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THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL IDENTITY STRATUM IN HENRIK IBSEN'S A DOLL HOUSE: A NEW PERSPECTIVE TO IDENTITY

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Abstract

Based on Bakhtin's theories of dialogism and stratification, the paper suggests that individual identity is not unified, is not a complete whole, and is not static rather identity with its diverse strata is dynamic, developing and evolving. Gender identity, cultural identity, linguistic identity, imposed identity, ideological identity, spacial identity, national identity, racial identity, topographical identity and even diverse sorts of hybrid identities such as socio-political identity, socio-linguistic, socio-cultural are just some strata of individual's nonhomogeneous identity. For matters of space and time, the present paper seeks to prove the existence of social identity based on Alfred Adler's theory of Individual Psychology and the concepts of superiority complex and inferiority complex and their representative causes such as social interest, style of life, and masculine protest. Looking from a different angle, the paper discusses superiority and inferiority complexes as the building blocks of social identity. Moreover, social interest, style of life, and masculine protest are the forming factors of the complexes and henceforth the stratum of social identity. The theories are applied on Henrik Ibsen's A Doll House to study the development and

suppression of social identity in Nora which lead her to seek her released un-imposed identity. Released un-imposed identity is interpreted in power structure relations as dissident or rebellious identity.

Keywords

Social Interest, Individual Psychology, Inferiority Complex, Superiority Complex, Masculine Protest, Stratified Identity

1. Social-Bound Adlerin Individual Psychology

Alfred Adler's (1870-1937) Psychoanalytical theories were formulated under the influence of several prominent figures such as Freud, Marx, the German philosophers like Kant, Hegel, Dilthey, Neitzche, Bergson and Vaihinger and ancient philosophers like Aristotle and Seneca. The aforementioned theorists and philosophers contributed in the formation of Adlerian ideas such as the idea of 'human being as a social being', the 'holistic view', 'the causal principle', 'the creative force of human being', 'the final principle' (Oberst and Stewart, 2012 p.10). Adler borrowed the idea that "everything depends on the opinion people have of it" from the Roman philosopher Seneca (ibid).

Under the influence of **Karl Marx**, and unlike Freud or other psychologists, Alfred Adler studied the individual in his social context. Adler strongly believed that the individual is the product of his social contexts. However, unlike Marx's, Adler's view is more humanistic and does not focus on the economic and political aspects of the society. In fact, Adler focused on the relations existing in the community of the people (ibid p.1-2).

Unlike Freud's psychology, Adler's psychology is subjective and optimistic. Freud declares that all nervous disorders are related to unconscious motives (Adler, 1956 p.8-9). Freud believes in deterministic psychology and assumes that the individuals are not capable of understanding their own motivations (ibid p.8). In fact, Freud relates everything to biological, external, objective causal reasons while Adler believes in psychological, internal, subjective causes (ibid p.9). Adler believes that the "unconscious as well as the conscious is determined by subjective values and interests" (ibid). Regarding the point, Adler believes that individuals can correct the mistakes which they have made in their lives (Adler, 1930 p.37).

In addition to subjectivism and optimism, several other factors differentiate Adler from Freud. First and foremost, Freud reduced all motivations to sex and aggression, whereas Adler

considers people as being motivated mostly by social influences and by their wish for *superiority* or success. Second, Freud assumed that people have little or no choice in shaping their personality, whereas Adler believes that people are largely responsible for the very personality they have. Third, Freud's assumption that the present behaviors are caused by past experiences is directly opposed to Adler's notion that present behavior is shaped by people's view of the future. And fourth, in contrast to Freud, who placed very heavy emphasis on unconscious aspects of behavior, Adler believes that psychologically healthy people are usually aware of what they are doing and why they are doing it. (see David Shaffer, *Social and Personality Development*; Alfred Adler, *The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler*).

Overall, "Adler's theory is a holistic psychology that focuses on the goals and purposes of human behavior" (Rieken, 2015 p.35). As the result, Adler's theory of *Individual Psychology* underscores evolution, development and dynamism of individuals; all individuals strive for perfection, and all individuals move from minus situation to a plus one (Adler, 1938 p.37).

In this regard, Adler also formulates theories of *perfectionism*. Born as a social member who needed to struggle his way up in the society, Adler formulated the concept of *superiority/perfection* different from the way it is defined by many scholars and theorist. A lot of contemporary psychologists have expanded the concept of *perfectionism*. For instance, "Hewitt and Flett proposed three dimensions of perfectionism: self-oriented perfectionism, other-oriented perfectionism, and socially prescribed perfectionism" (Ashby and Rice, 2002 p. 2). Done E. Hamachek (1933) expanded the idea of "normal and neurotic perfectionists" (Frost et al., 1993 122). Paul L. Hewitt (1963) and Gordon L. Flett coined three reasons for perfectionism: a) other oriented perfectionism, b) self-oriented perfectionism and c) socially prescribed perfectionism. In short, other-oriented perfectionism involves setting unrealistic high-standards for others, self-oriented perfectionism is adjusting 'high self-standards' and socially prescribed perfectionism is the idea that others impose exaggerated expectations on the individual (Flett, Hewitt, De Rosa, 1996 p.143). In "The Destructiveness of Perfectionism", Blatt asserts that Hamachek pointed out that self-oriented perfectionism can be the element which shows the ones who are suffering from 'neurotic perfectionism' (1007).

All important issues of human life, such as job, love, and the rest of relations are social. (Adler, 1956 p.59). The subjectivity of the individual is constructed within the very social community he lives in. That is the reason Adler suggests "Communal living became a necessity

because the community, and the division of labour through which every individual subordinated himself to the group, ensured the continued existence of the species" (1928 p.36). In essence, the notions and concepts of Adler's *Individual Psychology* are indispensable factors of individual's social life which form one's social identity. In the followings, based on Adler's theory *Individual Psychology*, the forming factors of one's social identity are to be studied. These notions include *masculine protest, social interest and life style*.

2. Superiority and Inferiority Complexes as the Building Blocks of Social Identity Denominators

Alfred Adler, is the "father of inferiority and superiority complex" (Adler, 1956 p.256). He strongly believes that there is always a relationship between these two notions and posits that the feeling of *inferiority* exists in all human beings and this is a natural and normal feeling (Adler, 1956 p.117; 1928 p.43). The feeling runs the risk of complexity once it permeates the whole life of the individual. In such a case it would be more than a complex, and could turn into a psychological malady. (Adler, 1930 p.74). Regarding this point Adler asserts that *inferiority* feeling "becomes a pathological condition only when the sense of inadequacy overwhelms individual, and instead of stimulating them to useful activity, makes them depressed and incapable of development" (Alfred Adler, 1930 p.43). Under such conditions, the feeling of weakness and helplessness is enormously intensified and grows into a deeply felt sense of *inferiority* (Adler, 1925 p.18). Looking from a different angle, Adler theorized that 'inferiority feeling' helps human promote his life and considered it as a positive derive. He stated that "human beings are in a permanent state of feeling their inferiority, which constantly spurs them on to further action in order to attain greater security" (1938 p.98). But, he ascertained that the feeling would become problematic when it surpasses the normal levels and reaches an exaggerated level. At this stage, the individual tries to compensate the exaggerated feeling by developing *superiority complex*. Under such conditions, the individuals focus on succeeding in life and do not mind the social growth (Adler, 1997 p.44). Adler mentions that a "superiority complex is a second phase. It is a compensation for the inferiority [feeling] complex." (Alfred Adler, 1956 p.260). He writes:

When the feeling of inferiority is intensified to the degree that the child fears he will never be able to compensate for his weakness, the danger arises that

in his striving for compensation he will be satisfied not with a simple restoration of the balance of power; he will demand an over-compensation, will seek an overbalance of the scales! (1928 p.75)

By way of explanation, throughout early childhood the individuals construct some rules about the world to overcome feelings of *inferiority*. Alfred Adler posits that individuals overcome the feeling of *inferiority* through compensatory mechanisms which are designed to enhance self-esteem (Highland and Dabney, 2009 p.112-113). To fulfill the aforementioned goal, the individuals move exaggeratedly towards their 'exaggerated goal of dominance' while desiring to conquer everyone at any price (Adler, 1928 p.75).

Feeling of *inferiority* is not abnormal rather it can elevate healthy normal striving and can result in man's progress. When the feeling of inadequacy intensifies, the individual moving away from 'useful activity', becomes depressed as the consequence of which he cannot cultivate properly. *Inferiority complex*, henceforth, turns into a way to escape the imposed life difficulties; the individual pretends that he is greater than the others to compensate his inferiority *feeling* (Adler, 1930 p.96). It can be concluded that:

From the previous exposition we conclude that man, seen from the standpoint of nature; is an inferior organism. This feeling of his inferiority and insecurity is constantly present in his consciousness. It acts as an ever present stimulus to the discovery of a better way and a finer technique in adapting himself to nature. (Adler, 1928 p.29)

Feelings of *inferiority* and *superiority* are universal, though, men do not respond in the same way to such feelings. Even under similar situations, individuals' responses would differ significantly (Adler, 1930 p.65).

Superiority complex is a kind of compensation for *inferiority complex*. Children with weaknesses, psychological or physical, develop either inferiority complex or superiority complex: "but the moment an unfavorable situation arises we see these children either breaking down and becoming depressed or developing a superiority complex" (Adler, 1930 p.89). One's social identity, formed through the society in which he lives, is constructed by the motivation to gain *superiority* or to escape *inferiority*. In the followings, the denominators of such feelings, namely masculine protest, life style and social interest, will be theoretically discussed.

3. Denominators of Social Identity

3.1 Masculine Protest

Early in his career, Adler believed that *aggression* is the dynamic power behind all motivations, but he soon became displeased with the term. After rejecting *aggression* as the single motivational force, Adler used the term *masculine protest*, which implied the *will to power* or domination over others. *Masculine Protest* is indeed any tendency to compensate for feelings of *inferiority* or inadequacy by exaggerated overt aggressive behavior (Adler, 1956 p.128).

In fact, the words masculine and feminine are metaphors for being weak and strong (1956 p.45). Adler's classification of power is "inferior =below = feminine versus powerful = above = masculine" (Adler, 1956 p.249). A lot of factors like clumsiness, sickness ugliness and many other reasons can lead to inferiority complex and consequently to *masculine protest* too (ibid p.46, 47). Children regard "strength, greatness, riches, knowledge, victory, coarseness, cruelty, violence and activity" as masculine behavior while they regard the opposite as feminine (Adler, 1925 p.21; 1956 47).

Regarding the aforementioned metaphors, one reason of *inferiority complex* can be social attitudes and discriminatory behaviors towards children. Girls' potentialities are underestimated while boys' are over-valued. Concerning the point, it is stated that "girls grow up always hesitating" and with the belief that only men can have achievements (1930 p.45). Male siblings are more often treated better and can gain better situations, compared to girl children (Adler, 1928 p.126).

For such discriminatory social attitudes, every neurosis woman wishes to transform into a man (1956 p.49) and such tendency reveals itself in various forms. In general, two types of women can be distinguished. The first type is the one who is raised in a masculine milieu (Adler, 1928 p.134). Such females are too energetic, ambitious and striving the way men are. They endeavor to surpass their brothers and the other males in their surroundings. They do mainly male activities while avoiding love and marriage. And if ever they enter romantic relations, they attempt to be the superior and the dominant one. Likewise, they strive to prove that they have "never developed a talent for domesticity" (Alfred Adler, 1928 p.134). In some cases, such women "play the part of a man" which "can lead to Lesbian love" which is, in essence, a sign of *superiority complex* (Adler, 1938 p.425). Such particular woman "is the type that seeks to compensate for the evil of the masculine attitude with a masculine reason". Escaping from her

femininity, she is in fact 'the "Manish" woman (Adler, 1928 .134). When these women become mothers, they “will tyrannize, will occupy themselves with punishment, and thus exercise a tremendous pressure upon children, which these children will, of course, attempt to avoid". They are not well loved mothers. While boys avoid such mothers and such women, girls run the risk of imitating them (ibid p.36).

The second type is a "woman who goes through life with an attitude of resignation, who exhibits an almost unbelievable degree of adjustment, obedience, and humbleness” (Adler, 128 p.35). Such women adjust with new conditions with no complaint and show “high degree of clumsiness and helplessness”. Most of these women “produce nervous symptom” as it helps them attract others’ attention (ibid.). This type of woman does not fight against the *womanly role* rather she hurts herself by the thought of being an *inferior* entity. And surprisingly enough:

She is fully convinced of the inferiority of women, just as she is convinced that man is only called upon to do the worth-while things in life. As a consequence, she approves his privileged position" on the other hand, she shows her weaknesses and demands additional help and support for it. And also for revenge she shifts "her marital responsibilities upon her husband. (Adler, 1928 p.36)

Other types of *masculine protest* address men. In one type men’s guiding fiction is that “I want to be a real man” (Adler, 1956 p.108). To be more exact, when a boy grows older his masculinity becomes his duty. He has to be ambitious; he has to have the desire for power and superiority and measure his masculine traits (Adler,1928 p.127). This becomes the goal of the neurotic and also the outcome for compensating the underlying feeling of *inferiority* which is equated with femininity (1956 p.250).

In brief "the more clearly a girl acquires the tendency to avoid the sexual role which society compels her to assume and the more, in the case of a man, there is a desire to play the privileged role despite all the false logic in such behavior" (Adler, 1928 p.145).

3.2 Social Interest

Social Interest is the natural condition of the human species and the adhesive that binds society together. The natural *inferiority* of individuals necessitates their joining together to form a society. Without protection from parents, a baby would die. Without protection from the

society, our ancestors would have been destroyed by animals. *Social interest*, therefore, is a necessity for eternalizing the human species (Adler, 1956 p.128).

Keeping with his holism, Adler defines *social interest* in the sense of "striving for perfection" which is originally called "community feeling" and cannot work without taking into account one's social environment. Human beings like animals have communal living in the context of social groups. Regarding the title concept, if a child fails to develop *social interest* he might struggle to get his goals in ways which could be destructive for the society.

According to Adler, the relationship between the child and the parents affects the development of *social interest*. Johnson, Smith, and Nelson (2003) found that:

Higher levels of family cohesion and expressiveness and lower levels of conflict were associated with higher levels of social interest in young adults. Social interest is higher in individuals whose families were helpful and supportive, emotionally and behaviorally expressive, and did not experience excessive conflict. (Johnson; Smith; and Nelson, 2003 p.281)

Richardson and Manaster (2003) contend that "the ideal of social interest is intended to inspire a way of life that counters such disconnectedness and helplessness with a sense of wider belonging and purpose" (Richardson and Manaster, 2003 p.124). According to some other critics "Adler emphasized that inadequate development of social interest in children and adolescents lead to psychological difficulties in adulthood" (Guzick, et al., 2004 p.361). Adler himself writes:

Since true happiness is inseparable from the feeling of giving, it is clear that a social person is much closer to happiness than the isolated person striving for superiority. Individual Psychology has very clearly pointed out that everyone who is deeply unhappy, the neurotic and the desolate person stem from among those who were deprived in their younger years of being able to develop the feeling of community, the courage, the optimism, and the self-confidence that comes directly from the sense of belonging. This sense of belonging that cannot be denied anyone, against which there are no arguments, can only be won by being involved, by cooperating, and experiencing, and by being useful to others. Out of this emerges a lasting, genuine feeling of worthiness (Adler, 1956 p.299).

Social Interest is an attitude towards enhancing the happiness of others and is considered a potentiality in almost all individuals. However, it must be developed healthily for proper contribution to a useful *life style*. In essence, *Social Interest* originates from the mother-child relationship during the early months of infancy. Individuals who have survived infancy are raised by mothers in possession of diverse degrees of social interest. (Adler, 1956 p.49)

According to Adler, although marriage and parenthood are tasks for two people, the two parents may affect a child's *social interest* in different ways. The mother's job is to improve a bond that leads to the healthy development of the child's *social interest*. Ideally, she should have a genuine and deep rooted love for her child. This healthy love relationship develops from a true caring for her child, her husband, and other people. If the mother learns to give and receive love from others, she will encounter less problems in healthy development of her child's *social interest*. But if she favors the child over the father, her child may become pampered and spoiled. Conversely, if she favors her husband or society, the child will feel ignored and unloved. (Adler, 1956 p.55-63)

Father is the second important person in the child's social environment. He must present a caring attitude toward his wife as well as other people. According to Adler's standards, a successful father avoids the dual errors of emotional detachment and paternal authoritarianism. The mistakes, depicting two postures, are often found in fathers which prevent the growth and the development of *social interest* in a child. The father's emotional detachment may affect the child's healthy development of *social interest*. A child who experiences paternal separation makes a goal of personal *superiority* rather than developing *social interest*. A child who sees the father as a dictator learns to strive for power and personal *superiority*. Adler believes that the effects of the early social environment are extremely important. The child's relationship with the mother and father is so powerful that it can smother the influence of heredity. Adler believes that after age of 5, the effects of heredity become blurred by the powerful influence of the child's social environment. By that time, environmental forces have changed or shaped nearly every aspect of a child's personality (Adler, 1979 p.33-49).

Social Interest is Adler's yardstick for measuring psychological health and is thus "the sole criterion of human values" (Adler, 1928 p.167). To Adler, social interest is the only gauge to be used in judging the worth of a person. As the barometer of normality, it is the standard to be used in determining the usefulness of one's life. To the degree that people possess social

interest, they are psychologically mature. Immature people lack social interest, are self-centered, and strive for personal power and superiority over others. Healthy individuals are genuinely concerned about people and have a goal of success that encompasses the well-being of all people.

Social Interest is not synonymous with charity. Acts of kindness may or may not be motivated by social interest. A wealthy woman may regularly give large sums of money to the poor and needy, not because she feels oneness with them, but quite to the contrary, because she wishes to sustain separateness from them. The gift implies, “You are inferior, I am superior, and this charity is proof of my superiority.” Adler believed that the worth of all such acts can only be judged against the criterion of social interest.

In sum, people begin life with a basic striving force that is activated by present physical shortages. These organic weaknesses lead to feelings of inferiority. Thus, all people possess feelings of inferiority, and all set a final goal at around age 4 or 5 (Adler, 1928 p.79). However, psychologically unhealthy individuals develop overstated feelings of inferiority and try to compensate by setting a goal of personal superiority. They are prompted by personal gain rather than by social interest, whereas healthy people are prompted by normal feelings of incompleteness and high levels of social interest. They struggle for the goal of success, specified in terms of perfection and completion for everyone. Overstated feelings of inferiority lead to a neurotic life style, whereas normal feelings of in completion result in a healthy life style. Whether a person forms a useless life style or a socially useful one depends on how that person views these certain feelings of inferiority.

3.3 Life Style

Adler’s theory of “Life style” is developed under the influence of Jan Smuts and his theory of “Holism”. Briefly speaking, “Holism” as expressed by Jan Smuts is a personality theory which expresses that we should know people as wholes rather than parts. Adler decided to call his approach to psychology *individual psychology*. Instead of speaking about individual personality, with the structures, characteristics, conflicts, and so on, he preferred to talk about life style which today we call Life style. It means how one lives his life, and how one copes with it. Dr Stein says:

Adler's primary index for mental health is the person's feeling of community and connectedness with all of life. This sense of embeddedness provides the

real key to the individual's genuine feeling of security and happiness. When adequately developed, it leads to an attitude of cooperative interdependency and a desire to contribute. These qualities are essential for building a healthy democracy. Adlerian child guidance and psychotherapy strengthen this feeling of community. (Stein, 2013 p.44)

Life style is also a point of divergence between Freud and Adler. For Freud, the events that have happened in the past, like early childhood stresses, affect what you are in the present. But Adler sees motivation as a matter of moving towards the future, something that the person instructs himself during his or her life rather than being influenced by the past without any new inspiration. Our lives are constructed based on our opinions, goals and desires. Brian Anthony Farrel (1912-1973) considered that:

That lifestyle is "not merely a mechanical reaction" is a second way in which Adler differs dramatically from Freud. For Freud, the things that happened in the past, such as early childhood trauma, determine what you are like in the present. Adler sees motivation as a matter of moving towards the future, rather than being driven, mechanistically, by the past. We are drawn towards our goals, our purposes, and our ideals. This is called teleology. Since the future is not here yet, a teleological approach to motivation takes the necessity out of things. In a traditional mechanistic approach, cause leads to effect: If a & b happen, then x & y must happen. But you don't have to reach your goals or meet your ideals, and they can change along the way (Farrel, 1981 p.23)

Life style includes a person's goal, self-concept, feelings for others, and attitude toward the world. It is the product of the interaction of heredity, environment, and a person's creative power. Adler used a musical analogy to elucidate life style. The separate notes of a composition are meaningless without the entire melody (Adler, 1997 p.57). G. C. Davenport in his book writes:

Adler felt that, in order to understand people, we have to understand them more as unified wholes than as a collection of bits and pieces, and we have to understand them in the context of their environment, both physical and

social. This approach is called holism. Adler decided to relabel his approach as Individual Psychology (Davenport, 1996 p.194)

People with a healthy, socially useful life style express their social interest through action. They actively struggle to solve what Adler regards as the three major problems of life. Adler believed that people with a socially useful life style symbolize the highest form of humanity in the progressive process and are likely to settle the world of the future.

4. Individual Psychology in *A Doll's House*

4.1 Social Interest in *A Doll's House*

Although *Social Interest* is an innate ability, it does not grow on its own habits. *Social Interest* must be nurtured in a healthy family environment where it urges cooperation, mutual respect, trust, support and encourage understanding. Values, attitudes and behavior patterns of family create a space that if it is healthy it will urge children to the rejection of selfish desires in favor of *Social Interest*. (Adler, 1956 p.38-53) Nora as a woman wants to implement these values but she needs to be supported from her husband.

In Adler's view all people in their lives suffer some deficiencies. Feeling inferiority is not abnormal rather it means becoming aware of this fact that we are not wise enough and complete. Feeling inferiority and trying for superiority is also related to sex. Adler's masculine context generally refers to women protest against her feminine role. Of course, this masculine view is seen in the men.

A Doll's House is the story of a woman who increasingly feels smothered by the benignly patronizing attitude of her husband, Torvold. He might seem weak and benign but there is something malign about Torvold's attitudes as well. Nora is able to provide enough money to help Torvold regain his health. But when her methods are revealed, she is scorned by both her husband and society. She needs to find out herself because a person with well-grown Social Interest struggles not for personal superiority but for perfection of all people in an ideal community. Nora wants to be a woman in her place with all abilities and attitudes of relatedness with humanity in general.

Nora describes to Mrs. Linde the circumstances under which she would consider telling Torvald about the secret loan she took in order to save his life. Her claim that she might consider telling him when she gets older and loses her attractiveness is important because it shows that

Nora has a sense of the true nature of her marriage. She recognizes that Torvald's affection is based largely on her appearance, and she knows that when her looks fade, it is likely that Torvald's interest in her will fade as well. Nora borrowed money because of *Social Interest* feeling that is inherent in her personality but she cannot tell her husband. She lacks in *Social Interest*:

MRS. LINDEN. Will you never tell him? NORA. [Thoughtfully, half-smiling.] Yes, some time perhaps- many, many years hence, when I'm- not so pretty. You mustn't laugh at me! Of course I mean when Torvald is not so much in love with me as he is now; when it doesn't amuse him any longer to see me dancing about, and dressing up and acting. Then it might be well to have something in reserve. [Breaking off.] Nonsense! nonsense! (Ibsen, 1879 p.17)

Nora in her father's house as she herself explains was like a doll and in her husband's house too. She struggles to release from this feeling of inferiority to get the feeling of cooperation with others for social advancement rather than for personal gain. Nora commits a crime that comes back to haunt her in the form of her husband's blackmailing employee. By the end, Nora makes an unconventional decision that has come to define Ibsen's play as a revolutionarily psychological critique of a fundamental societal norm along with *Social Interest*'s framework.

Married women were simply expected to have children and run the home and certainly not to work at all. Divorce was fairly easy and inexpensive, but needed the consent of both husband and wife and Torvald makes it clear that he will never agree to divorce which should increase our admiration at Nora's courage in leaving at the end of the play: she will become wholly isolated from society because she has voluntarily left her family.

NORA. Both of us would have to change so that- Oh, Torvald, I no longer believe in miracles. HELMER. But I will believe. Tell me! We must so change that-? NORA. That communion between us shall be a marriage. Good-bye. [She goes out by the hall door. HELMER. [Sinks into a chair by the door with his face in his hands.] NORA! NORA! [He looks round and rises.] Empty. She is gone. (Ibsen, 1879 p.104)

So here Adler's theory "a feeling of oneness with all humankind"(Adler, 1956 p.85) does not apply for Nora. Adler suggests that *Social Interest* and compassion could be the cornerstones for human motivation and the value of all human activity must be seen from the viewpoint of *Social Interest*.

Social Interest is the natural condition of the human species and the adhesive that binds society together. It begins early in development with the family and the group of families that family belongs to and originates in the mother-child relationship then continues in the father-child relationship. (Adler, 1956 p.59-96) In the Nora and Torvald example, Nora was a stay-at-home mom, without an identifiable outside-the-home career in her past. "Helmer. [In his room.] Is that my lark twittering there? Nora. [Busy opening some of her parcels.]Yes, it is. Helmer. Is it the squirrel frisking around? Nora. Yes! Helmer. When did the squirrel get home? Nora. Just this minute." (Ibsen 1879 p.3) She is under the control of her husband.

She, like many women post-divorce, will likely be dependent upon Torvald for her financial sustenance and he will likely pay her alimony or maintenance until such time that she is no longer financially dependent on him. But how long will that take? Nora has few of the skills which seem to be most valued in the workplace currently and she has no prior work history outside of the home. It will be very difficult for her to find employment to enable her to live adequately without Torvald's help.

Helmer. Don't interrupt me. [A little later he opens the door and looks in, pen in hand.] Buying, did you say? What! All that? Has my little spendthrift been making the money fly again? Nora. Why, Torvald, surely we can afford to launch out a little now. It's the first Christmas we haven't had to pinch. Helmer. Come come; we can't afford to squander money. Nora. Oh yes, Torvald, do let us squander a little, now- just the least little bit! You know you'll soon be earning heaps of money. (Ibsen, 1879 p.4)

Furthermore, the money she will receive from him is calculated to support her at a certain minimum lifestyle with little or no money for entertainment, luxury or extraordinary items. (Kadoch, 1997 p. 343-352). After all, her only entertainment during the marriage was to dance for Torvald.

According to Adler *Social Interest* is the "sole criterion of human values" and is the only gauge to be used in judging the worth of a person. (Adler, 1956 p.71)Ibsen's *A Doll's House*

focuses on *Social Interest*, through how women and men are perceived, especially in the context of social values and duties of both men and women as reflected through marriage. In *A Doll's House*, men are seemingly in the dominant position, and they manipulate their power to control women in ideological sphere so that their own identity and social status may be retained and be acknowledged by the society.

4.2 Life Style in *A Doll's House*

Life style is the term Adler uses to refer to the taste of a person's life. It includes a person's goal, self-concept, feelings for others, and attitude toward the world. It is the product of the interaction of heredity, environment, and a person's creative power. (Adler, 1956 p.62) Nora attempts to show the journey of such a woman as she gradually comes to the conclusion that her life and identity are a lie, and her real needs and aspirations go beyond the bounds of her marriage.

Helmer. Why, Nora, what a thing to say! Nora. Yes, it is so, Torvald. While I was at home with father, he used to tell me all his opinions, and I held the same opinions. If I had others I said nothing about them, because he wouldn't have liked it. He used to call me his doll-child, and played with me as I played with my dolls. Then I came to live in your house. (Ibsen, 1879 p.96)

The only way she can realize the full extent of her potential is to abandon her husband and live on her own. There's a part of self that wonders if there could be so much more beyond what someone has and Nora wonders what sacrifices she would have to make in order to find her goal. She believes her life has come to nothing because of her husband and her father, as we see:

Helmer. What an expression to use about our marriage! Nora. [Undisturbed.] I mean I passed from father's hands into yours. You arranged everything according to your taste; and I got the same tastes as you; or I pretended to- I don't know which-both ways, perhaps; sometimes one and sometimes the other. When I look back on it now, I seem to have been living here like a beggar, from hand to mouth. I lived by performing tricks for you, Torvald. But you would have it so. You and father have done me a great wrong. It is your fault that my life has come to nothing. (Ibsen, 1987 p.96)

Nora fights for liberation and equality and she gets self-concept like men and equally as a human being. Nora notoriously demanded that the ending change to get a socially useful life style that symbolizes the highest form of humanity in the progressive process. Nora as a wife and mother leaves her husband and children because she feels her life is a sham. It is the section that Nora thinks how she lives her life and how she copes with it. She has got to the stage that she understands whatever she has done was wrong or right and how can she pass these facts.

Nora, and other similarly situated women, become powerless because they succumb to the negative gender images and allow the imagery to undermine their own voices. It is therefore entirely realistic for Nora and other ex-wives to feel that they have no recourse but to accept the discharge of ex-husbands' indebtedness.

In *A Doll's House*, the past is not only lighted up by the present, the past is actually changed by the present so that it becomes a different thing. Nora's marriage seems to change to eight years prostitution, as she gradually learns the true nature of her relations with Torvald and the true nature of Torvald's feelings for her, "you have never loved me. You just thought it was fun to be in love with me... I've learned now that certain laws are different from what I'd imagined them to be ... But now I intend to learn. I must try to satisfy myself which is right, society or I" (92).

The last act, in which desperate Nora shatters what's left of her marriage, is sheer dynamite. It's like watching a murder taking place and maybe she feels all she had done suddenly has vanished. In her Life Style should see motivation as a matter of moving towards the future and the motivation for her is saving her husband. She understands she and her husband still have problems relating to one other as equal partner. Nora, the wife who travels the difficult path to independence and liberation during the course of the play, not has the position of an independent woman. Nora's gradual realization of her role as a submissive wife portrays the woman that is deprived of her rights. The development of that awareness in Nora is highlighted in the play because her life is constructed based on her opinions, goals and desires. Nora's crisis, arise out of the fact that 100 years ago a woman could not borrow money without the loan being guaranteed by either her husband or her father. Times change, but the play's psychological acuity holds true.

4.3 Masculine Protest in *A Doll's House*

Alfred Adler, the great psychologist, said that some girls start hating their role as women because of how the society devalues the role of a woman. Today it is very common to find jokes

about women, to find men being prepared to do the important tasks and to even find a guy telling his friend to be "a man" when he does something wrong. All of these factors combined in addition to many others force some women to try to act like men or to develop what's called the Masculine protest. (Adler, 2003 p.116-123)

The play is significant for its critical attitude toward 19th century marriage norms. It aroused great controversy at the time (Krutch, 1953 p.9) as it concludes with the protagonist, Nora, leaving her husband and children because she wants to discover herself. Ibsen was inspired by the belief that "a woman cannot be herself in modern society," since it is "an exclusively male society, with laws made by men and with prosecutors and judges who assess feminine conduct from a masculine standpoint."(Ibsen, 2000 p.229) Its ideas can also be seen as having a wider application: Michael Meyer argued that the play's theme is not women's rights, but rather "the need of every individual to find out the kind of person he or she really is and to strive to become that person." Meyer, 2004 p.478)

Nora, as a woman, a wife, or a mother, behaves like a doll. She is under the control of the invisible hands and the pressures of patriarchal society. Ibsen protests against the position of women in a masculine society which is unfair and under the hegemony of male-dominated powers. In a society which run by masculine laws with no emotions, Nora stops her flow of feeling and says "we have never sat down in earnest together to try and get at the bottom of anything" (Ibsen, 1987 p. 66). Due to her reasons she cannot stay in her doll's house any longer. No more emotion and sacrifice work here. She refuses to submit to her husband anymore and wants to face the world on her own.

In fact the process of the struggle of power is not as important as compared with the consequences it has brought to both the male and female characters. Nora's final exit is a good example of Masculine Protest that challenges men's power and brings immense pain to men who are still ignorant of the loss of their power. This action of Nora proves that she can decide conclusively like a man and she female counterparts in hope of achieving success in maintaining their masculine power and obtaining control over their counterparts. However, Torvald's practice of power does not help him to fulfill his perception towards reality, but makes him alienated from it.

As Kaufman summarizes "The assertion of power is also a response to fear and to the wounds we have experienced in the quest for power. Paradoxically, men are wounded by the

very way we have learned to embody and exercise our power” (Kaufman, 2000 p.25). According to the male-dominated society, Nora has done an unthinkable action because she wants to prove herself as an independent human being and is continuing to struggle for what Adler called *Masculine Protest*.

5. Conclusion

The stratum of individual’s identity, social identity, is formed in the context of society and via social relations and reactions. Nora, is imposed by a social identity which is constructed for her through patriarchal relations. Realizing that the kind of life Torvald imagines for her is a sort of death, Nora decides to rebel. Keavy Martin notes that “in Ibsen’s revolutionary plot twist was thereby stripped of its political impact; with the wife returned to her proper sphere, Victorian viewers could go about their lives without fear of social catastrophe” (Martin, 2011 p.187). Gail Finney writes that when Nora closes the door on her husband and children, she opens “the way to the turn-of-the-century women’s movement” (Finney, 1994 p.91). Society condemns Nora’s decision to abandon her duties as wife and mother as she is the one who rebels against her imposed identity constructed through dominant social discourse. Rebelling against the dominant patriarchal discourse, Nora goes to find her own true released identity. At the end, it is *Social Interest* which helps Nora to transform her life. All individuals can rebel against their imposed social identity and develop released un-imposed identity; the identity interpreted as rebellious or dissident in power structures.

The study over social identity can be furthered and enhanced by studying the socially imposed gender identity of Nora as well as Torvald Helmer and Krogstad. The study can also be developed by studying the point that Mrs Linde and Anne Mary share with Nora the socially imposed female identity of self-sacrifice, self-denial and altruism. However, while rebellious dissident identity is never evolved in Anne Mary, it develops in Mrs Linde and climaxes in Nora.

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