suggestions about human identity have included the social perspectives of human life and its role in acquiring identity. For Kerpelman and Pittman (2018), developing an individual's identity is a continuous process throughout life (Kerpelman & Pittman, 2018, p. 311). In this meaning, social incidents influence the development of the individual's identity, which seeks to be equipped with the demands of society.

Moreover, the development of social identity is influenced by the psychosocial crises that always negatively affect individuals and their behaviours. Therefore, the role of the parents is a potential in the child's development process. The care children gain from their parents during their early years increases their psychological trust in their surroundings. Losing care and protection influences the positive development of human identity because individuals lack the perspectives of defense against the outer threats to their lives. Accordingly, the social and psychosocial development process requires certain levels of trust and secure living. Suedfeld and his companions (2005) assert that the feeling of safety is a domain for establishing and gaining identity. The feeling of safety for human beings is essential since it represents the first response of the outer world.

As Gardiner and Kosmitzki (2011) mentioned, societies like Western ones are identically individualistic, increasing children's abilities to be more self-independent. In this regard, Suedfeld and his followers (2005) argue that continuous competition with others is required to achieve goals in life. The competitive nature is the way to avoid guilt and the trigger for taking brave steps in life. For Erikson (1950), the perspective of closeness to one of the parents, always the same-sex parent, has positive consequences on the development of the social identity. However, failures in life lead to dependency. Despite the feeling of failure in life, individuals try to gain a positive role in their society. In this meaning, failure represents the first step for the child to accept themselves and to interact with others well and independently.

However, the social failure forms a domain in shaping Dana's identity because she lacks her father's protection. This feeling has made her mind haunted by the idea of her family and whom they are in the community, as seen in her words: "I had always imagined that we would eventually be asked to explain ourselves, to press words forward in our own defense." (Jones, 2011, p.5). It is the community that rejects bigamy and its results. Thus, Dana rejects being seen as a bastard in such a community because of the father's practices, who does not want to confess reality to the public.

Dana's identity development has been influenced by her comparing her life to her sister-in-law. Socially, the other family enjoy good community connections and live normally. Dana and her mother lack such an opportunity for good communication with the community because her father insists on keeping them a secret: "I knew about Chaurisse; she didn't know about me. My mother knew about Laverne, but Laverne was under the impression that hers was an ordinary life. We never lost track of that basic fact." (Jones, 2011, p.5). Living in the shade is something terrible for Dana, who has suffered a lot because of that.

In this regard, Dana feels terrible when her mother refers to their living in the shade as a secret the father does not want others to know about. For example, when her mother calls her, "What are you doing, Petunia?" Dana rejects calling her with such a name, "Don't call me Petunia," because she considers such a flower a plant that lives only in the shade, and she does not want to live like that (Jones, 2011, p. 11). This represents the development of Dana's identity because she realizes her situation in the community and rejects living as a secret without a perfect identity.

However, the perspectives of Dana's competitive nature have influenced the development of her identity. Such competitive nature results from the father and his negative relational life with Dana's family, as shown in Dana's words, "But James loves her. She's not a secret." (Jones, 2011, p. 15). Safety, secure living, and protection are the perspectives of Chaurisse's life. These domains form a problem for the development of Dana's identity. For Dana's mother, her daughter is an unknown figure in the community, and despite that, she is better than her sister-in-law in many fields, as seen in the following:

"Am I a secret?" I asked my mother.

"No," she said. "You are an unknown. That little girl there doesn't even know she has a sister. You know everything."

"God knows everything," I said. "He's got the whole world in his hands." (Jones, 2011, p. 15).

Dana's mother plays the role of the parental defender for her daughter by the means of showing her daughter higher levels of care and protection. What matters for the cosy mother is encouraging her daughter to live normally despite the terrible life the family leads. Dana seems to have positive feelings towards her mother and her encouragement: "I am not putting myself down. As my mother would say, 'Self-deprecation is not attractive.' And as she wouldn't say, people in our position cannot afford to make themselves look bad." (Jones, 2011, p.30-1). Dana's mother wants her daughter to lead a normal life like other girls in her community.

For Erikson, any kind of psychological development starts with the prospects of Trust vs Mistrust, which he defines as The firm establishment of enduring patterns for the solution of the nuclear conflict of basic trust versus basic mistrust in mere existence is the first task of the ego, and thus first of all a task for maternal care (Erikson, 1951, p. 223-4). This is determined by the early human relations that start within the family borders, where parents have a basic role in developing the child's identity. In this way, the child can be seen by the family's expectations, which deeply impact his psychological and social development. Furthermore, Erikson asserts that This forms the basis in the child for a sense of identity, which will later combine a sense of being 'all right', being oneself, and becoming what other people trust one will become (Erikson, 1951, p. 224). Thus, the family has a fundamental role in developing positive or negative perspectives on their child's character.

In the same sense, in order to soothe the perspectives of tension and boredom between Dana and her father, her mother tries to convince Dana that her father loves her in an equal way to her sister-in-law, as seen in the following:

Some nights, after she kissed me good night, she would add, "Your father wishes you sweet dreams." I asked her once why he couldn't call and tell me himself. "He's your father, but first he is a man. A man is just a man, and that's all we have to work with." (Jones, 2011, p. 36).

Dana seems satisfied with such a reality about her father. She understands his terrible situation because the man lives between two families, and that is difficult for him: "My father is not a monster, but he still had a home to go to and a woman there to fix his plate for dinner." (Jones, 2011, p. 54). Because of her mother's positive support, Dana can enjoy a good identity, which is full of challenges and difficulties in life. In this sense, Dana has achieved independence from the beginning of her life. Instead, she has gained a strong character due to her isolation because she feels the lack of the father's role in her life. For example, her independence can be seen when she refuses to share with James what she has drawn in kindergarten: "Mother," I said, 'tell him to leave me alone." (Jones, 2011, p. 103). This clarifies the perspectives of the independence that Dana has gained because of the development of her identity, which has become featured in her competitive nature.

Furthermore, the perspectives of the competitive nature that Dana has achieved have helped her to be of a challenging nature to encounter others who stand as hindrances in the way of her independence. When Dana becomes a friend to Marcus, her father rejects that, suggesting that this young man is a bad person and suitable for his daughter. Hence, Dana inquires if he treats her sister-in-law the same way he does with her, as seen in the following:

My mother said, "This boy isn't good for you. He's not going to give you anything but a reputation."

James said, "I-i-if a-all you end up with is a reputation, you'll be lucky."

"Do you talk to Chaurisse like this?" I said. "I've seen her. She walks around looking like a streetwalker. I don't see you saying anything to her." (Jones, 2011, p. 105).

Consequently, Dana has achieved independence against others' restrictions on her life. This represents the perspective of developing her identity by means of deciding on her life by herself as an independent individual in the community. In other words, Dana has become a satisfied person with her life.

3.3. Social Satisfaction and Accepting Reality

The concept of self-acceptance is central to Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory, particularly about the development of self-esteem and autonomy. Erikson emphasizes that self-esteem emerges from a sense of self-control, which fosters goodwill and pride. He asserts, "From a sense of self-control without loss of self-esteem comes a lasting sense of goodwill and pride" (Erikson, 1951, p. 228). According to Erikson, this psychological firmness is achieved within a social environment that encourages individuals to gain autonomy and develop resilience, enabling them to "stand on their own feet" (Erikson, 1951, p. 226).

A key stage in Erikson's framework, Initiative vs. Guilt, highlights the critical role of parents in fostering self-acceptance in children. By providing opportunities for exploration and decision-making, parents enable children to build ambition and responsibility, which are essential for developing autonomy. Erikson notes that supportive parenting allows children to "examine the world, relying on a reason that encourages their decisions, ambition, and responsibility" (Erikson, 1951, p. 230). This underscores the dual role of parents as guides and facilitators, helping children interpret their experiences and make meaning of their environment. Through this process, children learn to approach life with confidence and self-awareness, key components of self-acceptance.

In the same meaning, the sense of the self-increases by recognising the individual's role in his community. This reflects the individual feeling of the human being towards his existence by evaluating themselves in life according to their perspective. Consequently, positive evaluation of the self-increases social satisfaction and self-acceptance standards. Such notions of self-acceptance by considering realities of life and the individual's position in such a situation are potential in Jones's *Silver Sparrow*, which is constructed on social issues like bigamy and its influence on the life of Dana and her mother. However, Dana is seen as a satisfied girl who accepts the realities of life, as seen in the following:

> Even people whose parents are happily married to each other and no one else, even these people have their share of unhappiness. They spend plenty of time nursing old slights, rehashing squabbles. So you see, I have something in common with the whole world (Jones, 2011, p.5).

In this saying, Dana is seen as a logical girl who understands the realities of life. For her, life is not fair, and all individuals have various complexities. Because she recognizes these realities, Dana accepts her situation and tries to live normally since life is not perfect for all human beings.

Dana is satisfied with her life and does not blame her mother for marrying James, who is already married to another woman. Instead, she feels contented with her relationship with her mother, who has provided her with all her cosy emotions to substitute for losing her father in her life. Dana expresses how she feels about living with her mother and how she understands life as follows:

> Mother didn't ruin my childhood or anyone's marriage. She is a good person. She prepared me. Life, you see, is all about knowing things. That is why my mother and I shouldn't be pitied. Yes, we have suffered, but we never doubted that we enjoyed at least one peculiar advantage regarding what really mattered (Jones, 2011, p. 5).

In this saying, despite the perspectives of suffering in Dana's life because of her father, she feels happy about her mother, who has played a positive fundamental role in bringing her up well. Dana's mother has dedicated herself fully to caring for her child because she realizes the negative role of her father in her life. Thus, Dana is not sad about how she has been brought up. Instead, she considers that a normal thing that can be seen in many families. Dana ignores her life's complexity as "I didn't think much more about it." (Jones, 2011, p. 6). This resembles her satisfaction and accepting the reality of life.

Dana's mother plays a crucial role in calming her daughter's worries and fostering her acceptance of life as it is. By instilling a perspective of inevitability and resilience, her mother encourages Dana to confront the challenges of their unconventional family life. She reassures Dana with the words, "I believe in the eventuality of things. What's done in

the dark shall come to the light. […] And isn't that what's supposed to set you free?" (Jones, 2011, p. 38). This reflects her mother's attempt to help Dana find freedom from the anxiety caused by their life in secrecy, shaped by bigamy and its rejection within their community. Her mother's guidance aligns with Erikson's theory that parental support fosters resilience and equips children to face life's obstacles bravely (Erikson, 1951). As a result, Dana develops a nuanced understanding of the complexities in her life, including the societal and legal restrictions that have prevented her from living openly with both parents. She reflects, "If I'd learned anything from my parents, it was that the law didn't understand anything about what passed between men and women" (Jones, 2011, p. 62). This realization exemplifies Dana's ability to accept life's intricacies without blaming her parents.

Another key aspect of Dana's journey toward self-acceptance is her relationship with Marcus, who becomes a source of emotional support and growth. Marcus introduces Dana to new possibilities, as she notes, "It was more like Marcus showed me new possibilities" (Jones, 2011, p. 63). This relationship gives Dana a sense of agency and belonging, helping her overcome the rejection she experiences from her family. Erikson's theory of intimacy vs. isolation suggests that meaningful relationships foster self-confidence and identity (Erikson, 1951). Marcus's presence enables Dana to navigate social connections, as she acknowledges, "Through Marcus, I found myself a best friend" (Jones, 2011, p. 66). These bonds help her embrace life as it is, allowing her to focus on the positive aspects of her circumstances.

Dana's relationship with Marcus also highlights her growing autonomy and self-empowerment. Despite her family's disapproval, she remains content with her choices, as demonstrated in her words: "Sometimes at the parties, Marcus called me his 'girlfriend' and even kissed me in front of everyone. I'd sit on his lap and drink from his cup" (Jones, 2011, p. 66). This illustrates Dana's ability to lead a life guided by her own decisions, independent of her family's judgment. Her connection with Marcus catalyses her transformation into a strong and self-assured young woman, embodying a self-acceptance rooted in personal growth and resilience. Dana's goal is to overcome hurdles in life by accepting the self as it is. Now, she has become a different figure who rejects the interference of others in her life. She expresses her autonomy: "When I was a girl, I would have been thrilled to know they had been discussing me, but now, I was just annoyed.

Who was he to act like he knew me?" (Jones, 2011, p. 102). Dana is a satisfied girl because of her autonomy, which has enabled her to live independently.

Accordingly, Dana has become an autonomous girl who can defend her rights in life as an independent girl. She rejects the interference of her father in her life because she considers him the cause of her terrible life during her childhood. After all, he refuses to confess the reality that she is his daughter. When James wants to control Dana and prevent her from accompanying Marcus, Dana ignores his words and asks him to be a brave man and declare that she is his daughter to the public, as seen in the following:

"Gwen," James said, "if you can't control her —"

"If she can't control me, what?"

"She doesn't need controlling," my mother said. "She needs something else."

"Legitimacy," I said.

"You are legitimate," my mother said. [..]

I looked at my mother. "Tell him to leave me alone." (Jones, 2011, p. 102-3).

Dana is perfectly autonomous and leads a life different from what she experienced during childhood. Now, she does not care for the existence of James in her life. Instead, his opinions about her life are something that is not important to Dana. Moreover, her mother's role in her life is seen as limited when Dana tells her mother, "You can't read my mind." (Jones, 2011, p. 107). Dana is not the little girl that other people can judge her behaviours.

Dana has developed herself to look at the world in a different way in order to achieve her satisfaction with the realities of life. She expresses her views of life as follows: "I am neither religious nor superstitious, but there is something otherworldly about the space where two roads come together" (Jones, 2011, p. 133). Dana has achieved self-acceptance through her views. Now, she rejects the social or religious restrictions that spoiled her life in her early days.

Eventually, Dana's ultimate goal is to live peacefully with her sister-in-law without considering their father's faults. All her concerns are determined to accompany her sister-in-law as she declares in the following:

> Looking at the city lights, I wondered if James had other children like me. I had gone to the soiree, not looking for my father, not trying to spoil anything, but hoping to see Chaurisse. I was going to ask her if maybe we could be sisters. It wasn't our fault what our parents had done to each other (Jones, 2011, p. 338).

The novel ends with evoking reality that all figures have become familiar with. Dana and Chaurisse are two sisters as James tells the truth about his bigamy. “Everybody knows that now,” James said. That's what you wanted. You got it.” (Jones, 2011, p. 339). Thus, Dana has become a known figure to the public, and she enjoys her self-acceptance that all other characters in the community can't deny anymore.

CONCLUSION

Psychoanalysis has always been interested in human behaviour within the social surroundings; therefore, the human self has been a fundamental issue for many psychoanalysts, who have made many contributions. As Terry Eagleton (1996) clarified, psychoanalysis is seen as a tool for understanding human behaviours resulting from the social forces applied to the self. Such clarification has led many thinkers to suggest that human development or self-acceptance is the ultimate result of psychological and social elements that cannot be considered in an isolated way. The human self develops through the means of social drive and interaction. Therefore, psychoanalysis tries to clarify the prospects of social domination that certain social groups apply to others and how these social practices affect human psychology.

However, the main interest of this study is the psychological and social development of the human self that develops with responses to internal and external motives. The notion of the self includes the features of sociability within categories, groups, or social entities, where the classification is based on ethnicity, gender, age, and lifestyle. Thus, this study's fundamental discussion and analysis have been dedicated to examining the human self and identity development, including certain domains like patriarchal domination and religious complexities that disturb human life. Such social issues determine the way human beings live and interact in their communities. Both Alcoff (2006) and Connell (2006) assert that the development of the human self is a psychological process that is influenced by conflicts, affinity, or disturbances that can be motivated by external threats like attempts of domination or other violent practices. In this regard, the self is developed due to the perspectives of reasoning among the groups when the individual finds themselves forced to behave according to the collective norms or to compare themselves to others in their social surroundings.

Another concept that this study has tried to provide answers to using the analysis is the social notion of mindedness and its influences on the development of the self. For Farber (1985), the application of mindedness resembles a trait which has at its core the disposition to reflect upon the meaning and motivation of behaviour, thoughts, and feelings in oneself and others (Farber, 1985, p. 170). Hence, the human behaviour of others is judged according to the individual's experiences and traditional beliefs. Furthermore,

According to Erikson (1994), the same notion of mindedness influences the stages of human development. It sheds light on how children are always affected by the interference of their parents, who constantly seek to direct their children and control their behaviours.

This study has explored the social dynamics that shape human identity development, integrating psychological and social dimensions to provide a comprehensive perspective. This approach has highlighted how external pressures, such as domination and societal norms, influence identity formation. Furthermore, the study includes another feature of a deep examination of the novels, comparing them to highlight the social domination depicted by both writers and as a reflection of their community. To increase the deep understanding of such concepts, the study has deployed both psychological and social concepts like the notion of mindedness, which is used to examine the perspectives of domination by means of the parents, who try to control their families in both novels. Thus, both writers are seen as advocates for the liberty of the children against the domination of the parents, who consider themselves masters of the families, ignoring the justified demands of other members of their families.

The analysis has also been dedicated to examining the patriarchal domination of the two parents, Rafiq and James, in both novels. These two parents can be seen within the concept of mindedness, which indicates their attempts to control their children. While Rafiq is influenced by his patriarchal norms of domination that stem from his religious beliefs, James is under the influence of the social norms that prevent bigamy and considers it taboo in the community. Thus, Rafiq represents the patriarchal domination that suggests the fundamental role of man and his authority to dominate women. He is a symbol of the Muslim Indian man who depends on religion to show his right to dominate women because the father considers his behaviour something good to preserve the honesty and dignity of his family. Accordingly, Rafiq reflects the patriarchal power that allows men to control women and force them to follow his religious beliefs. Rafiq treats Hadia and her sisters with no right to express their opinions about the father's chosen style. The novel depicts the social conflict between Rafiq and his family because of his continuous efforts to prevent his children from getting what they want. Amar's departure is the incident that reflects how Rafiq is totally extreme and harsh when he deals with the members of the family.

Furthermore, James is the problem of the disturbed life of Dana and her mother. Hence, the family crisis results from the father and his continuous efforts to keep his family under control. Instead, his application of mindedness is the domain that has kept Dana and her mother isolated since he does not allow them to live normally as other families. Thus, isolation forms a potential in the life of Dana and her mother, who are often left alone. Like Dana and her mother, Rafiq's family lives isolated to some levels because the father rejects seeing that his children are influenced by the Western perspectives of lifestyle, which he considers a kind of shame for a decent family like his.

Therefore, the features of the external threats to Hadia, Amar, and Dana can be seen in the behaviours of both fathers. For example, Rafiq wants to have complete control of his family, while James is only concerned with hiding Dana from being known as his biological daughter. Rafiq and James try to prevent their children's social integration, but the two men's purpose is different. Rafiq fears the spoiling of his children because he believes in his home traditions, which are religious ones. On the other hand, James does not fear the integration of his daughter Dana because of his beliefs. He wants to prevent her social integration to keep himself safe from social criticism for his bigamy. Thus, the two parents are quite different because Rafiq expresses his care for his family, while James cares only about his reputation more than anything else.

Both writers depict the features of the children's psychological suffering by representing the suffering of the mothers. For example, Hadia, who sees her mother as a model of the oppressed woman in the Muslim Indian community, feels dissatisfied with the way her mother lives while encountering her rights as an independent human being. Thus, Layla represents the collective suffering of women in her nation. For this reason, Hadia fears being a wife and that her role is only to apologize to her husband. She rejects the weak role of woman that the patriarchal community suggests and praises.

Unlike Layla, Dana's mother symbolises the autonomous woman who grants her daughter love, faith, and trust. She encounters her daughter's right to live a normal life. Thus, the two characters differ regarding the positivity and negativity in their children's lives. Layla lives away from her children because she surrenders to her husband, while Gwen lives close to Dana and rejects surrendering to James's demands of forging the child's identity.

The perspectives of trust between the children and their parents are missed in both novels. This is the result of the misunderstanding that children feel towards their fathers. Both Rafiq and James do not want to show their children good understanding. Therefore, both fathers have negative roles in the development of the self of their children. For example, Amar and Hadia are victims of patriarchal domination, and the result is that he has spoiled their relational life with their father. Dana is another victim of the father's practices. Like Amar and Hadia, her relationship with her father has been ruined because of his negative role in her life.

The positive role of mothers in both novels is not the same. While Mirza shows Layla a weak mother who cannot defend her children against Rafiq's domination, Gwen, Dana's mother, is presented with a positive role in her daughter's life. She is the caretaker of her daughter and the defender of her against the passive father. This shows Amar and Hadia have no connection to their mother, while Dana keeps connecting with her mother because of her positive role as a supporter.

The perspectives of achieving a new identity are seen in both novels through the resistance to the domination of both fathers. Amar has become different because of his integration into the Western community. Hadia has become a new figure with more independence. Therefore, they can decide on their lives differently from what Rafiq wants. In the same way, Dana has developed her identity by achieving autonomous perspectives on her decisions. She has become a friend to Marcus despite the opposition of her family. Like Dana, Hadia is an autonomous figure because she can decide on her own about her marriage.

Self-acceptance can be seen in the characters of Amar, Hadia, and Dana. Amar is satisfied with living away from the patriarchal domination. He has become satisfied with adopting the American lifestyle. The rejection of his family does not mean anything to him. The same notion of self-acceptance is seen by Hadia, who lives contented with her decisions in life. Both are depicted as strong characters who can live peacefully without the domination of their family.

Dana is not different to that since she has ignored that her father does not confess the fact that he is her biological father. Despite all the psychological suffering of isolation, she seems a strong girl who has forced all her surroundings to accept her existence in the

community. Dana's goal is to overcome hurdles in life by accepting the self as it is. Now, she has become a different figure who rejects the interference of others in her life. She has achieved her autonomy as a satisfied girl, which has enabled her to live independently. She denies the interference of her father in her life because she considers him the cause of her terrible life during her childhood. After all, he refuses to confess the reality that she is his daughter. Dana resembles Hadia, who ignores the orders of others that have spoiled her life. Both characters showcase resilience in the face of patriarchal control and societal constraints, carving independence paths that defy their families' expectations. Their journeys are personal triumphs and reflections of broader social struggles that intersect with cultural identity, marginalization, and belonging issues. These narratives highlight how systemic challenges, whether rooted in patriarchy, cultural traditions, or racial discrimination, shape and complicate the pursuit of self-acceptance and autonomy.

While this study primarily focuses on psychological and familial dynamics, the themes explored in both novels suggest a potential for broader interpretations. Issues such as racial identity and the immigrant experience in *A Place for Us*, alongside the impact of skin color and societal marginalization in *Silver Sparrow*, offer fertile ground for further analysis. These thematic layers underline the complex interplay between personal identity and societal structures, illustrating how characters navigate external pressures to assert their individuality. Exploring these dimensions can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how intersecting factors like race, migration, and class influence identity.

Such intersections point to the broader implications of identity formation as depicted in literature, challenging conventional approaches to character analysis. Future studies could incorporate theories of intersectionality, focusing on how overlapping forms of oppression shape human experiences by addressing these dimensions. These potential avenues for research align with the overarching goal of understanding the nuanced ways in which external forces influence identity development. Therefore, further studies about the two texts might deploy other theories, like racism, because both novels deal with the lives of characters who are different, either because they live as migrants, as in Mirza's *A Place for Us*, or as characters with different colors, as in Jones's *Silver Sparrow*. This study includes these notions because the general aim is to show how the characters have developed their identity in both novels.

In advancing the scope of the research, this study distinguishes itself by integrating psychological and social perspectives to analyze identity formation and self-acceptance. Compared to other studies on the texts of the two novels, this study is more extensive since it has included more psychological and social concepts and like-mindedness, which has not been deployed to examine the texts so far. Additionally, the study employs three concepts of Erikson's development theory to provide a structured framework for analysis. These concepts have been instrumental in proving the perspectives of self-acceptance, which is the core focus of this study. Including psychological and social perspectives of human development in one study has made this research a pioneering effort, offering a foundation for future studies using psychoanalysis or social theories to examine literary texts.

The study bridges human development's psychological and social dimensions, demonstrating how these intertwined forces shape the characters' responses to adversity. By utilizing Erikson's theories of psychosocial development—particularly the stages of Identity vs. Role Confusion and Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt—the research highlights how individuals navigate societal expectations while striving to preserve their sense of self. These stages emphasize trust, autonomy, and resilience in fostering a healthy psychological foundation. This dual focus on psychology and sociology underscores the complexity of identity formation and self-acceptance. It offers a holistic framework for understanding these processes in diverse cultural and social contexts.

Future research could build on these findings by investigating intersecting factors, such as race, migration, and economic status, which further complicate the dynamics of self-acceptance. In *A Place for Us*, for example, the immigrant experience is intricately tied to patriarchal traditions, revealing additional layers of conflict experienced by first-generation children. Exploring these intersections could provide a deeper understanding of how cultural displacement and familial expectations shape identity. Similarly, *Silver Sparrow* presents opportunities to examine issues of race and class, particularly through the perspective of familial secrecy and societal marginalization. These themes suggest that identity formation is not only influenced by individual and familial dynamics but also deeply rooted in broader social constructs.

The study contributes significantly to the literary analysis of *A Place for Us* and *Silver Sparrow*, offering a model for integrating psychological and social theories in literary critique. By combining Erikson's developmental framework with sociocultural perspectives, the research provides a nuanced understanding of the interplay between external pressures and internal conflicts in shaping the human experience. This interdisciplinary approach enriches the interpretation of these novels, demonstrating the universal relevance of their themes while highlighting their unique cultural contexts. The insights gained set a precedent for future research that bridges psychoanalysis, sociology, and literature, paving the way for more comprehensive studies on identity and self-acceptance.

Ultimately, the study underscores the transformative power of literature as a medium for exploring psychological and social dilemmas. The narratives in these novels illuminate the resilience required to navigate adversity and reflect the intricate dynamics of identity formation. By situating individual struggles within broader societal frameworks, the research reveals the universal challenges of self-acceptance and autonomy, offering valuable contributions to interdisciplinary discourse in psychoanalysis, social studies, and literary analysis.

The study's findings reaffirm the critical role of literature as a medium for examining and understanding complex psychological and social dilemmas. Through the narratives of *A Place for Us* and *Silver Sparrow*, it becomes clear that the journey toward self-acceptance often involves navigating a labyrinth of familial loyalty, societal expectations, and personal aspirations. These narratives highlight how external pressures—such as patriarchal norms, societal marginalization, and cultural dissonance—serve as obstacles and catalysts for individual growth, ultimately underscoring the transformative power of resilience and adaptability.

By delving into the intersections of psychoanalytic theory and literary analysis, the study demonstrates the utility of Erikson's psychosocial stages in decoding the intricate dynamics of human development. Key concepts like autonomy, identity, and trust are critical in shaping the characters' struggles and triumphs. These frameworks provide valuable insights into the interplay between internal conflicts and external realities, offering a deeper understanding of how individuals strive to reconcile personal aspirations with societal

constraints. Furthermore, these narratives underscore the universality of certain psychological experiences—such as the search for autonomy and belonging—while highlighting their unique manifestations within specific cultural and social contexts.

This research has broader implications that extend beyond the scope of these two novels. It opens avenues for further exploration of how literature critiques and reflects the forces shaping identity in diverse cultural and historical landscapes. Future studies could undertake comparative analyses across literary traditions, examining how race, migration, class, and globalization influence self-identity development. For instance, *A Place for Us* offers a poignant exploration of the immigrant experience and its interplay with patriarchal traditions, while *Silver Sparrow* examines the complexities of racial identity and familial secrecy. Both texts provide fertile ground for discussing how intersecting factors such as race, economic status, and societal norms shape the quest for self-acceptance.

The study underscores the enduring relevance of literature in bridging psychological and social inquiries, demonstrating how Erikson's theoretical insights can enrich the interpretation of literary texts. By intertwining these frameworks with the narratives of Mirza and Jones, the research showcases the potential of interdisciplinary approaches in fostering a holistic understanding of the human condition. The struggles and triumphs of characters like Hadia, Amar, and Dana are universal representations of the pursuit of self-acceptance, autonomy, and belonging—an endeavour transcending cultural and temporal boundaries.

We conclude that exploring self-acceptance within these narratives reveals a profound intersection of psychological resilience and societal expectations. The characters' journeys toward self-acceptance illustrate how external challenges, such as patriarchal domination and societal marginalization, act as obstacles and catalysts for personal growth and identity formation. Mirza's *A Place for Us* and Jones's *Silver Sparrow* demonstrate how individuals navigate the tensions between collective norms and personal aspirations, ultimately achieving a sense of autonomy and self-definition through persistent struggles and transformative resolutions.

Furthermore, this study's findings affirm the significance of Erikson's psychosocial theory as a robust framework for literary analysis. Concepts like *Identity vs. Role Confusion* and *Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt* have proven pivotal in uncovering

the psychological depths of the characters' experiences and their nuanced responses to external domination. By applying these theoretical insights, the research not only deepens the understanding of the individual development of Amar, Hadia, and Dana but also situates their struggles within a broader narrative about the universality of identity conflicts across various cultural and social contexts.

This study contributes to psychoanalysis, sociology, and literary studies by illustrating how literature bridges theoretical concepts with lived human experiences. Through the dual perspective of psychological and social dimensions, the research provides a nuanced understanding of how external pressures and internal conflicts collectively shape the human self. These findings underscore the enduring relevance of literature as a medium for reflecting and critiquing societal norms while fostering empathy, self-awareness, and a deeper insight into the complexities of the human experience.

Finally, the study emphasizes that self-acceptance is not a static or finite achievement but a dynamic and evolving process, influenced continuously by individual resilience and societal forces. Both *A Place for Us* and *Silver Sparrow* exemplify the human capacity to resist, adapt, and thrive in the face of external constraints. This dual perspective—embracing both struggle and triumph—enriches the literary narratives and positions them as vital tools for understanding the human condition.

This thesis compares the psychological dimensions of Erikson's theory with sociocultural critiques of identity formation, opening avenues for further interdisciplinary research. Future studies could explore the complex interplay between race, migration, gender, and class in forming identity or examine how similar themes manifest in different literary traditions and cultural contexts. Ultimately, this research asserts the transformative power of literature to explore, critique, and navigate evolving notions of identity and self-acceptance in an ever-changing world.

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