

Conflicts of the Main Character in Marcia Bradley's *The Home for Wayward Girls*

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Abstract. The title of this research is "Conflicts of the Main Character in Marcia Bradley's "The Home for Wayward Girls"". This research focused on analysing the internal and external conflicts faced by the main character, Loretta, and their impact on her development. This research was carried out to understand how these conflicts shaped Loretta's journey and to explore broader themes of trauma and resilience in literature. Loretta's character was chosen as the object of this research because her experiences offer significant insights into the consequences of childhood trauma and abusive environments. The data source for this research was the novel "The Home for Wayward Girls" by Marcia Bradley. The data was collected through close reading and note-taking. This data was analysed using qualitative descriptive methods based on the theory of Lajos Egry (2009) and William Kenney (1966). This research showed that Loretta's conflicts are categorized into internal and external conflicts. Internally, her anxiety and inner struggles stem from childhood trauma, while externally, her conflict can be considered as sociological, largely caused by her father's abuse and societal indifference. These conflicts have both positive and negative impacts on her character development, influencing her interactions, emotional stability, and resilience.

Keywords: conflict; main character and novel



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1. Introduction

Communication in general is the process of conveying messages from one person to another person, group, organization or society that responds and creates messages to relate to the environment and other people. Communication contains a specific purpose which is carried out verbally, face to face, or through digital media. Communication occurs when someone wants to convey information to another person. The information conveyed can make other people have similarities or differences in meaning of communication. In journal by Jihad Jaar WahamWan Mazlini Othman (2019) entitled Narration As A Means Of Communication In Selected Novels By J.M. Coetzee: Waiting For The Barbarians And Foe state that narrative is characterized as communication because its essence as with any acts is either conscious or unconscious intentionality as the case may be. Therefore, humans as the audience, readers and authors alike are also agents in the narration who aid to produce, create and interact with each other using communication in the completion of the narration through acts, speeches and actions.

A novel is a literary work written in the form of a long story in prose. A novel can contain many different elements such as a description of the setting, quotation between characters, and a narrative that describes the storyline of the novel. While Reeve stated that "A novel is a picture of real and manners" (1785:26). It means that a novel can be a reflection of human life and behaviour in reality, consisting of many thing such as: problem, feeling, emotion, ambition, and desire. Even some of the novels tell the human's life story which truly happens in reality. For readers, novel is one of the most popular fiction stories in the world. A novel reflect storyline about a particular human experience over a long period of time. Novels can also teach us about the meaning of life.

Literature is a written or spoken characterized by the use of language. Literary works are also characterized by the use of language to convey experiences, emotions and ideas. Covers various forms of written expression such as poetry, drama, novels, essays, and short stories.

Someone must have felt conflict in real life, and the same thing happens in the novel. A story in a novel has characters and a conflict between the main character and another character. Kenney stated "A story may deal with a conflict within a single man (e.g. desire vs duty) a conflict between a man, conflict between n man and society, between man and nature". (1966:19)

According to the statement, conflict does not just exist in humans, there are many factors that contribute to a development of conflict. Characters and their conflicts are the main element in novel. Humans are born imperfect, conflict has become inherent in us and cannot be separated no matter how far we run, conflict must exist, which means that human life cannot be far from conflict.

From several researchers, they have examined the types of conflicts of the main characters in the novel. Angelika Arif Margiraharjo, I Gusti Ngurah Parthama, Sang Ayu Isnu Maharani (2016) in their paper entitled Analysis Of Main Character In The Novel "The Fault In Our Stars" By John Green. The data was collected by documenter method. The theory was used by William Kenney (1966) and Bernhardt (1953). The collect data using By reading the novel and biographies of the author, and then followed by not taking and record parts of the novel related to research. The results of their analysis there are, two intrinsic elements conflict external, Internal, and psychological aspects of the main character is divided into wants, emotions, and feelings. In another researchers, they have examined the types of conflicts of the main characters in the novel. Ni Kadek Risa Puspita Padmi and I Gusti Agung Sri Rwa Jayantini (2022) in their paper entitled An Analysis of Conflict Found in the Novel "It Ends with Us" by Coolen Hoover. The theory was used in their paper by William Kenney (1996). The data collection in their paper using observation method and then followed by note taking techniques. The results of their analysis there are internal and external conflict of the main character.

Moreover, this paper is different from those previous studies that have been explained

before. In this paper the writer used a different novel from previous researchers, using the latest 2023 novel entitled *The Home For Wayward Girls* by Marcia Bradley which has not been used by other researchers and uses theories from Lajos Egi (2009) which discusses physics - ology, sociology, psychology. Apart from that, this research can also be useful as a reference for the public or anyone who are interested in analysing this topic because they understand the conflicts that exist in everyday life.

Based on those previous studies, this paper also has similarities that have been explained before. The previous researchers said in their paper that they used the note taking method and the writer of this paper also used the same method to conduct researcher. Previous research used novels as the data source in paper and analysed the types of conflict of the main character in the novel and also the writer of this paper will used novel and analyse the type of main character conflict.

2. Method

Method plays an important role in determining the success of the research. (Moleong, 2012:6) stated that qualitative method is method that intends to understand the phenomenon of what experienced by research subjects, for example behaviour, perception, motivation, action, holistically by way of description in the form of words and language, in a special natural context by making use of various scientific methods. The method of research that was applied in this paper are divided into three parts. They are data source, data collection, and data analysis. The method of research are used in this research can be divided into three parts. There are three of them: data source, data collecting, and data analysis.

The data source of this paper was taken from the novel entitled *The Home For Wayward Girls* (2023) by Marcia Bradley. The writer choosed this novel because it provided some data connected to the topic and the novel is enjoyable to read, as well as to learn about the conflict experienced by the main character in the novel.

The data is collected by reading the novel several times to understand the content and story of the novel, next step is note taking the story in the novel according to the topic to be researched. After colleting the data it will be analysed based on qualitative method. This research is analysing based on theory of Lajos Egry (2009) and William Kenney (1966). The last thing is result of analysis will be presented in descriptive way by providing an explanation in in-formal technique that are discussed in this paper.

3. Result and Discussion

Literary works such as Marcia Bradley's novel "The Home for Wayward Girls" represent the conflict of the real human being. Conflict is a battle between people, whether they be physical or mental. There are many types of conflict based on theories. Based on the story in Marcia Bradley's "The Home for Wayward Girls", it can be found that there are two types of conflict can be found in the novel. Those are: Internal and External conflicts. All of the conflicts will be explained clearly as the following.

Internal Conflict of the Main Character in Marcia Bradley's "The Home for Wayward Girls"

One common type of conflict in literature is internal conflict, where a character deals with their own problems and how these affect them. Loretta, the main character, often feels nervous. Her friends wonder how she manages to stay so calm. They don't know that she learned as a child to hide her nervousness to feel strong, but years of doing this have hurt her spirit. This is shown in the quote below:

“Do you meditate? Are you never anxious?” some asked. “I try not to let things get to me,” she winked and told those closest to her, the people she trusted with her sticky incontrovertible past where she’d both cowered and prevailed, led and fled. Her thoughts debated what she owed the decades that had fostered the person she’d become, those days and months when she would do anything, right or wrong, to get by” (Marcia Bradley’s, 2023:09)

The statement above shows that someone asked Loretta how she managed her anxiety from the past. Loretta often questioned herself, wondering if she could overcome everything, what her life would be like if she escaped from her father, William, and whether her decisions were right or wrong. She was always unsure, leading to confusion and internal conflict.

Loretta always feels anxiety on the bus station especially when he saw there is a man like her father. When a bus arrives at Sixty-Seventh and Madison, she jumps up and grabs the metal bar to steady herself. Twelve minutes have passed, as notification by the MTA app. She walks briskly toward the college's. A man brushes past her too quickly, catching her off guard. It can be shown from the quotation below:

“What the!” Loretta almost tripped; she pulled her bag to her chest. “Sorry, sorry.” The man stared quick her way, his eyes not sorry, not a bit. Loretta stopped. He hadn’t looked anything like William, but her heart pounded with fear. What if, what if? She scooted away from others, counted and breathed and counted again. You’re fine, she told herself, tried to laugh but that would be hard.” (Marcia Bradley’s, 2023:45)

The statement above indicates that when Loretta got off the bus, she accidentally bumped into a man and made eye contact with him. His gaze reminded her of her father, William, triggering her anxiety due to her childhood trauma. Loretta reassured herself that everything was fine and that the man was not her father.

She hopes everything will be resolved. Loretta mentally rehearsed various terrifying scenarios, and the word “fixed?” slipped from her lips. At school, her scars were hidden, and no one knew about her past. But now, other students would see the truth and notice the scars on her neck. She felt trapped in the Home for Wayward Girls. Over the years, Loretta read about people who engaged in strange behaviors their better selves couldn’t understand. Eventually, irrational behaviors become reality, leading to drastic actions, especially when facing serious issues. People rebel, and just thinking about it made her smile. Maybe not today or tomorrow, but she knew that day was coming. It was certain. The quotation as follows:

“Let it go,” she told herself. But another voice, the one she kept most hidden inside, begged her to contemplate opportunities that might lie in wait. Questions pounded within her aching skull. What would she do when the chance came? Was she brave enough? Did she have what it takes to risk everything?” (Marcia Bradley’s, 2023:73-74).

The statement reveals that the wound Loretta's father inflicted will scar her for life. She constantly reflects on how the wound will shape her and tries to convince herself to accept it, believing what's done is done. However, Loretta hides her true feelings, questioning if escaping was the right decision for her. She wonders if she was brave enough to make that escape and if she can take such a significant risk, despite never having done so before. This quote highlights Loretta's internal conflict as she debates with herself about whether she can take this risk.

Loretta touched the clear water then she looked at her reflection and sat on the ground while muttering what will she do now? then she looked at the white clouds and imagined it as a new blue ocean that she had never seen before. If William had not treated her harshly, and if she had been granted freedom, Loretta might not have needed to run away. Her heartbeat quickened as she crossed her arms over her chest, longing to escape and experience the joy and freedom often described in the novels she read, without any fear. Several quotes came to Loretta's mind as follows:

“This too shall pass? When? And how? What had she done but be born? How could her missteps merit what had been imposed on her life? The controlled tears that she kept packed away rolled down her cheeks and caught the collar of her faded green camouflage jacket. She didn’t care. “Why the fuck me?” Loretta hugged her knees. She reached for one of the white buttons in her pocket. Stared through the button’s holes toward the sun.” (Marcia Bradley’s 2023, 139-140).

From the above statement, Loretta made her way to a small river, once she arrived, she sat by the river, crying and questioning why such things were happening to her. She felt lost and unsure about why she was experiencing these emotions. In this quote, there is internal conflict because Loretta doesn’t know what she is feeling and why everything has to happen to her, so that question often repeats itself in her mind.

Loretta felt confused after leaving her house and she stopped at an abandoned house. She observed a spider, which looked more like a crustacean than an arachnid. Loretta looked around the empty house in the morning light. Loretta looked up at the sky hoping her mother was okay. She was sure of her memory of seeing her mother fall, her face filled with sadness, reaching out with an expression of shock more than pain. The words her mother spoke to her were not loud but were clearly understood by Loretta. Several quotes came to Loretta’s mind as follow:

“Gol!” That single word the closest thing to a kiss she’d ever received from her mother’s lips. Loretta set her head on her knees. Her skin was a mess of shaking and trembles and cold then hot sweats. She took very deep breaths. She didn’t want to relive any more of yesterday. But what about Elsie? Was she okay? Bits of the horror lodged in her mind. Pieces stuck to the sides of her throat like a rough cough that wouldn’t, couldn’t be expulsed. The shouts and screams of caustic crows on rewind in her head. “I never meant—” she cried.” (Marcia Bradley’s 2023, 163.)

From the above statement, Loretta remembered her mother’s words when her mother told Loretta to go save herself. There Loretta felt guilty and asked herself if her mother was okay? And was her best friend that she left behind okay? So many questions in Loretta’s head, she didn’t mean to do that to her mother that made Loretta think. This is included in the internal category because she felt guilty towards her mother and questions started to appear in her mind making she feel worried.

She is in Dilemma when Drew told her to be in a hurry for leaving the rent house and move to another city. Loretta rushed after Drew and walked beside him. This time Loretta did not feel alone because Drew had accompanied her to leave this city. Loretta and Drew walked side by side down the route that branched off to the right at the top of the hill. Loretta followed his steps. Each step was a little to the side, then forward. Then Drew spoke to Loretta as follows:

“See, I’m not so bad,” he said. Lowered his eyes, which were way above hers. Another of those tall guy skills. “You’re not in a hurry, are ya?” “Guess not,” she said. Her own head unsure where to look. Up at him or to the tar beneath her feet. “Come on then. East of everything will wait.” “Okay, you’re probably right.” Hurrying, getting fast onto the highway, took a back seat. She wondered how that was. That she’d had a timetable ticking inside her brain, a voice that kept saying move, move, move, and in an instant that very same voice asked, Why the hurry, why, why, why? She had no good answers. (Marcia Bradley’s 2023, 187)

From the above statement, it can be seen that Loretta and drew will go to another place and drew tells Loretta to move faster, Loretta wonders why she has to move? And why rush? those words keep spinning in Loretta’s head making her feels nervous because she really has to leave this place and start a new life but she still has no answer to the anxiety she often thinks about.

Loretta was worried when her husband (Clarke) didn’t pick up his phone. It happened when she was interviewed by Maggie (a reporter) about her life in the western mountains where Loretta grew up. Maggie asked Loretta if she would go back to where she grew up and Loretta

said that she did every day but the interview ended because Loretta had to meet her husband Clarke. then Maggie stood still in the doorway and the interview ended. then Loretta left the room and called her husband Clarke. And Loretta wants to call Clarke as follows:

“Loretta tapped her phone to call Clarke. She was surprised he didn’t answer. Not surprised but she was afraid. What-ifs exploded in her mind. What if William had disappeared? What if he was in New York? What if, what if. She walked to the window on the opposite side of the room. Stared at the street below. Every muscle in her body was pinging as sweat rolled down her back.” (Marcia Bradley's 20023, 197-198.)

From the statement, it's evident that Loretta is anxious because her husband Clarke isn't answering her calls. This triggers fears in Loretta's mind about her father, William. She worries about what might happen if William suddenly appears or find her location in New York. That question keeps popping up in her head even though it may not happen. In this quote, there is internal conflict because conflict between Loretta and her own thoughts so that the conflict is formed and causes Loretta to experience internal conflict.

Loretta is phobia of dog when Bull, a Rottweiler dog that will attack at any time according to his father's orders, shows his fangs and wants to bite Loretta because his father warned Loretta to stay away from the bunkhouse, but Loretta still insisted on going there, making her father William angry. It can be shown from quotation below:

“Please, please . . .” Her whimper became a plea to keep Bull’s pointed teeth away from her body, to prevent-delay-stop, please please please stop the branch that dug deeper into the rips in her skin, digging and dragging in attack. William slammed the branch into her spine, her waist, then whacked behind her knees. She heard Bull’s growl, close and mean.” (Marcia Bradley's 2023 : 60)

From the statement about, Loretta begged her father William to keep the bull away from her because the dog kept showing its fangs, but William ignored Loretta's request and decided to keep hitting Loretta using a sharp branch of wood that made her skin rips quite deep and William hit her on her spine, waist and behind her knees.

Loretta felt hopeless and frustrated. She fell to the ground, exhausted and weak, unable to match William's strength. Her knees hit the ground and bled and she walked slowly along the bunkhouse. Her head swayed and she bumped into rusty nails sticking out of the wooden frame of her bed. William did that because William told Loretta not to go near the bunkhouse and meet her friends there but Loretta was caught by William because she secretly went to the bunkhouse. The quote is as follows:

“The nail! The nail! she tried to scream. “Please,” she cried. “Please.” The words struggled from her mouth. Her father dragged her to her feet. That bent old nail, rusted, it ripped right through her long, mountain-strong, not so pale-skinned neck.” (Marcia Bradley's 2023: 60).

From the above statement, Loretta screamed in pain because of the wound caused by William, a torn neck wound that made blood flow from her neck to her chest. William did all that to Loretta because William told Loretta not to be friends with the girls but Loretta ignored William's request which made him angry and started to punish Loretta in a rough way.

External Conflict Between Loretta as The Main Character with Her Father

Bradely's *The Home for Wayward Girls* showed the external conflict between Loretta as the main character with William (her father). She felt very angry with her father. Loretta's husband (Clarke) asked her of how she can't be like her parents. Her husband tried to talk to her and Loretta told the story of her life before living in New York. Loretta said that her father (William) treated her not like his daughter but nearly as his slave and William also treated Loretta badly like committing violence against her and also sometimes William threw harsh words at Loretta like a whore or bitch. Loretta lived in misery because of her father's actions so she hated him. All of the

evident can be proved from following quotation.

“I wasn’t always good. I was jealous of them. Especially when I was a kid. Like eleven or twelve. Those girls came to the ranch from nicer homes in bigger cities. And they got to leave. I didn’t. Then I realized who the real enemy was. That’s when I started to change. I really did—I’d do anything I could for the girls after that, and I began to hate William and Mama. I still do. Especially William.” “With good reason.” “Hmm. Sure. Yet although I don’t go to church, I know hatred is a sin.” (Marcia Bradleys 2023: 09-10)

From the statement, it is clear that Loretta expressed to her husband (Clarke) of how her deep-seated hatred for her father began in childhood. The harsh treatment she endured from her father left a lasting impression and fuelled her resentment. As she grew older, the repeated memories of these traumatic experiences made it impossible for her to forgive him.

The conflict between Loretta with her father also happened on their first day of the bunkhouse. William explained to the girls what discipline and punishment meant, actions having consequences. Loretta felt a surge of anger at her father’s harsh words. She had witnessed this behavior before and tried to warn the other girls, but communication on the ranch was difficult. Loretta invited her new friend (Elsie) to see the place where she would be living for now. As they walked to the bunkhouse, Loretta chatted with Elsie and, greeted her with the following words:

“Well, welcome to here.” Loretta knew she sounded kinda stupid. “I mean. Sorry you had to come.” “I understand. It’s not your fault.” Elsie took a quick glance in Loretta’s direction. “William, that’s Papa, so you know,” Loretta said, although she herself hated to call him anything, least of all that. “You got to call him Papa, understand?” “Okay. Call him Papa. Got it,” Elsie said.” (Marcia Bradleys 2023: 18)

From the above statement, Loretta told her new friend (Elsie) to call William as a papa, But Loretta hated to call William as papa because after what William did to Loretta. She called him papa because that was the rule at the home for wayward girls.

The conflict between Loretta and her father made her father is in jail. Loretta, feeling uneasy, tried to call Clarke but she felt surprise when he didn’t answer the call. This lack of response made her in anxiety condition, fuelling her imagination with “what if” scenarios. What if William is missing? What if he’s in New York? She filled with fear and anticipation. Eventually, Clarke called her back to give her an update on her father’s case. Although troubling thoughts continued to run through her mind, Loretta covered herself and focused on the details of the case, taking deep breaths as she listened to Clarke. The conversation between Loretta and Clarke can be seen as the following.

“They got him, Lor.” Clarke paused, and she heard him take a breath of his own. “The sheriff called minutes ago. William will spend the rest of his life in prison.” “Do I need to—?” “No. Nothing. It’s over. I have it in writing. Your part is finished. You made this happen.” “Consequences at last.” “Exactly.” (Marcia Bradley’s 2023 : 198)

From this statement, it can be seen that (Clarke), Loretta’s husband, informed her about the progress of her father’s case. Clarke informed her that Loretta’s father has been responded to the Sheriff and now William has been arrested and is in jail.

Loretta has got quarrel with her father when William instructed Elsie to change her clothes in front of all the girls. Loretta felt helpless and overwhelmed as she watched. Loretta looked down at the floor and she didn’t know what to do. The lower Loretta lowered her head the bigger her decision became. Taking off her pants and shirt was one thing but William would ask Elsie to take off all her clothes and make her wear old women’s cotton panties and an undershirt. Loretta stood in front of Elsie hoping no one would see Elsie changing her clothes, Loretta offered to be her guide, reminding her that it was only the first day, that they had become friends, and that she

would support her during her stay at the ranch. But her actions made William Angry. The quotation as follows:

“You wanna test me, girl?” William’s voice rose, a hill of threats within each word. Elsie was silent. “I said now.” She dropped to the wood floor. “You stay there. Don’t speak. Don’t move.” Loretta knew and hated that William would teach Elsie as he taught all girls to clasp their hands in prayer, to cower, and that their true natures must be put asunder. Her father who so understood true natures. Put asunder they would be.” (Marcia Bradley’s 2023: 21)

From the above statement, William forced Elsie to take off her clothes in front of all the girls and told Loretta to be quiet and not to help Elsie and that made Loretta hate William because her father would teach bad things to Elsie and the sad thing is Loretta can’t do anything to help her friend.

The Cause and Consequences of Conflict

Understanding cause and consequences is crucial for grasping the relationships between events and actions in the world. In a novel, conflict represents an obstacle or problem that the protagonist must confront and overcome. Typically, conflicts arise from the protagonist's pursuit of a goal or their struggle to overcome challenges, which are often complicated by various obstacles. In the case of the main character, Loretta, the conflict stems from her harsh upbringing in a bunkhouse for troubled girls. The conflicts faced by Loretta have had both positive and negative impacts on her character development. According to Ross (1994: 94), the causes and consequences of conflict can be categorized into three areas: situation, family, and society. In Marcia Bradley’s “The Home for Wayward Girls”, these causes and consequences of conflict are clearly illustrated through Loretta’s experiences.

Family

Family conflict often arises from differences in values and expectations among family members. Factors such as violence or abuse also play a role, as well as changes in family structure, such as divorce, which can exacerbate the situation. Family tension can lead to deviant behaviour and diminish the emotional well-being of individuals. Additionally, relationships among family members may suffer damage, affecting interactions and emotional closeness (Ross, 1994). In this novel, the conflicts faced by Loretta are heavily influenced by family factors. These conflicts have significant causes and consequences, which can be outlined as follows:

“Loretta ran a finger along the edge of the oak kitchen table, her burgundy nails foreign in these parts. She might have been in a furniture store where it was preordained that nothing would be chosen. Clarke sat on a bench to one side, took off his blue Mets cap, and scratched at his forehead. Loretta knew he felt the same as when a client called him to a home where something unpardonable had happened. “Sorry,” she offered. “This place. So very” “Don’t be sorry,” Clarke said. “Right.” At the foot of the stairs that led to her childhood bedroom, Loretta stopped, slapped her hands on her Levi’s, and swung around on her booteheels. The sight of the kitchen mottled her skin with itches and childhood memories. William in his chair at the table. His hand on the green ledger the day he told her he’d kept a log. Such an insidious sin.” (Marcia Bradley’s, 2023: 208-209)

Loretta’s long-term abuse leads to severe mental disturbances, as illustrated by William’s control and psychological abuse. Loretta faces internal conflict due to differing values and expectations between herself and her adoptive parents, particularly William and Mama. These conflicting values create emotional tension and strained family relationships, exacerbating Loretta’s feelings of inadequacy and struggle. Changes in family structure and roles further aggravate her conflicts, adding emotional burdens and instability to her life. Loretta’s interactions with objects and memories from her past, such as finding a forbidden Rolling Stones tee, trigger anxiety and stress. These reminders of past trauma make it difficult for her to manage ongoing emotional issues, worsening her mental state and emotional wellbeing.

Based on the causes described, the consequences of Loretta's conflicts with her family manifest in several significant ways, affecting her emotional well-being and behaviour. The consequences are outlined as follows:

“It’s over,” she told the big sky above. “I’m done here. You don’t own me.” (Marcia Bradley’s, 2023:212).

The discomfort caused by family conflicts drives Loretta to sever ties with her past and the home she grew up in. The example “I’m done here. You don’t have me” illustrates how her emotional well-being is disrupted, prompting her to distance herself from her previous life. This emotional turmoil can lead to deviant behavior or difficulty managing her emotions, as she struggles to cope with the residual consequences of her troubled past.

Resolving family conflicts allows Loretta to embark on a new chapter in her life, involving self-acceptance and the creation of a new identity. The phrase “This is a new beginning” (Marcia Bradley’s, 2023:194), reflects her journey towards rebuilding her life and improving her emotional well-being. By confronting and working through her conflicts, Loretta gains the strength to start anew, laying the foundation for a more positive and self-affirmed future.

The conflicts experienced by Loretta in the novel stem from violence, differences in values, changes in family structure, and emotional tension. The consequences of these conflicts include damage to emotional well-being, relationship deterioration, and self-acceptance. Loretta strives to address and resolve these conflicts in order to build a new identity and improve her emotional well-being.

Situation

Situations can serve as triggers or backgrounds that lead to conflict. They encompass social conditions, environmental factors, or specific events that create tension or discomfort among individuals or groups. Consequences of situations may include impacts on mental health, shifts in family dynamics, or alterations in social or environmental situations (Ross, 1994).

“Loretta’s childhood hadn’t been normal. So far from it that even being asked to try and recall her past tied her stomach in a big double knot, burrowed her shoulders tight into her chest, and tears formed before she had the chance to remember a single moment. Sometimes she took long walks in the park, by herself—imagined herself stretched out on her and Clarke’s living room floor, arms above her head, stretching, stretching away her tension and her pain. Other times, she lay on their couch, pulled her knees to her chest, and tried to focus on HBO or Showtime, on any movie that might wash away her thoughts. But that didn’t work.” (Marcia Bradley’s, 2023:118)

The situation described is Loretta's extremely abnormal childhood, which led to deep trauma and emotional dysfunction. This abnormality, rooted in traumatic experiences, affects her emotional well-being into adulthood. When recalling her past, Loretta experiences strong physical and emotional reactions such as stomach pain, tight shoulders, and tears, indicating unresolved tension and trauma.

The consequences involve deep emotional and physical sorrow. Loretta's reactions show how her trauma-filled past continues to impact her current emotional state. Her attempts to cope, such as walking in the park, imagining herself relaxing on the living room floor with Clarke, and watching television, prove ineffective. This highlights the limitations of her coping mechanisms and her struggle to address her past trauma. Despite seeking relief, the ongoing pain and tension reveal the inadequacy of her current strategies in fully addressing the impact of her past.

Thus, Loretta's traumatic childhood is the primary cause of her emotional and physical discomfort. In addition to the data above, there are other statements explaining the causes and consequences of the situational aspects of the conflicts Loretta experiences. Here is an outline.

“This was her new life. It was easy to see months, years into the future, how prayers become but petitions to the Lord requesting quiet and a chair by the stove. Even new seasons on the prairie would offer nothing more than withered promises. Life wouldn’t change here unless or until she refused to stay.” (Marcia Bradley’s, 2023:144)

In this quotation, Loretta’s situation reflects a stagnant and unchanging environment that contributes to her dissatisfaction and frustration. Loretta’s new environment, which offers only “withered promises,” and her prayers that have turned into simple requests for “peace and a chair by the stove,” indicate that her hopes and aspirations have diminished to unmet basic needs. Her inability to envision positive changes in the future highlights her emotional stagnation, where hopes for a better future become increasingly minimal. Frustration and despair rise as she realizes that her current situation remains unchanged and her expectations continually go unmet. Ultimately, the quotation reveals Loretta’s motivation to seek change or leave her current situation in response to her deep dissatisfaction. This illustrates how a static environment and unmet aspirations impact her emotional well-being and drive her to pursue a more fulfilling life.

Society

In Ross’s (1994) framework, the aspect of “society” in the cause and consequences analysis focuses on how societal structures and relationships impact individuals. The consequences of these social causes include emotional and psychological impacts, such as frustration or alienation, as well as behavioural changes

“You’ll figure it out,” the adviser said. The same words she’d said time and again when Loretta visited her office at Hunter over the years. The adviser didn’t say more, offered no thoughts; if anything, she enjoyed Loretta’s bewildered state.” (Marcia Bradley’s, 2023:53)

In the quotation, the main social issue is the lack of adequate support from Loretta’s adviser. The adviser’s standard response, “You’ll figure it out,” without offering concrete guidance or empathy, demonstrates a failure in the support system meant to help Loretta. This indifference neglects Loretta’s emotional needs and even seems to take pleasure in her confusion, reflecting a broader social indifference where those in power show no concern for the struggles of others.

The consequences of this lack of support are significant. Loretta feels increased emotional frustration due to the adviser’s inability to provide meaningful assistance, exacerbating her feelings of helplessness and confusion. This indifference makes Loretta feel lonely and isolated, as if she is facing her problems without any supportive network. This sense of alienation worsens her mental condition, adding to her despair. Ultimately, the lack of support contributes to a long-term sense of helplessness, diminishing her self-confidence and making it harder for her to cope with challenges.

This quotation illustrates how social indifference and inadequate support are primary causes of Loretta’s emotional dissatisfaction, leading to frustration, loneliness, and profound helplessness, which worsen the challenges she faces daily. It also highlights how social structures and relationships impact Loretta’s personal experiences, with the lack of support from social systems and institutional failures contributing to her emotional discomfort and isolation.

“Mama said to tell you to come along, too, Elsie. Said being in trouble don’t mean you get out of your duties. She’s got stuff for you to do.” (Marcia Bradley’s, 2023: 85)

In this quotation, the social cause illustrated is the expectation and pressure from Loretta’s family or community to continue fulfilling her responsibilities despite her personal troubles. The message from “Mama” underscores a societal norm that individuals must persist in their roles and obligations regardless of the difficulties they face. This expectation reflects a broader social standard where personal struggles are not considered valid reasons for neglecting duties.

The social consequence of these demands is the additional emotional burden placed on Loretta. These dynamics highlight how social expectations can compound personal difficulties,

affecting an individual's overall emotional well-being and capacity to cope. The quotation below also highlights the aspects of 'society' in the cause-and-consequence analysis.

"This was her new life. It was easy to see months, years into the future, how prayers become but petitions to the Lord requesting quiet and a chair by the stove. Even new seasons on the prairie would offer nothing more than withered promises. Life wouldn't change here unless or until she refused to stay." (Marcia Bradley's, 2023: 144)

This quotation clearly expresses Loretta's despair regarding her social conditions and expectations. Her hopelessness stems from realizing that her prayers and dreams have been reduced to simple wishes for basic comforts, like "quiet and a chair by the stove." This highlights her profound disappointment with the unfulfilled social promises and opportunities she once hoped for.

The social consequence of her despair is a pervasive feeling of stagnation and helplessness. Loretta's belief that her efforts to improve her situation are futile intensifies her frustration and dissatisfaction with her current circumstances. This sense of futility underscores a broader issue of unmet expectations and unfulfilled promises in her social environment, contributing to her overall emotional distress and disillusionment.

4. Conclusion

Based on the analysis, the main character in "The Home for Wayward Girls" by Marcia Bradely's faces internal and external conflicts. Internally, Loretta's childhood trauma causes anxiety and inner struggles, hindering her interactions. Externally, her conflict is sociological, rooted in her father William's abuse. Raised in a harsh bunkhouse, Loretta endured severe mistreatment, leading to emotional distress but motivating her to seek a better life.

The conflicts have both positive and negative impacts which categorized into three areas: situation, where Loretta's abnormal childhood caused deep trauma and emotional dysfunction; family, where violence and abuse from William made her anxious and emotionally unstable; and society, where social indifference and inadequate support led to frustration, loneliness, and helplessness, exacerbating her daily challenges. Despite severe mistreatment and emotional distress caused by her father, Loretta is motivated to seek a better life. Her drive to escape her past traumatic and build a new path demonstrates her strength and courage.

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