

A Study of Characters' Core Issues in Kamila Shamsie's Home Fire: A Psychoanalytic Perspective

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Abstract

This research article aims to explore the psyche of the main characters in Kamila Shamsie's novel *Home Fire* (2017). For this purpose, the researchers have drawn on psychoanalytical theory proposed by Sigmund Freud in the late 19th century. This theory deals with the person's unconsciousness. The research is qualitative in nature. It explores the characters' motives and actions that constitute their personality. The prominent characters of the novel like Isma, Aneeka, Eamonn, and Karamat have been analyzed in detail. The present research highlights how anxiety affects the characters' lives and different factors such as defense mechanism, and family roles shape the psyche of the characters. The core issues which will be discussed in this study are the following; fear of intimacy, fear of abandonment, fear of betrayal, low self-esteem, and, unstable or insecure sense of self. The concept of family dynamics which is one of the basic concepts of the psychoanalytical theory of Sigmund Freud has been explored through the deep analysis of characters' actions. Finally, it also examines how characters adopt various strategies as defense mechanism to cope with these issues.

Keywords: Freud's Psychoanalysis, Defense Mechanism, Fear, Pakistani English Literature, Diaspora.

Introduction

A psychological method known as psychoanalysis aims to investigate the unconscious themes and symbols found in literary works, as well as the psychological struggles and motives of fictional characters. In order to decipher the text's hidden themes and hidden meanings, it has been used to analyze the behavior, thoughts, emotions, symbols, dreams, and other unconscious images. The writing of literature has also been impacted by psychoanalysis, with numerous authors employing psychoanalytic ideas to investigate the human mind and develop sophisticated, psychologically detailed characters. The purpose of psychoanalysis in literature is to create a framework for psychologically informed literary study and interpretation while also providing a better knowledge of the human mind.

Unconsciousness and psychoanalysis are two interconnected concepts that hold profound significance in the field of psychology and the understanding of human behavior. Unconsciousness refers to a state of the mind where thoughts, feelings, and motivations are not readily accessible to conscious awareness. It plays a crucial role in shaping our thoughts, behaviors, and emotional experiences, often without our conscious knowledge.

The interplay between unconsciousness and psychoanalysis is central to the understanding and treatment of psychological disorders, as well as the exploration of human personality, motivations, and the complexities of the human mind. This dynamic relationship continues to shape modern psychology and therapy, offering valuable insights into the depths of the human psyche and the intricate forces that shape our thoughts and actions. In this exploration, we delve into the fascinating world of unconsciousness and psychoanalysis, uncovering the profound impact they have on our lives and the field of psychology as a whole.

The father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud, thought that literature may help us understand the human psyche. With the use of symbolism, metaphor, and other literary techniques, Freud regarded literature as a type of art that enables authors to communicate their unconscious thoughts and feelings. He thought that reading and studying literature might help one understand the human psyche

better since it could disclose the internal conflicts, anxieties, and desires of the mind. The idea of the unconscious mind, or the portion of the mind that acts outside of our consciousness, is one of the fundamental ideas of Freud's psychoanalysis. According to Freud, the unconscious mind is home to memories, feelings, and thoughts that have been repressed because they are frightening or upsetting. According to Freud, people may explore and express these suppressed impulses and desires via literature in a way that is both safe and acceptable. Freud also held that literature might shed light on how a person's psyche develops through time. He felt that literature might be used to analyze the cultural and psychological influences that shape an individual's mind since literature is a mirror of the social and cultural context in which it was created.

In short, Freud thought that literature might be a rich source of knowledge about the human psyche and that literary analysis could be utilized to learn more about the unconscious mind and how the individual's psyche develops. H. Ruitenbeek (1964) in his book *Psychoanalysis and Literature* has examined the connection between literature and psychoanalysis in detail. The three chapters of the book are titled "Psychoanalysis and the Interpretation of Literature," "The Creative Process in Literature," and "The Psychoanalytic Study of Literary Criticism." It had great impact on the later researchers like Harold Bloom and Jacques Lacan, who advanced the psychoanalytic approach to literature and contributed to develop the multidisciplinary areas of psychoanalytic literary criticism. Kamila Shamsie, born in 1973 in Karachi, is a Pakistani-British novelist who afterwards went to the UK to pursue her academic education. She has published seven novels, including *Kartography* (2002), *Broken Verses* (2005), *Burnt Shadows* (2009), *A God in Every Stone* (2014), and *Home Fire* (2017). Her writings have won great praise and have been translated into more than 20 other languages. She has won several literary awards, including the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature, the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award, and the Women's Prize for Fiction. She has taught creative writing at a number of universities and regularly contributes to numerous journals. She is also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

The British-Pakistani novelist Kamila Shamsie is well known for incorporating psychoanalytic ideas and themes into her writing. Her novels *Burnt Shadows* and *Kartography* examine the effects of trauma on people and society, as well as memory, identity, and self-discovery issues. In *Burnt Shadows*, Shamsie looks at how trauma may change identity and relationships as well as how society and people might have trouble coming to terms with the past. In "*Kartography*," Shamsie makes use of Freudian ideas like the unconscious, repression, and the

Oedipus complex to investigate the inner motives and struggles of her characters. Overall, Shamsie's use of psychoanalytic ideas and motifs in her writing enhances the complexity of the psychological difficulties she explores. In this research, we'll discuss Freud's core issues in Shamsie's novel, *Home Fire* (2017). We'll explore the core issues present in the major characters of the novel. Isma, Aneeka, and Parvaiz are three British-Pakistani siblings, and the tale of their family is told in the novel *Home Fire*. It looks at issues including familial ties, loyalty, betrayal, and self-identity. Isma abandons her siblings and moves to America to pursue her academic goals. There, she meets Eamonn, the son of a well-known British politician. Due to the histories of both families, the two start having trouble getting along. Shamsie's *Home Fire* explores themes of love, sacrifice, and familial ties in the setting of British-Pakistani Muslims who live in a culture that frequently holds scepticism and distrust towards them. It has garnered favorable reviews from both readers and reviewers, and it has won several honors, including the Women's Prize for Fiction and the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature. Readers are prompted to reflect on significant problems in the work, including the meaning of identity, the role of family and society, and the effects of extremism.

Literature Review:

A literature review acts as a prism through which an individual can view the writer's world, which other analysts and critics have already explored. As Parija et al (2018) argue that "A literature review is an objective, thorough summary and critical analysis of the relevant available research and non-research literature on the topic being studied" (p. 154). It provides the writer's perspective and view and a framework for analyzing and evaluating that writer's literary work, which has been published at an international level. It is a collection of study data that has already been written about by critics and analysts about that specific writer's literary works, with references. It also highlights the hidden aspects of literary work that need further exploration because a novel can describe many themes and ideas. Norman (1993) points out nearly a hundred years of relationship between Psychoanalysis and Literature. He describes three phases of psychoanalysis. The first phase of psychoanalysis highlights the original discoveries of Freud, like unconscious processes and the Oedipus complex. In this phase, things are made clear by studying the relationship between consciousness and unconsciousness. In the second phase of psychoanalysis, Freud re-evaluates his original discoveries and proposes the model of ego psychology (id, ego, and superego). In this phase, things are examined by the relationship between the ego and non-ego, and the

non-ego is the id. Superego is the outer world. Moreover, the third phase is still in progress. Through all these phases, the scope of psychoanalysis is magnified. With reference to the study of fear, Furedi (2018) is a seminal work that dwells on the causes of fear and how fear works.

Niaz et al (2019) have illustrated the roles of psychoanalysis in elucidating literary works. In recent times, psychoanalysis has been one of the most important and modern theories for analyzing a literary text. They further explain the controversial thoughts about whether psychoanalysis is closely linked with literature. It tried to illustrate that psychoanalysis is not only used in the medical field but also helpful in interpreting hidden meanings, most notably in the field of literature and philosophy, culture, and religion. The sameness and difference between Carl Jung's and Sigmund Freud's theories of psychoanalytic criticism are also highlighted. Nandita & Al-Hafizh (2019) describe how the innocent British Muslims are deceived by different dominant groups. The strategies by which the British Muslims are betrayed are explained through textual analysis with the help of the implied author technique. Some discussion is also visible about the home and fire in this article. Three orphan siblings living in London, older sister Isma and 19 years old twins Aneeka and Parvaiz. Their ancestors were Pakistani Muslims who settled in London. Their father died in Guantanamo because he was considered a terrorist. The betrayal is done by two groups differently. One group is the British government, and another group is ISIS. Aneeka, Parvaiz, and Isma represent British Pakistani Muslims, Home secretary Karamat Lone is represented Br, the ish government, and Farooq is represented ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria). Betrayal of the British government is described in two ways. First, manipulation is done by Karamat Lone to gain political benefits. He is a Muslim, but he tells himself an atheist in public just because of political gain. He manipulated his Identity to become a home sectary of the British Parliament. Second, the British government limited the rights of Muslims and made strict and injustice rules for Muslims. Karamat discourages and asks to stop using Islamic symbols such as the hijab by females. The second group ISIS sends recruiters to Britain to convince innocent young Muslims to join ISIS, and in return, they will be given protection and good life. Farooq goes to Britain and convinces Parvaiz to join ISIS through some emotional speeches. Farooq talks about the discrimination and racism done by the British government against Muslims to convince him to join ISIS. He tells him about jihad (fight for Islam and Allah). He tries to inspire Parvaiz to join him by telling him about his father, Adil Pasha, who fights in Afghanistan and dies in Guantanamo. ISIS convince

and utilizes the treatment of the British government towards Muslims to brainwash innocent Muslims to join them. However, they were poorly treated when they joined and snatched their passport. When they try to run off from ISIS, they are killed. This is the case with Parvaiz when he tries to run off and is killed in front of the British embassy in Istanbul. Thus, the implied author technique explores deception by the British government and ISIS.

Kaltenbach (2019) examines Shamsie's *Home Fire* from a psychoanalytic angle with a particular emphasis on the themes of marginalization and belonging. The psychological impacts of displacement and cultural dislocation on the individuals are complexly portrayed, according to Kaltenbach, in the novel. The study of Rind et al (2022) explores the concept of Gayatri Spivak's *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (1988) through the textual analysis of *Home Fire* (2017). According to Spivak Subaltern is an inferior, subordinate, and subjugated group that does not have any voice and is not heard by anyone. Subalterns are treated as "Others," deprived of social, political, religious, and economic rights. They are neglected at certain levels of psychology and cultural & social rules. Subalterns are named as inferior, lower-ranked, downtrodden masses. Likewise, in Spivak's concept, Shamsie's novel also represents Muslims as Subalterns living in Britain. Saleem et al (2022) state that *Home Fire* presents Edward Said's concept of *worldliness* and diasporic Muslim identities. Shamsie explains the stereotypes and stigmas of Muslims as irrational, barbaric, sentimental, and violent in the novel. Furthermore, it is explained that whether Muslims live in England, America (westernized), Syria, or Pakistan, they are violent and troubling for other inhabitants. There is a description of detoxification and fundamentalism in *Home Fire*. Shamsie misrepresents Islam when she Compares Islam with Cancer in a question. She talks about the turban and whether it is a style or a Muslim thing. She leaves these questions unanswered in the novel. This shows her latent westernization. The character of Aneeka is represented as a Muslim girl who can exploit and seduce Eamonn for her gain. After having intercourse with him, she starts her day by offering prayer. Through the paradoxical personality of Aneeka, Shamsie mocks Islam and Muslim culture. This is evidence of her programming of western stereotypes about the Muslim community. In addition, it is explained that every Muslim character in the novel betrays other Muslims. Isma betrays her siblings when she goes to America, Aneeka exploits Eamonn with her fake love, and Eamonn baffles his father, Karamat. Karamat circumvents the Muslim community and his father's legacy. Through these characters, Shamsie adverts that Muslims are shameless because they sell their dignity whenever required.

Karamat Lone is represented as an opportunist who deceives not only his Muslim community but also his fatherhood for his political gains. The character of Parvaiz is shown as the extension of his father, who became jihadi and terrible for his state. At the novel's end, there is a bomb blast in which Aneeka and Eamonn die, illustrating that Pakistan is a terrorist, corrupt, and sentimental country. Shamsie's melodrama portrays the radicalization and westernization of diasporic Muslims as a threat to humanity. They have pointed out the idea of orientalism and re-orientalism. Orientalism is a practice of the West to assert its dominance over the East. Re-orientalism is the representation of stereotypes of the Orientalized East. The East is represented as exotic, uncivilized, savage, barbarous, and dangerous. The South Asian authors and elite intellectuals represent the orient as exotic as the West wants to see. They admire and adopt the practices of the West. In-Home Fire Kamila Shamsie also tries to represent the West culture more explicitly than Pakistani or Eastern culture. Through textual analysis of the novel, many examples can be found. Shamsie writes about Isma, an older sister in the Pasha family, who used to wear a hijab to hide her frizzy hair, not for her Islamic Identity. She is severely investigated at the airport traveling to America for further studies due to her oriental appearance. The elite of the East is represented through Karamat Lone, as he rejects orient ideology and follows Western ideology, and he feels proud of the practices of Western ideology. Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, and Pakistan are represented as a dystopia, which empowers the West's ideas and position about the East. Islam is presented as exotic and radical through the references to Iraq and Syria. At the novel's end, when Aneeka and Eamonn die in a bomb blast in Karachi, it shows that Pakistan and other Islamic countries are involved in terrorist activities. Taimur et al (2023) deal with the relationship between Greek and indigenous culture and cultural adaptation. Their work also focuses the way gender and religion play role in shaping characters' personalities. Tabassum et al (2024) have examined the social and cultural factors that cause fear and constitute characters' personalities. Similarly Basit et al (2024) explore how different stimulants transform Pervez into a fundamentalist.

There is limited research on the psychoanalytic analyses of Shamsie's chosen novel. Few attempts have been made to examine the core problems of the characters in the novel from a psychoanalytic standpoint. The psychoanalytic conflicts, motivations, and growth of the characters throughout the works have not yet been thoroughly studied. This lacuna in the literature offers a chance to the researchers to explore the psychoanalytic core issues in the characters of

Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire*. Such a study could contribute to a better understanding of the characters' inner lives and throws light on the psychoanalytic elements that pervade Shamsie's works.

Research Questions:

The study investigates the answers of the following questions:

1. What psychological core issues Shamsie has presented in the personalities of her characters in *Home Fire* (2017)?
2. What emotional and psychological battles do the characters experience in the novel?
3. Do characters succeed in coping with their core issues?

Research Methodology:

The present research is qualitative in nature. The researchers have employed content analysis method to investigate the complex psyche of the characters of the novel. Anxiety is significant to experience in psychoanalysis because it exposes our core issues. According to Sigmund Freud, anxiety is an amalgamation of tension, repression of Id desires, and traumatic situations overpowering the weak ego. Anxiety arises when some unpleasant moments come into a person's life. It comes out when there is a conflict between the ego and the superego. Due to anxiety, some changes and disorders are observed in a person's personality and physical behavior. As mentioned by Sigmund Freud, the father of the psychoanalytic school of thought, there are three major types of anxiety. The anxiety comes out due to fear of the natural world's circumstances and when the ego is disturbed by the threat of the external world's events, objects, and persons, known as objective anxiety. A psychological disruption can be observed when a person becomes anxious due to a terrible incident or physical object. This all occurs due to realistic or objective anxiety. It can be controlled by disappearing that terrible object or staying away from that ugly incident. The overwhelming Id desires over the ego is the result of neurotic anxiety. The function of the ego is to control Id desires. However, when Id desires overcome ego, it creates a mental disorder known as anxiety. The ego's inability to control Id desires causes many abnormal behaviors, irrational thoughts, and delusions in a person. Id desires need to be fulfilled in any case, which is called neurotic anxiety. The most common example of neurotic anxiety is hysteria, in which the ego fails to control Id desires. Desires are strong enough to demonstrate in the form of abnormal behaviors. The conflict between the ego and superego causes moral anxiety.

Superego deals with moral values and social norms which restrict and abandon a person from doing evil and immoral chores. Moral anxiety is to be answerable to your conscience, and it is displayed and felt through shame, guilt, and regret. Moral anxiety is self-punishment. The most common example of moral anxiety is an obsession in which a person feels shame and guilt. Anxiety is central in psychoanalysis since it exposes our core issues. Therefore, the researchers will focus and analyze the core issues that are evident in characters' personalities. These core issues include fear of Intimacy, fear of abandonment, fear of Betrayal, low self-esteem and unstable sense of self.

Discussion & Analysis:

Home Fire is a novel by Kamila Shamsie that was published in 2017. In telling the tale of a British Muslim family, the book examines issues of identity, family, politics, and religion. Isma, Aneeka, and Parvaiz, three siblings who are struggling with their identities and connections to their family's past, serve as the major characters of the novels. The themes and characters in *Home Fire* lend themselves to a variety of psychoanalytical interpretations. For instance, one would contend that the childhood traumas of the characters—such as the loss of their parents and the feeling of isolation and prejudice they suffer as British Muslims—have a substantial influence on their psychological growth and behavior. One may also consider how the characters' irrational wants and anxieties shape how they behave throughout the story. Overall, despite the fact that *Home Fire* does not directly discuss psychoanalytic theory, it is possible to read this novel via a psychoanalytic lens in order to examine the psychological aspects of the characters and their experiences.

CORE ISSUES

In the novel, the characters have to experience different situations and events which cause the break down of mental health and create emotional pain inside them. In the selected novel of Shamsie, it is seen that the major characters face numerous harsh realities which cause anxiety in them. Due to this anxiety, the characters' core issues are exposed. Some of the prominent core issues are explained as follows:

I. Fear of Intimacy

Tyson (2006) defines fear of intimacy as an enduring and intense feeling that emotional attachments damage and harm us. We can save ourselves from this

emotional turmoil by remaining at an emotional distance. This core can be seen while talking with Hira Shah, Isma shares her fear of intimacy as follows

I don't want Eamonn's pity, if that's what you're driving at here.' 'I'm driving at the fact that habits of secrecy are damaging things', Hira said in her most professional voice.(Shamsie, 2017, p. 39).

Isma's statement that she didn't want Eamonn to feel pity for her would suggest that she fears intimacy, but it doesn't mean it proves that she does. Isma's hesitation to express her ideas and feelings to others, as highlighted by her reply, however, may be a hallmark of a fear of intimacy. Hira Shah's comment on the negative impacts of secretive behaviors may also apply to a fear of intimacy. This anxiety can make it difficult for people to establish intimate connections and to be vulnerable with others, which can be harmful to their mental health.

Isma's fear to intimacy is a result of previous trauma like being abandoned or hurt by the death of her mother and grandmother. If this is the case, counselling may help her resolve these problems and learn how to interact with people more effectively. In short, it's crucial to understand that aversion to intimacy is a typical and normal human feeling, and that receiving treatment from a mental health expert may be a beneficial first step in overcoming it.

In the beginning, he was afraid she might choose simply to stop coming around one day. There was a skittishness to her manner, now passionate, now distant. Once she'd even broken off at a moment that left him crying out in dismay to say, No, I can't dressing quickly and leaving, refusing to explain. (ibid, p. 74).

Over here, Aneeka may be afraid of closeness because of her uncertainty and propensity to be both passionate and distant with Eamonn. She abruptly decides to break up from a moment of closeness with him and depart without saying goodbye, which is another indication of her fear. Aneeka may be pulling back and separating herself from the connection out of fear of being exposed and the possibility for being hurt. For those who have endured prior traumas or have battled with intimacy and trust in their relationships, this anxiety can be a frequent coping technique.

She was a weight against him unwanted, clinging. In that moment he could imagine not loving her; he could imagine wanting her gone from his life with her secrets and her strangeness, her swerves of mood, the sheer inconvenience of her. But then she pulled away, put a hand over her eyes, and when she looked at him again she was Aneeka once more. (ibid, p. 85).

Both Aneeka and Eamonn's fear of intimacy are depicted in the extract. Eamonn may be having second thoughts about getting close to Aneeka as seen by his remarks about how she weighs heavily on him and how her quirks and secrets bother him. He is contemplating a life without her, demonstrating his fear of intimacy's inherent vulnerability. Aneeka, on the other hand, seems to be grappling with the sense of intimacy based on her clinginess to Eamonn and her mood swings. She could act in this way because she is afraid of being harmed in the relationship or of losing Eamonn. She is straining to be honest and vulnerable with Eamonn, as evidenced by the fact that she may quickly revert to her regular self.

2. Fear of Abandonment

The fear of leaving loved ones is physical abandonment, and the fear that they do not love us and have no affection for us is emotional abandonment (Tyson, 2006). This phobia can be observed in a person deprived of basic needs, love, and care in her childhood. Abuse, negligence, the death of loved ones, and the emotional distance of parents are significant causes of this core issue. Fear of abandonment is very important core issue as it emphasizes the terrible impact of political and social turmoil on individual lives and speaks to the universal human urge for belonging and connection.

According to attachment theory, people often worry being abandoned when they think their attachment figure could abandon them. A variety of situations, such as relationship changes, separation, or loss, might cause this anxiety. According to the statement,

When the twins grew older and formed their own self-enclosed universe there was less and less Aneeka needed from Isma , but even so there remained a relationship of physical closeness -Parvaiz was the person Aneeka talked to about all her grieves and worries, but it was Isma she came to for an embrace, or a hand to rub her back, or a body to curl up against on the sofa. And when the burden of the universe seemed too great for Isma to bear - particularly in those early days after their grandmother and mother had died within the space of a year, leaving Isma to parent and provide for two grief struck twelve-year-olds - it was Aneeka who would place her hands on her sister's shoulders and massage away the ache. (ibid, p. 13).

Aneeka's growing independence may indicate a shift in the nature of the relationship, which might make Isma dread being abandoned or left alone. This

passages from the novel imply that Aneeka and Isma are extremely close and that Aneeka depends on Isma for both emotional and physical assistance. Aneeka's need on Isma lessens as the twins mature and become more independent. Isma, who has been in charge of raising the twins since their mother's passing, can experience anxiety at being abandoned as a result of this transition. The text also implies that Isma had to assume parental responsibilities for the twins after their mother's passing, which would have strengthened her bond with them. This stronger bond and the fear of being abandoned may make Isma feel obligated to take care of and safeguard the twins. Under this situation, Isma's fear of abandonment may be made worse by Aneeka's lessening need for her as it may be interpreted as a rejection of her caregiving role.

Also, Isma's fear of abandonment could have been exacerbated by the responsibility of raising the twins after their mother and grandmother passed away. Isma may have felt alone and overburdened in her role as the primary caretaker, which may have made her dread of losing her attachment figures more intense. Isma would have needed Aneeka's physical comfort and mental support during this difficult period, which may have strengthened her bond with Aneeka. This implies that Isma may be afraid of being abandoned because of Aneeka's diminishing need on her, the death of the two family members, and her job as their primary caretaker. We may better understand the complicated feelings and connections that influence the lives by being aware of these interactions. When Aneeka informs Isma that Parvaiz has contacted her but not Isma, Isma feels abandoned.

He sent a chat message just to say he's OK. You got the same?' 'No, I got nothing.' Oh, Isma. I was sure you had. I would have told you otherwise. Yes, just that. He's OK. He must have assumed I'd tell you as soon as I heard. (ibid, p. 26-27).

Isma's dread of abandonment is brought out in their discussion of Parvaiz's message. Isma could conclude that Parvaiz is no longer interested in keeping up a close connection with her because of the fact that he messaged Aneeka but not her. She may start worrying about the quality of her relationships with others as a result of these emotions of uneasiness and worry. Isma appears to be feeling alienated and outcast based on her answer of "Oh, Isma" when Aneeka informs her that she did not receive the same message as her. This may exacerbate her feelings of loneliness and her worry that the people she loves about may leave her. Aneeka comforts Isma by saying that Parvaiz probably believed she would

learn about it from her, underscoring the value of transparency and communication in preserving happy partnerships. In order to minimize misunderstandings and possible conflict, it also emphasizes how crucial it is to question presumptions and deal with anxieties and insecurities in relationships. The conversation between Isma and Aneeka demonstrates the adverse consequences abandonment worries may have on a person's relationships and sense of self. It also emphasizes how crucial it is to keep relationships healthy by being truthful with one another and dealing with fears.

The siblings watched one another, and watched one another watching one another. At least it felt that way, though in all probability she was far more aware of the twins than they were of her. (ibid, p. 30).

These lines from *Home Fire* imply that Isma is feeling extremely conscious of and mindful of herself around her twin siblings. This may be as a result of an anxiety over abandonment, which is a common emotional reaction for those who have gone through loss or tragedy in their life. Isma may be attempting to emphasize their familial bond and create a sense of closeness and security by using the phrases "sister" and "brother" instead of their siblings' names. She may, however, be more sensitive of her siblings' behavior and worry because she fears being abandoned or rejected by them.

Fear of abandonment can be observed when Aneeka accuses Isma for Parvaiz's inability to return home *Isma you have made our brother not able to come home.* (ibid, p. 42).

Aneeka is lamenting the fact that Parvaiz is unable to return home in this situation, and she is blaming Isma for the situation. Aneeka's fear of desertion may be a result of her tight bond with Parvaiz and her wish for him to come back to his family. Aneeka may be expressing her worry that she won't have Parvaiz's affection and support, who is a significant part of her life, by blaming Isma for his disappearance. Aneeka could also be concerned that other family members, like Isma, may not be entirely engaged to the family's well-being, which could exacerbate her feelings of abandonment and loneliness.

3. Insecure/ Unstable sense of self

The importance of preserving and maintaining a feeling of our Identity, to maintain a sense of self knowledge. Identity is frequently described as our whole perception and experience of who we are (Tyson, 2006). To have a solid sense of who we are, we must be able to recognize ourselves as the same person

in the past, present, and future. There are various occasions in Kamila Shamsie's novel *Home Fire* that reveal characters have a low sense of self. For example, anxiety can be observed over here:

She had expected the interrogation but not the hours of waiting that would precede it nor that it would feel so humiliating to have the contents of her suitcase inspected (ibid, p. 01).

It seems that the Isma may be dealing with fear of shame and low self-esteem. Anxiety, which includes dread, concern, and uneasiness, might result from the anticipation and uncertainty of the interrogation in line. Isma can be concerned about how the questioning will turn out and dread the ramifications of defying the authorities. Feelings of worry and uneasiness can also be influenced by a sense of vulnerability and powerlessness. Anxiety is a complicated feeling that may have a big influence on someone's psychological health since it can come from a lot of different places, such as uncertainty and dread of the unknown.

Isma had expected the questioning, which suggests that she could have been worried about the prospect of being questioned or inspected. This can suggest that she isn't confident in her own opinions or behavior, which can cause feelings of uncertainty and self-doubt. She may be too self-conscious if, as demonstrated by the fact that she finds the scrutiny of her luggage humiliating, she is. This can be a sign of poor self-esteem, which could make her feel ashamed or embarrassed about particular elements of herself. She can be dealing with poor self-esteem and a fear of being shamed, which might be causing her anxiety and inconvenience.

She had made sure not to pack anything that would invite comment or questions - no Quran, no family pictures, no books on her areas of academic interest. (ibid, p. 01).

It could suggest Isma's insecure sense of self. Isma could be attempting to blend in or stay out of the spotlight by not carrying objects that are important to her faith, family, or intellectual interests. This can be a sign of her lack of confidence or of her concern over being evaluated or condemned by others. She may not feel fully accepted or comprehended by others around her if she is purposefully hiding parts of who she is from others, as this may be the case. This can be a sign of underlying insecurity or a feeling of alienation, which might be driving her cautious conduct. The character may be battling with emotions of self-doubt and confusion about her identity and place in the world, as is suggested by the line overall. This is demonstrated by the meticulous packing selections she makes.

This line could suggest that Isma is using avoidance as a defense mechanism for being interrogated at the airport. Avoidance or distancing from circumstances or stimuli that are seen to be threatening or uncomfortable is a frequent defence mechanism. Isma is intentionally avoiding carrying anything that would bring attention to her and elicit comments or inquiries from other people in this situation. Isma defends herself from possible unfavorable interactions or judgments by avoiding potential causes for tension or discomfort. This defense mechanism, though, could also keep her from expressing herself completely and interacting with people in a more genuine and open way. The line suggests that she could be adopting avoidance as a defense method for her nervousness or uncertainty, but this may be restricting her capacity to connect with others and cultivate a more confident sense of self. Insecure sense of self can be seen when Aneeka and Isma talking about the airport security investigation:

Her muscles tightened at the thought of Aneeka in the interrogation room. (ibid, p. 26).

Isma's uneasiness and worry about possible discrimination and harassment at airport security are highlighted in it. Isma's fear and worry for the security and well-being of her loved ones can be seen in the way her muscles tens up at the notion of her sister being exposed to questioning. Due to the dehumanizing and traumatizing effects of being subject to security checks and interrogations based on one's past or identity, people may feel uneasy and helpless as a result. Moreover, it can reinforce the notion that some groups are innately suspect and require extra inspection, which can exacerbate feelings of exclusion and marginalization. The effects of discriminatory behaviors on people and their relationships are shown by Isma's worry for her sister and her distress at the prospect of Aneeka being questioned. It also emphasizes the value of making efforts to build a society that is more just and equal and free from harassment and discrimination based on one's identity or background.

There are still moments of stress when I'll recite Ayat al-Kursi as a kind of reflex. 'Is that a prayer?'

'Yes. Ask your girlfriend about it. Actually, no, I'd prefer it if you didn't mention it to anyone.'

, You shouldn't have to hide that kind of thing.'

'I'd be nervous about a Hme Secretary who's spoken openly about his atheism but secretly recites Muslim prayers. Wouldn't you?'

'Do I look nervous?' (ibid, p.107)

Eamonn and Karamat Lone's conversation illustrates Karamat's unsteady sense of self. Home Secretary Karamat is a British Muslim who has disassociated himself from his ethnicity and religion. He struggles to juggle his competing identities as a British politician and a Muslim and is perceived as an outcast in the Muslim community. Karamat's revelation that he performs the Muslim prayer Ayat al-Kursi under pressure demonstrates that he has not entirely lost touch with his Muslim identity. He feels the need to conceal this side of himself from others, even his kid. This implies that Karamat is not at ease with his Muslim identity and is worried about coming out as a hypocrite or a traitor. In addition, Karamat's reaction to Eamonn's inquiry regarding the reason for his desire to conceal his prayer exposes his inner turmoil. Karamat is conscious of the fact that his role as home secretary necessitates that he project a particular persona to the public, and he considers his Muslim heritage to be a potential risk. At the same time, he is conscious of the possibility that the Muslim community may look his atheism with suspicion, and he feels the need to uphold his ties to his Muslim past. In general this exchange sheds light on Karamat's unstable sense of self and his battle to juggle his competing identities as a Muslim and a British politician. He struggles between wanting to separate himself from his Muslim identity and wanting to stay connected to his roots.

4. Low Self-esteem

Self-esteem is our thinking about ourselves. This core issue deals with low self-confidence. It is a belief system in which we consider ourselves less worthy than others and are ignored (Tyson, 2006). According to Eamonn's statement, he could be lacking in self-confidence when it comes to facing unfavorable media coverage of his father, Karamat Lone.

I hate all the old muck they scrape up about him every time he's in the headlines, and this time it'll be worse. I came to avoid it. He is good at dealing with it; I'm not. (Shamsie, 2017, p. 34).

Eamonn's selection of the word "hate" conveys a strong dislike for how his father has been portrayed in the media. The perception that the unfavorable media attention reflects adversely on his family and, consequently, on himself may be the source of this extreme unpleasant emotion. This would imply that Eamonn accepted the unfavorable media coverage as a reflection of his own self-worth, which is a characteristic of people with poor self-esteem. Eamonn's remark that he stays clear of situations where his father can receive unfavorable media coverage

also suggests that he lacks confidence in himself. This might imply that Eamonn doesn't think he has the competencies or skills to deal with unfavorable attention well. This can make him feel overburdened and apprehensive, which might exacerbate his poor self-esteem. Eamonn may have poor self-esteem if he compares himself to his father, who he claims is excellent at handling unfavorable media attention. Eamonn may be feeling inadequate or deficient in some manner because he is negatively comparing himself to his father. Eamonn's worry and discomfort with the bad media attention given to his father may be exacerbated by this parallel.

Thus, Eamonn's comment in *Home Fire* raises the possibility that he experiences poor self-esteem when it comes to dealing with the harsh media exposure his father has received. Kamila Shamsie emphasizes the influence that unfavorable media attention may have on people's sense of self by examining this possible problem in Eamonn's character. She also emphasizes the significance of fostering good self-esteem.

"How she'd wept that day in Hira Shah's office. For her mother, for the grandmother who had predeceased her daughter-in-law by less than a year, for her father, for the orphaned twins who had never really known their mother before bitterness and stress ate away the laughing, affectionate woman she'd once been and most of all, for herself." (ibid, p. 39).

In these words from "*Home Fire*," it is revealed that Isma has a poor sense of self. She appears to be dealing with emotions of inferiority and self-doubt based on her sobbing for both her family members and herself, especially the phrase "and most of all, for herself." She may also be seeking for good role models and lacking confidence in her own capacity to play that position, as seen by her concern for the twins who never really knew their mother and the loss of the smiling, loving lady her mother had been. Isma's sobbing could also be a sign of a lack of emotional strength or coping mechanisms, which are associated with poor self-esteem. She is crying for many people, including herself, which shows that she may be carrying a heavy emotional load and finding it difficult to control her own emotions.

5. Fear of Betrayal

Grievous feelings that our friends and loved ones will betray us (Tyson, 2006). They cannot be trusted anymore, and they cannot be trusted not to cheat us, not to mock us, and not to do backbiting. In a relationship, it can be as a partner

cannot be trusted not to date anyone else These following lines from Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire* depict a fear of betrayal.

Her phone buzzed and she looked down to a series of messages. It's all going to get worse. He has to prove he's one of them, not one of us, doesn't he? As if he hasn't already. I hate this country. Don't call me I'll say things I shouldn't. Stop spying on our messages you arseholes and find some bankers to arrest. (ibid, p. 34).

The line "It's all going to get worse. He has to prove he's one of them, not one of us, doesn't he? As if he hasn't already" that the sender of the message is worried about the loyalty of a trusted friend. If the person receiving the message is also close to the subject of the communication, it could make them fearful because they might be concerned about being deceived or having their own allegiance called into question.

The phrase "I hate this country" alludes to the characters' sense of disillusionment or dissatisfaction with the society or government they live in. As the character may feel let down or betrayed by the processes and institutions that are intended to safeguard them, this might add to a sense of betrayal.

"Stop spying on our messages you arseholes" implies a dread of being watched or monitored, which may add to paranoia or a fear of treachery. The term "arseholes" conveys a sense of rage or fury, which might be a reaction to feelings of betrayal or violation brought on by the intrusion of monitoring. These lines collectively suggest that Isma receiving the messages could be suffering betrayal dread, mistrust of the state or society, and fear of monitoring or surveillance.

Gently he said, 'My love, I promise you MI5 is not watching you because of your father.' I know. They are watching me because of my brother. Ever since he went to Syria, to Raqqa last year. (ibid, p. 95).

This passage also reveals Aneeka's fear of betrayal; when Eamonn tries to reassure her that MI5 is not watching her because of her father, Aneeka responds that they are watching her because of her brother's actions; Aneeka's fear of betrayal is based on her conviction that her brother's actions have placed her and her family under suspicion and that they are being monitored as a result. Given that her brother being a member of an extremist group, Aneeka's concern of deception is justified. She may have thought that because of her brother's conduct, she and her family are also in danger. She can be afraid that a loved one would betray her or denounce her to the police. In short, the text indicates

Aneeka's worry about betrayal influences her behavior and choices in significant ways. She could be reluctant to confide in others and is probably careful about who she trusts. She can also feel alone and emotionally unstable due to her fear of betrayal.

"Don't you ever refer to her in that way again. She is the woman I'm going to marry. 'Nothing moved in his father's face. 'Stay here. '

'Or what, you'll arrest me?' But the Home Secretary has gone before she and of the sentence slamming behind him." (ibid, p.109)

In these lines, Eamonn expresses a concern of betraying his love interest, Ankeeka. Eamonn instantly stands up for her and declares his love for her when his father disparages her. This demonstrates his fear that his father may desert him by refusing to approve of his relationship with Ankeeka. When his father tells him to remain where he is and he responds by asking whether he will be jailed, his panic grows even worse. The reason behind Eamonn's fear of betrayal is because his father is a strong individual, and he worries that he will use this influence to destroy his relationship with Ankeeka. This fear is justified since Karamat Lone, Eamonn's father, has previously shown he is willing to use his position of authority to meddle in his son's personal affairs and influence his decisions. Due to his father's erratic and unstable disposition, Eamonn's fear of betrayal is a reasonable reaction.

Defense Mechanism

To overcome anxiety and psychological disturbance, some strategies are adopted, and this process is called defense mechanism. In the above mentioned novels some specific defensive strategies are adopted in certain situations to overcome protagonists' anxieties. These defense strategies are as follows;

I. Avoidance

Staying away from things that make you feel uncomfortable or threatened is known as avoidance, and it's a psychological defence strategy. Excessive avoidance can temporarily relieve symptoms, but over time it can impede progress and exacerbate anxiety or stress. It's crucial to strike a balance between turning to avoidance as a coping mechanism and confronting difficulties in order to support sound psychological health.

She'd made sure not to pack anything that would invite her questions - no Quran, no family pictures, no books on her area academic interest. (ibid, p. 3).

In *Home Fire*, a Muslim lady named Isma uses avoidance as a coping strategy when visiting the USA. She makes a conscious effort not to bring anything that can draw unwelcome notice from airport security or immigration agents. Isma uses avoidance, a defence tactic that entails avoiding unpleasant or anxiety-inducing circumstances or stimuli. She is well aware that her Muslim identity and academic interests in terrorism-related themes might cause suspicion and closer examination by airport security and immigration agents, so she tries to avoid anything that can be used against her or her family in a discriminating way.

Isma's choice to use avoidance draws attention to the widespread prejudice and unfair treatment that Muslims frequently experience in Western society. It also offers insight on the worry and apprehension that Muslims feel while dealing with authorities or undertaking such activities as travelling. Isma effectively uses avoidance as a defence strategy and a coping strategy to get by in a harsh and prejudiced environment. It also highlights the urgent need for more tolerance and compassion in Western cultures towards Muslims and other marginalized groups.

Helmy & Zayed (2017) state in their article “Muslim discrimination in the West: Historical roots and contemporary causes” examines the era-specific and current reasons for prejudice towards Muslims in Western society. They said that during the colonial era, when Western powers ruled numerous nations with a majority of Muslims and presented Muslims as inferior and backward, unfavorable stereotypes and opinions of Muslims were reinforced. Islamophobia, or the irrational fear or hate of Islam and Muslims, to be a major cause of Muslim discrimination in the West. They contend that extremist organizations who use violence and terrorism to explain their acts might contribute to the spread of Islamophobia, which is frequently founded in ignorance of and misunderstanding of Islam. According to them Muslim discrimination in the West is caused by media representation, political rhetoric, and Islamophobia, which fuel stereotypes and prejudices.

Ismail (2018) points out in his article that Islamophobia is a form of racism and prejudice that specifically targets Muslims based on their religious identity. It can lead to discrimination, exclusion, and marginalization in various areas of life, including education. A qualitative study found that many Muslim students in higher education in the UK faced discrimination and exclusion in various forms, such as verbal abuse, micro-aggressions, and exclusion from social events. These experiences can have significant negative effects on Muslim students' academic performance, mental health, and overall well-being. To combat Islamophobia in

education, efforts should focus on promoting greater understanding and empathy towards Muslims, as well as addressing structural inequalities and biases that contribute to discrimination. Further research and action are needed to address Islamophobia in education and society more broadly.

We don't talk about it. We were forbidden to talk about it. (Shamsie, 2017, p. 50).

The Pasha family is seen in Kamila Shamsie's "Home Fire" using avoidance as a defence strategy to deal with the stigma and prejudice surrounding their jihadi father, Adil Pasha. To protect themselves from criticism and abuse in British culture, they refrain from talking about his prior terrorist acts. In the case of the Pasha family, they refrain from discussing Adil's history in order to shield themselves from any potential prejudice and discrimination they may experience in British culture. Isma tells Eamonn that it was against the rules to talk about Adil's history, illustrating the level of guilt and anxiety around the subject. The Pasha family's decision to utilize avoidance as a defensive strategy highlights the negative impacts of stigmatization and discrimination towards those who are related to terrorists. It also draws attention to the difficulties that Muslims face in Western nations, where they are frequently the subject of prejudice and stereotyping. In conclusion, the Pasha family's defensive tactic of staying out of trouble demonstrates the challenges of dealing with the effects of terrorism in a society that frequently stigmatizes and rejects Muslims. It emphasizes the requirement for greater acceptance, empathetic understanding, and tolerance of underprivileged communities in Western countries.

2. Displacement

Displacement is a defense mechanism in which a person redirects their emotional impulses, usually anger or frustration, from their original source onto a less threatening target. This can result in expressing these feelings in an inappropriate or disproportionate manner. While displacement might temporarily alleviate the initial emotional distress, it can lead to misunderstandings, strained relationships, and unresolved conflicts. Recognizing when displacement is occurring can help individuals address their underlying emotions and find healthier ways to manage them.

In the hours when he knew Aneeka wouldn't visit, he went to the gym, did his shopping, dropped in on his mother to prevent her dropping in on him. He fired his cleaning lady, who also worked for his parents... (ibid, p. 80).

Aneeka fails to meet him, Eamonn turns to displacement as a coping strategy to deal with his feelings of rejection and abandonment. Displacement is a typical defensive tactic that is used to divert unfavorable feelings to another, less dangerous source. Eamonn concentrates on other areas of his life, such as going to the gym, shopping, and dismissing his cleaning woman, in order to avoid facing his feelings over Aneeka's absence. He does this to insulate himself from the discomfort of rejection by channelling his annoyance and disappointment onto these hobbies. Eamonn's defence strategy of displacement emphasizes the difficulties people have in dealing with rejection and desertion in relationships. It also emphasizes how crucial it is for one's mental health and wellbeing to acknowledge and deal with unresolved emotions. Eamonn's use of displacement as a coping method highlights the necessity for society to learn more about emotional regulation and coping mechanisms. It emphasizes how crucial it is to have a secure and encouraging atmosphere that encourages healthy emotional expression and communication.

He stood up, walked to edge of the roof. As far from her as it was possible to go. In his life he'd never known anything like this feeling - rage? fear? What is it? Make it stop. He kicked out, knocked over the kumquat tree. (ibid, p. 95).

In "Home Fire," Eamonn uses displacement as a coping strategy to deal with the strong emotions that follow learning of Aneeka's brother's engagement with ISIS' media wing. In the example of Eamonn, he aims his fury and terror at a kumquat tree and topples it. By doing this, he shields himself from the awkwardness of the circumstance and avoids facing his feelings towards the stunning information regarding Aneeka's sibling. The employment of displacement as a defense strategy in this situation emphasizes the challenges people have coping with intense emotions brought on by traumatic occurrences. Additionally, it emphasizes the harm that repressed emotions do to mental health and general wellbeing. Eamonn's use of displacement, in general, highlights the significance of identifying and dealing with one's emotions in the wake of terrible occurrences. It draws attention to the need for society to get a better grasp of emotional regulation and coping methods.

Displacement as defense mechanism is also used by the characters of *Burnt Shadows* as follows *"I'll chase him down in the car. 'He slammed the flat of his*

hand against the door to push it open, the sound of flesh smacking wood violent and painful. Elizabeth's hands lifted in self-defense to shield her face. (Shamsie, 2009, p. 94).

When this mechanism is active, it is seen in James Burton's angry response to the door in *Burnt Shadows* after learning of Sajjad and Hiroko's intimacy. James turns his aggravation and rage towards the door since he is unable to address Sajjad and Hiroko directly. He may get some of the stress and rage out by smashing his hand on the door, although in a violent and damaging way.

3. Denial

People who deny reality about a situation or about their own feelings, ideas, or behaviours are defending themselves. It's a strategy for shielding oneself from upsetting or dangerous information. Although denial may bring about a brief sense of relief, it can also impede people from dealing with issues, coming to wise decisions, or getting assistance when they need it. Using denial frequently can eventually impede personal development and result in more serious problems. It's critical to identify when denial is being used as a coping method and to think about more healthy approaches to coping and face reality.

From the start, Suarez had understood the Home Secretary's insistence that he didn't want to know anything at all about the threats against him; 'You do your job and let me do mine, 'Karamat had said.' (Shamsie, 2017, p. 216).

Karamat Lone employs denial as a coping strategy to deal with the possible challenges to his political career posed by media coverage of Parvaiz's body and Aneeka's protest. By refusing to recognize or accept unpleasant or overwhelming truths, denial is a frequent defense technique employed to shield oneself from them. He is able to detach himself from the circumstance and save himself the emotional pain that would result from acknowledging the truth of the dangers thanks to this denial. By using denial as a coping method, Karamat Lone illustrates the detrimental effects of ignoring uncomfortable or overwhelming facts. It demonstrates how denial can keep people from taking the required steps to deal with the problem and may have unfavorable effect. Karamat Lone emphasizes the value of embracing and facing challenging facts, despite how unpleasant or overpowering they may be, via the use of denial as a coping method. It emphasizes the necessity for people to possess emotional resilience and the capacity to deal with trying circumstances in order to successfully navigate through them. The characters use a number of defense mechanisms to address

these particular core issues in an effort to protect their mental health. These psychological defense mechanisms help people deal with internal conflicts, reduce anxiety, and protect themselves from emotional distress. By using these approaches, the characters create a psychological wall that protects them from the full effects of their core issues, allowing them to maintain equilibrium and psychological stability. The characters' use of these protection systems highlights how flexible and creative people are by nature and how they can deal with difficult situations. Additionally, these defense systems shed light on the characters' psychological adaptability, coping strategies, and the complex interaction between their internal conflicts and outside circumstances. A closer understanding of the complex complications of the characters' psychological experiences and the multidimensional nature of their individual journeys is made possible by examining these defense mechanisms.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the psychoanalytic analysis of Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire* offers significant insights into some core psychological issues such as fear of betrayal, poor self-esteem, an unstable sense of self, and fear of abandonment. The research have explored the characters' defense mechanism, including denial, displacement, suppression, selective perception, and projection. The researchers have comprehensively investigated the characters' conflicts, tensions and defense mechanisms by applying psychoanalytic ideas and concepts. The Freudian analysis of Kamila Shamsie's novel *Home Fire* has been done by using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic framework, which sheds light on significant issues including poor self-esteem, fear of abandonment, fear of betrayal, and an unstable sense of self. Understanding of these anxieties, the characters' resultant behaviors, and their defensive mechanisms have been examined through Freud's ideas. The characters' issues with sense of self and self-worth are further illuminated by Freud's theory of an unstable sense of self and poor self-esteem. The present study helps the researchers to comprehend the complexity of human nature, interpersonal dynamics, and the long-term effects of individual and communal experiences in a better way. It helps us learn about their underlying desires, fears, conflicts, and motivations through psychoanalytic investigation.

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