

**THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF SINGLE PARENTHOOD IN KAINE  
AGARY'S YELLOW-YELLOW AND SEFI ATTA'S EVERYTHING GOOD WILL  
COME**

**Julie Chidinma Nwangwu and Dr.Ibiene E. Iboroma**

Department of English Studies, Faculty of Humanities University of Port Harcourt Choba,  
Nigeria.

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**ABSTRACT:** *The purpose of this study is to examine the Psychological Effects of Single Parenthood in Kaine Agary's Yellow-Yellow and Sefi Atta's Everything Good Will Come. This study makes use of secondary data sources (Novels and previously published works) in order to elicit information that would assist in filling the overarching gap we found in the literature. Furthermore, we drew on Sigmund Psychoanalysis and Control theories in order to help the study understand the effect of single parenthood on the emotional and social behaviour of children within the family unit. Overall, this study validates the relevance of Psychoanalysis and Control theories because it illustrates that human nature, historical and cultural differences affected the emotional and social behaviour of children under single parenthood.*

**KEYWORDS:** Single Parenthood, Psychoanalysis, Control theory, Yellow-Yellow

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this study is to examine the Psychological Effects of Single Parenthood in Kaine Agary's Yellow-Yellow and Sefi Atta's Everything Good Will Come. One of the banes of society's moral development is the problem of the family this is because in every society, a man's sense of propriety and morals is measured by his level of education and his social background (Ivan). This illustrates that how a man lives, act and behave in predicting his upbringing. In sociological studies, it is therefore imperative to place importance on the family as the first agent of socialization. It is in line with this notion that sociologists had considered the family as the smallest unit of the society and the most duty-bound unit in terms of imparting ethics, morals and decorum. In spite of the central role the family plays in the development of ethical standards in the society, the family itself has not been free from problems some of which result in break-up. In the face of this problem, the couples sometimes are unwilling to accept responsibilities for their mistakes thus leading to divorce which creates a gap in the upbringing of their children. Thus, it is believed that children display deviant tendencies easily when social control is weak and ineffective which is an aftermath of marital break-up.

Establishing a family is the first step in teaching the child the norms and standard ethics of the society. But, when a defined family structure is lacking as a result of break-up the child often loses sense of values, morals and standard etiquettes (Ivan). This is why experts had asked what the most important component of a family structure is? So as to proffer solution to cases of break-up and this question had raised considerable debates as to what a family is. Since the break-up of the structure of family results in negative consequences for every member of the family which had prompted some scholars to argue that a single parent household is not a family. Others had argued that single-parent household still passes as a family (Chester, 1998). This school of thought based their argument on the fact that a single parent may be made up of one-parent, yet it constitutes a unit of socialization. More so, all single parent household are

not the result of inability to find a husband or a wife. This is because there are many causes of single parenthood ranging from death of one partner, war, migration and loss of contact, denial of unwanted pregnancy/fatherhood in a pre-marital situation, forced celibacy due to traditional provisions. Like in the death of one partner the source argued that will the family structure be derecognized because only one partner survived to take charge and care of the children? The answer is no. Therefore, in order to resolving family problems it becomes imperative to look at the problems that leads to break-up (divorce) and the emerging consequences of single parenthood in order to control the crime rate and moral decadence in the society. The problems resulting from single parenthood are large in number. They range from emotional or psychological to physical problems, some of which come in the form of hysteria, violence, pilfering, prostitution, lack of respect for elders and timidity as well as coyness.

As a chronicler of the society's ills, literature had played considerable role, though limited in some ways in reporting the problems of single parenthood and its consequences to the development of the family in particular and the society at large. It is in the light of this that Kaine Agary and Sefi Atta raised discussions as per the large numbers of problems resulting from single parenthood in their novels: *Yellow-Yellow* and *Everything Good Will Come*, respectively. Specifically, these novels dealt with different kinds of single parenthood in order to examine how the children are variously affected. In Kaine Agary's *Yellow-yellow*, single parenthood results from migration and loss of contact (2006) while in Sefi Atta's *Everything Good Will Come*, single parenthood results from death of one partner in the case of Sherifat and a divorced in the case of Enitan (2005). Against, these different forms of single parenthood, we observed from the literature that limited studies had attempted to compare and analyse the Zilayefa (*Yellow-Yellow*), Enitan and Sherifat (*Everything Good Will Come*) and how they respectively impact the emotional and social behaviour of children within the family unit. Hence, this is the gap this study intend to fill in the literature. More so, in an attempt to fill this gap we draw on the psychoanalytical theory (Sigmund Freud) and control theory (Walter Wreckless). More specifically, the key objectives of this study include to examine: the causes of the characters' emotional and social behaviour; why individuals react differently in identical circumstances; the alternative measures to remedying the problem of fixation arising from a skip off a stage in the psychological development of an individual and the psychoneurosis of the characters to underscore the existentialist view that there is an essential human nature, or set of defining human features, which is innate, universal, and independent of historical and cultural differences.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This study draws on Freudian's psychoanalytical theory and Walter Wreckless' control theory. This study draws on certain principles of the psychoanalytical theory in order to understand the "completed process" of growth and development of the characters in relation to their social environment. Thus Nyong J. Udeoyop opined that:

*"Ultimately, two things more than all others determine the value of any work of art, including the novel, these are ethics and aesthetics. Ethics concerns the moral value of thought and action. For this reason, characters must be viewed as morally differentiated beings in a complex interplay of feelings, emotions, desires, knowledge or awareness, action and incidents" (Pp 7)*

This consideration of the “interplay of feeling” leads us to the question: how does the authors, under study, present the “completed process” of their main characters’ thought and development in relation to their growth from innocence to experience? The answer to this question takes us to the theory of psychoanalysis. Our adoption of the psychoanalysis is not from the point of view of literary criticism which interprets a text from the psychological development of its author. Our position is based on the therapeutic perspective which enable us study the emotion and thought of the individual characters in the texts. The theory and practice of Sigmund Freud provides the foundation for psychoanalysis. Sigmund Freud, while working on his patients, diagnosed as having hysteria, he declared that their problem was psychological and not physical. For Freud, these patients have suppressed desires which have refused to heal. This undisputed declaration by Freud, underscores therefore that emotional outburst, violence and consequently deviance of any kind are mostly the result of some suppressed desires which have been controlled in the infantile period of development. For Freud, these desires are stored in the unconscious state of human being. Thus Charles Bressler argued that:

*“Freud was the first to suggest that the storehouse for these desires was unconscious – his name for that part of the psyche or mind that receives and stores our hidden desires ambitious, fears, passions and irrational thoughts. Unaware of the presence of the unconscious, we operate consciously, Freud asserted, believing our reasoning and analytical skills are solely responsible for our behaviour. But it is the unconscious, Freud believed, that evidences itself through slips of tongue, dreams, art and irrational behaviour that motivates most of our actions” (Pp 89)*

The views running through Bressler’s notion endorse the idea that human actions result from an impulse that resides in the unconscious state of his being; that is to say that every of man’s action in the product of a pre-existing desire conditioned by the events in the person’s social environment. For Freud, human beings evolve through certain basic phases in their development of consciousness and reasoning. The id (which incorporates the sexual and other desires), the ego (which tries as best it can to negotiate the conflicts between the insatiable demands of the id, the impossible stringent requirements of the superego, and the limited possibilities of gratification offered by reality), and the superego (which internalizes social standards of morality and etiquette the id is further divided into three overlapping phases: the oral, the anal and the phallic phases. In the oral phase the child experiences sensual pleasure in the oral cavity and so, develops the habit of sucking; from the mother’s breast to his/her (child’s) finger, to anything the child lays his/her mouth on. Later, the child develops sensual pleasure in the anus.

Bressler further explains that during this stage, the anus becomes erotogenic zone, for the child becomes sadistic, expelling and destroying through defecation. By withholding faeces, the child also learns that he can control and manipulate others” (Pp. 90). The later and most influential stage is the phallic stage. This is the stage of sexual desires or libido. Freud maintains that at this stage, the pleasure principle basically controls the child resulting in what he calls the Oedipus complex. For Bressler, the child is at this stage (phallic) self-centred, sadistic, and assertive, thus, the child “cares for nothing but his or her own pleasure and recognizes neither male nor female” (Pp 90). Consequently, the child especially in his/her third year will want to possess his/her mother. While the male child develops and tries to engage in sexual union with the mother, the female child also develops sexual desires for the mother but which last only for

a short time before she switches over to the father resulting in the electra complex. If the father is absent, there is an impaired development resulting in uncontrollable urge, in later life for men. This is because the child (female) does not undergo the castration effect when the “penis envy” impulse develops in her as to condition her ways that will help her control her urge.

In the case of the absence of a mother with whom she develops the impulse of “penis envy”, the girl, in later life, becomes alienated from the social world of man and this indulges, perhaps, in masturbation and lesbianism. The same effects apply to the case of the male child in the absence of either parent. Attitude of shyness and timidity often develop in the male child in the absence of the mother, or he becomes rude, brutal and over-imposing in his relationship with women in later years. Need not to over-emphasize the different stages of psychoanalytical theory, thus we agree with Bressler’s view that:

*“The ego’s job is to mediate between the instructual (especially sexual) desires of the id and demands of social pressures issued by the superego. What the ego (consciousness) deems unacceptable it suppresses and deposits in the unconscious. And what it has most frequently repressed in all of us is the sexual desires of our early childhood” (Pp 90).*

Given the roles of these different phases in the development of the individual from innocence to experience, it is indeed, true that these phases are interconnected. And, in the interconnectedness of these phases, any imbalance or an upsetting of the channel of relationship and development, results in chaos and hysteria – a psychoneurotic burst, irrationality, stimulated body symptom, deviated and so forth. Furthermore, the control theory is found suitable for this study because it proclaims that behaviour is the outcome of an internal impulse (Stephen, 1993). According to Wreckless external stimuli is good on what already exist in the unconscious mind if the individual at certain period in life needs a very strong measure in order to control certain impulses. Hence, weak control social systems result in deviant behaviour occurs when external controls on behaviour are weak. This implies that any measure of control applied by individuals other than the possessor of the non-conformist impulse the parents, the social groups, the law and the general norms of society would be rebuffed. More so, control theory argues that children who are properly bonded to their parents are less involved in crime and other deviant actions than children who have no parental bond. Hence, the theory therefore conceives the family as a natural law-abiding institution, which illustrates that if a child has strong bond with the parents, the child becomes bonded with positive influences from within the family and society.

This notion is however true but it fails to explain the outcome of the social behaviour of a child bonded with a parent of questionable background. It is for this reason that this theory is considered to be children-centred in its analysis. This is because it fails to explain the reaction and crime tendency of adult based on impulse and, as well, how the adult can control this situation. However, one of the key theoretical contributions of this study is in the establishment of the links between the adopted theories. Therefore the relationship between the psychoanalytical and control theories rest on the fact that they consider human actions as a product of the internal workings of the mind which develops from infancy through adult. This further implies that the behaviour of a man in adult life, is consequential to his psychological development from innocence to experience most of which are only controlled somehow due to experiences, but bits of his unconscious impulse still appear unnoticed and dictates certain actions he exhibits from time to time. Additionally, both theories give room for external control basically as a sure way to curtailing excesses in an individual. Hence, the both theories validate

the roles of parent in the development of their children and that the absence of parental care results in the development of certain psychological and behavioural deficiency.

From the literatures Kaine Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* publication had received wide criticisms and acceptance and most of which were published as internet blog, whilst some were on critical writings on the text. Thus Orié opined that *Yellow-Yellow* "is a novel of adventure, of agitation over the natural and human-manufactured harm to the Niger Delta lands and her people, in the guise of oil exploitation" (Pp 196). Orié's view departs from the psychological position of our focus, but it offers us enough bases on which to strike a balance between the individual impulse and the external factor that serves to modify such impulse. In the case of the heroine in the text, the socio-economic condition which Orié hints at helps us to appreciate why Zilayefa or Yellow-yellow seeks to travel to the city. This escape motif offers a new dimension to the psychological position of Zilayefa's view of survival outside the village. Orié's view agrees with Onyerionwu's consideration of the causes of militancy, prostitution and other kinds of moral shortcomings. In their words:

*"In Yellow Yellow, Agary is also interested in the calamity of the destruction of the human resources base in the Niger Delta. This phenomenon had given rise to militancy, prostitution and other kinds of moral shortcomings in the area" (Pp 127).*

Although, Zilayefa does not yield to prostitution but her surrounding reality of her village life opens in Zilayefa a quest for her to define herself what her life should be. Irrespective of the environmental perspective of the text, Kay looks at the text from the point of view of racial prejudice and survival quest. In Kay's submission, we are told that:

*"The novel describes Zilayefa's search for direction and purpose, her admiration for her city friends, her concern about her lack of a father and her racial identity, and, her affair with a powerful older man. She is sympathetic character and her voice seems authentic" (Pp 8).*

Kay's view is character-centred but it relates also with the events in the text by his enlisting the many quests which Zilayefa outlined in her search for directions. It is this quest that dominates the novel: from the girls who travel to the city to seek greener pastures to Bibi's (Zilayefa's mother) quest for a sound education for her daughter (Zilayefa), to Zilayefa's quest for direction and the quest for reunion with an unknown father. Ikheba captures most graphically, the submission of Kay in the paragraph above in his analysis. For Ikheba:

*"In Yellow Yellow, we see a Nigerian rotting in a place as its people, desperate from affirmation to survival, engaging in elaborate "okoso" system of getting whatever they need (good grades, anything) in return for whatever they can give (sex, whatever sell)" (Pp 11).*

It is at this point that we appreciate that impulse is not the only problem with Zilayefa, society also help to compound these problems for her. Bwerinofa, on his own part asserts that *Yellow-Yellow* is "... a truly authentic narrative of a region" (blurb). Here "region" synchronizes with the notion that the society helps to compound the problems for Zilayefa. For Agary's mastery of the narrative mode which enables her to represent the stark reality of the Niger Delta region, she gets the praises of scholars who consider her novel as "stark and socially realistic" (Kani, blurb) novel which shows that "the writer's power of (description) is remarkable" (Ozako,

blurb). For this reason, the novel (*Yellow-Yellow*) should be "... for all people who are daily occupied with the quest for the meaning of their existence" (Jahman Anikullop, blurb). And, we cannot forget, as Abdulareem Baba Aminu has sharply remarks, that it is a novel of "Elegant narrative, stylist writing and emotional dept" which makes "Agary's first book a compelling hard-to-drop (sic) read" (blurb).

For Sefi Atta's "Everything Good will Come", Adichie confirms that Atta's novel demonstrates an artistic craft from a feministic perspective. In Adichie's words: "there is wit, intelligence and a delicious irrelevance in this book" (blurb). But it is Sefi Atta's courage in choosing to look at her fictional world through fiercely feminist lenses that I must admire" (blurb). Orie's notion about the novel agrees with Adichie in terms of ideology (feminism). But Orie considers Atta's feministic vision as unfulfilled because Atta could not create an Enitan that succeeds as a 'total' woman after her (Enitan's) militancy" (Pp 55), rather, the novel "presents a trial of concourses of agenda to address hostile leadership, struggling and teering womanity and voicing silence" (Pp 27). Orie's view is rather too exaggerative in its condemnation of the feministic examples of the novel. Apart from Enitan not coming out a total woman as Orie claims, she exudes certain feministic exuberance that are, indeed, worthy of emulation. In a departure from the feministic lens, Onukaogu and Onyerionwu decry that Atta's *Everything Good Will Come* is a failed attempt at appropriating the socio-political realities of the Nigerian society. In their words: "Sefi Atta's brilliant novel, *Everything Good Will Come* is also neither here nor there in the explanation of socio-political currents of the temporal setting of the novel" (Pp 114). This assertion is contestable. Although a novel ought to capture the historical moment of the time of its production, but literature does not work with particularities. This is why Aristotle differentiated poetry (literature) from history based on the idea of probability and necessity. Appropriating the military and the civilian leadership trajectory in her work does not make the point of view too various and contradicting as Onukaogu and Onyerionwu claim. It is for this reason that Odia Ofeimum asserts that "Sefi Atta's first novel has the nerve to redefine existing traditions" (blurb). It is evident that, Kaine Agary and Sefi Atta are writers with uniqueness and they used their creative ability to bring to mind, the societal issues. Critics have discussed critically different aspects of their work but not much has been on the psychological effects of single parenthood in the two novels. This research therefore focuses on the psychological effects of single parenthood in the novels. It is on the basis of this, that we adopt these theories to explain the actions, inactions and reactions of characters of Agary and Atta in order to explain the psychological effects of single parenthood in *Yellow-Yellow* and *Everything Good Will Come* respectively.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

We found that the family structure has positive and negative influences on its members. The loose life Emem lives, gossiping, flirting with men as also shown in her advice to Zilayefa speaks volume of this influence. Zilayefa's inconsiderate acceptance of Sergio and Admiral, her constant night snicks as well as those of other girls who sell their bodies in the cities are some of the influences of the family because there is a lack of strong control system as a result of the absence of one member of the parents. Zilayefa tells us of how young girls troop into hotel in search of white men as well as her own desire to try such adventure: Every night, girls trooped into the hotel hobby, looking for a chance to snatch up a white man. Hundreds of girls left their villages to go to places like Warri and Bonny, to get their chance with a whitey.

Through I was financially comfortable and somewhat emotionally fulfilled with Admiral, I was still very curious about what the mystique was with white men (Pp 168).

But this desire is usually hampered by a fear that locked in the deepest recesses of her emotions. This is due largely to the fact that her father is a whitey and: “In fact, when I allowed myself to think about it, I thought it safer to keep away from white men just in case I committed a taboo with the father I had never known” (Pp 167). Zilayefa’s fear prevents her from some of the advantages, if ever there is any that she would have got from such a union. Again we understand that Zilayefa’s flirtation with Admiral is due to the love she lacks in her filial relationship with her parents. We have earlier said that the absence of her father in a girl-child’s life precludes her from experiencing the castration effects when the impulse of penis-envy develops. Consequently, the effects become an uncontrollable desire for the opposite sex. In the case of Zilayefa, this attitude develops in her unreserved acceptance of the Admiral. We are told that this naïveté acceptance of this man, the age of her father is as a result of a longing, especially as she sees the Admiral and his daughter. Alaere, as a version of what she has lost with the absence of her father, informs us that:

*“I was in such awe of Admiral and was taken by the fact that a man of his place in society wanted to be with me. Things had gone so well, I did not want to spoil anything. I wanted to make him happy and hope that in return I would experience the emotional comfort, attention, and protection that I had seen between him and Alaere” (Pp 145).*

This could be considered very naïve and a misconception on the part of Zilayefa for not exemplifying any moral rectitude. However, she is not really to be blamed for, she is acting under a compulsion too strong beyond her control: the absence of paternal love which causes an imbalance in her psychoneural development. This is buttressed in the quotation below:

*“I felt a deep sense of longing for him, not because of the comfort Emem hinted at which was money, but because I was hoping that the relationship would give me a taste of close paternal affection that I had never had” (Pp 138).*

Further down, the heroine-narrator continues to give us the reason why she falls head-down-toe for Admiral in her words, she tells us that: At this point, it suffices that all of Zilayefa’s action, reactions, inaction and other behavioural patterns are due to the imbalances in her emotional growth, her lack of paternal care and filial control measure affected her steps. From the foregoing, we appreciate her action as coming from an unconscious and conscious nagging. The idea running through this chapter is that single parenthood has so many effects on the psychological development of a child.

We have demonstrated this in the various instances drawn and the citations made from the citations made from the text. We also found that family structure and social setting affected the behaviour of family members. For example in case of Enitan and Sherifat, the actions, choices and behavioural patterns of Enitan and Sherifat are an exemplification of the effects of the conflicting demands of the id, the ego and sup for Superego which from their individual psycho-personality. For Sherifat, she is rude, disrespectful and non-conformist. We are told in the narrative that Sherifat is “rude and vain” (Pp.151). A full version of this quotation shows not only that Sherifat is rude and vain but it tells us other about Sherifat; her misdemeanour, indifference and her waywardness. It reads thus:

*“Sheri was rude and vain. Sheri had always been rude and vain, except that as a child it was endearing. And whatever she said, it was clear that she did not think much of herself. She liked rich men” (Pp.151).*

We need to stress this point that Sherifat’s rudeness, her not thinking about herself, and her love and performance for rich men are not isolated phenomena from the personality and belief of Sherifat. They are the outcome of an instinctive belief and preference which represent the conscious and unconscious essence of Sherifat’s personality. This line of argument takes us back to our earlier position in the introductory part (background to the study) of this study that action is the product of motivation and motivation determines behaviour (action set in mood) and behaviour is oriented towards the attainment of a goal. Also, the goal is pre-existed by a social condition which determines whether the goal is set out towards the attainment of material gratification or happiness. This pre-existing condition is again determined by the agent’s state of mind which is indeed better understood in terms of psychology. This point of view corresponds with Udumukwu’s notion that “...what a character does is the product of an underlying belief that exists before the action” (Pp 34). From the position above, we appreciate why Sherifat turns down the idea of marriage from her mind. The weak control system in her family had earlier resulted in her being raped and even since; she suffers a biological divorced after marriage she takes to waywardness as a call-girl about this ugly condition, she tells Enitan the following:

*“You remember what happened to me? I remembered only that she was the most powerful girl I know, and then she wasn’t anymore, and I became disappointed with her. ‘Not that’, she said. ‘You can say it. I did not rape them’ they raped me, and if they see me they’d better cross the road” (Pp 106).*

As the conversation deepens, we get to know further that Sherifat can no longer produce. The boys who raped her had “jinxed her life...” (Pp106).

*“And me, myself, ‘she said. What did I know? Taking a hanger to myself, with all the biology I studied. I still thought I had a black hole inside me. So, which single man from a normal family would have a person like me? (106).*

If these sentences are not enough to write home the point, then Enitan’s (the heroine-narrator) explanation makes it very clear.

*“Better be ugly, to be crippled, to be a thief even, than to be barren. We had both been raised to believe that our greatest days would be: the birth of our first child, our wedding and graduation days in that order. A woman may be forgiven for having a child out of wedlock if she had no hope of getting married, and she would be dissuaded from getting married if she didn’t have a degree. Marriage could immediately wipe out a sluttish past, but angel or not, a woman had to have a child” (Pp106).*

For Sherifat, she is educated having studied biology but she lacks two most vital things in the African setting: children and marriage. The preeminent position given to child-bearing and marriage is a pointer to show that it is a typical African setting. It is this view that links us to the role played by Sherifat’s immediate social setting in compounding her psychological problem. The premium place on child-bearing and marriage in the world of Sherifat varies from



the world of Tika and Efia in Amma Darko's *The Housemaid*. In *The Housemaid*, Tika deliberately opted for abortion rather than have a baby that will be to her (Tika) what she (Tika) has been to her mother (Sekiywa), and Efia, on the other hand, opted for premarital pregnancy against marriage in order to amass Tika's wealth. In the case of these characters (Tika and Efia) there is no much disdain from the society for the refusal to marry and for Tika's refusal to have a baby. But for Sherifat, she has been "jinxed" (Pp106). It is at this point that we appreciate the gender position of the novel. Not only is Sherifat denied the happiness of marriage due to her destroyed womb, she is also denied the means to stand on her own financially so she could be used by men for sexual gratification. This phallogocentric culture is represented in her (Sherifat's) uncles taken over of her father's property in the name of "native law" (Pp144) Sherifat therefore finds herself at a crossroads: raped, barren, unmarried and dispossess. What comes out of this is "want" and the desire to survive it:

*"Want? I beg you don't talk to me about want. When my father died who remembered me? Chief Bakare done die, God bless his family. We didn't even know where our next meal was coming from, and no one cared. Not even my uncle, who took all his money" (Pp105).*

The "his" in the emboldened part of the question refers to Sherifat's father, the society sanctions that Sherifat and her siblings forfeit their inheritance to their uncle, more to it for her being a female than to other considerations. This same society pushes the boys to rape her, makes her useless thereafter for being barren, rejects her in marriage, dispossesses her of her inheritance and comes back to her for sexual gratification and the most dangerous effect of which is objectification. Sherifat is objectified. She is first of all taught the process of being socialized, and in the process she is raped. She is made to internalize the reigning patriarchal ideology by her acceptance of Brigadier Hassan's dos and don'ts book-line and sinker, and she is conditioned to derogate her own sex by being taken away from her mother under the lover of death and what remains of her is "unhappiness, sexual frustration, and other deprivations" (Pp 211). For Enitan, she is always revolting, a clear case of non-conformist. She rationalizes her action from the position of her mother having realized her father's hypocrisy. And always she would outline the many ills of men, the representation of the society's cultural values:

*"I began to count on my fingers. 'No husband, husband's girlfriend, husband's mother. Human rights were never an issue till the rights of men were threatened. There's nothing in our constitution for kindness at home. And even if the army goes, we will still have our men to answer to. So, what is it you want women to say?" (Pp 200).*

Her anger with men is not necessarily a realization evolving from experience and maturity. Despite been jilted by Mike, revulsion springs from her father's mistreatment of her mother. Not that she realizes this earlier, but her being with her father exposes to her the many-sided nature of men. Her experience of the rape of Sherifat also compounds her psychological trauma. As explained in the literature review section of this study, suppressed desires which have not healed often do results in emotional outburst, violence and consequently deviance of any kind. More so that if there is an impaired development in the child's oral stage of development it results in any of the above negative behaviour. In Enitan's case, the dispute between her mother and her father results in weak control of her development processes so that her action in later life is a fixation of her suppressed infantile desires. In that section (Literature Review), we contend that if there was an impaired development due to the absence of the father, the child (female child) develops an uncontrollable urge for men in later life or, in reverse, she

(in the absence of the mother) becomes alienated from the social world of man and indulges, perhaps, in lesbianism and masturbation. As a result of her alienation, she becomes violently repulsive.

Enitan's life authenticates these views very wonderfully. She relates very well with her father but could not stop disrespecting him. She loves her father so much that she envies everyone that tries to gain her father's attention, Sherifat and her (Enitan's) mother inclusive when she is not with her father; she tries to relieve herself by going to see Mike, her boyfriend. Enitan's manner family in love raises concern also. She just falls in straight, even on the first time of meeting, without any reservation. This could be explained in terms of the first argument for impaired development, viz: "the child develops an uncontrollable urge for men in latter life." In her own words, she tells us that she is "... always hopeful about men" (Pp 176). It is for the reason advanced above that her father cautions her against Mike, her boyfriend:

*"You know, he said. 'I may not know much about youngsters today, but I know a few things and I don't think you should be making yourself so available to a man you've just met'" (Pp 132).*

The phrase emphasized reinforces our position in terms of uncontrollable urge. In spite of her father's warning that doing this makes her look cheap, Enitan, turns down her father's advice and walks out on him very disrespectfully:

*"I walked away. Unchaperoned indeed, look at him, just look at him and that Sheri calling herself my sister 'this is modern Lagos,' I said over my shoulder. 'Not Victorian London, 'this is my house' I heard him say and don't be rude'" (Pp 132).*

Enitan has earlier informed us that Sherifat is rude and vain, but from the above we also infer that she (Enitan) is also rude and vain. Another notable effect of the family structure on Enitan's life is her inability to cook. Aside the feminist argument against domesticity of the roles of the woman, one thinks it is not just obligatory but necessary for every human and not just the woman to know, even partially how to put things together to make an edible meal. But for Enitan: "Growing up with my father, I rarely stepped into a kitchen, and my father was easily satisfied with meals his cooks prepared" (Pp 126) and what results from this is an emphatic: "I'm sorry, I don't cook" (Pp 173). This makes her afraid of marriage which she considers a union of "an overload of duties... sometimes self-imposed." Her fear is hinged on her revolt. She says that:

*"The expectation of subordination bothered me most and how could I defer to a man whose naked buttocks I'd seen? Touched? Obey him without choking on my humility like a fish bone down my throat" (Pp 191).*

This self-interrogation is preceded by an argument between her and her husband, Niyi over who should prepare food for her husband's brothers. It goes this way:

'Enitan can you get these animals something? [...] 'You have hands,' Show some respect'. 'Go to hell,' I said (Pp 190).

Furthermore, Enitan goes on to ask her husband to get his brother drink since he cannot prepare food for them.

*“Well, why can’t you ever get them drinks for once? I answered, ‘Why can’t you go to the kitchen? What will happen if you go? Will a snake bite your leg? He did not speak to me for two weeks and I contemplated leaving him for that alone – he could at least have remembered his age, even though I deliberately bumped him and poked my tongue behind his back” (Pp 191).*

Bumping and poking one’s tongue behind a man’s back is disrespectful but contemplating leaving a man for an action as it is above is insane. The result of this is an emotional confusion as to whether or not she really loves her husband: “Sometimes I love you sometimes I hate you. But when I hate you, its becau-au-ause I love you” (Pp 120). The geographical style of inserting two hyphens in the word “because” shows how difficult it is for Enitan to accept loving her husband. This writing style shows how a stammering speech mode. Enitan’s confused emotion is due to her psychological trauma, the effects of her broken family structure. Her non-conformity is expressed in such declaration as “Good women were at home” (pp 159). Enitan shouts in Mike’s house; Enitan quarrels on the street; Enitan goes looking for men; Enitan is not always at house. She even walks out on her father in spite of the fact that “Daughter didn’t walk away like that. It was a sacrilege. Costly, too under my breath, I cursed our economy that didn’t give me freedom to sustain myself” (Pp 93). What we glean from the discussion so far is that Enitan is a victim of divorce. Worst still, her behaviour has been modelled upon the continuous problems that characterize the relationship between her mother and father. As a result of this continuous problem, the control measure needed in nurturing Enitan becomes weak. The weakness in the control system makes Enitan to become over-bearing and disrespectful.

## CONCLUSION

We have been able to establish this study that Kaine Agary and Sefi Atta are Nigerian female writers whose focus are not streamlined, like most female writers, to a preoccupation with the plight of women. Although, their novels, *Yellow-Yellow* and *Everything Good Will Come*, respectively are foregrounded on feministic ethos, yet their fictional horizon embraces the problems in which their society, Nigeria, is entrapped. Through the analyst of the two novels under study, we have seen how Kaine and Sefi portray the psychological effects of single parenthood on their characters. We have seen how broken homes affect the characters and how they react to it. Despite the presence of a mother or father in a single parent family, the characters still lack the filial love they deserve. We have also shown that the actions and behavioural patterns of the characters in the two novels are not based on a pre-ordained destiny; rather they are the outcome of a psychological problem rooted in the characters’ unconscious and conscious development. Given the above, it becomes necessary to say that these actions and behavioural patterns are influenced and affected by the social forces operating in the social setting in which the characters find themselves. The world will be a better place if a defined family structure is not lacking. Hence, Agary and Atta present us with the issues at stake in broken homes for purpose of providing means to solving family problems, especially, those problems that lead to break-up. Agary and Atta also advance the consequences of single parenthood from which their readers can draw blue-prints for controlling the crime rate and moral decadence in the society.

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