

# Okonkw's insecurity

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



There are a lot of factors in a person's life that contribute to their feeling of insecurity. Certain events might cause that, mostly it tends to be childhood events. Men usually try to hide their insecure feelings by making sure they appear strong and masculine while deep down they could be very weak. A person feeling insecure is normal but insecurity taking over a person might result in his downfall. That's what happened to Okonkwo in Things Fall Apart.

Okonkwo's obsession with what others think of him started from an early age, which would drive him to be insecure. Okonkwo's father is the reason for Okonkwo's insecurity. His dad being viewed as a nothing would make Okonkwo want to be viewed as everything his father wasn't. Okonkwo's first priority is to maintain his masculinity in front of people, which would lead him to success at first. But, later on he would be so afraid to look weak, that he breaks a lot of tribal rules just to keep his image intact.

Okonkwo starts breaking the rules by beating his youngest wife Ojiugo during the week of peace because she left the hut without cooking dinner. He later on does another fatal error that would start leading to his fall down, he kills the boy which called him father although the clan's leader and the authorities told him not to. Okonkwo loved Ikemfuna but he still killed him because he resembles any feelings with femininity and for him any sign of femininity is being weak. Feeling weak inside, Okonkwo would do actions to make people feel down.

Insecure people insult others because they think that, by making someone else down; it will make them feel better about themselves. That's exactly what Okonkwo does when he tells Sugo - a man without titles- " This meeting

is for men," who implies that he is not a man, but actually a woman, who is a weak creature in Okonkwo's view. The reason why Okonkwo specifically attacked Sugo by implying that he is a woman is because insecure people attack the things they are most afraid of.

Another reason why he constantly criticizes people is because, deep down, he feels inferior. This particularly shows when his wife, Ekwefi, says " guns that never shot". He immediately translates that as a critique of his masculinity. As a result, he starts beating her, thinking that this will prove his masculinity, while it totally shows the opposite. It actually makes him seem weaker. Okonkwo hides all his emotions under a mask because he associates any form of emotion, such as compassion and love, to being feminine.

Okonkwo tries to hide his emotions from his daughter Ezinma. Although she is his favorite child, he refuses to show her any kind of emotion, supposedly, to maintain his masculinity. Another example of how Okonkwo tries to hide how he feels is when he kills his " son" Ikemefuna. Upon killing him, Okonkwo feels too much pain inside of him that he thinks of himself as a " woman". However, afraid of being viewed as weak, he keeps trying to hide his feelings. Instead, his body responds and starts to weaken without him noticing it.