

**Societal Stigma, Cultural Norms, and Representation of Mental Conditions in Bayo
Adebowale's *Out of His Mind and Lonely Days***

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**Being a MA Thesis Submitted to the Department of Languages & Literature, Faculty of
Arts, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of Master of Arts Degree (MA) in
English (Literature)**

2025

Certification

This is to certify that Inioluwa Mayokun EZEKIEL with matriculation number LCU/PG/005223 carried out this research work titled “Societal Stigma, Cultural Norms, and the Representation of Mental Conditions in Bayo Adebawale's *Out of His Mind* and *Lonely Days*” in the Department of Languages and Literature, Faculty of Arts, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, for the award of Master Degree of Arts (MA) in English Language and that this has not been previously submitted.

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Dedication

This research is dedicated to God Almighty, and my wonderful Parents. Drs O J & O O Ezekiel

Lead City University Ibadan DO NOT COPY

Acknowledgments

This research, titled “Societal Stigma, Cultural Norms, and the Representation of Mental Conditions in Bayo Adebawale's *Out of His Mind* and *Lonely Days*”, was carried out at Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo state. The academic resources provided by the University Library, as well as external facilities such as the Kenneth Dike Library at the University of Ibadan, were invaluable to this study. The use of digital resources and internet-based academic databases also played a crucial role in the collection of relevant scholarly materials and literary texts. In addition, the intellectual and environmental support available during field interactions within Ibadan significantly contributed to the qualitative research process.

I express deep appreciation to my promoter and Head of Department, Dr. U. R. Davies, for her consistent academic guidance, thorough supervision, and critical insights throughout this study. I am equally grateful to Prof. Anjola Robbin, Dean of the Department of Languages and Literature, for her scholarly support, and to the following lecturers whose knowledge and teaching contributed significantly to my academic growth: Dr. Esther Senanyon, Dr. Olajide Monsuru, and Dr. Racheal Aluko. Their individual and collective contributions provided both academic and moral strength during this research.

I sincerely acknowledge the sponsorship of Dr. O. J. Ezekiel, whose support created an enabling environment for the completion of this academic pursuit. I also appreciate the steadfast encouragement of my family, particularly Dr. O. J. and Dr. O. O. Ezekiel, my beloved parents, and my siblings, Tobi, Eniola, and Feranmi Ezekiel for their unwavering patience, understanding, and moral support throughout this work.

Despite the valuable support received from the individuals and institutions mentioned, I take sole responsibility for any possible errors in this research.

Abstract

This study investigates the representation of mental conditions in Bayo Adebowale's *Out of His Mind* and *Lonely Days*, with specific attention to how societal stigma and cultural norms shape the psychological states of the protagonists. It fills the gap in Nigerian literary studies regarding the intersection of societal stigma, cultural norms, and mental health representation, using psychoanalytic and socio-cultural theories as template of discussion. The study adopts a qualitative research design. The population comprises the two selected novels. The sample includes *Out of His Mind* and *Lonely Days*, selected purposively for their thematic focus on mental conditions and cultural influence. Instruments for data collection include in-depth content analysis of the novels and scholarly secondary sources; analysis followed a thematic interpretative method. Key findings show that both protagonists suffer mental distress as a result of societal pressures, *Out of His Mind* reflects how stigmatization and neglect intensify mental instability, while *Lonely Days* illustrates the emotional toll of patriarchal widowhood practices. Both novels reveal that conformity to harmful cultural expectations often results in isolation, aggression, and psychological breakdown. The study concludes that socio-cultural elements are central to understanding the mental conditions of characters in Nigerian literature. It recommends that future literary research explore wider applications of psychoanalytic theory in African narratives to enrich understanding of character development and mental health portrayal.

Keywords: Societal stigma, mental conditions, cultural norms, societal expectations, and psychological distress.

Word Count: 228

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