


A Cognitive Analysis of Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*

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ABSTRACT

Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) presents a radical cognitive analysis of how colonialism disturbs the psyche, leading to alienation as much from one's own identity as from others. Through the lens of psychoanalytic theory and concepts of cognitive psychology, Fanon examines how the colonized individual internalizes racial stereotypes and constructs fragmented identities in a colonial system where whiteness is the standard to which society adheres. The epidermal (or skin color)ization of inferiority, an important tenet in Fanon's argument, helps to make sense of how certain schemas through which we process social interactions became pervasively organized around skin color, which may lead to the internalization of inferiority and a desire to mediate the experience and knowledge of one's self-world through the lens of skin color. From a cognitive point of view, Fanon's work examines the way perception, memory and thought processes are formed by systemic racism. Individuals who have gone through colonization find themselves constantly having to navigate a world where negative stereotypes become represented in their lived experience, where discrimination is part of the daily discourse, and their own identity becomes a dissonance in the endogenous order of whom to be as citizens. Fanon's writings illustrate the ways that colonial subjects suture themselves together in the midst of external pressure to rehearse dominant white conventions. This cognitive perspective highlights how the impact of the colonial mindset manifests in mental health, identity formation, and social relations. Fanon's investigation leads us to important questions concerning how these schemas which inform and are informed by cultural and historical contexts continue to perpetuate internalized racism and psychological trauma. His works continue to provide significant insights into the cognitive level of colonial oppression and its impact on post-colonial societies.

Keywords: *Nigeria, literature, cultural policy, management, Africa, society.*

Introduction

Frantz Fanon was a philosopher, revolutionary, and influential writer. The psychological and social effects of colonialism on both colonizers and colonized are the main topics of Fanon's writing. His intellectual development significantly impacted by his firsthand encounters with

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racism and colonialism. Fanon received his education in France, where he studied psychology and medicine. His revolutionary ideas were sparked by his personal encounters with racial prejudice in a society that was meant to be open and equitable. *Black Skin, White Masks* was published in 1952, during a period when many African and Caribbean nations were still under European colonial rule. Significant racial tensions, institutional and psychological discrimination, and the battle for independence characterized this century. Intellectuals and activists began to focus on the psychological impacts of colonialism in the post-war era. The schema of colonized people were coping with internalized racism and a shattered sense of identity as a result of centuries of subjugation. As we know that cognitive psychology is the study of internal processes including perception, thinking, memory, attention, and language (Cherry, Kendra) so the setting of this book providing a comprehensive and intimate examination of the psychological effects of colonialism. Fanon explores the intricate relationship between race, identity, and power in his work. In the book, he had said that ‘for the black man there is only one destiny. And it is white’ (Fanon). A deep sensation of separation from oneself and alienation are the results of this process. Fanon analyzes the manner in which colonial people internalize the unfavorable stereotypes placed upon them, leading to a split self, using psychoanalytic theory. This book offers a thorough analysis of how colonialism affects Black people's thought processes and identity development from a cognitive standpoint. Central to Fanon's analysis is the concept of "epidermalization" of inferiority, where the color of one's skin becomes a primary marker of value and identity. Talking about schema, often describes as a pattern of thinking and behaviour that people use to interpret the world (Cherry, Kendra), argues that the black individual's consciousness is often split between their self-perception and the image reflected back by a racially prejudiced society. This dual consciousness creates a state of cognitive dissonance, where the colonized individual struggles to reconcile their authentic self with the identity imposed by colonial power structures. "Black Skin, White Masks" is significant not only for its insightful critique of the psychological impacts of racism and colonialism but also for its profound influence on subsequent generations of thinkers and activists. By introducing Frantz Fanon and the historical context this research paper aims to delve into the cognitive processes and schemas that shape racial identity and consciousness in a colonial context. Utilizing a cognitive perspective, this study seeks to uncover the psychological mechanisms at play in Fanon's analysis and explore the broader implications for understanding the colonial condition.

Significance in Psychology

Schemas guide how we interpret new information and may be quite powerful in their influence (Pankin). The study of Frantz Fanon's book gets more detailed and vivid, when it incorporates with the concepts from cognitive perspectives or schema theory. It [subsequently] offers an understanding of thought processes that goes into reading and comprehending Fanon's writing. This study is important to academia and society for a number of reasons:

Progress in psychological understanding: by acquiring a multidisciplinary perspective, this study adds [to our understanding of] how colonialism affects brain processes by fusing cognitive psychology with post-colonial philosophy. We believe, It draws attention to the ways that sociology, psychology, and cultural studies connects and offers a sophisticated understanding of the black mind under colonial control.

Psychological healing and therapy: therapeutic approaches for people from colonized backgrounds can be beneficial by introducing, forefront, the knowledge of cognitive effects of colonialism. Many researchers can use this study [as a guiding tool] when dealing with identity, self-esteem, and mental health difficulties that result from systemic and historical racism.

Addressing systematic racism: the study adds to the continuing efforts to battle these challenges by highlighting the long-lasting cognitive effects of colonial schema and systematic racism. It offers a solid academic foundation for promoting laws and procedures that tend to the psychological needs of underprivileged groups.

Empowering Marginalized Voices: This approach strengthens oppressed communities and validates the psychological realities of colonized people by giving voice to those feelings. Up to some extent, it advances public awareness of the widespread effects of superiority on identity and mental health.

Research Statement

Through a cognitive viewpoint and schema theory analysis of the text, the research seeks to identify the following salient features:

i. Cognitive Schemas and Racial Identity: we will examine how black people acquire racist schemas because of colonial imposition, which gives rise to the condition known as internalized racism. Subsequently, this entails the unwitting assimilation of the harmful preconceptions of colonized and views of the colonizer, which profoundly influence their sense of self and worldview. The idea of double consciousness, which was first introduced by William Edward Burghardt W.E.B. Du Bois (African American sociologist and scholar) and expanded upon by Fanon, is the main issue that is to be investigate. This idea captures the

psychological struggle that Black people go through when they see themselves through the biased lens of the colonizer, and [in addition to] their own cultural lens. Due to the shattered self-identity caused by this dual perspective, there is a great deal of cognitive dissonance and self-alienation. Psychological anguish persists [as a result of] the internalized conflict between the individual's innate cultural identity and the enforced identity of the colonizer.

ii. Psychological Impact of Colonialism: dealing with the severe psychological damage that colonialism inflicts on Black people's mental health, it draws attention to the way that a variety of mental health conditions, such as anxiety, despair, and a shattered sense of self had been brought on by the constant pressure to live up to colonial norms. According to Fanon's research, colonial control impairs the cognitive and emotional health of the colonized, making it necessary to fight for reconciliation of the identity that the colonizer has forced upon them with their own. The colonizers imposed language, which [obviously] alienates people from their own linguistic and cultural foundations and alters their cognitive processes. This is the major psychological consequence.

iii. Perception and Self-Representation: last but not the least, examining the ways in which black people's social cognition [significantly] shaped by societal biases and colonial stereotypes. Black people's self-perception, like, how they were viewed and treated by others, are influenced by these deeply rooted prejudices. The work by Fanon sheds light on how ubiquitous these preconceptions are, permeating every facet of life, from social interactions to personal identity.

Literature Review

A wide variety of psychological frameworks that aim to comprehend how individuals perceive, process, and retain information are included in the field of cognitive theory. Cognitive dissonance, perception, and cognitive schemas are important ideas in cognitive theory that are pertinent to this study. Mental models known as cognitive schemas assist people in categorizing and interpreting data in light of their past experiences and knowledge (Frederic Charles Bartlett). They serve as frameworks that affect how fresh information is interpreted and assimilated. Cognitive dissonance refers to the mental discomfort experienced when a person holds two or more contradictory beliefs, values, or attitudes simultaneously (Harmon-Jones and Harmon-Jones).

People's interpretation of social and cultural signals, particularly those pertaining to race and identity, greatly influenced by their perception. Characters and events portrayed in literature

via the lens of the reader's perception. The process by which people arrange and interpret sensory data in order to make sense of their surroundings is known as perception (Wiltshire). The present research paper's literature study investigates the utilization of schema theory and cognitive perspectives in the examination of Frantz Fanon's "Black Skin, White Masks." This article attempts to establish a theoretical framework for comprehending the cognitive schemas related with racial identity and the psychological effects of colonialism by examining previous academic work on schema theory and cognitive psychology. Combining these cognitive frameworks with Fanon's observations provides a sophisticated understanding of the thought processes that influence identity and self-perception in the context of colonial schema. This multidisciplinary approach not only helps us to understand Fanon's writings better, but it also makes it clear how relevant they are to the current conversations about identity, racism, and mental health.

Vivaldi Jean-Marie (Jean-Marie) contends in *The Irreducibility of Black Bodies* that Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* uses philosophical and psychoanalytic ideas to inscribe the social and psychological realities of the African Diaspora into the conceptual framework of Western sciences. Jean-Marie draws attention to two primary consequences. Firstly, Fanon outlines a unique concept of self-determination for the African Diaspora, which includes political, social, and cultural norms and values. Fanon's second goal is to change the way that black groups are perceived in Europe as risks to sexual and biological health. Jean-Marie comes to the conclusion that Fanon's attempt to include these experiences into Western scientific discourse is ultimately hindered by the way that black bodies are still perceived in Europe, which inhibits a full scientific conception of them. The promise of cognitive and neuroscientific techniques to get over these restrictions and offer a more thorough knowledge of the psychological and lived experiences of the African Diaspora, I would say, is something Jean-Marie neglects to mention. The literature that is now in existence frequently concentrates on philosophical and psychoanalytical viewpoints, but thorough cognitive assessments are scarce. This results in a lack of knowledge of the ways in which cognitive theories might account for the psychological problems that arise from the internalization of racial oppression.

Cynthia R. Nielsen's "Frantz Fanon And The Négritude Movement: How Strategic Essentialism Subverts Manichean Binaries" (Nielsen) provides an in-depth exploration of Frantz Fanon's work *Black Skin, White Masks*, focusing on how Fanon's subjectivity as a colonized individual was constructed and how white assimilation politics contributed to his self-fragmentation. Nielsen interprets Fanon's use of essentialized narratives as a form of

"strategic essentialism," acknowledging that different historical moments require different strategies. She emphasizes Fanon's rejection of the notion that human freedom and the power to resist, has extinguished even in oppressive contexts and explores Fanon's development of historico-racial and racial-epidermal schema to understand the experiences of racism and social construction of black inferiority. Cynthia R. Nielsen further elaborates that Fanon's racial-epidermal schema highlights the creation of the historico-racial schema, or the "Neutralized" understanding of blackness that deeply ingrained in social consciousness and was [ultimately] integrated into political, cultural, and legal practices of societies. Fanon, frequently, advocates for actions of resistance, including subject re-narration, to bring about socio-political transformation. These acts of resistance must be weighed against his alienated tendencies. Fanon's theories of social construction and power dynamics also support human agency. By cognitive theories, scholars may explore how people interpret and internalize racist events, which can result in psychological tensions and identity disintegration. This method can provide light on the cognitive processes that underlie the acquisition of inferiority complexes and the self-perception of being the "other," leading to a more thorough comprehension of Fanon's insights. By connecting cognitive processes to the social and psychological experiences described by Fanon—experiences that Nielsen's study does not fully examine—filling this gap will improve the corpus of information now in existence.

In *The Changing Evaluations of Black Skin, White Masks* throughout History Paul Gonzalez (Gonzalez) sheds light on one of Fanon's most important contributions was the assertion that colonial schema caused the African population to develop an inferiority and dependency complex, robbing them of their culture and substituting European values. This led to generations of individuals who fervently pursued white values, exerting pressure on subsequent generations to give up their native tongues and customs. Decolonization is the answer, but according to Fanon, it can never be achieved peacefully since it is a violent process, and in order for the African communities to fight back, they must unify into a national culture. The examination of cognitive psychology is largely absent from Gonzalez's analysis, which concentrates on the socio-political and cultural effects of colonialism. By incorporating theories from this field, it becomes clearer how the inferiority and dependency complex has internalized at a cognitive level and what sort of psychological mechanisms colonizers had used to affect identity and self-perception.

Black Skin/White Masks: The Performative Sustainability of Whiteness by Bryant Keith Alexander (Alexander) has been divided into three sections: It starts by looking at the socially

created identity of "Whiteness" and how the discipline of White Studies has shaped, emerged from, and questioned it. It also raises concerns about how White Studies maintains Whiteness in the face of mounting social and cultural criticism. Third, Alexander makes the case that Whiteness is a performative identity that is independent of race and ethnicity. Alexander's autoethnographic stories of seeing, acting out and fighting Whiteness serve as the framework for each part. Alexander avoids delving into cognitive psychology in favor of concentrating on the performative and social construction of Whiteness. Cognitive theories, which Alexander has not discuss, can be used to explain how people internalize the socially created identity of Whiteness as well as the cognitive processes involved in acting and rejecting Whiteness. The dearth of empirical studies using cognitive psychology approaches to validate these statements emphasizes the necessity for research that produces quantitative data. The lack of longitudinal research and comparative studies across various racial and ethnic groups hinders our ability to comprehend distinct cognitive tendencies and the historical development of Whiteness. This study provides a comprehensive understanding of the psychological effects of Whiteness by tying cognitive theories to the social construction and performative elements that Alexander emphasized. Using multidisciplinary methods from cognitive psychology and neuroscience, this study fills in important gaps in our knowledge about Whiteness and creates new directions for future research. The empirical focus strengthens the body of current literature by offering [the actual] evidence to back up theoretical assertions. This study justifies its relevance and necessity, by advancing our understanding of the cognitive effects of the performative nature of Whiteness. These understandings can be applied to policies and practices, its aim is to address racial dynamics and promote psychological well-being across many communities.

Gap in the Literature

As we analyze the above existing studies, they primarily focused on the broader literary analysis of post-colonial texts or the general application to literature, without delving deeply into the specific cognitive processes and psychological impacts within post-colonial schema/contexts. Additionally, while the exploration of sociopolitical and historical dimensions of colonialism are there but having insufficient attention to the profound psychological effects on the colonized individuals. These gaps are [particularly] noticeable when it comes to integrating these perspectives with post-colonial literature and its schematic analysis, particularly in the context of Frantz Fanon's "Black Skin, White Masks." By integrating schema theory and cognitive psychology, this study offers an understanding of the

cognitive dissonance and mental health challenges faced by colonized subjects, thereby enriching the existing discourse on race, identity, and the psychological impact of colonialism. The goal of this research is to fill these gaps by providing a detailed examination of how cognitive schemas and colonial stereotypes shape the racial identity and psychological experiences of black individuals, as depicted in Fanon's work.

Research Methodology

Cognitive Perspective Approach: In order to examine Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*, this study takes a cognitive approach, concentrating on the ways in which race identity is shaped mentally and the psychological effects of colonialism. Applying cognitive theories to literary analysis, such as cognitive dissonance, schema theory, and perception, is known as the cognitive perspective approach. This methodology facilitates a comprehensive comprehension of the ways in which internalized colonial schemas impact the ideas, feelings, and behaviors of the characters. The goal of the research is to uncover the psychological mechanisms that underlie the experiences of people who have been colonized by examining how these cognitive processes are portrayed in the text. We have used textual analysis and close reading, to investigate the psychological themes and cognitive schemas in book. Upon closely examining the book, one must pay close attention to its language, structure, and meaning. This technique makes it possible to pinpoint important sections that highlight cognitive processes, including instances of cognitive dissonance or how colonial schemas affect how characters view themselves. These sections will be interpreted through textual analysis, which will investigate the ways in which Fanon's language and storytelling devices portray the psychological effects of colonialism. Through methodical text analysis, the study aims to reveal the emotional and cognitive aspects of the characters' experiences.

Data Analysis

This section explores the relationship between Frantz Fanon's "Black Skin, White Masks" and cognitive theories, particularly schema theory and cognitive dissonance. We hope to provide light on how Fanon portrays the emergence and influence of cognitive schemas associated with racial identity and the psychological effects of colonialism by closely analyzing significant sections.

Racial Identity and Cognitive Schemas

Frantz Fanon's "Black Skin, White Masks" is a profound exploration of the psychological effects of colonial schema on black individuals, focusing particularly on the formation and

impact of cognitive schemas related to racial identity (Hook). Cognitive schemas, as mental frameworks built from past experiences and cultural context, shape how individuals perceive themselves and others. In the chapter "The Fact of Blackness," Fanon vividly describes the moment a black individual becomes aware of their racial identity through the gaze of the white other. He writes, "Look, a Negro! Mama, see the Negro! I'm frightened! Frightened! Frightened!" (P-112). This white child's cry perfectly captures the startling awareness that one is only seen through the prism of racial difference.

I could no longer laugh, because I already knew that there were legends, stories, history, and above all historicity, which I had learned about from Jaspers. Then, assailed at various points, the corporeal schema crumbled, its place taken by a racial epidermal schema. In the train it was no longer a question of being aware of my body in the third person but in a triple person. In the train I was given not one but two, three places. I had already stopped being amused. It was not that I was finding febrile coordinates in the world. I existed triply. (P-112).

The significant of psychological and cognitive on racialization explained by Frantz Fanon. From a cognitive perspective, the change from a corporeal to a racial epidermal schema denotes a turning point in which Fanon reconstructs his identity via the prism of outside racial impressions, resulting in a disjointed self-awareness that he characterizes as being present in a "triple person." He must concurrently negotiate several, sometimes contradictory identities as a result of this cognitive overload. The corporeal schema refers to an individual's fundamental awareness and understanding of their own body as a physical entity, rooted in proprioception and kinesthesia, providing a stable sense of embodiment and self-identity (Vignemont, Pitron and Alsmith). The racial epidermal schema, on the other hand, develops when a person's self-perception is greatly impacted by the racial meanings that are imposed by society, turning their identity into a racialized construct that is determined by outside stereotypes. The person's sense of self is destroyed by this forced identity, which causes intense internal conflict, alienation, and an ongoing existential battle to balance their true selves with the negative racial identity that society has imposed. So, we can say that psychologically, this change is a sign of a burdened and confused sense of self-replacing innocence and enjoyment. Fanon's portrayal of his fractured identity shows psychological strength and resistance despite the extreme psychological suffering, as he critically engages with and navigates his racialized existence. The intricate interaction between cognitive and psychological dynamics emphasizes how racialization affects a person's identity and self-perception daily, underscoring the need to comprehend these processes to address the wider consequences of racism and societal prejudice. This moment illustrates the formation of a racial schema that is imposed externally

and internalized by the black individual, shaping their self-perception and interactions with society.

The influence of these schemas have been further discussed by Fanon in the chapter "The Woman of Color and the White Man." Here, he looks at the interactions between white males and black women, showing how societal and intimate dynamics are governed by colonial schemas. Fanon shows the mentality of a colored woman: "I loved him because he had blue eyes, blonde hair, and light skin" (P-43). In their quest for acceptance and social advancement, black women frequently absorb the colonial stereotype that views white people as superior. Fanon says in his introduction, "The desire of the Black man is to be White. The statement "The white man slaves to reach a human level" emphasizes the inner turmoil and dissonance that Black people go through when they try to fit into the colonial paradigm of humanity and supremacy. This quote captures the inner agony that black people experience when they embrace the idea of white supremacy and strive to achieve it as a result of living under colonial control. This leads to a fundamental contradiction in their sense of self. Fanon illustrates the pervasiveness of these racial ideals throughout the book with a number of allusions, including "Whiten the race," "save the race," and "X is black, but misery is blacker" (p. 47). These allusions highlight the constant pressure that Black people have to reject their African American identity and adopt a vision of humanity that is centered on White people.

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It is obvious that nothing can be recognized or recalled which has not first been perceived (F.C. Bartlett). Perceiving, recognizing, and recalling are all psychological functions that belong to the same general series. According to Fanon's observations, the perception of racialized identities imposed by society results in the identification and internalization of these identities, which has a significant impact on the person's memory and self-concept. This study emphasizes the importance of perception in forming racial identities and emphasizes the need for a cognitive analysis to fully comprehend the psychological effects of racism as discussed in

Black Skin, White Masks by examining these cognitive processes within the context of racialization. This method not only fits in with accepted cognitive theories but also demonstrates why it is important and necessary to investigate the cognitive aspects of racial identity construction and the psychological effects that result from it. The intricate interaction between cognitive and psychological dynamics emphasizes how racialization affects a person's identity and self-perception on a daily basis, underscoring the need to comprehend these processes in order to address the wider consequences of racism and societal prejudice.

Internalization of Inferiority

The author, Frantz Fanon, examines how black people internalize their feelings of inferiority via a thorough cognitive and psychological examination. According to Fanon, black people are forced to internalize a sense of inferiority through a variety of cognitive processes as a result of colonialism and systematic racism. One of Fanon's most important discoveries is the idea of the "racial epidermal schema," according to which black people have a shattered sense of self because they are always conscious of how the white world sees them and also the Negro enslaved by his inferiority (P-19). Professor D. Westermann says that the Negroes' inferiority complex is particularly intensified among the most educated (P-25). "The Black Man Wants to Be White," the author writes. The statement "The white man slaves to reach a human level" draws attention to the psychological tension and cognitive dissonance that black people go through when they try to fit into the colonial schema of superiority and humanity. In *Black Skin, White Masks* Fanon has quoted M. Mannoni as; "Colonial exploitation is not the same as other forms of exploitation, and colonial racialism is different from other kind of racialism..." (P-88). In the narrative, Cinderella Complex has been used to refer to the phenomenon where black men seek validation and self-worth through relationships with white women. According to Fanon, black males who have internalized sentiments of worthlessness and the white colonial is motivated only by his desire to put an end to a feeling of dissatisfaction, on the level of Adlerian overcompensation (P-84). This is because of racism and colonialism, that black may seek love relationships with white women in an effort to improve their social standing. A character like Jean Veneuse projects the entire arsenal of racial stereotypes onto a child of three or four years. To Andree he says; "Tell me, Andree darling...in spite of my color, would you agree to marry me if I asked you? (P-77). My analysis of the internalization of inferiority in *Black Skin, White Masks* is greatly strengthened by Claude M. Steele's work, *A Threat in the Air: How Stereotypes Shape Intellectual Identity and Performance* (Steele), which offers a

thorough explanation of how societal pressures and stereotypes affect identity and cognitive performance. According to Steele's theory of domain identification and stereotype threat, social factors as economic hardship and negative stereotypes prevent people from identifying with their schools, especially African Americans, who need to identify with them for continuous academic achievement. The idea of stereotype threat, or the anxiety that one's behavior would validate adverse preconceptions, is consistent with Fanon's observations of how black people internalize society's perceptions of their inferiority. Based on Steele's research, African Americans obtain lower on tests when they are faced with stereotype threat, which supports Fanon's theories about the psychological harm caused by racism. By merging Steele's research, We show how internalizing inferiority is a cognitive procedure that is strongly impacted by social institutions, offering a thorough explanation of the psychological and cognitive processes behind the development of racial identities. Fanon in chapter four argues that European civilization and its best representatives are responsible for colonial racism (P-90). It is the racist, who creates his inferiority (P-93).

Psychological Impact and Cognitive Dissonance

Frantz Fanon's study of cognitive dissonance in "Black Skin, White Masks" serves as crucial for understanding how people of color manage their multiple consciousnesses while living under colonial authority. W.E.B. Du Bois introduced the idea of "double consciousness," which describes the psychological struggle that colonial or subjugated populations go through in repressive societies. Fanon develops this concept by providing examples of the psychological anguish brought on by internalized colonial schemas and the quest for self-affirmation. Arnold Rampersad, in his *The Art and Imagination of W. E. B. Du Bois*, reveals his theory on the origin of this idea: The black possesses 'no true self-consciousness' but a 'double consciousness,' seeing himself only as perceived by whites through the veil (Rampersad). For this insight Du Bois drew from the psychology of his time. The term 'soul' was used synonymously with consciousness both by idealistic psychologists and by the religiously orthodox James McCosh, whose philosophy Du Bois has studied at Fisk. His favorite professor, William James, posited in 1890 that the structure of the brain allowed 'one system [to] give rise to one consciousness, and those of another system to another simultaneously existing consciousness.' The psychologist Oswald Kulpe wrote in 1893 of 'the phenomenon of double consciousness or the divided self... characterized by the existence of a more or less complete

separation of two aggregates of conscious process... oftentimes of entirely opposite character (Reed).

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Fanon's exploration of cognitive dissonance is evident in his analysis of how black individuals navigate their dual consciousness. The concept of double consciousness, originally articulated by W.E.B. Du Bois, is echoed in Fanon's work as he describes the constant struggle between the internalized negative schemas and the desire for self-affirmation. In "The Fact of Blackness," Fanon clearly states, "over-night the Negro has been given two frames of reference within which he has had to place himself" (P-110). This reflects the cognitive dissonance of trying to reconcile an imposed racial identity with an authentic self-conception. The black man among his own in the 20th century does not know at what moment his inferiority comes into being through the other (Fanon, P-110). The duality of existence is further explored in Fanon's observation in chapter one as he says, A Negro behaves differently with a elite man and with another Negro (p-17). The requirement of balancing two opposing realities—one created by the colonizer's repressive gaze and the other by the person's cultural and community identity—leads to this dual awareness. The difference has a significant psychological impact and frequently results in depressive, anxious, and alienated feelings. In his exploration of these effects on mental health, Fanon points out how persistent colonial ideologies constantly erode the sense of self-worth of the colonized person.

Language and Cognition

In reading *Black Skin, White Masks* it is crucial to respect the difference between 'personal identity' as an intimation of reality, or an intuition of being, and the psychoanalytic problem of identification (p-xvii). Frantz Fanon explores the relationship between language and identity formation in depth in *Black Skin, White Masks*. This book offers a valuable starting point for examining the ways in which language shapes the internalization of inferiority. Fanon shows throughout the book how language, especially in a colonial setting, can have a significant impact on how people think and who they are. He further says that every colonized people in

whose soul an inferiority complex has been created, finds itself face to face with the language of civilizing (p-18).

We could start by looking at Fanon's claim that adopting the language of the colonizer entails adopting a civilization and a culture. In the first chapter, "The Negro and Language," Fanon writes, "To speak means to be in a position to use a certain syntax, to grasp the morphology of this or that language, but it means above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization" (p.17). This demonstrates the ways in which language is entwined with cognitive and cultural schemas, where learning the language of the colonizer is viewed as a means of achieving acceptance and raising one's social standing in a colonial culture. Moreover, Fanon talks on how language may cause an individual's identity to fragment. This also implies that language not only forms cognitive schemas but also propels the creation and modification of identities, frequently resulting in the erasure of an individual's true identity in favor of a colonial identity that is imposed. Fanon, on proving this statement, says that Negro adopts a language different from that of the group into which he was born in evidence of a dislocation, a separation (p-25). As a result of this we came to a conclusion that the Negro faithfully reproduces that Imago (p-169).

Thiong'o argues that, the language of my education was no longer the language of my culture. It was, in a sense, a double education: the one of my upbringing and the one of my formal schooling (Thiong'o). "Frantz Fanon's analysis in "Black Skin, White Masks" and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's reflection on language in "Decolonizing the Mind" can be compared. Thiong'o draws attention to the cognitive dissonance that colonized people experience when the language of their culture and the language of formal education diverge. This is in line with Fanon's investigation of how colonialism causes the colonized to adopt a foreign cognitive framework, which results in a shattered sense of self.

The psychological effects of language on Black people must also be taken into account. According to Fanon, "Every colonized people—in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality—finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country" (p. 14). As because adopting the language of the colonizer sometimes means abandoning one's original tongue and, consequently, one's cultural identity, by our analysis this paragraph highlights how language may foster sentiments of inferiority and self-alienation. By deep analysis, most of the Antillean thought that the Negro body is black, his language is black, his soul must be black too (p-180). Black people frequently struggle to reconcile their native

identity with the identity that invaders forced upon them. Their self-perception may be constantly negotiated as a result of this dichotomy, leading to cognitive dissonance. We can possibly see, how Fanon expands on this topic in Chapter Four, "The So-Called Dependency Complex of Colonized Peoples," where we can elaborate that how Fanon he discusses how language shapes cognitive schemas and creates reliance. According to his writing, "The colonized is raised above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the cultural norms of the mother country." As he gives up his darkness and his forest, he becomes whiter (p. 18). Here, we observe how language serves as a cognitive paradigm that propagates the internalization of racial inferiority and colonial hierarchy.

The concept of stereotype threat developed by Claude M. Steele, which enhances Fanon's concepts, can be utilized to reinforce our research. According to Steele, the possibility of discovering unfavorable preconceptions about one's ethnic group might have a detrimental impact on identity development and cognitive function. This is consistent with the observation made by Fanon that black people adopt the language and culture of their colonizers in an effort to avoid negative stereotypes and be accepted, a move that might cause cognitive dissonance and identity difficulties. The author says that, I had rationalized the world and the world had rejected me on the basis of color prejudice (p-123).

Discussion

Frantz Fanon provides a thorough examination of a number of schemas in *Black Skin, White Masks*, which serve as an example of the social and psychological conceptions around race and identity under colonialism. These include the Cinderella Complex, which highlights the internalized desire to be rescued from one's racial identity by assimilating into the dominant white culture, and the Abandonment-neurotic schema, which reflects the fundamental fear of rejection and isolation experienced by black individuals in a racially biased society. In order to maintain their sense of superiority, colonizers feel compelled to rule and control the colonized, as demonstrated by the Prospero Complex. The Racial Epidermal Schema explores how racial characteristics that are apparent to the naked eye, including skin tone, are used in discriminatory practices and social interactions. The historical and communal memories of racism and colonialism that shaped black people's identities and experiences are addressed by the Historico-Racial Schema. Black people's physical and physiological experiences are examined in The Corporal Schema, along with the effects of racism on their sense of self and physical integrity. Black people's adaptation of their physical presence and conduct to racial

stereotypes and expectations is examined via the Postural Schema. Fanon also delves into the Racial Schema, addressing the formation and interpretation of racial identity, and the Colonial Schema, emphasizing the interactions between colonizers and colonized. The Psychological Schema examines the psychological effects of racism and colonialism, whereas the Linguistic Schema examines how language shapes identity and power relations. Finally, the Sexual Schema discusses the desires and sexual dynamics that result from racial preconceptions. When taken as a whole, these schemas offer a thorough and sophisticated explanation of the complex aspects of black identity as well as the deep psychological ramifications of racism and colonialism. Fanon's experience also illustrates the continuing difficulties related to these colonial structures. The narrative addresses the idea of creating a new, positive self-identity via the characters' defiance and declaration of their humanity. For example, Fanon talks about how black people embrace their cultural past and affirm their value in order to reject the forced schemas and express their own identities. The characters' internal monologues and interactions, which frequently convey a yearning to be freed from colonial confines and to reinvent themselves on their own terms, make this resistance clear.

Analysis of Findings

After analyzing our results under the prism of cognitive theory, we can comprehend the points made by Fanon in "Black Skin, White Masks." The investigation shows how black people internalize the cognitive schemas created by colonialism, which results in a fractured sense of self and serious psychological distress. There is a widespread cognitive dissonance in the text as a result of these schemas being reinforced by social interactions and the colonizer's gaze. Fanon's portrayal of this internal conflict is consistent with cognitive theories that contend that perception and behavior are shaped by schemas. As an example of the cognitive dissonance that colonized people go through, the ongoing balancing act between the imposed colonial identity and the need for self-affirmation supports Fanon's claim that colonialism has a significant negative influence on mental health. Our analysis's wider ramifications highlight the severe psychological repercussions of colonialism and racism. Knowing how racial identity-related cognitive schemas are created and contested might help one better understand the long-lasting effects of colonialism on mental health. This perspective emphasizes the necessity of social and psychological treatments that support cognitive emancipation and deal with internalized racism. It also highlights how crucial it is for mental health professionals to be aware of cultural and historical contexts, as understanding the causes of internalized oppression and cognitive dissonance may help oppressed people recover and become more

resilient. Our results complement and add knowledge from earlier research on racial identification and cognitive dissonance. Steele's (1997) study on stereotype threat, for example, lends credence to the notion that internalized negative schemas impact performance and self-perception. The psychological harm brought on by internalized racism is also highlighted in the research on racial identity in children conducted by Clark and Clark (1947). However, by applying these cognitive theories to Fanon's story, our study provides fresh insights and shows how literary analysis may highlight the complex psychological impacts of colonialism. Additionally, our research offers a thorough understanding of how these schemas were both created and challenged within a colonial framework, whereas other studies have concentrated on certain facets of internalized racism.

Limitations

Although our research offers useful details, there are certain drawbacks. The analysis's primary focus is on textual evidence from "Black Skin, White Masks," which can restrict how broadly the conclusions can be applied to other situations or ethnicities. Furthermore, the particular cultural and historical context of colonialism affects how cognitive schemas and tension are interpreted; nonetheless, this background may not adequately convey the complexities of racial identity in modern contexts. By including a wider range of texts and circumstances and using qualitative techniques to investigate the psychological impacts of racism and colonialism, future research might build on this study. More multidisciplinary studies that integrate psychological and literary analysis may offer a more comprehensive understanding of these problems.

Conclusion

This study provides the various ways in which scholars such as Frantz Fanon and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o explain the significant psychological and cognitive effects that the language of slavery has on those who have been colonized once. In addition to, being a tool for communication, language may also be used effectively to implement culture and subsequently influence identity, which causes internalized inferiority complexes and identity problems in those who are colonized. Fanon's "Black Skin, White Masks" examination of cognitive schemas [clearly] demonstrates how colonialism imposes and maintains negative racial identities, causing profound psychological anguish and cognitive dissonance. Highlighting the long-lasting psychological effects of colonization on both people and society. To address the

enduring psychological effects of racism, it will be imperative to acknowledge these dynamics for decolonization, create sound cultural autonomy, and promote self-determination among formerly colonial peoples.

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