

Women's Anxiety in Modern Javanese Literary Short Stories

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to achieve three objectives: (1) to identify the forms of anxiety experienced by Javanese women, (2) to uncover the causes of this anxiety, and (3) to understand women's ego responses or attitudes in addressing their anxiety as depicted in modern Javanese short stories published in *Panyebar Selamat* magazine in 2023. These objectives are analyzed using Sigmund Freud's psychological theory of personality, particularly his concepts of anxiety.

This qualitative research utilizes 12 short stories with psychological themes published in *Panyebar Selamat* in 2023. The data consists of words, phrases, and sentences that depict the anxiety of female characters. Data collection is conducted using library documentation techniques, while data analysis employs a descriptive approach guided by Freud's theory.

The findings reveal that neurotic anxiety is the most dominant form of anxiety experienced by female characters, appearing in 7 out of 12 short stories. Forms of anxiety include feelings of unease, embarrassment, discomfort, doubt, and depression. The causes of anxiety often stem from everyday life, such as economic factors, unfulfilled promises, romantic issues, filial obligations, and social status. The ego defense mechanisms adopted by the female characters to cope with their anxiety are predominantly positive, including sublimation, repression, projection, and distraction.

Keywords: neurotic anxiety, cause of anxiety, ego defense

INTRODUCTION

Women have always been an interesting topic of discussion in literary works. A woman's name is often used as the title of a story or poem [1]. Not only in popular literature, where women are sometimes exploited as a narrative embellishment, but even in serious literary works, women's names frequently appear as titles, as is the case in modern Javanese literature.

Modern Javanese literature is a form of literature written in the Javanese language and remains vibrant in today's society. Its presence is consistently observed in weekly Javanese-language magazines such as *Panyebar Semangat* and *Jaya Baya* in East Java, and *Joko Lodhang* in Central Java [2].

The genres of modern Javanese literature are similar to those in Western literature, including novels, serialized stories (*cerbung*), short stories (*cerkak*), poetry (*guritan*), and modern drama [3]. Among these, *cerkak*, *cerbung*, and *guritan* are the most enduring genres, regularly featured in the aforementioned magazines. In contrast, novels and modern drama rely heavily on the creativity of the authors, with no established platform ensuring their regular publication. Novels are sometimes compiled from serialized stories previously published in magazines. Modern drama, whether as a text or a performance (on radio or television), is the least frequently encountered genre and lacks a dedicated platform for publication.

Modern Javanese short stories are published weekly in Javanese-language magazines, resulting in 52 short stories per year. Women, as a marginalized group in Javanese society, are often portrayed as objects, themes, or even titles in these stories. The issues faced by Javanese women have become increasingly complex due to socio-cultural developments and upheavals [4]. Similarly, their psychological challenges have also grown more intricate. Literature, as a reflection of society, continues to portray the psychological dimensions of women's personalities in modern Javanese literature.

Sigmund Freud's theories, as foundational concepts in literary psychology, provide an appropriate framework for understanding the psychological issues of female characters. The prominence of a character's personality structure often triggers psychological problems. The dynamics of personality are the source of these issues. Anxiety [5] is one of the most common psychological challenges faced by Javanese female characters. This is closely related to the cultural traits of *ewuh pekewuh* (hesitation) and the strong control of the ego in Javanese women.

This research aims to explore the causes of psychological problems in female characters and the attitudes they adopt as ego defense mechanisms. Specifically, the study addresses three questions: the forms of anxiety experienced by female characters, the causes of their anxiety, and the ego defense mechanisms they employ to resolve it.

Freud posits that anxiety is an unpleasant affective state that can physically and psychologically threaten an individual. Anxiety arises when the three structures of personality—id, ego, and superego—are in conflict [11]. For example, the id, as the most basic part of personality, may harbor strong desires for personal pleasure, while the superego, as the moral aspect of personality, restrains these desires due to perceived threats.

Freud categorizes anxiety into three types: realistic anxiety, neurotic anxiety, and moral anxiety [12]. According to Suryabrata [13], realistic anxiety is the most fundamental form, representing a tangible fear of real-world dangers. Neurotic anxiety occurs when uncontrollable instincts lead to actions that may result in punishment. Moral anxiety arises when one's actions conflict with moral standards.

Freud identifies various forms of ego defense mechanisms, including repression, reaction formation, displacement, sublimation, rationalization, and projection [14]. These mechanisms share common characteristics, such as denial and distortion of reality.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used in this study is the qualitative descriptive method. Ahmadi [15] states that qualitative research is based on narrative and descriptive data. Qualitative research prioritizes interpretive explanations over numerical analysis. The descriptive method is defined as a problem-solving procedure by describing the condition of research subjects and objects, such as individuals, institutions, communities, and others, based on observable facts and conditions.

The data source for this research consists of modern Javanese literary short stories published in *Panyebar Semangat* magazine in 2023, which have psychological themes, particularly anxiety. The research data includes narratives and dialogues from both female and male characters that illustrate the anxiety experienced by female characters in these modern Javanese literary short stories.

The data collection technique employed in this study is a library research approach. Primary data were collected from the texts of modern Javanese literary short stories selected as data sources. Secondary data were obtained from theories and concepts related to Javanese women and Sigmund Freud's psychological theories. The literature review forms part of the explanation derived from the examination of relevant references for the study [16].

Data analysis was conducted using a qualitative descriptive method guided by Sigmund Freud's literary psychological theory, specifically focusing on anxiety. The researcher presents all data that indicate interactions between characters, story settings, and plots by categorizing them based on formulated categories.

DISCUSSION

The anxieties of female characters in modern Javanese literary stories published in *Panyebar Selamat* 2023 magazine are contained in 12 stories. The anxiety experienced by the female characters consists of neurotic, real and moral anxiety. The three forms of anxiety, their causes and solutions will be described below.

A. Neurotic Anxiety of Female Characters in Short Stories in Modern Javanese Literature 2023 in *Panyebar Semangat Magazine*

There are seven short stories in modern Javanese literature published in *Panyebar Selamat* magazine whose female characters have the theme of neurotic anxiety. The forms of neurotic anxiety experienced by female characters are as follows.

1. Neurotic Anxiety Forms of Female Characters in Short Stories in Modern Javanese Literature 2023 in *Panyebar Semangat Magazine*

Murti, a character in the short story *Wong Wadon sing Kepingin Ngimpi (A Woman Who Wants to Dream)* by Budiono (2023), experiences neurotic anxiety. Murti feels uneasy; she wants to sleep and dream. What she wants to dream about is illustrated in the following excerpt.

Wektune lumaku terus. Nanging wong wadon kuwi tetep angel turu. Dheweke bola-bali nggresah. Yen turu wae angel, banjur kapan tekane impen? Kegawa pengangen-angene sing tansah ngarep-arep tekane impen, embuh ngapa wengi iki perangane impen-impen kepungkur malah bali teka lan pencolotan ing siraha.

Time passed, yet the woman continued to struggle with sleeplessness. She repeatedly lamented, "If it's so hard to sleep, when will I ever dream?" Driven by her longing to dream, fragments of her past dreams began to resurface, dancing vividly in her mind.

Murti's character embodies a sense of restlessness in her quest for sleep. She appears to sigh anxiously, unable to find rest. Murti eagerly anticipates the arrival of beautiful dreams that would transport her to the joyful moments of her past. She longs to relive a life of comfort and fulfillment, where all her needs were met by the men in her life. She had been close to several men, but it was the last one, a former schoolmate, who left the most cherished memories. These memories lingered deeply, making Murti yearn to remember him, even in her dreams.

The concept of "dream" in this context carries dual meanings. On one hand, its denotative meaning refers to her yearning to recapture lost happiness, even if only in the world of dreams. On the other hand, the dream carries a symbolic meaning, representing Murti's desire to rekindle the joy and contentment she once felt with this man.

The character Sinta, in the short story *Pentas* by Ardini Pangastuti (2023), experiences uncertainty regarding her husband's permission. Sinta is unsure whether her husband will allow her to dance or not.

"Aku durung bisa janji. Takmatur Sinuwun Prabu dhisik," wangsulane Sinta diplomatis.

"Bu Sinta ki ketoke Wanita modern, nanging mosok wedi karo bojo," aloke Mia

"Soal pelatih, mengko tauuruse. Aku ana kanca duwe sanggar tari," ujare Sinta, saderma kanggo ngurangi rasa ora kepenak saupama Sayoga ora ngidini dheweke nari.

"The account cannot be promised yet. "I have to ask my husband's permission first," answered Sinta diplomatically.

"Mrs. Sinta looks like a modern woman, but she's afraid of her husband," said Mia.

"Regarding the coach, I'll take care of it later. "I have a friend who owns a dance studio," answered Sinta, just to reduce the feeling of discomfort that Sayoga wouldn't let her dance.

Sinta, a dancer and a college graduate, struggles with uncertainty about her participation in a dance performance organized by the women of the Sekar Tumangkar Farmers Group in Sawokembar Hamlet for the August commemoration event. She does not dare to give a definitive answer, fearing her husband might not permit her to join. Although Sinta's anxiety is not explicitly portrayed, it is implicitly evident that she worries about being reprimanded by her husband for participating without his approval.

Riri's character in the short story *Semine Tunggak Katresnan* (Harjono, 2023) experiences neurotic anxiety and doubt. Riri is doubtful about Pras' mother's acceptance. From the start, Mrs. Indri rejected Riri as a potential daughter-in-law.

"Oh, aku ndherek prihatin, Mas Pras. Nanging, upama aku sowan Budhe Indri, apa ora malah saya nambah-nambahi momotane batine?" pangucapane Riri sajak bingung. "Biyen sing nglarang Mas Pras sambung tresna karo aku rak Budhe Indri. Jalaran dheweke ora seneng akro aku..."

"Oh, I'm sorry, Mr Pras. But, if I met Bude Indri, wouldn't that just add to the burden on his mind?" said Riri looking confused. "In the past, it was Bude Indri who forbade Mas Pras to have a romance with me, because he didn't like me.

Pras and Riri had been separated for seven years, a separation caused by Prastyo's mother, Mrs. Indri, who disapproved of their relationship. After all this time, Prastyo met with Riri to inform her that his mother had suffered a mild stroke. Prastyo's request to take Riri to meet his mother triggered real anxiety in Riri. She doubted whether Mrs. Indri would accept her, given that seven years ago, Mrs. Indri had rejected their relationship and caused their separation.

The Gita character in the short story *Isih Ana Lintang* (Aneta:2023) experiences neurotic anxiety. It was feared that Gita would be embarrassed in front of the Kenar children.

...Upama ana bot repote paklike Gita, awake dhewe mesthi dirasani yen ora sabiyantu. Terus iki sing dadi pikiranku, saupama Gita wis koktinggal lan daktinggal, Bu, apa mbesuke ora diundhamana anak-anake Kenar? Ya senajan dulur misanan, nanging omah iku bisa njalari dredah...

...If uncle Gita had any trouble, we would definitely be gossiped about if we didn't help. This is what haunts my mind. If we had left the Gita behind, wouldn't the children of Kenar be concerned about it in the future? Yes, even though they are cousins, the house can cause arguments...

Gita remembers her parents' conversation. His mother and father thought about his self-worth. Anxiety that they will be gossiped about if they cannot repay the kindness of their siblings who have given them shelter haunts the minds of Gita's parents. They are afraid to accept other people's kindness, even if that person is their brother-in-law. It is estimated that the children of Kenar, Gita's parents' brothers-in-law, will make fun of Gita who cannot take shelter without her parents' help.

Mother character in the short story *Oktober* (Djosemito: 2023) experiences neurotic anxiety in the form of confusion.

Aku bingung. Ora ngerti karepe ibu. Ewa semono aku panggah ngetutake tanpa celathu. Sanajan sajrone ati kebak pitakonan, arep ngapa ibuku iki? Ibu terus mlaku. Alon-alon. Setengah rangu-rangu. Kala-kala

mandheg sedhela. Nyetitekake dalan. Banjur jumangkah maneh, nurut lemah kang ketok limit, nuduhake yen perangan kuwi kerep diambah wong-wong kang mlebu metu alas.

I'm confused. Don't know what Mother wants. However, I still followed without saying a word. Even though in my heart there are many questions, what will Mother do? Mother then walked. Slowly. Sometimes it stops for a moment. Pay attention to the road. Then he took another step, following the path, showing that this path was often used by people going in and out of the forest.

This scene depicts what a mother and daughter do. I, the child, experienced real anxiety, confusion, over what his mother would do. The mother, in the middle of the bus journey, asked to go to a place in the form of a forest. A woman stops in the forest causing anxiety about the threat of danger that might occur to her mother. Mother continued walking through the forest a little to the middle and stopped somewhere. The silence of the mother character also creates confusion for my character who doesn't know what the mother is doing. Mother's silence turned out to be related to her mental problems. The mother was depressed by what happened to her biological father, who was a victim of the G 30-S PKI, who died because he was arrested, killed and buried in the forest.

The main shop is named Niken in *Cerkak New York-Singapura-Jakarta* (Pirngadi, 2023) experiences neurotic anxiety. This beautiful woman feels pressure from her parents in her love life.

Dheg! Kaya ana palu gedhe sing ngepruk dhadhaku. Rasa kuwatir wiwit ngrambati atiku. Arah pangandikane Rama sithik-sithik wis bisa tak bedhek. Enggal-enggal tak buwang gegambaran ala sing mampir ing pikiranku. Ora bakal. Iki dudu jaman Siti Nurbaya!

Deg, like a hammer hit my chest. Worry began to creep into my heart. I could guess the direction of my father's conversation little by little. I immediately threw away the bad images in my mind. No way, this is not Siti Nurbaya's era.

Niken felt her chest tighten as if she had been crushed and hit by a heavy object, a hammer. Niken is worried that her parents will force her into an arranged marriage. Niken's father has given signs that he will be introduced to his friend's son who is studying in Germany. However, Niken immediately dismissed her bad prejudice against her father. It was impossible for his father to still have such old-fashioned ideas about arranged marriages.

Ratri's character in the short story *Rembulane Wis Ndadari* (Budi, 2023) experienced neurotic anxiety in the form of sadness.

"Aku kadhang kala ngrasa sedhah. Ora merga awake dhewe ditundhung minggat saka ndesa banjur kedlarang-dlarang tekan Sala dadi pengamen meh limang taun iki. Dudu. Dudu kuwi. Nanging ya gene nganti seprene awake dhewe durung diwenahi momongan sing bisa dakkudang nganggo lagu senenganku kuwi? Kamangka jare dhokter, nalika awake dhewe mriksakake kae, wong loro ora ana masalah ing bab kesehatan."

"I feel sad sometimes. Not because we were kicked out of the village and then stranded in Sala as buskers for the past five years. No. Not that. But, why haven't we been blessed with a child who I can sing my favorite song to?" In fact, according to the doctor's examination, when we checked at that time, we had no problems with reproductive health."

The two husband and wife characters are named Windu and Ratri. The two of them are a young couple whose romantic relationship is not approved by their parents. They eloped to Sala and became buskers. They experienced neurotic anxiety, felt sad, especially Ratri, worried about herself not getting pregnant. Even though he really hopes he can cradle his biological child with songs *Lela-lelo Ledhung*, a song that is always sung when busking.

2. Causes of Neurotic Anxiety in Female Characters in Short Stories in Modern Javanese Literature 2023 in Panyebar Selamat Magazine

The cause of Murti's anxiety in the short story *Wong Wadon sing Kepingin Ngimpi* (2023) is an affair she has with the men she depends on. One of the wives of the man who used her as a mistress found out about her husband's infidelity and confronted Murti as in the following excerpt.

Nanging lakune crita urip lan panguripan ora selawase kepenak dirungu. Wong wadon kuwi kudu nampa kanyatan pait nalika sawijining dina dilabrag bojone wong lanang mau. Dheweke diuman-uman nganti entek amek kurang golek. Dituding ngrusak pager ayu.

However, the story of life and life is not always pleasant to listen to. The woman had to accept the bitter reality, when one day she was hit by the man's wife. He was mocked until he lacked words. He was accused of destroying people's homes.

Causes of Murti in short stories *Wong Wadon sing Kepingin Ngimpi* (2023) wants to remember the happiness he once felt because the happiness he felt had indeed ended. Murti, who became his friend's mistress, experienced bitterness that could not be forgotten. The poor woman was assaulted by her boyfriend's legal wife. Murti was accused of being a mistress who destroyed other people's households. Since that incident, Murti has no longer been able to have contact with men who usually provide a comfortable life with various luxurious facilities.

The cause of the anxiety experienced by the character Sinta is a problem with promises. The female character had made a promise to her husband before getting married.

Mula nalika Sayoga kandha yen ora seneng duwe bojo penari, Sinta diadhepake marang pilihan kang abot. Antarane nari lan priya kang ditrisnani. Lan Sinta milih Sayoga, amarga dheweke rumangsa ora bisa nerusake urip tanpa priya iku...

That's why when Sayoga stated that he didn't like having a dancing wife, Sinta was faced with a tough choice. Between dancing and the man she loves. Sinta chose Sayoga, because she felt she couldn't continue living without him...

The cause of Sinta's anxiety is rooted in the decision she made when she was going to marry Sayoga. Sinta cannot live without the man she loves. Sayoga doesn't like having a dancer wife. This is a serious dilemma for him, who is a dance school graduate. Sinta has made the decision to leave the world of dance and live as a housewife with Sayoga, the man she loves very much.

The cause of Riri in the short story *Semine Tunggak Katresnan* (Harjono, 2023) experiencing neurotic anxiety is due to social status. Riri experiences doubts about the acceptance of Pras's mother, the mother of the man she loves, because of his status as a child taken from an orphanage.

"Ah, ila-ila iku mung kanggo alasan, Mas. Aku, ngerti kok. Anane Budhe Indri ora mangestoni yen awake dhewe mangun bebrayan iku satemene aku iki mung anak pupone bapak-ibu, Pak Gunadi lan Bu Murdini. Bayi kang diadopsi saka panti asuhan," ceplose Riri tanpa ewuh pakewuh.

"Ah, crazy! That's just a cover, sir. I understand. Bude Indri does not approve of our relationship just because I am the adopted son of Mr. Gunadi and Mrs. Murdini. "A baby adopted from an orphanage," said Riri without hesitation.

Riri's character knows the real reason why Mrs. Prastyo did not accept her as a future daughter-in-law. *Ila-ila* atau *gugon tuhon*. What Prasyo's mother used as an excuse was just an excuse to cover up the real cause. Indri already felt that her status as an adopted child was actually the reason why Prastyo's mother did not want to accept her as a potential daughter-in-law. Riri is only Mrs. Murdini's adopted child who was taken

from an orphanage. The status as an orphan from the orphanage is actually the reason why Mrs. Indri, Prastyo's mother, does not accept Riri as Prastyo's life partner.

The cause of Gita and her parents' anxiety in the short story *Isih Ana Lintang* (Aneta:2023) is self-esteem. The child and mother maintain their self-esteem so as not to be insulted and blamed by their siblings.

“Dikaya ngapa tetep kepenak manggon omahe dhewe senajan rekasa. Merga yen wis kepotangan budi awake dhewe bakal kalah sakabehe...Coba apa ora nggrantes yen anake Kenar alok Gita ora bisa ngeyub nek ora diwenehi omah Bapak...”

"After all, it's still better to live in your own house, even though it's a bit of a struggle. We will lose if we are indebted... See if it isn't sad if Kenar's children make fun of Gita not being able to take shelter if her father doesn't give her a house..."

The cause of anxiety experienced by Gita's parents is their desire not to feel indebted. Gita's mother, and especially her father, are unwilling to suppress their feelings because they feel a sense of obligation to her sister. They are determined to maintain their self-esteem and avoid being demeaned or labeled negatively by their siblings. Their independence, or their refusal to accept the kindness of others, is a strong stance held by Gita's parents.

In the short story *Oktober* (Djosemito, 2023), the cause of anxiety experienced by the mother character stems from her desire to honor and be devoted to her deceased husband.

Mudhun saka bis, ibu ngadeg nggejejer sauntara ing pinggir dalan. Kaya wong ngengleng. Suwara klakson sawijine bis kang nuju liwat gawe kaget. Sanalika ibu jumangkah sinambi nyekeli tanganku. Udakara pitung jangkah ibu mandheg. Noleh alas ing sisih kiwa dalan. Lingak-linguk...”

Getting off the bus, Mother stood stiffly in the middle of the road. Like someone confused. The sound of a passing bus horn startled me. Mother quickly held my hand. After about 7 steps, Mom stopped. Look towards the forest on the left of the road. His eyes look left and right...

The mother figure who originally boarded the bus with her son, me, suddenly stopped. Mother did not say or tell me anything. The behavior of the mother who suddenly stopped in the forest area, in the middle of the bus journey, caused my character's anxiety. The mother figure's silence is the cause of my character's increasing anxiety.

The cause of anxiety experienced by the character Neken in the short story *New York-Singapura-Jakarta* (Pirngadi, 2023) It's true that it's an arranged marriage plan. Her parents introduced her to a man who was her father's best friend's son.

“Rama, to the point kemawon, wonten sesambetanipun menapa wangsul kula kalihan putranipun om Prasojo?” pitakonku kanthi swara gemeter.

“Putrane Om Prasojo kuwi saiki kuliyah ing Jerman. Minggu ngarep dheweke bali Jakarta. Karepe Rama, mbok menawa kenalan maneh. Ya... maksude Rama lan Ibu kepingin....”

“Sampun, Rama!” ucapku banter nyandhet pangandikane Rama. “Mboten sisah Rama lajengaken, kula sampun ngertos. Rama rak badhe njodhoaken kula kalihan putranipun Om Prasojo ta? Jawaban kula mboten, Rama. Mboten!”

"Father, straight away, what is the connection between my return and Uncle Prasaja's son?" I asked in a trembling voice.

“Om Prasajo's son is now studying in Germany. Next week he returns to Jakarta. Rama meant, maybe we could get to know each other again. Yes... I mean Rama and Mother want to...”

"That's it, Dad!" I said loudly, interrupting father's conversation. “No need to continue, father, I already understand. Dad wants to match me with his son Om Prasajo? My answer is no, father, No!”

Niken will be introduced to Om Prasajo's son, her father's friend. Niken's father still expressed his desire to introduce Niken to the son of his father's friend. However, Niken showed a spontaneous and strong reaction by rejecting her father's wishes. Niken firmly rejected the matchmaking plan. This *Cerkak* is similar to the novel *Serat Riyanto*, the first novel in modern Javanese literature which explores romance and marriage characterized by arranged marriage. Niken also knows and has feelings for the man her parents arranged for her to marry.

The cause of Ratri's anxiety in the short story *Rembulane Wis Ndadari* (Budi, 2023) is a feeling of guilt towards parents.

“*Ora merga disotake dening wong tuwa kita?*”

“*Nanging nikahe awake dhewe ora antuk restu saka wong tuwa. Ya tujune wae Paklik Kandar lan Pakdhe Trimo gelem dadi seksi.*”

"Not because our parents swore at it?"

"But our marriage did not get the blessing of the parents. Fortunately, Uncle Kandar and Uncle Trimo wanted to be witnesses."

Windu and Ratri were initially believed to be incompatible because they came from two villages, Sekarjo and Pule, where, according to the people in their communities, marriage was prohibited. However, both of them logically denied this, arguing that the reason was merely fabricated by their parents. The real cause of their struggles was the incompatibility stemming from old grudges in their parents' past. The lack of parental blessing became an obstacle to their hopes of having a child. Evidently, after their parents approved of their relationship, Ratri became pregnant.

3. Resolving the Neurotic Anxiety of Female Characters in Short Stories in Modern Javanese Literature 2023 in Panyebar Selamat Magazine

Murti takes the solution in the short story *Wong Wadon sing Kepingin Ngimpi* (Budiono, 2023) is a good solution. Murti performs sublimation. Let's look at the following excerpt.

Esuke nalika tangi turu, wong wadon iku ora kresah-kresuh kaya sing saben-saben dilakoni ing omahe. Dheweke saiki malah bisa mesem. Impen-impèn sing sasuwene iki tansah diarep-arep kudu dikipatake adoh. Tekade bakal nglungguhi jejere wong wadon sawutuhe. Bakal mlaku salumrahe waton bisa ayem lan tentrem.

In the morning, when she woke up, the woman did not complain like she had at home. Now he can actually smile. The dreams that you have been hoping for must be pushed away. She is determined to become a complete woman. He will walk according to norms as long as his inner peace is possible.

The character Murti, through sublimation, manages to escape the anxiety he is experiencing, namely his dreams of being able to live a life full of pleasure. The woman asked her teacher, Eyang Dipo, for help. The old man, called grandparent, gave advice and guidance to Murti so that the woman could give up her desire to live happily with men. The anxiety in Murti's heart had disappeared and was replaced with a smile. Murti is ready to live a new life as a normal woman and find peace of mind.

Sinta's character in the short story *Pentas* (Pangastuti:2023) solves his anxiety problems with diversion.

“Aja salah tanpa dhisik. Olehku Latihan nari iki saderma ngombyongi kanca-kanca kelompok tani Sekar Tumangkar sing arep pentas pitulasan... Mengko kepepete ora ana pelatih tenan, aku nyuwun idi panjenengan kanggo ngancani kanca-kanca nari...”

“Don't get me wrong yet. I only practiced dancing with friends from the Sekar Tumangkar farmer group who will be performing at the Seventeenth event... Nani, if I don't have a trainer, I ask permission to accompany my friends in dancing...”

Sinta overcomes her anxiety through displacement. She took the initiative to learn and practice the simple movements of the Caping Nggunung dance, which was suitable for the farmers' wives in the Sekar Tumangkar farming group. Sinta shifted her goal by asking her husband for permission to simply become a trainer for the women, rather than participating in the dance herself. However, her husband unexpectedly granted permission for her to dance. Sayoga had realized that, for the past 20 years of their marriage, he had restrained his wife's joy of dancing. His jealousy had blinded him to understanding his wife's true desires.

Riri in the short story *Semine Tunggak Katresnan* (Harjono, 2023) resolves his anxiety with repression.

Riri malih kebuka atine. Dheweke sadhar. Ironing telenging atine isih ana tunggak katresnan marang Prastetyo. Kamangka Bu Indri iku ibune Priya kang dadi cong-congane atine kasebut. Mula iku Riri kudu gelem nampa Bu Indri apa anane. Sarta ngugemi wajibe anak marang wong tuwa...

Riri opened her heart. He realized that there was still love in his heart for Prastetyo. Mrs. Indri is the mother of the man she loves. So, Riri must be able to accept Mrs. Indri as she is and carry out her responsibilities as a child towards her parents...

Riri's character suppresses her anxiety about her doubts about her future in-laws. He suppressed all his bad feelings towards Mrs. Indri and tried to accept Mrs. Indri as his future father-in-law. Riri also tries to accept Mrs. Indri as she is and carry out her obligations as a child. Riri promised in her heart that she would carry out her duties as a child, namely taking care of Mrs. Indri who was sick with a stroke.

Ibu Gita in the short story *Isih Ana Lintang* (Aneta: 2023) resolves her conflict with projection, throws away her anxiety and diverts it to another reality, namely by agreeing to her husband's wish to live in his own house even though it is ugly, short, and if it rains it will be flooded.

“...Wis ta sing paling enak iku opor bebek, mentas awake dhewek...Aku ya ra pa-pa yen ngenggoni sing ana wae. Sing durung rampung iku dialing-alingi triplek rak ya kena. Mengko mbokmenawa ana rejeki dibacutake maneh mbangune. Sing baku ora kebanjiran,” ucape Bu Keni alon.

“...Never mind that the good thing is duck opor, meaning it can stand on its own feet...I also don't have a problem if I just live in a makeshift house. Unfinished parts can be covered with plywood. If you have good luck, you can continue building. “The important thing is not to get flooded,” said Mrs. Keni quietly.

The two female characters, mother and daughter, accept their situation, even though they live in a house that is still under construction, covering the unfinished parts with makeshift materials, like plywood. Gita's mother decided not to apply for a loan from the bank because they already had too many loans. At the end of the story, their difficulties are eased with the acceptance of funds from the sale of Gita's father's inheritance in the village.

The narrator in the short story *Oktober* (Djosemito, 2023) takes action to resolve her anxiety through the defense mechanism of projection.

“Mudhun kene sedhela,” wangsulanku karo narik tangane ibu.

Kaya bocah cilik, kaya bocak cilik ibu manut wae dakglandhang mlebu alas. Kala-kala aku mandheg. Mbenakake tas gedhe kang dakcangkong lan cangkangan jajanan kang ngribeti laku. Tekan papane ibu nggejejer wingi aku mandheg.

“Nek Ibu arep ziarah, dakkancani,” kandhaku lirih.

"Come down here for a while," I answered while pulling Mom's hand.

Mother just obeyed when I pulled her into the forest, like a child. Sometimes I stop.

I let go of his anxiety and carried out the activities of taking his mother to his father's grave. The child fulfilled his mother's wish to make a pilgrimage to the grave of his father, Aku's grandfather. I stopped in the middle of the road, in the forest area where his mother had stopped yesterday. Without telling her the plan, I also took her mother into the forest. I invited his mother to make a pilgrimage. Mother is relieved to be able to carry out her obligations, to be filial to her biological parents.

Niken in the short story *New York-Singapura-Jakarta* (Pirngadi, 2023) carry out ego defense with projection.

“Banjur apa rencanamu yen ketemu karo cowok pilihane wong tuwamu kuwi?”

“Bakal dakunek-unekake sawaregku. Yen perlu ing sakngarepane wong tuwane pisan.”

“Piye yen cowok kuwi nggantheng lan duwe masa depan?”

“Aku ora peduli!”

“Yen tetep dipeksa?”

“Luwih becik karo kowe wae...” sautku entheng rada ketrucut.

"What are your plans if you meet the man your parents chose?"

"I'll make fun of it as much as I like. If necessary, in front of his parents."

“What if the guy is cute and has a future?”

"I don't care."

"What if you're still forced?"

"It's better with you," I said lightly and casually.

Niken diverts her anxiety about her father's arranged marriage by transferring these impulses to someone else. Niken made sure to reject the match she was going to accept. Niken chose to accept Ando, a man she had known for only a short time, rather than being forced to marry a man she had never known.

The solution taken by the characters Ratri and Wishnu in the short story *Rembulane Wis Ndadari* (Budi, 2023) to overcome his anxiety is by repression, suppressing all impulses that cause anxiety in him. They suppress all feelings of wanting to have children.

“...Ngaten Paklik, kula remen yen ibu bapak lan mara sepuh sampun saged nampi kula kekalih. Mpun boten disebratke. Nanging nyuwun pangapunten, kula boten saged wangsul dhateng Mantingan malih. Kula badhe nggemblengaken tekad badhe bebadra piyambak.”

"...Here's the thing, Uncle, I'm really happy that my parents and in-laws can now accept the two of us. They no longer reject us. However, I don't want to return to Mantingan anymore. I am determined to fight and live independently."

Wishnu and Ratri took steps of repression, suppressing all the anxious impulses that befell them. Their anxiety about not having children because their respective families would not approve of their relationship was not expressed through action, but instead, was repressed. Wishnu still desires to remain independent, despite his parents having forgiven him for his mistakes. Ratri, too, does not want to return to her homeland, even if it means losing her parents' inheritance. Both characters are content with suppressing their anxiety, even though the result is that they must struggle on their own.

CONCLUSION

Neurotic anxiety is the dominant type of anxiety experienced by female characters in modern Javanese literature published in *Panyebar Semangat* magazine in 2023. Seven out of twelve short stories explore the theme of neurotic anxiety. The forms of anxiety experienced by female characters include restlessness, embarrassment, hesitation/discomfort, doubt, and pressure. The causes of this anxiety revolve around the daily lives of ordinary people, such as economic factors, promises, love, the desire to be dutiful, and social status. The resolution or ego defense mechanisms adopted by the female characters in dealing with their anxiety are also positive. They employ strategies such as sublimation, repression, projection, and displacement.

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