CITTA

A Sukrut India Publication
To Promote
Psychoanalytic Reflections

Citta, a Sanskrit root word, means consciousness. It refers to not only the cognitive processes and the ego, but also feelings and instinctual tendencies inherited from experiences in life.

Citta is a Sukrut India response to the need to bring together various schools, practices and clinical experiences from across the world which have application to the cultural context of India, and promotes psychoanalytic application and thinking in India. To this end, Citta will be a bi-annual publication on psychoanalytic as well as intersubjective submissions that are a blend of real-life experiences supporting theoretical and conceptual frameworks in psychoanalysis. It will explore commonality as well as diversity with the professional respect that contributors deserve.

The Editorial Team

Ms Priya Venkataraman, a candidate with the International Psychoanalytical Association and a member of the Indian Psychoanalytical Society, will be the Editor for the first four issues of the publication. She will be supported on the Editorial Team by eminent psychoanalysts committed to promoting psychoanalytical thinking from an Indian context. Sukrut India reserves the right to add individuals to the team, depending on the theme of an issue as well as to strengthen the quality of review of submissions.

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Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

I am thrilled to introduce the inaugural issue of Citta, a bi-annual publication aimed at promoting psychoanalytic thinking and fostering dialogue among practitioner-scholars.

The need for such a newsletter cannot be overstated. We live in a world that is constantly changing, and as psychologists and psychoanalysts, it is important to constantly learn from each other and grow as practitioners.

In our first issue of Citta, we explore the turbulent years of adolescence. Ms Senora Sundar writes about how emotions impact the performance of female football players under **Research**. Ms Ruchika Gupta looks at the role of a father in the development of an individual. Ms Lavanya

compares levels of depression, anxiety, and stress among the students of classes 10th and 12th. We also have an engaging and insightful **essay** by Dr. Amrita Narayanan on the effects of patriarchal culture on how adolescent girls experience sexual excitement.

In the **Reflections** section, we have transcribed Mrs. Shukla Bose's energising keynote speech from the IC 23 conference held in February. Ms Kalpana Tanwar explores how adolescents understand death. I have contributed a short essay on why stories have such a hold on us. Lastly, Professor Sudhir Kakar shares his reflections on the papers presented at the IC 23, offering astute interpretations and profound insights that elevate the quality of discussion. To conclude, we have Mr Manab Bose's thought-provoking **Review** of MJ Akbar's latest book.

This issue has been an exciting one to bring forth, and it represents the potential that Citta holds. I invite you to join us on this journey as we seek a deeper understanding of the complexities of the human psyche. Your involvement will help Citta develop and evolve into a strong voice and a valuable resource for all those interested in the field of psychology and psychoanalysis.

Thank you for your support.

Priya Venkataraman
Editor, Citta

Research

Adolescent Women in Football – Reflections on Winning and Losing

By Senora Sundar

Abstract

It is vital for athletes to get in touch with their emotions and feelings as it impacts their individual games and the team's performance as a whole. Athletes experience a wide range of emotions throughout sports activities that go unnoticed. Emotions can significantly impact performance by altering physiological and attentional states in a way that may enhance or harm an athlete's ability. Athletes have an individual zone of optimal performance. Therefore, specific emotions at certain intensities will influence performance (Hanin, 2000). Athletes can considerably improve their athletic performance by using focused emotion management techniques if they are aware of the emotional states that enable them to perform at their peak. However, the process has not been simple for female football players, considering their past struggles with societal restrictions and other standards. This study tries to explore, reflect and comprehend the team's "collective unconscious" and examine individual players' feelings regarding their desire to play, win, and lose games.

Keywords: Winning and Losing, Emotions, Collective Unconscious, Optimal Performance, Psychology

Introduction

Football (soccer) is the most popular female sport in the world with more than 13 million registered female players and more than 3 million female players under the age of 18 years (Fifa). Adolescent athletes especially, may face stress when participating in sports (Tamminen and Holt, 2010). According to cognitive-motivational-relational theory (CMRT; Lazarus, 1991, 1999), stress develops when an athlete perceives that a particular circumstance jeopardizes or has the potential to jeopardize his or her personal goals. It is even noted that early adolescence is a time when female youths transitioning out of sports and physical activity engagement is at its highest level (Hedstrom and Gould, 2004).

An athlete's life is also greatly impacted by sport psychology. It is a field of study that focuses on using psychological knowledge and abilities to address systemic problems in sports environments and organizations, as well as concerns relating to athlete development and ensuring optimal performance and wellbeing by modifying thought processes and behaviour. Emotions are an integral part of sports performance (Hanin, 2012; Robazza, 2006; Uphill & Jones, 2007). The emotions are also a reflection of self-evaluating his/her performance during pre-game, post-game and during the game. Emotions are widely believed to help energize and direct behaviour (Ekman, 1992; Frijda, 1986). Recent work has demonstrated that high-approach emotions differ from low-approach emotions in several different ways, including their neural correlates (Harmon-Jones, Harmon-Jones, Fearn, Sigelman, & Johnson, 2008), their effects on cognition (Gable & Harmon-Jones, 2008), their peripheral physiology (Kaczmarek, Behnke, Kosakowski, et al., 2019; Qin, Lü, Hughes, & Kaczmarek, 2019), and their effects on behaviour (Fawver, Hass, Park, & Janelle, 2014; Mouras, Lelard, Ahmaidi, Godefroy, & Krystkowiak, 2015).

Although promising, it is not clear what drives these effects. Research on sports performance has shown that athletes benefit from high-approach negative emotion (anger) and high-approach positive emotions (happiness, excitement) compared to low-approach negative emotions (i.e., anxiety and sadness; Rathschlag & Memmert, 2013, 2015). Based on those findings, the approach tendency may be the key element of successful performance.

Following Lazarus's recommendation (2000), taking the first step—becoming aware of our emotions and their impact on our performance—opens the door to a more exciting and accomplished life.

As much as this paper explores the emotions of female adolescent football players on their desires to play, feelings when winning and losing, it even sheds light on the team's "collective unconscious". According to Jung, the collective unconscious is a part of our unconscious mind that each of us carries with us when we are born and that links us to the history of human thought and behaviour. The way the collective unconscious operates is outside the realm of our conscious awareness.

The collective unconscious is also a way to feel connected, instead of separated, from others in the world. We might come from different places and viewpoints, but we all long for a mother, feel fear when we think of death, and seek out heroes. And we all dream in archetypes at night. Tapping into our unconscious and getting in touch with those specific emotions and thoughts would highly impact the team and individuals by adding a third eye perspective. To see what was not seen, to notice what was left out and much more.

Review of Literature

The review of literature is grouped under the following categories based on the variables chosen:

1.1 Emotions and Optimal Performance in Sport

1.2 Winning and Losing in Sport

1.3 Collective Unconscious

1.1 Emotions in Sport

The importance of emotions has been amply demonstrated by research in sport psychology over the past 40 years. Due to their impact on particular performance factors (including attention) and psychological well-being, positive emotions are now a legitimate and promising subject of research. After World War II, for many years, researchers in mainstream psychology prioritized negative emotions (such as anxiety) over pleasant emotions (e.g., happiness). The benefits of these feelings in a sporting environment are still not fully understood, especially in terms of their capacity to boost self-efficacy, motivation, focus, problem-solving, and adversity coping.

But why is it so crucial to consider how emotions affect performance? Emotions have been at the crux of our struggle to survive and, more importantly in the modern world, to perform from an evolutionary perspective. To better understand why it is so essential to understand the underlying influence of emotions on performance, the theory of **Cognitive-Motivational-Relational Theory** (CMRT) by Hanin (2000) is referred to. According to Hanin, "One main mechanism whereby performance is affected negatively is the self-statements and ruminations produced by emotional struggles that interfere with attention and concentration, without which a top performance is not possible" (Lazarus, 2000). As a general rule, the interaction of specific emotional content (anxiety, anger, etc.) with specific emotional intensity (high, moderate, or low) will produce specific optimal or dysfunctional effects on athletic performance (Hanin, 2007). The CMRT postulates that the influence of emotion on performance will depend on the match between the action tendencies derived from the core relational theme and the task demands (Lazarus, 2000). This theory proposes that stress management requires a dynamic interaction between three factors we refer to as "the big three of coping".

Stress assessments, emotions, and coping mechanisms make up this group. Individuals evaluate situations in light of their significance for their own objectives, convictions, or values, according to this viewpoint.

The study on, "Examining the big three of coping in adolescent athletes using network analysis" used 276 young athletes aged 12 to 21 who engaged in synchronized swimming, basketball (n = 65; 23.5%), and judo in this study. The sample was made up of 70.1% females. This study had the aim to examine the relationships among the components of the big three of coping using network analysis as an alternative to factorial approach. Appraisals were assessed using the Precompetitive and Appraisal Measure, emotions were assessed using the Sport Emotion Questionnaire and coping strategies were assessed through the Coping Inventory for Competitive Sport.

This study presents relations within the components of the big three of coping. Appraisals showed to be positive relations with anxiety, excitement, and happiness; and negatively related with dejection and anger. Meanwhile, emotions are grouped with different sets of coping strategies: mastery coping strategies correlated with excitement and happiness; internal regulation strategies correlated with anxiety; and goal withdrawal strategies correlated with dejection and anger. The limitation of this study was that it did not delve deep into the emotions that were found from the athletes' responses as well as the team's collective unconscious.

1.1.2 The Individual Zone of Optimal Functioning (IZOF)

Under this variable, the theory aims to forecast the quality of a forthcoming performance in connection to the performer's pre-performance emotional state. It postulates a functional relationship between emotions and optimal performance.

Hanin (2000) offered another different viewpoint, emphasizing the uniqueness of emotion as it pertains to a sports-specific theory called the IZOF, the Individual Zone of Optimal Functioning. According to the **IZOF theory** (Hanin, 2000), emotional condition before a competition will affect how well an athlete performs in it. The description of emotional experiences in sports performance takes a comprehensive approach (e.g., cognitive, bodily-somatic, behavioral), intensity, content, time (e.g., duration, frequency), and context (Hanin, 2007). This theory also presupposes that emotion functionality plays a role in how emotions affect performance, in addition to hedonic tone. A traditional approach to using the IZOF theory is to create unique performance profiles for each athlete using memories of past successes and failures.

According to Hanin (2000), "two constructs related to energizing and organizing aspects of emotion may account for the impact of emotions upon the performance process: energy mobilization (demobilization) and energy utilization (misuse)." As a general rule, the interaction of specific emotional content (anxiety, anger, etc.) with specific emotional intensity (high, moderate, or low) will produce specific optimal or dysfunctional effects on athletic performance (Hanin, 2007).

The study on A Practical Application of the Anxiety-Athletic Performance Relationship: The Zone of Optimal Functioning Hypothesis is referred here to review the study. In this study, a multidimensional framework was used to investigate the zone of optimal functioning theory. This investigation's secondary goal was to measure pre-competition state anxiety over the course of a competitive season. The idea was that athletes who were less anxious and stayed within their cognitive and somatic anxiety ZOFs would perform better than those who were more anxious and stayed outside of them. Participants in this study were 16 members of a NCAA Division I1 women's varsity soccer team. Only athletes from field positions were included in the sample; goalkeepers were not included. Team members ranged between 17 and 19 years of age.

Precompetitive state physical and cognitive anxiety were measured using the Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2 (CSAI-2; Martens, Burton, Vealey, Bump, & Smith, 1990). In order to provide an accurate assessment of soccer play that is not reliant on position, a systematic observation method that breaks down the game into component abilities was developed. This scale is composed of three subscales: cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety, and self-confidence.

The limitation of the study was that the present study was only concerned with cognitive and somatic anxiety.

1.2. Winning and Losing in Sport

Along with the risk of physical harm, athletes also run the risk of social risks in the on-field action and interpersonal interactions that define team sports activities (see e.g. Frey, 1991). In doing so, they run the risk of jeopardizing their sense of personal value and self-worth for the desired achievement. Therefore, performance outcomes might cause modifications in both positive and negative effects on emotions. Early research results have demonstrated that there are disparities between winners' and losers' emotional responses. For instance, squash tournament winners reported significantly higher levels of alertness and lower levels of stress than losers (Cox and Kerr, 1990). Additionally, players said they felt more impulsive and less serious after winning than after losing (Kerr and Van Schaik, 1995). At the conclusion of a series of physical education skill sessions, students played a competitive game of table tennis. Winners reported feeling much happier, prouder, pleased, and thankful than losers, who felt significantly angrier, dejected, inept, and astonished. (McAuley, Russell, and Gross, 1983).

Transactional emotions (TESI) were believed to represent the impact of game outcome, with winning eliciting positive feelings like pride and thankfulness and losing eliciting negative emotions like humiliation and resentment. Players' responses revealed that this was only partially true, with scores on gratitude much higher after winning than after losing. Additionally, it was discovered that the feelings of humiliation, guilt, and contempt were all much higher after losing than after winning games. Individual transactional mood changes from before and after the game showed that winning significantly increased appreciation and virtue while losing significantly decreased virtue and decreased resentment to substantial levels.

As much as a collective group goal is significant in a team sport, the desire and motivation to play as well is equally important. This is associated with the Self-Determination theory as well because one needs to determine their reasons for being motivated and reaching their goal. Self-determination theory suggests that all humans have three basic psychological needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—that underlie growth and development (1980s, Edward L. Deci and Richard Ryan). The concept of autonomy is the idea that one may freely choose their actions and feel in control of them. Feeling forced or commanded to behave is the opposing experience.

1.3. Collective Unconscious

Carl Jung, a psychotherapist, created the phrase "collective unconscious" to describe the unconscious mind that all people share. It is made up of archetypes, which are straightforward depictions of enduring characters and connections. The mother-child relationship and the father-child relationship are two examples of archetypes. According to Jung, every person is born with a storehouse of memories and images known as the collective unconscious. The contents of the collective unconscious are hidden from people. The psyche may, however, throw open a gateway to the collective unconscious during moments of personal crisis. Dreams are a common way for the unconscious pictures to surface, and Jungian psychologists were particularly interested in dream interpretation. Jung thought that many of the symbols included in dreams had a universal, consistent meaning and that they offered a crucial window into the collective unconscious.

The study on "Collective unconscious mental state and female feticide in India", has been used as a reference to better explain this. Every human action typically has an associated individual mental state, however certain actions involving a large group of people can be explained by the collective mental state.

The effort in this paper is also based on circumstantial evidence. Making an intentional suggestion at an unconscious level is challenging, but it is not impossible.

The above studies have been an eye opener as it merges with the theme and the objective of the present study though with few limitations. But these studies, provided interesting perspectives, suggestions and ideas for future research.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the teenage women of the Parikrma Football Club's thoughts and feelings. following victories and defeats.

When the team went through defeat/loss, feelings of disappointment, sadness, frustration, anger, and dissatisfaction. Dissatisfaction, especially when their expectation to win wasn't met, was evident. Some players took it very seriously and intensely. ("It was difficult to take the loss;

I felt angry because I thought I was giving my 100 percent, but when I saw the game, nobody was giving that; sadly, it was very difficult for me, as a captain, you feel responsible for leading the team and it never felt good. I felt like I was giving a hundred percent, I didn't know where we were lacking, so losing sucked a lot; I would end up feeling quite emotionally exhausted. Because, you know, I was so invested in the team and the success of the team when after everything you put in, you lose. It feels very exhausting. Not physical exhaustion but as much as emotional exhaustion you know? "Some of the losses were, like some very silly mistakes and turned out to be a loss. That was even more disappointing; losing was very difficult for me. I felt very very sad because one goal was made by accident." etc).

While other player's saw the losses as another learning experience, even though they felt sad, disappointed, angry and regretful. ("It was difficult to take the loss, but still our team, we didn't give up on the game. When we lost also, we were thinking about how we can play our upcoming games, and we trained for the upcoming game for the loss that happened; if it was a very tough game and we did lose, my thoughts were, we did our best. Maybe we could have done more but we did our best and I'm happy about our performance; There's always that sense of you know, like last time you did this wrong, so you need to correct it and do better. So, I just don't want to give up in such a state").

And after winning games, happiness was the common feeling. ("When I win, I'm just in the air. I can't sense anything like that. It was a very happy moment; Winning a game in a super division match is really tough and hard. It's a different kind of emotion when we win a match in a super division league. We wanted to win all the matches but unfortunately, we couldn't, whichever match we won, it was really, a memorable one; I'm very happy when I play in the rush and then you run, and you score. It's amazing," etc).

As we are also talking about the team's collective unconscious, we could see that feelings of 'guilt'. ("There were some mistakes from my end as well. The last goal was a little off. After conceding a goal, I felt down."), 'jealousy' ("Yeah, I thought of giving my 100 percent, and wanted to play the entire 90 minutes. But then, I didn't get the chance to play."), 'self-pity', and 'regret' (I felt that I should have guided more with regards to the team's performance; when we lost a game, I feel like we could have done much better about it. I just felt like we could have performed better than you know what we had actually played, etc") surfaced. It was also notable that the team used "loses" as an opportunity, a challenge to win games and they did. It helped them improve their performances majorly only after going through losses, as most of the players pointed it out in the interview. ("So, whenever we lost a match we would come back stronger and win the other matches. So, the losing game made it more challenging and it was really helpful; "that just made it better for all of us, like that would just help us work harder for the next game. It was like an advantage and a disadvantage, the emotion thingy; "whenever I lost a match, it was like a kick for me to improve better and better in the next matches").

Based on the responses above, we can point out how all the players were aware of their emotions when they won and lost. ("Mmm, I mean, my feelings, yeah, I knew; Obviously, when you win or lose, emotion plays a main role; "I was very aware. But I was just always feeling my emotions at all times; right after the game, and going to the dressing room, sitting with the entire team, and like their emotions, what they felt after losing, you know that's when I actually got to know. Like the happy or the sad emotion that I could come in touch with. So, not exactly when I was in the field but mostly when I'm on the way home or at home, I realized it"). And how even some of them used it to channelize their next game and performances. ("Like I always use that emotion to want, wanting to do better; Yeah, it had to be that way? Otherwise, I did end up doing that because if after a loss and you're only hanging on to that, then you won't be able to come back from that. So, I had to consciously detach myself from that loss and try focusing on the next step").

An intriguing correlation exists between how players collectively felt before a match and to the match outcome. While most teams initially felt a mixed bag of emotions ranging from confidence to nervousness, it was noticed that when fear was the dominate emotion in a team, the team invariably lost. In these situations, in was the moment when the team conceded to a goal that fear grew leading to more loses. From the data, it was noted that 75% of the time before a match, the team felt nervous, pressured and also anxious. The pressure to win or make it to their collective goal that was to qualify to the IWL (Indian Women's League) was ever-present. This particular lingering feeling of anxiety of whether they will make it or not, whether the team will win the super division league or not was always overpowering and dominant than the rest of their emotions such as feeling confident, happy, excited and so forth. Overall, whenever the feeling of anxiety and pressure became the dominant emotion, the game outcome resulted in at least 62-65% losses.

Whereas, when the team were collectively motivated by their losses, with certain triggering emotions such as anger and disgust on an unconscious level, they performed with more vigour and usually won subsequent matches. But the wins sadly were lesser compared to the losses.

When the players became aware of their emotions and used it to fuel their motivation, they performed better. Therefore, the hypothesis, "there is correlation between emotional awareness amongst the female football players and the outcome", is proved.

When trying to find that the collective unconscious of the team is, we try to analyse and pick what is left "unsaid". Considering each player's personal history, my interaction with the entire team and the qualitative interview questions gave us a path into their collective unconscious as a team. It was found that the collective unconscious of the team revolved around the "expectation to win the league". Though the team's common goal was to win the league or just win most of the matches, they ended up losing more matches in the league than winning the same. The unconscious feeling turned to "shame".

Conclusion

It is well noted that the adolescent football players were aware of their feelings when they won and lost. The reflections have majorly been around the feelings of sadness, disappointment, especially when the team's expectation/goal wasn't satisfied. Despite the losses, the responses showed how some of the players were resilient and put up a tough fight after the losses. Here, the team used loss as a challenge to win their next games. Feeling of defeat has been also a major component in tapping the player's utmost potential as well. Since the team went through more losses, the feeling of sadness and disappointment has been dominant than the feeling of happiness, or excitement. Future studies can be done more on how losses can also improve game performances than winning, because losses teach more than what a win could sometimes.

Senora Sundar is ardent about sports psychology and is zealous about bridging the gap between the ethical concerns of the sports' governing bodies and conserving the integrity of sports. She is also a cognitive trainer who loves taking play sessions for children. You can contact her at senorasundar@gmail.com

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Research

A Systematic Review of Role of a Father in Development of Autonomy and Identity Formation in Adolescence: An Indian Scenario

By Ruchika Gupta

Abstract

A major component of the nature-nurture debate remains the involvement of parents in a child's phases of development. While involvement of both parents is crucial for an overall development, the absence of either can affect the growth as well as the direction of one's life choices, in such a way that the resultant personality and overall functioning gets affected drastically, especially when the dynamics changes from adolescence to adulthood. This paper aims to study the effect of quality of father-child relationship on the being of an individual. Identity and Autonomy are the two determinants of the study. Report presents the findings of a systematic review conducted on a total of 20 research papers, screened central, from the other relevant two decades' worth of accumulated data (2000-2020). The study will help in determining the role of Indian fathers and its importance in the development of an individual.

Key Words: Parenting, Autonomy, Identity, Indian Fathers, Indian Culture

Rationale

Huge data has been accumulated through numerous studies over the past few decades on the importance of parenting and the necessity of preserving the required balance. Although it is undeniable that other factors, such as social groups, education, culture, society, and the media, invariably impact on our development. There is no denying that our parents' foundational values and parenting style have a lasting influence on us, for better or worse, and are frequently the lessons we return to time and time throughout our lives.

In light of the fact that numerous research studies have discounted the significance of fathers in a child's general growth and development, there are those who advocate otherwise. Therefore, the importance of this study is rooted in the fact that, despite being one of the developing nations that is progressing amongst the developed, India still lags behind because of a corrupted and damaged foundational value, owing to a disturbed structure. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to comprehend the extent to which a father's role contributes to an adolescent's development of identity and autonomy, in precepts functional with the Indian scenario.

Objective

Taking into consideration the norms and practices that are prevalent in India with regard to the accepted nomenclature of the role of a father in the lives of the adolescents, a systematic review has been conducted with the aim of examining the role of father in identity formation and development of autonomy in adolescents.

Some Crucial Literature for Reference

The Indian Milieu

India is a land of religious diversity, with 29 states and 7 union territories, each with its own history and cultural features. Approximately 80% of the people follow the Hindu religion; about 3% are closely allied groups, who follow Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism; while about 14% follow Islam and 2.3% follow Christianity, making India quite diverse. We see many common threads within this incredible variety, owing to elements that contribute to horizontal unity, where people living within an area have the same cultural elements due to a common sociocultural history and tradition, despite differences in class, caste, and occupations. Vertical unity exists across the country, with people of a group developing similar mentalities due to similarities in religion, region, caste, and language. As the home of one of the world's oldest civilizations, India's family system, family roles, and parenting practices are also influenced by centuries-old religious texts.

In India, the family is regarded as a sacred institution. It is expected that one will undertake one's dharma (duties) to the family in such a way that the family's honour is preserved in the community and society. Norms of authority deference, personal chastity, and modesty in private and social behaviour are reinforced. Caring for young ones is an everyday task that entails safeguarding, guiding, and meeting their physical needs. Indeed, childcare and upbringing are inextricably linked in daily life, as evidenced by this phrase: 'you bring up your children; we live with ours' (P. N. Kirpal, quoted in Kumar 1993 P.69).

For two primary reasons, there has been a stronger focus on understanding, retaining, and integrating the positive elements of traditional culture. The first step is to establish that the ancient Indian culture's way of life has strengths and it contributes to an individual's well-being in the midst of the stresses of a rapidly changing society. Second, there is a need for protection, to preserve one's own cultural identity and ways of life in a world where the market and media reign supreme, spreading ideas from the west. A recent popular term, 'fusion', is quite appropriate to describe the Indian psyche, where traditional lifestyles are being merged with contemporary, so-called modern lifestyles that are also capitalized by the market. Parenting as overall, and fathering in particular, are formed and circumscribed within this framework, where cohabitation and adaptability are critical.

Adolescence: A Dynamic Phase

The period of adolescence is that phase of life when strong parent-child attachment is essential for the normal development of adolescents, both biological and psychological, but it can also be a period that is disruptive for family socialization (Granic, Dishion, Hollenstein, & Patterson, 2002; Steinberg, 1988).

According to Jessor (1984), early adolescence is a period of rapid change, when adolescents are struggling to deal with issues such as identity development, peer group membership, pubertal development and changing social roles. The process of development is often aided or hampered as a result of source, manner and interpretations an adolescent receives during this phase of development where communication is a very important tool in defining the contents of those learnings.

Communication is a significant facet of parent adolescent attachment. It has been assumed that a child learns to regulate his or her emotions through specific cognitions, which in turn are developed on the basis of healthy parent child interactions (Garnefski, Rieffe, Jellesma, Terwogt, & Kraaij, 2007). Studies on parent adolescent communication reported that parental communication has a strong relationship to the well-being of the adolescent (Greenberg, Siegel, & Leitch, 1983), and the lack of closeness with parents (Kandel & Davies, 1982; Parker, Tupling, & Brown, 1979) or a lower level of parental influence (Chrispin, 1998) correlates with a higher degree of behavioural problems in adolescents.

Development of Autonomy

Emotional autonomy is defined in terms of relationships with others and includes relinquishing dependencies and individuating from parents (Steinberg, 1999).

Steinberg & Silverberg (1986) have described emotional autonomy in relation to parents as increasing individuation from parents (e.g. Perceptions that parents do not know or understand the adolescent), increasing perceptions of parents as people (e.g., recognizing that parents may act differently when not with their children) and decreasing idealization of parent.

Ryan & lynch (1989) have also viewed the development of emotional autonomy as detachment and noted that although detachment could result in some increases in self-reliance, it might also result in loss of valuable connections to others, leading to other problems such as lack of a consolidated identity, lower self-esteem, and problem-behaviour. The well-known classic perspectives on adolescent autonomy of Anna Freud (1958) and Peter Blos (1979) believed that conflict between adolescents and parents is normal and necessary for the development. Emotional autonomy development is thus a paradoxical process that involves the establishment of an autonomous ego functioning and at the same time the maintenance of nurturing family relationships.

Puberty marks the intensification of conflicts between parents and children, and thereby distances the adolescent from the rest of the family. The major quarrels between the adolescents and their parents are over the issues of autonomy (collins & laursen, 2004). Parenting attitudes marked by rigidly enforced rules and regulations, make adjusting difficult for adolescence.

Internalizing behaviour like anxiety, withdrawal/ depression, somatic complaints are problematic. Scores are low where adolescents have the capacity to perceive their parents in roles beyond parenthood. Such children are realizing that their parents have their own lives and other roles to play as well. They have achieved a level of self-governance and maturity where they allow their parents to maintain their own interests, lifestyles etc. Capacity to "perceive parents as people" is a cognitive aspect of emotional autonomy, and seemingly developed understanding about parents' other roles and viewpoints that parents also have their own lives to live seems to be a characteristic of psychosocially mature and healthy adolescents

The emergence of emotional independence in adolescents is like a two-edged sword. When parents support their children's autonomy development consistently, it can result in great outcomes; however, if they don't, it could go wrong and lead to problem conduct or delinquency.

Identity Formation

Adolescence has been considered as a period marked with identity crisis. The adolescent crisis of ego identity versus role confusion, when resolved, enables individuals to integrate all the images about oneself into a personal identity and consolidate various roles one has to play (Erikson, 1968)

Given that most of the literature is from the western culture or areas it is pertinent to study gender differences in identity especially in cultures like India which are traditionally male dominated but where current changes in society and family setup have made women more visible in areas which are initially not open to girls.

Marcia has proposed a practical method for comprehending the antecedents, correlates, and concomitants of identity (1966). The characteristics of investigation and commitment serve as the foundation for the four identity situations of identity attainment, moratorium, foreclosure, and diffusion. Adolescents who have attained identification are individuals who have had a period of inquiry and have made commitments that define their identity (Marcia, 1980). A lack of commitment and exploration is a trait of dispersed people, foreclosed people have absorbed goals, values, and beliefs from parents or other authority figures without much critical thought, and individuals in moratorium status are now engaged in the discovery process. People on identity diffusion appear easy-going and aimless. Identity diffusion is frequently linked to low self-esteem, misbehaviours, and alcohol or drug abuse issues (Adams, Munro, Munro, Doherty-Poirer, & Edwards, 2005; Luyckx, Goossens, Soenens, Beyers, & Vansteenkiste, 2005).

Fathers' attitude characterised by higher acceptance is also an important correlate of identity achievement in boys. On the other hand, high paternal attitude of avoidance is associated with lesser identity achievement in boys and higher foreclosure in girls. The present results suggest an importance of positive paternal attitudes towards the psychosocial development of an adolescent. The theoretical literature (Minuchin, 1974) and empirical findings (Anderson & Fleming, 1986; Zimmermann & Becker-Stoll, 2002) suggests that the family context plays a significant role in the adolescents' ability to develop stable identity. Adolescents need a secure base to explore their selves. In the absence of a warm familial relationship, healthy psychosocial development of adolescents may be a challenging issue.

Tung and Sandhu 2006 in the research done on a sample of 600 boys and 300 girls of age range 13 to 21 in the various schools and colleges of Amritsar city of India concluded in their research that girls are somewhat further along than boys in identity formation across or groups as evident from their performance on higher identity status that is identity achievement and moratorium, and the boys outscore girls on diffusion. This suggest that issues of career, political views, religion and relationships are more important to girls than to boys in the adolescent years. These results are very relevant in the present-day scenario of Indian society as today girls seem to outnumber boys in medical colleges engineering institute universities and also same to be outshining boys in other significant avenues of life.

Autonomy and Identity Formation

Loevinger's (1976) model of ego development suggests an empirically grounded normative developmental sequence that comprises nine levels through which individuals can theoretically pass; pre-social, impulsive, self-protective, conformist, self-aware, conscientious, individualistic, autonomous, and integrated. Levels are, however, also quantitative, in that each successive level is considered to be more sophisticated and adaptive than the previous; thus, the levels describe an increasingly complex view of the interaction between self and society

Gfellner, 1986, they found that level 5, self-aware, served as an important develop mental marker after which progress tended to slow. It suggests that development may stabilise once individuals reach a particular level, rather than a particular age, per se, as suggested by Cohn (1998). The body of literature currently available demonstrates unequivocally how individuation and self-discovery go hand in hand during adolescence (Allison & Sabatelli, 1988; Berzonsky & Kuk, 2000; Fullwinder-Bush & Jacobvitz, 1993; Grotevant, 1987, Marcia, 1989; Noller, 1995; Perosa, Perosa, & Tam, 2002). According to Frank et al. (1990), adolescents who exhibit little autonomy and adhere to parental belief systems are more likely to make identity commitments based on what their parents expect of them.

Individuation is a crucial aspect of adolescent development, according to Smollar and Youniss (1989), because it encourages kids to explore and form an independent identity from their parents. Identity formation, according to Noller (1995) and Grotevant and Cooper (1986), is a result of two concurrent processes: (a) individuation, and (b) connectedness. Teenagers' capacity for independent judgement and decision-making, as defined by Berzonsky et al. (1990), is a sign of individuation. Therefore, Noller (1995) proposed that stressing individuation is the best strategy for families to encourage identity exploration during adolescence (Perosa et al., 2002).

Moore (1987) showed that adolescents' dissociation from their parents is essential to the growth of their ego-identities. According to Frank etal. (1990), adolescents who exhibit little autonomy and adhere to parental belief systems are more likely to make identity commitments based on what their parents expect of them.

Overall, the results highlight the crucial link between teenage autonomy and identity formation. Although some researchers discovered that self-exploration requires adolescents to be emotionally independent of their parents, other researchers claim that the development of adolescent identity is a result of both separateness from and strong connection to familial bonds.

Parenting: Role of a Father

Regardless of differences in family function and structure, the father is still considered as central and irreplaceable figure in his child's life and serves as a protective shield against negative entering forces into the child's life. According to mothers in a study conducted by Tuli and Chaudhary (2010), a father's role is important irrespective of the degree of interaction or challenges within the family (Chaudhary 2013).

Only a few published studies on a father's involvement with young children, and more are currently in the process of being conducted. Any understanding of fatherhood or fathering has resulted from investigation into parenting in various community settings, women and work, childcare support required for women or households, or Indian family structure and gender norms.

In accordance with the ancient texts, a man was expected to take up duties as a householder (Grihastha that includes parenting) around the age of 20-25 years in the Hindu scheme of life (Sanatana Dharma). Prior to this, in the brahmacharya stage of life, a person had to undergo a period of training under a master in order to be well prepared for his adult life. Fulfilling the basic needs of all dependent members was a vital duty that continued in the next stage of life, known as Vanaprastha Ashram, by broadening his horizon of care and promoting the welfare of fellow beings and society. This was followed by the final stage, known as Sanyas Ashram, in which a person was required to reject worldly life. (Dubois 1992; Chaturvedi 2003).

Thus, parenting is imbued with a sense of 'duty' in the Indian context and is consistent with one's dharma. The mothers and fathers are said to be responsible for shaping their children's personalities, and parents are obligated to provide religious education to their children during their childhood. When children reach adulthood, religious samskaras ingrained in them form deep roots, blossom, and bear fruit. It was indicated that 38% of fathers believe it is crucial to improve their children's personal development, which includes character traits such as self-awareness, confidence, independence, responsibility, and social skills, as well as gain the support of others (Sriram and Sandhu 2013).

Various images of a father have been depicted in the Vedas or epics. Some fathers have been portrayed as ideal, such as King Janak, Sita's father and a great philosopher, and King Aswapati, Savitri's father, who instilled the right sanskars and made his daughter capable of defeating the God of death. In contrast, Duryodhana's father, Dhritarashtra, who was visually impaired, has been portrayed negatively as a father because he turned a blind eye to his son's misdeeds, became overambitious, selfish, and did not train the son in the right moral conduct. In India, the male head of the family was known as the Karta Purush, which literally stands for the 'male doer', or the one who is primarily responsible for the well-being of the family, while another connotation refers to duty towards rituals for one's ancestors

According to a traditional patriarchal society, the father is supposed to be a provider, as evidenced by his attitude and job choice. He is to accept full responsibility for raising the child to the finest of his ability, delivering all of basic goods and services while also guiding and aiding him/her to grow and prosper. Most fathers are certainly eager to provide a good life quality and education for their children's development, and they work hard to fulfil their children's hopes and aspirations to the best of their abilities, failing which makes them unhappy (Saraff 2010; Sriram 2003).

The Vedas enumerate certain qualities that are required in a father. He must show affection, be easily accessible to his children in times of need, and be friendly and protective; in turn, the children must listen to and follow their father's orders.

According to Madan (2010), a father must direct his child into education through a ceremony. He will also be accountable for scheduling tutors, books, and learning materials, as well as monitoring the process through contact and communication. Fathers are expected to provide occupational orientation and to propagate a tradition. They were repeatedly alluded to as the 'guardians' of the family. The father possessed the responsibility and authority to pass down cultural norms. (Kapoor & Seymour, 2000).

It was indicated that 38% of fathers believe it is crucial to improve their children's personal development, which includes character traits such as self-awareness, confidence, independence, responsibility, and social skills, as well as gain the support of others (Sriram and Sandhu 2013). Ramu (1989) discovered three decades ago in his study on dual-earner families that 50-70% of fathers were involved in aspects relevant to schooling, education, recreation, and hobbies of their children. Saraff and Srivastava (2010) note, based on data from 350 fathers in urban Mumbai, about three in four fathers spend 21-40% of their time in their child's primary care, according to this study only 3-11% of fathers perform routine childcare tasks on a regular basis, where 35-40% rarely engaged in such tasks, and a quarter never performed them.

Methodology

Eligibility criteria

The Prisma declaration 2020 served as the foundation for the eligibility conditions. With data from the social sciences, health sciences, and behavioural sciences, the search was primarily focused on tracing the necessary facts through history and the present to uncover the function of father in the development of adolescents from an Indian perspective. Perspectives on parenting, adolescence, Indian fathers, the growth of autonomy, and identity formation were the topics that were subjected to apprehension in the search. The time frame for the search was from the year 2000 to January 2023. The papers published before 2000 aren't included in the shortlisted ones, referred for evaluation. Finding the components of autonomy and identity formation in teenagers that are a contribution of father in the child - rearing process and how

these are interconnected, were the central objective of the search. At this point, a total of 20 research publications were included with other 30 being excluded for their ineligibility to prove relevant associations to the Indian scenario.

Information source

For this systematic review, the data was selected from the existing records on google scholar. The last search for the review was conducted on 20th January 2023. A total number of 18,000 records were identified from the online database of google scholar through keywords.

Search strategy

For this extensive search, I developed a search strategy to locate pertinent material. The google scholar database was used as the basis for the search strategy. In addition to "Role of fathers in child rearing in India," "autonomy and identity formation in adolescents," "Fatherhood in India," "Independent Indian adolescents," and "role of fathers in autonomy and identity development in children," the keywords and phrases also included "Fatherhood in India." All searches covered the years 2000 through 2023 and included journal articles, book reviews, study summaries, and internet-published content in Hindi and English.

Selection procedure

By manually selecting them from the recognised items in the present database, the research papers were picked. The study only uses studies that have been published in original research journals, reviews, and online. To ensure the review's quality, every duplication was carefully examined. Research paper abstracts were carefully examined for analysis and article purification to ensure eligibility standards and paper quality. Each study piece was then carefully analysed after that. The following exclusion criteria are used to reduce the number of publications that are available in both Hindi and English. Two publications that were authored in Danish and Spanish were taken out of the study. In addition, fifteen other articles were dropped from the study after duplicate entries were removed since they were unable to consider samples of people who exclusively hailed from India. Therefore, a total of 20 articles after evaluating them against the aforementioned qualifying criteria.
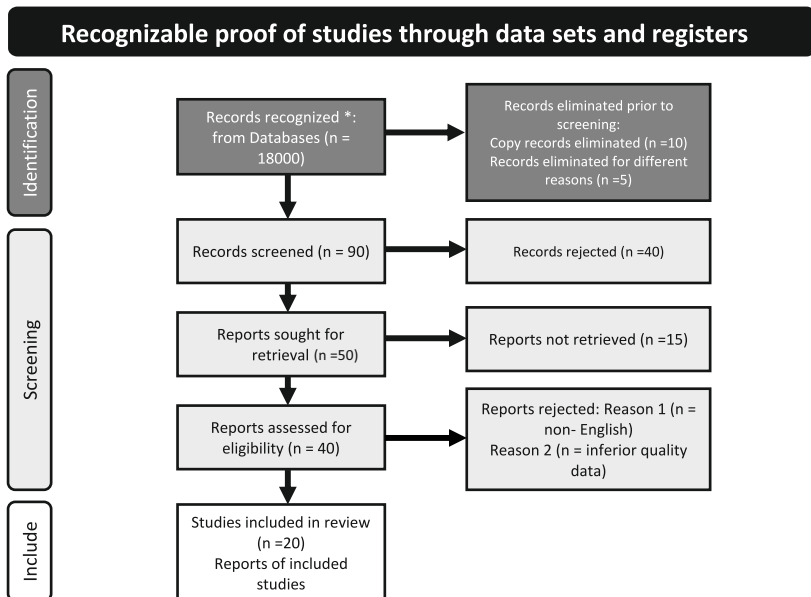
Data collection process

Given that 20 publications were selected for data collection, the following characteristics were extracted:

1. All submissions must be original papers, review papers, books, or journal articles. Case studies and publications that were published earlier were excluded.

2. The essay must only be written in English or Hindi and pertain to psychological, sexual, or behavioural sciences.

3. The papers' publication dates range from 2000 to 2023.

4. Associative components focused on the ideas of the role of fathers in the development of adolescents that were linked to the articles that were retrieved.

Conducting the review

The Prisma 2020 stream chart below depicts how the review was conducted. It includes searches for information bases and registers as it were.

Recognizable proof of studies through data sets and registers

| Identification | Records recognized *: from Databases (n = 18000) | → | Records eliminated prior to screening: Copy records eliminated (n =10) Records eliminated for different reasons (n =5) |

Screening	Records screened (n = 90)	→	Records rejected (n =40)
	Reports sought for retrieval (n =50)	→	Reports not retrieved (n =15)
	Reports assessed for eligibility (n = 40)	→	Reports rejected: Reason 1 (n = non- English) Reason 2 (n = inferior quality data)

| Include | Studies included in review (n =20) Reports of included studies |

Reporting the review

Using database and reference searches, 18000 objects were found. After reviewing the titles and abstracts, 17500 records were removed since they didn't meet the requirements for inclusion. 20 of the 90 papers that were evaluated had data gathered in the form of abstracts.

List of articles opted for systematic review

Author	Title	Year
Tanusree Moitra, Indrani Mukherjee	Parent–Adolescent Communication and Delinquency: A Comparative study in Kolkata, India.	2012
Damanjit Sandhu & Bikramjeet Singh, Suninder Tung & Nidhi Kundra	Adolescent Identity Formation, Psychological Well-being, and Parental Attitudes.	2012
Indu Bala Agarwal, Prakash Chandra Agarwal	Role of parents in the development of social competency among adolescents	2018
Anjula Saraff & Harish C. Srivastava	Envisioning fatherhood: Indian fathers' perceptions of an ideal father	2008
Jaipaul L. Roopnarine and Preeti Suppal	Kakar's psychoanalytic interpretation of Indian childhood: The need to emphasize the father and multiple caregivers in the socialization equation	2000
Aqeel Khan	Predictors of positive psychological strengths & subjective well-being among North Indian adolescents: Role of mentoring and educational encouragement	2013
Kristin D. Neff	Judgments of personal autonomy and interpersonal responsibility in the context of Indian spousal relationships: An examination of young people's reasoning in Mysore, India	2001
Vidhya Thakkar and Neha Sheth	Communication patterns between adolescents & their parents	2014
Shweta Singh and Ajai Pratap Singh	Validation of the Factor Structure of the Parent-Adolescent Relationship Scale in the Indian Context	2021
Shagufa Kapadia and Joan Miller	Parent–Adolescent Relationships in the Context of Interpersonal Disagreements: View from a Collectivist Culture	2005
Shruti Chatterjee Graf	Cross-Cultural Study of Adolescent Identity Formation and Autonomy within the Context of Parent-Adolescent Relationships	2003
Nisha Patel-Amin, Thomas G. Power	Modernity and childrearing in families of Gujarati Indian adolescents	2010
Damanjit Sandhu and Suninder Tung	Role of Emotional Autonomy and Family Environment in Identity Formation of Adolescents	2006
Mila Tuli and Nandita Chaudhary	Elective interdependence: Understanding individual agency and interpersonal relationships in Indian families	2010
Anjula Saraff & Harish C. Srivastava	Pattern and Determinants of Paternal Involvement in Childcare: An Empirical Investigation in a Metropolis of India	2010
Sahithya Br, Shroff M Manohari and Vijaya Raman	Parenting styles and its impact on children – a cross cultural review with a focus on India	2019
Nandita Chaudhary	The father's role in the Indian family: A story that must be told.	2013
Suzanne L. Cross	Indian Family Exception Doctrine: Still Losing Children Despite the Indian Child Welfare Act	2006
Premilla D'cruz and Shalini Bharat	Beyond Joint and Nuclear: The Indian Family Revisited	2001
Saloni Sapru	Parenting and Adolescent Identity: A Study of Indian Families in New Delhi and Geneva	2016

Conclusion

There exists various direction where the results concluded through the systematic review study could lead to. Following are some major factors that are worth looking into taking in view the topic under search:

- Gender roles affects responsibility distribution, irrespective of contemporary lifestyle or societal frame, this fact subsists in and around every community, though strength of distribution of its effect could vary given alterations in facets like parental aspirations, knowledge, and experience

- The role of a father in the personality development is different for a male and a female child. Such that,

    a. Fathers serve as a key role model for sons. The strength of warmth of the relationship between the father and son was significantly connected with the boy's psychological distress and level of life satisfaction, and vice versa.

    b. A son's self-esteem was greatly influenced by his father's ongoing contact, but a daughter's self-esteem was greatly influenced by her father's affection. (Emmanuelle, 2009; Zia, et al, 2015; McCormick & Kennedy, 2000, Gecas & Schwalbe, 1986; Sriram and Sandhu, 2013).

    c. In Indian culture, a father's function as a mentor and guide is more important such that his dominating role helps adolescents engage in self-evaluation, which is different for responses from mothers. (Sriram, 2011; Gryczkowski et al., 2010; Cabrera et al., 2007)

- The fulfilment of the appropriate proportions and standards of Identity commitments and Autonomy is what leads to individualization (Fullwinder-Bush & Jacobvitz, 1993; Grotevant & Cooper, 1985; Josselson, 1980; Cote and Schwartz, 2002; Smollar and Youniss, 1989; Garber and Little, 2001; Allison & Sabatelli, 1988; Grotevant & Cooper, 1986).

- Regardless of gender, adolescents who have more involved and supportive fathers been more likely to engage in identity development and the subsequent discovery of their unique selves (Kenny and Gallagher, 2002; Siegal, 1987).

- Just as both parents are equally accountable for a child's existence, they also share responsibility for their child's wholesome development (Kapadia and Miller, 2005)

Discussion

In the purview of understanding the role of Indian fathers in the development of autonomy and identity formation, we were able to touch many interesting variables. The main findings of this paper constituted of learnings like,

- Responsibility distribution is impacted by gender roles,

- For sons, fathers are a major source of inspiration.

- The degree of psychological anguish and level of life pleasure experienced by the father, as well as the son, were substantially correlated.

- In Indian culture, a father's role as a mentor and a guide is more significant, and because of this, his dominant position encourages adolescents to evaluate themselves.

- The fulfilment of the appropriate proportions and standards of Identity commitments and Autonomy is what leads to individualization. In order to establish a balance between their adolescents' desires and the proper allocation of control and involvement, parents' roles are highly significant.

- Adolescents are more likely to engage in identity development and the eventual discovery of their individual selves if their fathers are more involved and supportive.

Overall, the idea that was developed and supported by the literature's facts and statistics was that both parents share responsibility for their child's healthy development. The absence of either parent during a child's development leaves a large gap that may never be filled, but its impact is typically extremely evident in the child's growth and behaviour patterns throughout their development period, especially during adolescence. Regarding the Indian scenario, research indicates that a father's level of participation and quality of care is directly related to how their own fathers interacted toward them and their family while they were in the formative stages of development. Due to their expected role as the brave male figure of a restrained and saviour figurine, who is also the torch bearer of the extended family members in the absence of another elder male head, men/fathers have been seen providing primarily the instrumental care to the family and a distanced emotional self with their own family (wife and children). This is because most societal and community settings in India follow a collectivistic patriarchal nomenclature. The fundamental finding of this study is that fathers continue to play a crucial role in a child's development, especially during adolescence.

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Research

Depression, Anxiety and Stress Among Adolescents: A Comparative Study Between 15 to 16-year-olds and 17 to 19-year-olds

By Lavanya G R

Abstract

Today's youth undergo immense amounts of pressure and stress trying to meet the expectations of parents, friends, peers and of themselves. The repercussions of such stress go unnoticed or is ignored. Depression, anxiety and stress are the most common issues that adolescents face. Adolescents facing such issues can get help if diagnosed in the early stages.

The aim of the present study was to assess the levels of depression, anxiety and stress amongst adolescents between the ages of 15 to 19 studying in classes 10th and 12th. A comparative study was done on levels of Depression, Anxiety and Stress amongst the students of classes 10th and 12th, appearing for the board exams in State Board.

The Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale - 21 Items (DASS-21) was administered to a non-clinical sample of 120 students in classes 10th and 12th from the State Board of Education. The results analyzed showed a relationship between depression, anxiety and stress. A t-test done between genders showed statistically significant only in anxiety and statistically insignificant in depression and stress. A t-test done between age groups of 10th (15-16 years) and of 12th (17-19 years) showed statistically high significance in depression, anxiety and stress.

Keywords: Depression, Anxiety, Stress, Adolescents, State board of Education

Introduction

According to WHO, health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. In recent times, mental health issues are a part of global discussions along with other major health issues such as diabetes, blood pressure and cardiovascular diseases. The awareness of mental health disorders is increasing day by day. Most of the mental health disorders go unnoticed, especially amongst adolescents. During this period of adolescence, the young minds undergo drastic changes both physically and mentally.

Especially students taking up their 10th and 12th board exams experience a lot of stress and anxiety and over a period of time go into depression. The pressure of these public exams acts as additional stressors. Exposure to an immense amount of stress for a long period of time has adverse effects on not just their mental health but also their physical health like chronic cardiovascular diseases, gastrointestinal issues etc., (Chauhan and Aeri,2020). Hence, it is vital to assess the levels of depression, anxiety and stress factors to prevent health hazards.

Amongst the several standardized psychological assessment tools available to assess depression, anxiety and stress, the 21-item Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS-21; Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995) is a questionnaire that assesses the three factors in three subscales consisting of 7 items in each subscale. It is predominantly used to assess factors on school/college going students. Hence, in this study, DASS 21 was used to assess depression, anxiety, and stress among 15–19 year-old adolescents.

Review of Literature

There are various studies done on the prevalence of depression, anxiety and stress amongst college going students. A study done by Shraddha Chauhan, Bani Tamber Aeri(2020) on Incidence of depression, anxiety, and stress among Indian urban affluent adults showed that the extent of depression, anxiety, and stress that these individuals were experiencing is a usual part of day-to-day life and is not detrimental for their health as it can usually be coped well with.No meaningful correlations were observed with demographic, dietary, lifestyle, anthropometric, and biophysical factors in this population.(Chauhan and Aeri, 2020). A study done by Sarkar, et al. (2017) showed that depression, anxiety, and stress affect a considerable proportion of undergraduate medical students in India and that female students had higher rates of depression and stress as compared to males (Sarkar, et al.,2017). A ten-year longitudinal study of development of depression from preadolescence to young adulthood showed that peak increase in both overall rates of depression and new cases of depression occurred between the ages of 15 and 18. The results of the study suggested that middle-to-late adolescence may be a critical time for studying vulnerability to depression because of the higher depression rates and the greater risk for depression onset and dramatic increase in gender differences in depression during this period (Hankin, B. L., Abramson, L. Y., Moffitt, T. E., Silva, P. A., McGee, R., & Angell, K. E. (1998)). The most common problem in 12 to 18 year old school

going girls was found to be anxiety and depression (Mishra, Amrita; Sharma, A.K. (2001)). According to a study of Depression and anxiety among urban adolescents, levels of depression and anxiety were high and depression was significantly higher among those with co-existing anxiety and female participants. (Jayashree, et al (2018)).

This study primarily focuses on the adolescents taking up the board exams and how it impacts the students' mental health.

Methodology

Sample

This study was conducted on students of class 10 (N=125) and of class 12 (N=115) from two institutions in Malleshwaram, Bengaluru. Overall 102 female students and 138 male students participated in the study. Verbal consent from the students was obtained.

Inclusion criteria: Students of only class 10th and 12th studying in the Karnataka State Board were included.

Exclusion criteria: Students of other classes, different boards of education were excluded.

Tools

The 21-item Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale, the short version of 42 item scale by Lovibond, S.H. & Lovibond, P.F.   (DASS-21; Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995) was used to collect data. Various studies showed that the internal consistency and concurrent validity of the DASS and DASS–21 were in the acceptable to excellent ranges.

Instructions

The students were instructed to read each statement carefully and encircle a number 0, 1, 2 or 3 where,

> 0 - Did not apply to them at all
> 1 - Applied to them on some degree or sometimes
> 2 - Applied to them a considerable degree or a good part of time
> 3 - Applied to them very much or most of the time

which would indicate how each item on the scale applied to them over the past week or two. They were assured of confidentiality and that there were no right or wrong answers. The students were also asked to not spend too much time on any statement and give their honest responses.

Procedure

The DASS-21 questionnaire was administered to the participants as a part of cross-sectional data collection after obtaining permission from the educational institutions where the students were studying and verbal consent from the students. During administration, the students were instructed to rank the statements from 0 to 3 indicating the extent to which each of the statements applied to the past week of their life (least applicable was scored 0, whereas most applicable was scored 3). The final scores were calculated separately for depression, anxiety, and stress by multiplying each score by 2 and then compared with the standard DASS-21 severity ratings, as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: DASS-21 severity ratings for depression, anxiety and stress scores

Severity	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
Normal	0-9	0-7	0-14
Mild	10-13	8-9	15-18
Moderate	14-20	10-14	19-25
Severe	21-27	15-19	26-33
Extremely Severe	28+	20+	34+

Source: Lovibond and Lovibond, 1995

As a part of the cross-sectional data, information pertaining to the demographic factors (age, gender, education) were collected. 240 adolescent students belonging to class 10th and 12th selected for the study. The DASS-21 questionnaire was used for assessing DAS (DASS-21; Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995).

Precautions

Precautions were taken:

i) To make sure that the students have understood the instructions.
ii) To translate the meaning of the statements for students with difficulty in English.
iii) To obtain as honest a response as possible.

Results

Table 2: Correlation between depression, anxiety and stress.

Variable	Mean	SD	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
Depression	8.04	4.77	-	-	-
Anxiety	8.14	4.98	0.67	-	-
Stress	8.56	4.64	0.69	0.69	-

The data was analyzed using the SPSS developed by IBM. The mean in depression amongst the population was found to be 8.04 with a standard deviation of 4.77. The mean and standard deviation in anxiety was found to be 8.14 and 4.98 respectively. A mean of 8.56 and standard deviation of 4.64 was found in stress. Spearman's correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between depression, anxiety and stress showing a statistically significant correlation of .67, .69 and .69 was found between Depression - Anxiety, Depression - Stress and Stress - Anxiety respectively as shown in Table2.

Table 3: t test between Gender (Female and Male)

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Test Statistics
Depression	Female	102	7.89	5.06	t= -.40
	Male	138	8.15	4.93	p= .690
Anxiety	Female	102	8.85	5.29	t= 2.00
	Male	138	7.62	4.29	p= .047
Stress	Female	102	8.94	4.68	t= 1.09
	Male	138	8.28	4.60	p= .278

The mean in depression amongst the female and male was found to be 7.89 and 8.15 (N=102, N=138) with a standard deviation of 5.60 and 4.93 respectively. The mean in anxiety was found to be 8.85 and 7.62 with a standard deviation of 5.29 and 4.29 respectively. A mean of 8.94 and 8.28 with a standard deviation of 4.68 and 4.60 was respectively found in stress. A t-test done between genders (Male and Female) showed statistically significance only in Anxiety (t= 2.00, p =.047) (p value of <0.05) and statistically insignificant in depression (t= .40 , p =.690) and stress (t= 1.09, p = .278) as shown in Table3.

Table 4: t test between 10th (age:15-16) and 12th (age:17-19)

Variable	Age Group	N	Mean	SD	Test Statistics
Depression	10th	125	9.44	5.02	t= 4.74
	12th	115	6.52	4.47	p= .000
Anxiety	10th	125	10.03	4.72	t= 7.01
	12th	115	6.09	3.91	p= .000
Stress	10th	125	10.16	4.52	t= 5.95
	12th	115	6.83	4.13	p= .000

The mean in depression amongst the 10th and 12th students was found to be 9.44 and 6.52 (N=125, N=115) with a standard deviation of 5.06 and 4.93 respectively. The mean in anxiety was found to be 10.03 and 6.09 with a standard deviation of 4.72 and 3.91 respectively. A mean of 10.16 and 6.83 with a standard deviation of 4.52 and 4.13 was respectively found in stress. A t-test done between Age groups of 10th (15-16 years) and of 12th (17-19 years) showed statistically high significance in Depression (t=4.74, p=.000), Anxiety (t=7.01, p=.000) and Stress (t=5.95, p=.000) as shown in Table 4.

Discussion

The objective of the study was to assess the levels of Depression, Anxiety and Stress amongst students of class 10th and 12th who are taking up their public board exam. The correlation between Depression - Anxiety, Depression - Stress and Stress - Anxiety was found to be statistically significant. This shows that the symptoms of one are interrelated to one another, which was similar to the findings of a study by C. K. Teh et al.(2015).

In the present study the prevalence of anxiety between the genders was found to be statistically significant. The cause for this anxiety could be due to the immense pressure to perform exceptionally well in the board exam and to adhere to societal expectations. These young students have to choose a career path with minimal exposure to the real world which could give rise to a lot of uncertainty.

The limitation of this study was that the sample of students were taken from two educational institutions only and hence, the findings of this cannot be generalized.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study suggests that the students of class 10 and 12 experience a considerable amount of Depression, Anxiety and Stress while giving their Board exams leading to psychological distress. With awareness and appropriate guidance from parents/caretakers, teachers and peers the students can attain better psychological well-being.

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Through the Psychoanalytical Lens

Female Sexuality, Culture and the Psychological Tasks of Adolescence

By Amrita Narayanan
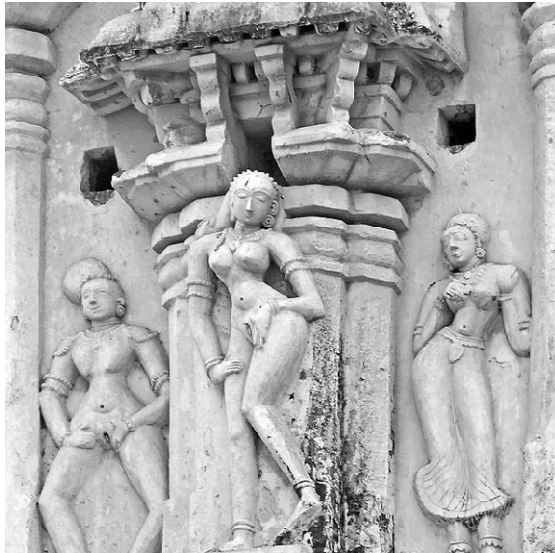
Abstract

Do the culturally universal adolescent tasks vary in the Indian context? This essay revisits the psychological tasks of adolescence—developing autonomous ego function and re-encountering reality with an individual ego—as if culture mattered. Without claiming that there is single paradigm of becoming an adolescent, I argue that patriarchal injunctions on female sexuality in India have resulted in a "normal failure" to provide sufficient ego strength for the sexual excitement of adolescent girls. Based on a clinical case, this essay will describe the consequences of such a systemic normal failure to host girlish excitements, discuss the hopeful possibility that these tasks may be revisited in a delayed adolescence, and present some of the therapeutic nuances of ego reconfiguration in delayed adolescence.

Adolescence is well understood to be one of our most culturally coded experiences (Esman, 1990; Chen, C., & Farruggia, S. P., 2002). While the tasks of adolescence vary in their intensity and timing by culture, what remains universal is the process of emotional disengagement from parental ego support (Blos, 1967) a process which generates a simultaneous chaos and excitement. As the adolescent encounters a new array of novel stimuli congruent with his or her increased opportunities for mobility and autonomy, they have a renewed encounter with external reality (Browning, 2011). This renewed encounter with reality occurs as the adolescent's ego takes over from the parental ego which previously filtered external reality

(Blos,1967; Browning, 2011; Bonowitz, 2021). An adolescent's reassessment of her external world takes place simultaneous to an effort at self-representation which includes goal-directed genital sexuality. The reassessment of the outside world is matched by a new outside self—the adolescent has grown into physical maturity—and a more mature inside self—the adolescent now has the cognitive capacity to imagine various versions of her own future, not simply the outcome suggested by her family.

All adolescents undergo these transformations and challenges within the crucible of the culture they grow up in: their development is in some ways an adaptation to the culture in which they live. In this introduction to my paper, I'd like to discuss two culture specific factors that mediate the culturally universal tasks of developing autonomous ego function and (re)testing reality: the cultural ideal vis-à-vis autonomy, and the cultural treatment of female sexuality.

When it comes to autonomy, for Indians, a final disengagement of the individual from parental ego support is often neither desired nor achieved. Writing from his New Delhi psychoanalytic clinic in 1996, the psychoanalyst Sudhir Kakar explains: 'Individual and group self are birthed simultaneously for Indians, a "We are" simultaneous to an "I am" [1]. Empirical studies on Indian college students also suggest that Indians take into account collective and individual needs simultaneously when making decisions (Sinha et al, 2001). This connection with the parental and community ego, is not an abstract idea. If, as Freud reminds us the ego is a skin ego, dependent upon the physical body to find its mental representation, then skin life is culturally constructed. Urban Indians, we know are breastfeed longer, hand fed rather than spoon fed, regularly massaged and co-sleep with parents or elder relatives for extended periods. In this social atmosphere of skin bonded early life, togetherness with the parents—especially the mother—is valued over independence, perceptibly leaving its imprint upon the ego via the skin.

Thus, it is perhaps worth iterating that the Indian position does not accord a hallowed position to independence and separation. We perhaps would not fully agree with Freud who writing in Family Romances (1919) says: "The separation of the individual as she grows up, from the authority of the parents, is one of the most necessary achievements of her development, yet at the same time one of the most painful". The Indian Family Romance is considerably stickier than the Family Romance of the nuclear family upon which Freud gazed.

I want to examine the effect of this adhesiveness—a strong inter-generational link and the desire for continuity, as much as change—upon the subject of female adolescent sexuality. Worldwide, as the adolescent re-encounters her relationship to external reality the drama of sexuality seems to pervade almost every thought. The re-encounter with external reality invites a reappraisal of the family norms with respect to sexuality which in their turn have unfolded within the crucible of culture. Of course, the problem of women's sexuality is also universal. Worldwide, the widely recognized empirical research of psychologists Roy Baumeister and Jean Twenge (2002), acknowledge that there is 'a pattern of cultural influence by which girls

1 Kakar, S. (1996). The Colours of Violence. In Indian Identity (2007 edition). Penguin Books: New Delhi. p. 361.

and women are induced to avoid feeling sexual desire and to refrain from sexual behavior'.[6] However Baumeister and Twenge do emphasize that countries which have had a sexual revolution seem to exercise less of this suppressive force on women's sexuality. Even when there is access to the internet and its wide-ranging sexual norms, what these researchers found was that smaller locally located bodies tend to have more power over women's sexual norms. What makes the Indian situation unique is that the effect of gossip, reputation and maternal socialization in promoting the dangers of female excitement are intensified by the cultural support for togetherness over independence—the sticky Indian family romance.

Of course, there is a great deal of variability in how the individual family treats the daughter's bodily maturity, but numerous sociological and psychological accounts suggest that the Indian family greets the daughter's puberty with a great deal of anxiety. (Akhtar, 1999; Kakar, 1978; 1990; Kumar, 2014; Narayanan, 2014).   Thus, in India, the task of disengagement from parental ego support in adolescence can be made more complicated by what I call normal failure of ego support for young girls' infantile sexuality.

To explain what I mean by normal failure of ego support for young girls' sexuality, I'd like to draw from the psychoanalytic concept of the auxiliary ego. When a child is young, the parent serves an auxiliary ego function towards the child: the parent serves as the child's ego until such time as the child has its own capacity to manage. When it comes to sexuality, the job of an auxiliary ego is to provide protection and permission for sexual excitement and aggression.   This protection of childhood excitement is nec¬essary for Eros to remain available for when the child becomes an adolescent and adult. At a time when the child's capacity to manage excitement as well as to decide what excitements are permissible is still immature and un¬stable, her future capacity to bear sexual excitement depends on her parents' relationship to her infantile and then to her adolescent excitements.

My own clinical and research experience suggest that until recently, in India, social factors made caregivers uncomfortable or unable to provide a robust auxiliary ego function for girls' sexuality. Indian born British psychoanalyst Masud Khan describes situations of routine failure of auxiliary ego function as "cumulative trauma" in which there is a hyper-remembering of absence where there should have been parental presence. I believe this term—cumulative trauma— is appropriate to describe what happened for several generations of young girls in India when parents were diverted from their protective responsibilities as individuals, by an unconscious internalization of the group norms of the patriarchal com-munity that for centuries has used the control of female sexuality to anchor community anxieties.

The notion that female excitements are dangerous can become instated in the Indian family romance in ways that present an obstacle for the adolescent girls growing into sexual maturity. When parents mirror the patriarchal community and share its view that women's free bodies will be construed as dangerous, external reality is perceived and presented as more fixed and

dangerous than it is; girlish sexual excitement is civilized ahead of schedule, at a stage where it needs nourishment. In this situation, sexual maturity is not understood as a process but as if it were a forbidden gate that is somehow magically opened at marriage. As a consequence of cumulative trauma, adolescent tasks of self-representation can remain incomplete, and the self-confidence of sexual maturity becomes shadowed by an excess of self-doubt.

For girls who experience this, there is a double whammy. The first is a denial of girlchild sexual excitements which was until recently common to many cultures. British psychoanalyst D.W.Winnicott (1966) was perhaps the first to point out that boys receive permission in childhood to displayed their genitals 'with a swagger and a swank' that is denied to their female counterparts. This swagger accorded in childhood gives men a psy¬chological advantage in self- confidence that is denied to women.

The second difficulty, perhaps more particular to India, is that the mothers of the girls have also frequently internalized the patriarchal ideal of women's sexuality, leaving them with no role model upon which to model their sexual agency.

Writing in 1996, Kakar reminds us that women in India generally are praised and idealized "it is only as a female sexual being, that the patriarchal culture's horror and scorn are heaped.[2] Two decades later, Kakar reminds us of this communal ownership of women's bodies in a 2013 op-ed entitled "Is the Indian woman a person?"[3] He writes:

> *My answer is only a qualified yes. In a society that has traditionally defined a person through her relationships rather than her individuality, a woman is certainly a person when she is a mother, a daughter, a sister or a wife. Any woman who does not fit into these mental categories is a female, a 'stree,' an object of enjoyment.*

When there is has been a normal parental failure in the auxiliary ego function, there has been no safe haven for girlish excitements and a swagger of girlish bodies, the substrate upon which the development of adolescent ego function can be built. The parents, acting in their protective function, protect the girl child from the community's perception of sexually agential females by keeping her infantilized instead of discharging their auxiliary ego function of protecting sexual excitement. When the adolescent undergoes her second phase of reality testing brought about by her increased mobility and autonomy, the ego disengagement that accompanies it, may get delayed, to the point at which the adolescent has more physical independence from the parents and a chance to return to the denied excitements of childhood more safely. At this time, the memory of how childhood excitements were treated by care-providers are revisited, as the girl adolescent tries to make sense of this aspect of gender inequality in contact with a wider ambit of external reality.

2 Kakar, S (1996) Intimate Relations. IN Indian Identity (2007 edition) Penguin Books: New Delhi. p.19
3 (2013a, January 9). Is the Indian woman a person? The Times of
  India, 1:2

Summarizing the literature on the process by which adolescents test reality, psychoanalyst Deborah Browning (2011) identifies three modes of reality testing: contemplation, action, and conversation. Contemplation employs various cognitive processes, such as attending, perceiving, remembering, and judging, as well as self-refection. Action tests reality with a variety of actions, both real and virtual and including speech acts that are designed to evoke action in others. Conversation involves social verification and the invocation of an interpersonally shared reality. Each of these processes are active elements in the case I am about to present where there has been a failure of auxiliary ego function in a young woman with strong drives. In this case of a delayed psychological adolescence, my patient is 26 at the time of the consultation but she presents with the questions of reality testing, ego reconfiguration, and self-representation that are expectable for adolescence. She has a heightened confusion and conflict about sexual excitement which includes an active dialogue with her internalized figures from childhood. A strong figure who is not a family member—the psychotherapist—bears witness to the re-enactment of these childhood dramas.

In the psychotherapy room:

Twenty- six- year- old Shibani (b. 1992) is a professional architect who superficially appears extremely confident and independent. She brags frequently about her professional success which is matched by external reality. One of her favorite repeated sentences is: 'I just know that I'm the best of my kind.'

Lying on the couch, during our first meeting, Shibani said that she was very happy with how her life was going but was concerned about her conservative Punjabi family from whom she was separated by hundreds of kilometres. Over the weekend, she said, there had been a scene at the local bar during which her ex- boyfriend had broken a bottle of wine to show his anger at their recent breakup. She told the story in vivid, colourful detail, speaking brightly and with pleasure at the sexual power she felt at this moment. ('I felt like a Queen'). Shortly after, she huddled over with anxiety and tears, describing how terrible she had felt the next few days, unable to work and racked with shame and guilt. With fugitive fear she muttered: 'I come from a traditional family, I don't want them to get the wrong impression about my living away from them.'

As we spoke, I strained to understand what the trigger had been for the arrival of the internalized audience of the traditional Punjabi family that Shibani was from. Her actual family after all would have no way of receiving this news. As she recounted it, Shibani had thor¬oughly enjoyed the dramatic display of possessive love, complete with the jilted Devdas style lover, but her shame began when she recognized the presence of an older woman present at the bar— the set where this scene unfolded— who also worked with her at the architecture firm. This older woman became a fantasized locus of gossip: she would spread word about Shibani's sexual exploits which would somehow find their way back to Shibani's nuclear family. Shibani imagined a loss of affection from this woman who reminded her of the other women in her home community in

Haryana. Shibani was fixated on the gaze of this woman, convinced that the older woman was refusing to meet her eyes after the incident. Browning's processes of contemplation, action, and conversation mapped out for the adolescent's encounter with external reality, Shibani had experienced the action but was stuck in the contemplation and needed a conversation.

The experience of imagined disapproval from a female authority figure provides a vista into the conflict that arises when a much-wanted individual sexual liberation develops alongside gener¬ational and group identifications that idealize denied sexual agency for women. Shibani had begun therapy a year after she moved away from her home town in Delhi during which time she had lived with her parents. Living independently, Shibani was having an adolescent encounter with external reality: the clash between the external reality presented by her parents and the new one she is encountering in the new, more liberal town in Goa that she now lives in, that puts a demand on her still maturing ego.

On another occasion, Shibani told of a pleasurable experience of ca¬sual sex that she had initiated. Following this enjoyable sexual experience with a man, she found herself pursuing and making demands upon him to consider marrying her. Her demands performed an interest in him as a future partner that far outweighed her actual interest in him. Previously, on numerous occasions she had described him as boring, patriarchal, and without much to offer her except financial security which Shibani anyway did not need, since she was financially independent. When the casual sexual encounter ended Shibani was overwhelmed by the process of contemplating her action. She found herself sleepless and anxious and puzzled by feeling this way when she had done exactly what she wanted.

Rather than face this contemplation—and the message of separation from the family that it carried—Shibani enacted her conflict. In the psychotherapy room, I was witness to the intensity of emotion that accompanies an anachronistic regression to the sexual values of a previous generation. Numerous voices made themselves heard in the psychotherapy room and in the counter-transference I too experienced a dramatic intensity of conflicting emotions. When Shibani spoke of her aloneness, shame, and guilt after casual sex, she sounded helpless and I felt deeply moved. But this enactment of an adolescent pushing for separation was combined with another enactment that seemed to carry the memory of a girl child whose excitements were dangerous. Shibani stalked the man she had had sex with calling him late at night and demanding that he introduce her to his family. When she narrated the messages she'd left him on WhatsApp, I was not, I felt, in the presence of the abandoned young woman who began the narrative, but her enraged father or brother who may have once enacted such a form of justice upon the man who had slept with. The tone of her voice was no longer that of a fearful youngster, instead it carried the intense aggression of a community member who wanted restitution for damage. She spoke in a vi¬olent vocal register saying ('He better not treat me like this'), routinely threatening him in her imagination with shame ('He's spoken to his mum about me, I think I'll call her'). As she continued speaking about her real and fantasized attacks upon the

man she slept with, the voice of the young woman who had made a choice to experiment with casual sex was completely drowned out by the aggression of this inner character who inhabited her, who was out to get the man who had outraged her. I must confess that the enraged patriarchal father who inhabited Shibani was hard to empathize with, and I feared his refusal of reality would cause actual harm to the man Shibani was stalking.

For Shibani the revisiting of childhood memory, also a feature of adolescence, forestalls the integration of the new encounter with reality. The revisiting of childhood happens as a repetition rather than as a remembering. Shibani's symptoms—depression, anxiety and sleepless—were the drama of an ego vacillating between the child who had been denied permission for girlish pleasure and excitement and the enraged Punjabi parent who experienced the girlish excitement as a threat to the whole community. Neither had a chance to contemplate the external reality of life in Goa where an upper-middle class twenty-six-year-old professional's sexual forays are not judged very harshly.

To understand the bodily level of Shibani's vacillations between erotic pleasure and tri¬umph and personal despair, I remembered Kakar's notion of the dual naissance of the individual and community bodies. Each time she had sex with a man who was not her husband, I thought, she was identi¬fied with her individual body which enjoyed the experience; soon after, she would identify with her community body, which was both affectively powerful and long lasting, a bodily experience of shame, outrage and threat of excommunication.

In studies on adolescence, infantile memory gets revived in adolescence (Blos, 1967), simultaneous to the reconfiguring of the ego, but in situations like Shibani's, there is a resistance to the reconfiguration of the ego, related to the memory of belonging to a previous generation, who refuses the renewed encounter with reality. The question of what freedom will be allowed to the woman-patient by the woman-therapist also eventually haunted the psychotherapy room in my work with Shibani. The disapproving older woman would continue to make an appearance, and eventually Shibani would wonder whether I was that disapproving older woman.

Literary reflections:

While much of what I have narrated is particular to Shibani's case, the psychological effort required to metabolize differences in sexual freedom, in cross-generational relationships is not particular to Shibani. I would like to briefly give two examples of how the shape of an adolescent girl's sexuality is impacted by the sexual fate of her mother's generation.

Tagore— whose upper- class and upper-caste women subjects are famous for their thwarted efforts to script an individual life— beautifully illustrates the nature of the psychological tasks for women of both generations in his 1919 short story, 'The In- Between Woman'.[1]

In the story, a young woman Shailabala enters the home of a married couple Nibaran, a clerk at MacMoran company and his wife Harasundari, a homemaker. Harasundari, the first wife,

invites Shailabala into their mar¬riage as a gift of gratitude to Nibaran: she is past her period of fertility and she wants Nibaran to have children. In his later years Nibaran has developed a refinement of attention he lacked in his younger years: he dotes on Shailabala. Observing her husband's romantic treatment of Shailabla, Harasundari becomes envious of the younger woman's sexual power over her husband particularly as Shailabala is legatee to erotic wealth that Harasundari never had. Harasundari meets her own envy with judgement: the older woman exhausts herself with efforts to spoil the young woman she envies. The younger woman is narcissistically hungry and laps up this treatment, without care for the older woman's sexual loss. At this moment in the tale, Tagore writes:

> *Women have both queenly and slavish aspects to their nature.*
> *When the roles are divided so that one woman becomes a queen*
> *while the other remains a slave it destroys the pride of the female slave*
> *yet cannot sustain the happiness of the queen.[2]*

The story closes with Shailabala's death, the younger woman's passing re-announcing the death of Eros between the older couple. Readers are left with a picture of interdependence between older and younger women: an excess of narcissism in the younger woman's sexuality and an excess of self- sacrifice in the elder woman's sexuality, are untenable to the long-term sustainability of the heterosexual couple.

Another version of how the rift between the generations plays out is the verbally violent separation drama in the popular Tamil short story "Me" by Vidya Subramaniam (b. 1957). In this short story, the daughter cruelly slices away the maternal defences towards external reality and exposes the mother's lack of erotic opportunities and envy. Subramaniam's daughter character—is she in her late twenties or even older? —financially supports her mother but is chaffing at the mother's demand that she remains erotically abstinent. In the concluding paragraphs of the story the daughter fights her mother's erotic bitterness to affirm an erotic life for herself:

> *"You chased away every man who wanted to marry me. For the sake of your future,*
> *you made my future a bed of nails. Why should you be able to eat three meals a day,*
> *have three new saris a year while I remain a frozen virgin?[4]" and elsewhere in the same argument,*
> *"If you want to stay with me then stop interfering in my sex life.*
> *Bless me, as you should that I have finally found some pleasure."[5]*

Subramaniam's short story "Me" was published in the 1980's, but it points to a conflict that has been long experienced in the mother-daughter dyad. At the heart of this conflict is a pressing social question—how do women who have different levels of opportunity and levels of access to sexual freedom manage to live together in the crucible of anxiety, belonging, protectiveness, and envy, that is the consequence of a longstanding allegiance to patriarchy?

4 Subramanium, V (1987). Me. IN The Blaft Anthology of Tamil Pulp Fiction. Khanna, R(Ed) (2008) Blaft Publications, Chennai. P. 116-119
5 Subramanium, V (1987). Me. IN The Blaft Anthology of Tamil Pulp Fiction. Khanna, R(Ed) (2008) Blaft Publications, Chennai. P. 116-119
5 https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/books/and-still-i-rise-why-manjula-padmanabhan-never-came-to-terms-being-the-second-sex/

The psychological solution to this conflict that seems most favoured in the Indian context is the binding of self-representations, delaying the daughter's experience of external reality as she coheres her ego with her mother's. Aside from the occasional literary work, the rift between the generations is rarely expressed as directly between the mother and daughter: the numerous Saas-Bahu dramas on television for example, relocate this rift into another safer same-sex relationship: the mother and the daughter-in-law. While the experience of being policed by the mother-in-law, is a projection of unmetabolized material from adolescence, it is not just a projection. Much of a young woman's grief and rage about her sexual oppression remains latent until it can be enacted later in life via the mother-in-law.

Back to the clinic:

Imagined envies and anxieties relating to an older female figure appear to be a regular feature of the clinical experience of young women experiencing the tasks of adolescence—a reconfiguration of the ego and a reassessment of self-representation and of external reality. How does the therapist in a different generation from the patient cope with this?

Numerous sources on the psychotherapy of adolescence stage dramas emphasizes the therapist's counter-transference process as being critical to manage (Abate, 1964; Sarles, 1994; Showalter, 1985). The process of contemplation, action, and conversation contains a few different non-linear stages: the patients grieving in which denied excitements are mourned, swaggering in which the therapist provides a space for childish triumphalism that was missed in a previous stage, enactments in which internalized objects are remembered, and integration in which a new self-representation is slowly formed and the new encounter with reality completed.

To speak about how this affects the therapist, let me return to the therapy room. It was yet another occasion when Shibani had enjoyed casual sex but afterwards felt that she had to control the man's opinion of her and rescue her reputation. On this occasion, Shibani was extremely agitated, restless and sleepless. She had had difficulty working and was obsessed with the idea that man had taken her at her word that she wanted casual sex. The sentence she repeated, over and over was 'he can't think that I'm that type of girl'.

"What kind of girl" I press her. Eventually says 'the kind who would have a one-night stand'. Then she realizes the painful hilarity of this, and we share a moment of truthful laughter at the irony of the situation: she has to prove she is not the type of girl she clearly is.

What did the laughter mean to each of us? On one hand it provided dramatic relief, breaking the intensity of Shibani's agitated focus. It allowed her the triumph of her 'action stage', and I would like to think it furthered safety, and the symbolic possibilities of a sex positive culture as she contemplated her actions in her inner world. Yet, as playwright Manjula Padmanabhan reminds us, a laugh always also contains a scream, something like the Freudian laughter of unease, and in this case, perhaps a manic hope of reclaiming it all. A psychotherapist who works with women

Ire-experiencing the self-representational crisis of adolescence, hovers with difficulty in the Kleinian depressive position. Even when an individual patient experiences pleasure and relief—as Shibani did in that laughter—the therapist bears the hollow end of the laugh, which contains the hard-to-metabolize self-loathing brought about by a refused place for female sexual agency in the patriarchy.

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Reflections

Mrs Bose

At Sukrut's 7th International Conference (IC 23) held between the 16th and the 17th of February 2023, **Mrs. Shukla Bose,** *Founder & CEO, Parikrma Humanity Foundation gave the Keynote speech. Here is the transcription of her talk in full. We hope the transcription captures the depth of wisdom, humour and sensitivity Ms Bose brought to the conference with her insightful presentation.*

Good morning everyone and thank you so much Gracy, it's nice to know that at least someone is reading my blogs. I need to actually establish my relevance here because, in the midst of eminent psychologists and Professor Kakar, I'm really honoured that you are actually listening to what I am saying. So, what is a non-psychologist doing here? The way I see the connection is sometimes, psychologists are really good at analysis, really good at theorizing and it's left to people like us to actually put some of their theories into practice. And therefore, it is really good to actually hear what some of the challenges at the grassroot level are. I have at least dealt with 1500 adolescents over the last years. What has been my experience dealing with them and what have been some of the blocks and what have been some of the challenges? So, I'm going to talk to you about what do adolescents want. And actually, what do we think we need?

So, what do adolescents want versus what they need?

The real conflict in the adolescent world is the growing gap between what teenagers want to do versus what the adults think they need to do. There is a 'Conflict of Mobility versus Stationary'; conflict between mobility that the teenager wants, with the stationary steadfastness that adults wish the teenagers had.

There are 1.3 billion adolescents in the world today, more than ever before. This makes up 16 per cent of the world's population. Defined by the United Nations as those between the ages of 10 and 19, adolescents experience a transition period between childhood and adulthood and with it, significant growth and development. Their vulnerabilities and needs are distinctly different from those of younger children and therefore often remain unaddressed.

Children; they have bad manners, contempt for authority;
they show disrespect for elders and love chatter in place of exercise.
They no longer rise when elders enter the room, they contradict their parents and
tyrannize their teachers. Children are now tyrants." – Socrates

You may think this is something often that teachers say, isn't this something you have often have parents say? But this is what was said nearly 2800 years ago by Socrates. So, people of all ages look at adolescents as what Erik Erikson has said, "the years of storm and stress".

"Youth," according to Aristotle, "are enslaved to their desires. Each day they seek to gratify what their appetite for pleasure dictates." Now, this is, as someone who actually deals with adolescents on a daily basis and admires many adolescents, pretty demeaning. But I won't use demeaning in that sense, what I'm saying is, "adolescents are mostly misunderstood."

What are the basic needs of adolescents? It is the need for:

- Belonging
- Power
- Enjoyment
- Independence.

Conflict happens when:

- Adolescent experience anxiety caused by separation/individuation fears and parents too feel anxious that they are losing control over their child.

- Adolescents fear criticism from other parents. Many times, parents make decisions on the basis of what others say. Fear their child will abandon their values and instead emulate the antihero. They feel that they will lose their positioning in their children's lives.

- Conflict also happens when, even small tensions may become too much to bear when both the adolescent and parent and teacher cannot harness their own anxieties, and then both may rely on more primitive defences that undermine efforts toward constructive negotiation. Which is the only way to create balance and reduce the gap. The adult's familiar psychological defense system may be challenged in these circumstances.

- Parental or teacher's regression to authoritarianism or denial manifesting as avoidance or neglect may emerge, causing the adult to overlook the underlying needs of the separating adolescent.

All that adolescents want are is to

- TO STAND OUT—to develop an identity and pursue autonomy.

- TO FIT IN—to find comfortable affiliations and gain acceptance from peers.

- TO MEASURE UP—to develop competence and find ways to achieve, and be successful

- TO TAKE HOLD—to make commitments to particular goals, activities, and beliefs they believe are important.

They also want to live dangerously for the excitement. We have experienced it in Parikrma in the last 20 years that teenager girls don't like the good boys as much as they like the bad boys, the anti-heroes.

- Antiheroes may particularly appeal to adolescents who, sensitive to their own flaws, see the antihero as similarly flawed and shunned by adults. These adolescents also hope to find the ability to flourish without depending on adults.

Why do girls get attracted to bad boys?

- Girls look for power and an increase of self-worth that comes from redeeming the bad boys. They are the nurturing mothers who will transform the bad boys.

- The eternal conflict between, I mean I'm a student of literature and I always find in every situation like there's so many similarities with the "Far from the Madding Crowd". Where there's this Gabriel Oak, the solid dependable steady guy that is faithful, loyal and following the protagonist but the protagonist takes Gabriel Oak for granted and gets attracted to Sergeant Troy. Someone from the army with a flashy uniform with great charm and charisma. But absolutely zero dependability.

Wanting to live dangerously for the excitement

- Leads to addiction of drugs and alcohol

- According to data from the 2015 Monitoring the Future (MTF) study, an annual survey of U.S. youth, three-fourths of 12th graders, more than two-thirds of 10th graders, and about two in every five 8th graders have consumed alcohol. And when youth drink they tend to drink intensively. The scene is no different in India.

I know I have talked with principals of high-end schools and I find one of the complaints and grievances they have is that they think that children are slowly getting addicted to alcohol. In Parikrma too, where our students are exposed to alcohol very early in their age because 98% of their fathers are alcoholics. The taboo about alcohol is no longer there. So, we have two

scenarios. Some children who are doing pretty well in life and have graduated from Parikrma have chosen potential careers, have told me very clearly that they will never take alcohol because they have seen what the downsides of alcohol are. It not only ruins the individual but the entire family. But on the other side, we have boys who have said, "taking alcohol is no big deal in life, I have seen my father, my elder brother and my uncles taking it, so why not me?" And then they slowly get addicted to alcohol.

We need to also understand.

- All of us need to feel safe and protected, to have our physical requirements for food, clothing, warmth, healthcare met (Maslow's needs). Teenagers want more.

- Teenagers may defy your attempts to keep them safe, by staying out late, running around with 'bad company', engaging in behaviour that you may feel is risky.

- Teenagers wanting to live dangerously for the excitement by pushing boundaries. They test, and keep testing. They test the adults, teachers, parents and they keep testing themselves.

Now I have seen teachers very fallaciously trying to reach or get closer to children by allowing their boundaries to be pushed. I have seen teachers who casually make references, "Oh why are you here without your girlfriend or when are you planning to run away with your boy?" While teenagers like to reserve the right to push the boundaries of the adults, they do not like their privacies to be invaded. That where conflict happens. So, it's very important to be friendly, not familiar. The fact that they become contrary, however, doesn't mean they don't want you to continue caring and continue to act on their behalf. What teenagers want as much as when they were little is our love, our care, our respect and our attention. They want to be noticed by us. Too often, because teenagers are moody and withdraw into themselves, we respond by ignoring them. Ignoring bad behaviour and not rising to it is one thing; ignoring the person who is annoying us is another. We actually have to bifurcate the behaviour from the person and that becomes more important in teenagers. And it can become a pattern, where they mope so we ignore them, so they mope even more, convinced we don't care.

We have seen situations in the classroom where the most disruptive children are the ones who really need us the most. It's easy to alienate them and throw them out of our classrooms; our schools giving them a TC. It's very, very common and it keeps happening. But it happens to those kids who really need to stay in the system of school even more. We need to understand, that:

- Teenagers need both stimulation and activity, and rest and relaxation

- Teenagers often need support in keeping active so that it becomes a part of their adult lifestyle, and they stay healthy and fit. I really worry that sports is not given that much

importance in many of the schools because physical exercises are absolutely important for teenagers. They need to exhaust their energies, they need to feel good about being healthy and fit.

- They also need, "Choices and responsibility". Teenagers need us to give them choices and responsibility appropriate to their age. We must not think that they will not take responsibility. Many times we assume they want and don't give them the responsibility.

- Acknowledging and respecting their decisions

Adolescence is the time for choices. It's when they have to decide what courses they will study, what path they will take at least for their early life. But they also have so many other decisions to make. Acknowledging and respecting their choices doesn't mean we have to sit back and not give them some guidance. Acknowledging and respecting their choice means saying that we can see why they feel it is important, explaining our thoughts on the matter and inviting them to tell us more in a mutually respectful way. I constantly tell my teachers where, don't be transactional with the children. Don't instruct them about what to do and why they have done it, what they should not have done. We should have conversations with our children. And children respond to conversations warmly if they feel safe and they can trust the adult.

Let's get into Erik Erikson's stage of 'Identity versus Role Confusion' which is stage 5. So, I have referred to Erikson's storm and stress years where he says there's a period of Identity versus Identity Confusion. That is the main thing that actually propels teenagers to be more creative, to explore but also makes them rebellious. I think what is, I was reading as an educator, hundred years ago William James, psychologist, devoted an entire chapter on talks to teachers. How important the teachers are in keeping the balance in a teenager's life.

[Video shown]: *"Hi, I'm Amrutheshwari and I'm a teenager. Teenage is a fundamental stage of life that each human being passes through. Even I want my teenage to be filled with excitement and glee. For a start, happiness is freedom, freedom to do whatever that keeps me excited, gives me peace of mind and keeps my soul happy. For many of us, teenage is a golden phase. I don't want to be a burden with responsibilities and pressure, or career choice etc. Instead I want to spend my quality time being with my peers and also my passion. When my parents and my teachers always want me to take up responsibilities, stay focused, study hard, get good grades and they always want me to be perfect in every single thing that I want to do. Well, I don't want to be perfect, it doesn't matter if I commit mistakes, I want to learn from my mistakes and go ahead in life. When I talk about my dreams, my teachers and parents always want me to go towards the safe path that they have been following. I mean, they always want me to become a doctor or an engineer. I don't want to be like that. I want to try new career options and explore new things. I'm a girl who wants to grab all opportunities and fly in the sky. Thank you."*

Here, you got a glimpse of one of my kids wanting to fly high and says she doesn't want to be perfect, she just wants to be herself. She doesn't want to be modelled as per her parents' desire but wants to explore herself.

According to Erik Erikson, the psycho-social developmental goal of adolescence is to develop an identity. Personal worth and values create the foundation for a healthy identity, which leads to healthy adult relationships. Typically, adolescents experience the developmental stage of Identity vs. Role Confusion between 12 and 18.

- Difficulties with commitment: unsure of their values and boundaries, vulnerable to peer pressure, problems starting or stopping relationships, jobs, roles, overdependence or isolation from family/friends, unsure of what direction in life to take.

- Fragile sense of self: looks outside for definition of self (i.e., self is defined by others, success, failure, attention), constant need for attention or over recognition, dependent on group for identity.

- Lack of confidence, negative self-image, unwillingness to express thoughts, ideas or accept others that differ with them, feelings of worthlessness, or being unlovable. Come to think of it, why do they have negative self-image? I think adults around them play a very significant role that gives them a negative self-image. When they are called useless, compared with older siblings or neighbours, that itself fosters a negative self-image.

- Sex and relationship issues: may be preoccupied with sex, appearance, body, materialism, confusion around sex, love, and nurturing, relational or sexual avoidance.

- Role confusion can occur within families when boundaries are not transparent or are overly rigid. Teens need a structure that provides safety and support and reflects a healthy value system. This structure offers limits and boundaries, helps define what behaviors are appropriate or effective, and balances the needs of self and others, and accepts accountability and responsibility.

- Teens also need the freedom to consider different values, express likes and dislikes, problem solve for skill development, experience different roles, begin and end relationships, adopt healthy sexuality, and develop and practice personal boundaries. Just like Amrutheshwari who wants to fly high and wants to consider different options and values. Unfortunately, social media can exacerbate role confusion by confusing fantasy and reality and the development of online identities vs. those in the real world.

One of the things that struck me by Erikson, was the development of fidelity as "establishing an ideological commitment to one's beliefs and values" (Erikson 1968) is a pathway to healthy identity development. Fidelity should be a focus. Developing healthy relationships within a young person's family supports developmental milestone mastery and values. The base of healthy familial relationships provides a framework and guidance in managing social relationships with peers. Fidelity is paramount to master in adolescence before navigating developmental tasks of young adulthood, intimacy vs. isolation. We have to cultivate fidelity and help our children master it before navigating developmental tasks of young adulthood of intimacy versus isolation.

The positive traits of a teenager, what young people need to succeed:

- **Resilience** - has been becoming one of the main factors in education, and it's just a couple of years we've been working with resilience. But earlier success was grades, marks and ability to go to a good university and get a good job. But resilience is actually important because we need to train our children and teachers to bounce back. How effective are our teens at bouncing back?

- **Confidence.** One of the most important traits for success throughout life is confidence, but this is something many teens struggle with.

- **Adaptability**

- **Proactivity** - It's very important as I keep speaking to many of my alumni and they say what has really helped them stand out in the crowd that they move around is their ability to be proactive in an environment. To share opinions, to be able to influence others.

- **Perception** - I think it's so important for educational institutions to change and tweak the perception that children have about society, relationships, parents, peers because many times, they have conflicts about what they hear from old people, and what they see with the young ones. And how can we do that, we can do that by sitting, discussing and getting our children read more. To even talk more, expand their horizon and change their perception. We need to understand that adolescents have a self-centred attitude. They believe in survival and work towards their own self-gratification but that's not because they are terrible. But because of their developing brain structure.

Circumstances are often difficult for teenagers to see from other people's perspectives due to their still-developing brain structure. In this way, adolescents can become self-centred and focus on their own needs regardless of how those needs affect others. Often adults respond to that by being generous in our attitude towards them. And making them understand that by being self-centred, they are actually also impacting the others around them.

We need to understand that adolescence is a time of the search for identity. Adolescence is the time when teenagers begin to explore and assert their personal identities. During this period of development, adolescents engage with peers and largely in society in the process of finding out where they fit. During adolescence, relationships with peers begin to take precedence over relationships with family. However, while family interactions are still important and necessary for adolescent development, adolescents often place more emphasis on their friends' perceptions and values. How do we respond to that? How should we respond to that? Not taking a position of strength and power and not stopping nagging and micromanaging our teens won't help them to develop intrinsic motivation. It is not because of outside pressures but because of what they really want to do. It might help our teens to pass an exam, but what will happen when they're at university, and we are not there to guide them? The secret to motivating teens is to fuel inner motivation — to support and help in the development of self-discipline. You know in education, there is this self-determination theory which leads to self-regulation. And how can self-regulation be achieved? Goal setting, through strategy use and parents and teachers must spend time and actually help our teenagers to strategize their future, manage their time, monitor themselves, evaluate themselves and then regulate themselves.

We need to understand the focus on the process more than the outcome. Getting good grades and performing well in extracurricular is important, but there's more to life than that. I don't want teachers and parents to suddenly say, 'Oh, be very casual about sitting for exams, it's not that important,' but we also need to understand there is more to life than that.

What truly matters are the skills our teen learns through the journey — traits like responsibility, perseverance, resilience, and hard work. So, we need to encourage our teenagers to focus on the process of becoming a more motivated and disciplined student. We must respect our teenager's autonomy.

Our teenagers are learning to find their way in the world — discovering their personality, passions, and individuality. While our teenagers might not be adults quite yet, the desire for increased autonomy and independence are two natural elements of growing up slowly. One easy way to respect our teenagers' autonomy is to set rules and consequences together. We must promote empathetic communication, talk to our teens and listen to what they have to say, even if it's not exactly what we want to hear. Anyone who works with me in Parikrma knows how important communication is in our system and how we need to communicate with our children. We need to encourage open dialogue and exchange long-winded lectures for supportive, empathetic communication. If our teen comes to us with a problem, we must not judge them and avoid the urge to interrupt him or her by giving unsolicited advice. We can still give guidance and coaching but listen more to what the teenager says and speak less. In other words, we must practice active listening as we give our teens our full attention. Listening is a skill that not only psychologists must have but all adults must have. Whether they are teachers or parents, listening is one of the saving graces that can create harmony around us.

Now, we must also support our teens' various interests. Do our teens have interests outside of school like dance, music, or athletics? We must encourage them rather than discouraging them. I've seen in Parikrma, many of really good footballers, athletics being pulled out of their interests before their exams. In fact, in Parikrma itself I'm challenged where the heads do not want their children to be released for football practice because the examinations are near. And that is very frustrating, and I tell them actually before examination they must play more games, they must go to play football because then they will come back, having exhausted their energy and really concentrate on work. Academics are essential to our teens' overall development, but so are other activities and hobbies. When our teens invest time in a passion, they learn how to become self-motivated while developing other life skills too. Don't talk about our teens' hobbies as if they're a waste of time. If we do that, our teens may become angry and resentful. It seems easy to talk about it but how can we actually put it into action? It's through demonstration.

Develop a school culture where it's okay to make mistakes. Share our dreams and setbacks — and embrace new challenges even when it's scary! I ask my teachers, you know, when the new teachers come into Parikrma or new psychologists saying "nobody, the children are not listening!" That class management is a big issue, but you know the best way to manage a classroom? It's actually to say it in front of their class, "I am feeling very sad that things are not going my way." And you will suddenly grab everyone's attention because they come from a deep-seated empathy and then they will want to respond to you. They also feel good when their teachers are adventurous. And we must not procrastinate. If there's a simple task that we can complete in a couple of minutes, do it right away. Demonstrate and show how it's done. We must as institutions look at a holistic approach to motivation by taking care of our own physical and mental health. We must motivate our teenagers through positivity. Say positive things to our teens as often as we can. Celebrate their unique strengths and encourage them to see that hard work is fun and rewarding. Research shows that rewards and punishments actually don't lead to long-term motivation. Sure, they might compel our teens to study more for an upcoming exam, but they won't teach our teens the value of hard work and persistence. They will do it but it will be transactional, they do it for the moment but will not develop their personality. They must, and we need to let them learn from natural consequences — without telling them "I told you so" — we will avoid frustrating power struggles. Most importantly we must find mentors for our teens. We mustn't think even teachers that they know, and they have all the answers for the teenager. In Parikrma, we are working out on a scheme by inviting our alumni whether they were good or bad to come and mentor our students. Because I feel that the children will respond to them far better than they will respond to someone as old as me.

It's especially helpful for our teens to have a mentor when there's a conflict between us and them. Equip our teens with valuable organizational tools. Tools of making a list, working out a calendar, a plan. These things, children must be given. And develop routines and structures together with our teens. We must actually sit down and do work planning with them.

We should avoid giving pep talks. Pep talks don't work. Activities related to seeing things and if they want to listen to pep talks, they can do it on their own but we should not be giving them pep talks. Because we will switch off very soon. Let me share what my other student has shared.

[Video shown]: *Hi everyone this is Ritika from Parikrma, 12th standard and me being a student I have a lot of interests in studying until Masters. Since I'm in 12th now and very soon I will be joining a degree college. I have my parents and a few of my elder cousins and relatives who say to take only this degree and that degree which confused me a lot. I have interest in studying in the media field where my parents and few of my relatives didn't accept my choice. They say these fields are not meant to be for girls and things like that. In this situation I'm suffering a lot with what to take up next and having no family support for my own decisions and choices. I personally think that there are more other girls who are suffering in these situations. Or they just end up taking what they don't like just for the sake of their family. Thank you.*

I think basically the real problem are not the teenagers, the real problem is that as adults we have forgotten to inspire in our effort to control. We are so interested in controlling others, situations around us that we have actually forgotten to inspire our teenagers. You know these two clips that I showed you, I thought of it around 7 o'clock in the night and just rung up these kids and asked them, "Do you have anything that you would want to say or want me say on your behalf and they sent me these clips on their own, just last night! The last clip I received from one of my students, Kritika, was about 9 o' clock in the night. Now what does that mean? It means that these girls and boys are desperate to be heard. They want to share what they feel, the experiences they go through and want the adults to hear them and I am very happy that I got the opportunity to share what they feel, what teenagers feel with all of you here today. Thank you for giving me this opportunity.

Our Constant Companion

By Kalpana Tanwar

*An edited version of 'Our Constant Companion' was published in 2018, by Srishti Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Yelahanka, Bengaluru and Cumulus International Association of Universities and Colleges in Art, Design and Media c/o Aalto University, School of Art, Design and Architecture, Otaniementie 14, 02150 Espoo, Finland. It was also presented at 'Letters to the Future' Cumulus Conference Bengaluru 2017. This is a detailed paper.

The Future of Death

The future varies according to the lens chosen to view it- ecologically, genetically, sociologically, economically and so on. The future I wish to focus on is our personal future, unique to each of us, and thereby universal. Whatever we may envisage the future to be - old age, retirement, grandchildren, ailing health - the future common to us all, and to all things, that is rarely discussed, is death.

I started contemplating a class on death, especially as our Institute had lost one of its founders. Years ago, I recall Carlos Castaneda saying that death was our constant companion, it follows us around every step of the way. I decided to name my class of 10 days spread over 10 weeks, Y/Our Constant Companion.

Description of class titled Y/Our Constant Companion

Besides our shadow, we all have another constant companion, who has been with us from the time of our birth. Yet, this companion is usually ignored or marginalized, and we tend to go through life trying our best to forget.

Who is this companion? And why do we wish to distance ourselves?

In some ways this companion creates fear and hate, yet could be our best friend, teacher and guide. This class explores the role and impact of this companion on our everyday lives as well as its influence on different cultures and philosophies. Introspection, group discussions and facilitation will be expected of all participants.

Class Details

This class was an elective and 15 students signed up, mostly women, between the ages of19-22. They came from different parts of the country, with fairly varied social, cultural and economic backgrounds. This diversity needs to be appreciated, especially as there is a high level of discussion and sharing in the classroom. Most of them had little idea what they were signing up for. Yet others were reluctant, and the class was their last choice.

A few rules were discussed- the need to maintain discretion and confidentiality, be sensitive to others' thoughts and emotions, be good listeners and be supportive of others' feelings and sensibilities.

Process Oriented Psychology

Theory was presented to the class with the intention of bringing it to life and demonstrate that it was something that was happening in the moment, therefore relevant and dynamic.

By using theory, I was able to put a structure on the discussion. Most of the concepts came from Process Work or Process Oriented Psychology, which has close connections to Jungian psychology and quantum physics, developed by Drs. Arnold and Amy Mindell, and the Process Work community primarily based in Portland, OR, USA.

Classes comprised of a topic, followed with discussions in small groups, or having a general discussion and then finding a topic the class wanted to explore further in small groups.

The resulting insights were then shared with the larger group. This allowed everyone to have a chance to speak, ask questions, comment and most importantly listen to others.

When students sat in close proximity in small clusters it supported an intimate atmosphere of mutual sharing. From the beginning, and constantly reiterated, students were assured that there were no right-wrong or good-bad answers. They were encouraged to connect and share and acknowledge their feelings. At the end of each class students blogged their experience for the day and explore their feelings - fears and anxieties. They were also given specific assignments.

To stimulate thinking, introspection, awareness, analysis, and to provide a focus, I introduced various audio-visual aids including the documentary, The Shift by Wayne Dyer; the movie, Ordinary People; the Ted Talk by Anita Moorjani on Near Death Experiences. We also read the book, When Breath Becomes Air, by Paul Kalanithi. Students were asked to review their favourite Bollywood movie through a different lens; they were then asked to share their observations.

I did not follow a very structured plan for any class. 'Go with the flow' was an operating principal. In this way, I was able to focus on anything topical or current that had the student's attention. The death of a fellow student in a motorbike accident was used as a grief counselling class and students were encouraged to blog about their thoughts and feelings. Students went home for long weekends and came back with stories of suicide of family members. The class shared their experiences and turned into a spontaneous support group. They were encouraged to go home and question parents about mysterious deaths in the family, and why certain topics were taboo.

Discussions On Y/Our Constant Companion

The topic of the class was intentionally provocative. This course was an elective. I wanted to tickle the imagination and curiosity of the student. There was much speculation about who this constant companion was. My response was that this is a journey we are on and was something we would endeavour to figure out together.

Some companions mentioned early in the class included pets, teddy-bears, talismans, parents, siblings. Even a handkerchief played a role!

An interesting observation was that God as constant companion was very fleetingly and hesitantly voiced initially, yet in later discussions almost all the students did talk about following some sort of personal prayer practice.

I will use direct quotes from the student blogs. Identities have been kept confidential, and names have been changed.

ABN: Firstly, the discussion that we had kept me into thinking what actually companion is and how we tend to define it differently within different situations. The first and foremost thing that I realised was about myself and my thought process and how I thought about the word companion. The second thing I felt was how difficult it was for me was to talk about my fears at first, but after seeing everyone talk about their own, it gave me a little courage to talk about things which I felt deeply about.

BS: When we started talking about Y/Our companion a lot of things came up, like fear, object, parents, God etc. At this point, I realised that there were common things that all of us had but in different situations. I figured out that losing my hanky was fear, when I don't get to see it in my hand, it's like getting fits. Realizing this made me laugh and when I shared this with my sister, she thought I was silly.

Class Notes: Explorations on Life, Fears, and Death

Reflections on the documentary film called The Shift by Dr. Wayne Dyer

This documentary was viewed in class. The students watched it together. The reason for this was because I was afraid that if I asked them to view it in their own time, it would have far too much competition with more exciting material available at the tap of a finger. So, the class room was darkened, doors shut. Students still find it exciting to view 'movies' in class time and I was taking full advantage of this. After watching, there were discussions and the assignment that followed was to blog. For this, I asked very specific feeling and thinking related questions. I emphasised that there were no right, and wrong answers and research and reviews were of no interest to me. It was their personal view that I was looking for. Some students went into it with no hesitation, others were very confused and reluctant. However, with my constant encouragement and the support of fellow classmates, many of the hesitant ones too became more expressive as the weeks went on.

PN: I can completely relate with Dr. Wayne Dyer and his way of living life. If Dr. Wayne Dyer is French fries, then I am a raw potato waiting to become French fries. The only difference between me and him is that I keep changing from potato to fries and then potato again, while he is able to constantly live life as fries and he also has the ability to transform others from potato to fries.

NJ: The film, and especially the character of the filmmaker inspired me to create work that pleases my talent and skill. He made it to showcase it to the world and rapidly climb the ladder of success without fearing his true purpose or emotions.

This particular quote caught my attention. It revealed to me the stress of needing to have a marketable career in the future. Design students are often concerned about how they would describe what they 'do' or 'learn' in a design school. The response to a casual question, sometimes from complete strangers, became stressful. The need for random social approval in terms of doing the 'right thing' for a bright future was very important.

One talented, musically inclined young man told me how the only reason his grandfather was willing to accept his study path was because the title of the institute included the word 'technology'.

The above quote indicated being introspective and relating various, different aspects of their lives with what was going on in the class room. According to me, this was a clear indication that they were doing both- thinking and introspecting.

Family Tragedy

Ordinary People is an English movie about an American family dealing with the loss of an adolescent son/brother, and how each family member attempts to deal with it. We watched the film together in the classroom. With a view to encourage in-depth analysis and introspection, here are the questions/ guidelines that were shared for student blogs.

1. Select an episode from the movie Ordinary People that had the most impact on you. Discuss how and why you feel strongly about it. Do the events of the last few days come to mind whilst watching the movie?

2. Which character did you most identify with? Why?

3. Which character did you least identify with? Why?

4. Choose and name three specific characteristics of the person you do not identify with. Now consider this – In which way are you like this person you do not identify with?

The last question is clearly challenging. I know many well-functioning adults who would absolutely refuse to see themselves in the other. Many students rose to the challenge, some did not. Here are some of their self-reflections that display immense fluidity and flexibility.

NP: At first, I was going to go with Kevin as the person I did not relate to. Here's why:

1. Short-tempered- in some situations I just want to scream and shout at someone for something they did or said or something that happened

2. Insensitive – sometimes I joke about that things that go wrong

3. Rude / attitude- I really feel like being that way sometime

But after our discussion in class, I decided it was the mother. I'm really glad that the discussion 'Not relating to the mother' happened! I realised that I am becoming like the mother. Trying to be the perfect person. In the movie, after the tragic death of her son, the mother's way of coping was to pretend that nothing had happened, and that life must go on as before. It would start out with striving for self-discipline and then lead to being perfect for everyone else so that people will like her and not find her annoying. Not find things not to like me. This is true with even some of my closest friends. But then the seriousness and importance of that age-old life lesson hits me saying that EVERYBODY HAS FLAWS AND PEOPLE ACCEPT IT. LET THEM BE. Don't try to control it. I was controlling too much. I was struggling constantly but was not aware of it. I would feel terrible that I was put-down and restrained, controlled by my own self. So, when we broke down the character of the mother and when someone said how she's trying to be the perfect wife, mother, I realised that was me. I was horrified to find out that this is where my 'self-discipline turned striving to be perfect' path is taking me. I decided at that moment that I won't be like that anymore. I would not put myself down, be critical of myself. It's important to relax, be at peace, to be a good human being.

BON: Initially, I found this exercise pointless. Since I dislike Beth's character, how could I be like her? But once I jotted down three specific characteristics and then thought of them as traits in my own personality, I could draw a few parallels. I was astonished, and it was extremely difficult to accept and even harder to pen down.

MT: On completing this assignment, I had an important revelation that we find it easy to point fingers at other people's flaws whereas we are scared to look at the mirror and admit that the same flaws may lie within us.

Another pattern that emerged at the end of this exercise was that many students disliked the therapist in the movie, for asking too many questions, insisting on answers, asking counter questions. I could see that there was some projection going on. But the discussion and writing activity clarified many of these points and it was illuminating how fluid and receptive they were once they were encouraged to introspect.

Tragedy: Lived and Experienced

The tragic event of a college student perishing in a road accident preceded the next class. I used this time for grief counselling for some of the students who did show up for class.

DA: It was shocking and frightening for us to hear that one of our friends had passed away in an accident the night before. I was shaken and unsure and had no reaction. I had seen her the day before, she seemed happy and pleasant and we had waved to each other across the corridor, that was the last I saw of her and it's unimaginable to think that she's gone.

AR: The first thing I did after returning back home was to call up my mother. I was shocked at the way she reacted to the news. 'Oh! My god! I am so sorry for the parents." I was thinking about V and all her dreams being left unaccomplished, my mother was thinking of her parents. My first instinct was to put myself in the place of V and my mother put herself in the position of a person who has lost their daughter.

Design students are taught all about perspectives. But how do we inculcate thinking in perspective in design students?

Well, here was proof that this was happening. Here was empathy in action. Spontaneously, reactions to a real-life tragedy, demonstrated different perspectives that the student could understand and identify with: Separation from the parent and the child. Here was the student's awareness that - mother whom I am so close to, thinks quite differently, about the very same incident than I do.

And also, most importantly for me, was that neither is right or wrong, and both are completely relevant.

This session became an excellent example of self-awareness, introspection, and analysis, that did not come out of a text book.

Discussion on Paul Kalanithi's book *When Breath Becomes Air*

Paul Kalanithi's book, When Breath Becomes Air was recommended reading. This is an autobiographic journey of a young neurosurgeon who had been diagnosed with terminal cancer.

I encouraged the students to read it on their own. Most did. They discussed it with others and got deeper and deeper into the issue of death. By now, the students knew that feeling and acknowledging their emotions was being actively encouraged and was also a necessity for class participation.

The constant refrain by me in class was, "How does that make you feel?"

RS: Initially, it was very unsettling to read a book about a person's journey towards death. I was a bit afraid fearing it would be too intense, but I started to get to know this person who was so alive and full of goals and ambition, fears and insecurities, just like us. I felt inspired to read about his work ethics and principals and the way he lived his life.

GB: Because of this book, I started accepting my life as it is. Before a lot of people told me that I was materialistic, and I was like that in some ways. I kept complaining about things I don't have and all. But after reading this book everything was easy to handle. I asked my parents and my friends to read this book.

Reactions to the class 'Y/Our Constant Companion'

RN: This class has been a rollercoaster wherein I have felt an array of emotions, it has been an exhilarating and self-reflective experience.

DC: Over time, we have spoken a lot about fear and death being man's constant companion. It was nice to have explored these two categories, but personally, I would like to explore other aspects of companionship in life.

My notes during the class 'Y/Our Constant Companion'

During the course of these and many other classes, young adults have taught me a lot about myself and other old people like me.

Many of us complain that adolescent young people are poor communicators. They don't like to verbalise. They resent and resist answering questions. This is clearly not true. I started asking myself, maybe the way I question is not working, I need to try another way. I kept pushing myself, sometimes asking for their help. At some point, the reserve broke down, we were able to have many meaningful discussions.

I then realised another issue that older people have. We don't really want to hear what the young adults have to say. If it does not fit our narrative, we shut them down. The effort to be open-minded, non-judgemental, appreciate another perspective is very difficult for many of us.

As older people, we like to think we are smarter, wiser, more experienced. We are! However, we know a lot about our world, our time, our interests. We really know very little of the world young people inhabit. This is again very difficult for us to admit.

We like to believe that youngsters don't think. This class clearly demonstrated that this is not true! Initially, the class was responding in the way they thought they should respond (mainly a reflection of the home and culture they come from) but gradually they started thinking, expressing what they really thought for themselves!

These young people went on record to demonstrate that they do introspect a lot! They also spoke of the unhealthy self-criticism much of that introspection involved. They were able to examine their inner most thoughts and feelings and change the way in which they did this.

We like to imagine that peer group pressure for young adults is primarily negative. I saw many instances of how students bandied together, very selflessly to support one another.

Being reckless is clearly part of being young, experimental, exploratory, and creative. We want youngsters to have all those qualities – but we are so afraid for them that we tend to term them as reckless.

Conclusion

I think the students did well with such a delicate and edgy subject. I had a broad idea about what I wanted to do in the class, but it was up to the students to pick up the ideas that I would share with them. They did it bravely and well beyond my expectations!

During the course various incidents took place. One student came back after a long weekend home to tell us about her cousin who had committed suicide and she had been the first one to see the hanging body. Another student returned from a family wedding to announce that no less than five wedding guests had died over the weekend celebrations. He added that one of their deaths was most inconvenient as that person had been in charge of keeping track of the wedding gifts!

The macabre and the funny both go hand in hand as we take a walk down life's path. May we all travel with strength and love.

Kalpana is a Process Oriented Psychology Therapist in Bengaluru. She is currently focused on her private practice as a facilitator and psychotherapist, working with individuals, couples, families and groups and organizations. She was faculty at Srishti Institute from 2010-2019. You can contact her at kalpana.tanwar54@gmail.com

Reflections

Attunement: Role of Stories in Coping

By Priya Venkataraman

Abstract

While nothing can replace actual human contact and the real understanding that emerges between two individuals, humans craved stories like an instinct. This paper argues that the instinct for stories is similar to the instinct of an infant searching its care-givers' face for understanding and a sense of self. I hope to be able to draw parallels between reading stories and attunement, and how they help us cope with our insatiable yearning to be understood.

What is attunement?

Attunement can be seen as a way one is able to 'tune-in' to someone else's emotional needs and respond in a way that makes the person feel understood.

As infants we needed our mothers to be able to understand our non-verbal signals and manage them, so our distress becomes less frightening. Empathetically responding to an infant has been called 'marking' (Gergely and Watson, 1999). Responding quickly, and appropriately, is the key here. A delay in response, or if the care-giver responds with too much anxiety, it can aggravate the distress instead of soothing the child.

Juliet Hopkins (1990) refers to studies in which carrying a baby in a kangaroo pouch in the first few months of life has a more positive effect than even breast feeding! The proximity to the mother increases the likelihood of secure attachment by providing ample opportunity for the mother's mind to respond and make sense of a baby's state of mind – leading to attunement. One is instantly reminded of the 'holding environment' D. Winnicott (1960) spoke about, which is essential to help the baby gain trust in the world and to develop a sense of self. A baby in such an environment is seen to have received emotional containment, as coined by Wilfred Bion (1962b). Such a baby is also better at self-regulation accordingly to Schore (1994).

Bowlby sees attunement as part of 'attachment behaviour'. He believed infants were pre-programmed to seek attunement for its safety; to remove or at the very least, lessen the fear of dying. An infant who is unsuccessful in attaining some degree of attunement with a care-giver, and hence unable to develop attachment, will have its very survival in question.

'It [attachment behaviour] is activated in infancy by conditions of fatigue, hunger, pain, illness and cold, and by external conditions indicating increased risks: darkness, loud noises, sudden movements, looming shapes and solitude. When it is activated the child seeks contact with one of his particular attachment figures whom he has learned to discriminate.' – Juliet Hopkins (1990).

Marking, containment, holding are ways of speaking about attunement and vice versa. I believe these are different ways of defining the enormous need an infant has of feeling understood without words during its early days of life. I wonder if perhaps the 'ubiquitous yearning' Melaine Klein speaks of in her 1963 paper 'On a Sense of Loneliness' is a way of saying we are always seeking attunement? Always looking for understanding/ to be understood?

It is a two-way process

Gaining attunement is a two-way process. The infant projects into the mother its distress. The mother then makes meaning of it and returns it to the baby but in an altered way. This kind of attunement, called affect attunement, is a way of infant and mother sharing experiences. To say the same thing in Bionion terms, the mother 'contains' difficult emotions projected into her and returns it in a more manageable state to the child. In this way the child is likely to develop a sense of wellbeing from having uncomfortable emotions contained, understood and returned.

Developing a sense of self

That babies are born to relate is now a well-established notion in child development theory. The instinctual need to relate, to look out into the world and seek responses are the building blocks to finding attunement and developing a sense of self.

Schore (2005) physically locates a sense of self in the limbic system in the right brain. This 'sense of self' they argue is deeply influenced by the mother's own right brain activities. In other words, when she looks at the baby with joy, the baby feels it is a joyous creature, when she looks and responds with urgency, the baby know it matters and that it will survive. Kohut (1971) speaks of the gleam in the mother's eye when she sees her baby. The baby who sees this gleam will naturally come to think of itself as quite a wonderous thing indeed!

A depressed care-giver or one without adequate 'right-brain' responses might leave the infant stressed. With repeated experiences of separation and anxiety the infant, as Watt (2003) put it, will go down not just a bad psychological pathway, but also a neurological one. He means to say the infant's brain gets hard-wired to now look upon the world as a cold and uncaring place, undeserving his trust.

Klein (1963), on loneliness, said: "A satisfactory early relationship with the mother implies a close contact between the unconscious of the mother and of the child. This is the foundation for the most complete experience of being understood and is essentially linked to the preverbal stage. However gratifying it is in later life to express thoughts and feelings to a congenial person, there remains an unsatisfied longing for an understanding without words."

Why stories

Some stories are vastly popular, while some become our own 'private myths', personal favourites or family heirlooms. Stories can inspire us, amuse us, shock us or lull us to sleep. Some people find great solace in books, often at the cost of real human interactions. Whichever the stories, and whatever the degree of identification, there is no doubt the effect stories have on all of us. We have always *needed* them.

In his 1986 essay 'Home is Where We Start From' Winnicott says that cultural experience, which includes myths, history, art, stories, has as much of an impact on human life as one's inner psychic reality and external life. He suggests that 'truths' can be found in this common cultural experience. He looks upon writers as 'allies' in helping readers to 'tune in' to a deeper, shared reality.

Freud in his paper on 'Creative Writers and Daydreamers' suggested that "the opposite of play is not what is serious, but what is real". Play, daydreaming and reading fiction provide children and adult a respite from reality. Not that play (or imagination) is entirely divorced from reality either. Fiction can be a safe resting place between an unstable psychic reality and a difficult outer reality.

Stories create a world into which children (and later adults) can get lost in. But this is a world given to us by an author/ creator. To use Winnicott's paper on 'Capacity to be Alone', while reading we are 'playing' in the presence of someone.

Stories are often spoken about as ways to understand oneself; to understand the 'human condition' and to find meaning. In a way, we expect and seek from stories something of what we sought for in our early care-givers. This thing we seek could be meaning, or words for our feelings, or empathy and so on. At the heart of it is the desire to know that we are not alone in our pain and anguish. I suspect stories are another way one continues to seek attunement. It is the attunement that, however briefly experienced or denied, we craved as infants. To find in the dilemma of characters the meaning of our own experiences is like searching the faces of our early care-givers an understanding of our distress. It can unlock memories, experiences and feelings forgotten and buried deep inside us. It reminds me of Kafka's famous quote that "a book must be the axe for the frozen sea inside us."

So how are stories, especially those about fictional characters like talking animals, sometimes situated and fashioned entirely from imagination, able to achieve this?

Perhaps in imagination one is able to live out omnipotent phantasies and, in some way, become the baby and the breast. The loss of attunement and the loss of omnipotent beliefs is briefly forgotten as one engages in stories of achievement, supernatural phenomena and magic.

But when we speak of attunement as a two-way process, how can we view stories (which are typically a narrator narrating a story to a listening audience) in a similar light?

A way to understand this might lie in Joseph Campbell's idea of myths being 'public dreams'. Good stories are born out of an artist sublimating his unconscious phantasies and trauma. Some of these unconscious phantasies maybe shared and may be held in common (like 'public dreams') with the listener. So, for the listener/ reader, it feels like someone has sublimated his inner phantasies and made sense of it; like he has been able to communicate his anxiety and it has been understood. Much like a baby looks at its mother for her to make sense of its distress.

Shared unconscious phantasies explains why some stories become more popular (and may even achieve the status of myths and epics) over others. So, even while there is no real human interaction between creator and audience, creating and hearing stories has a two-way quality to it; in the listener lies unvocalised phantasies and from the creator emerges sublimated versions of the same phantasies.

Tuning in to stories

Humans are very unreliable creatures. Even Winnicott had to concede to the existence of a 'good-enough' mother and the impossibility of any mother being 'perfect'. By 'good-enough' he seems to be saying that even in the best of 'holding environments' an infant was bound to experience some frustrations, feelings of neglect and mis-attunement. Klein (1963) said, 'Even at best… the happy relationship between the mother and her breast is never undisturbed, since persecutory anxieties are bound to arise.'

An infant seeking to understand the world through the eyes of its care-givers is bound to realise that he needs more. He is going to have to try other means to learn how to navigate the world and understand himself. Stories are one of a child's first avenues to know, to educate himself about the world, about relationships and how to cope with difficult feelings.

In stories there is the excitement of knowing that something unexpected will occur. As one reads these stories in relative safety, the unpredictable twists of the story can be enjoyed without fear over our well-being. A relationship develops between a child and the characters of a story. Their fictitious nature adds to the attachment as, in this pseudo-relationship, a level of reliability has some in. This is a character who will not let you down. One is safely able to identify with them and see the world through their eyes.

But the real beauty of a well-told story is that even when the unpredictable twists become known, they don't become predictable. We each have books and movies we re-visit multiple times in the course of our lives. Anticipating that 'unexpected thing they know' will come (Zeedyk 2006) creates interest and intimacy. Listening to them for the hundredth time, the child will still respond with the same mirth or mock terror. Knowing what is to come gives a child a sense of control over his world. It aids in his omnipotent phantasies and lets him believe he has some power over adversities.

Even when we don't know what is to come, stories continue to engage our omnipotent phantasies. Our own experiences help us connect with characters and their situations. Through their victories and redemptions, we feel empowered. In other words, stories reduce the impotent feeling of helplessness a child is bound to have if it comes up against 'too much reality' too soon. Hence reading/ listening to stories has the power to become a 'transitional experience'.

Writers were readers first

The American poet Mary Oliver, who passed away in 2019, was an avid reader as a child. Her childhood, as recounted by her, sounds difficult. Her dysfunctional family did not make it easy for her to deal with sexual abuse as a child. She had recurrent nightmares and left home very young. In an interview she says, "I was needy a great deal of my life, because I didn't get sufficient mother-love and protection." In her essay titled, "Staying Alive," she writes: "The second world — the world of literature — offered me, besides the pleasures of form, the sustentation of empathy and I ran for it. I relaxed in it. I stood willingly and gladly in the characters of everything — other people, trees, clouds. And this is what I learned: that the world's otherness is antidote to confusion, that standing within this otherness — the beauty and the mystery of the world, out in the fields or deep inside books — can re-dignify the worst-stung heart." Later she writes, a line that speaks to me most dearly, "I read the way a person might swim, to save his or her life."

Melissa de la Cruz, an author, says "Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* is the book that got me through a year-long depression after I graduated from college and felt lost and unmoored. The story's focus on happiness and love — between parents and children, siblings, friends and of course romance, against the backdrop of the Napoleonic wars — made me realize I was loved by friends and family, and that life was worth engaging in."

Annabell Pitcher, an author herself, says the book, *Are you there God? This is me, Margaret* by Judy Bloom helped her deal with 'conflict in identity'. "Margaret's struggle to understand who she was and whether to voice her opinions if they were different to her classmates was very familiar to me. Her pain was my pain, and the questions she asked were the ones I wanted answering. It's a book I returned to time and again, because I loved working everything out alongside her, and going through puberty with her. We grew up together."

Liz Kessler, another author, says, "If I am going through a difficult time, there is one book that will always help me to put my situation into context: The Diving-Bell and the Butterfly, by Jean-Dominique Bauby."

The words that stand out in these testimonials are "understood", "less alone", "together" and "connected". These are words one could easily attach to 'attunement'.

Conclusion

Reading has been therapeutic for me and this paper was an attempt to see why, through the lens of attunement. In my well-thumbed copy of *To Kill a Mocking Bird* by Harper Lee, Atticus Finch tells his daughter (after she complains about a difficult teacher), "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view. Until you climb inside of his skin and walk around in it." In this book, as well as many others, I've found mentors, father-figures and soulmates. I have found kindred spirits who were more articulate than I in thoughts and words and helped me understand myself better.

As I read to my children now, and as they enjoy some stories more than others, I see how unconscious identification helps them navigate the world. No matter how we were raised, how much love and attunement we received, the 'ubiquitous yearning' never leaves us. It sets us on an insatiable journey to consume more and more stories.

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Research

IC 23: Professor Sudhir Kakar's reflections

Some of the papers published in this volume were presented at Sukrut's 7th International Conference (IC 23), held on the 16th and 17th of February 2023. At the end of each day, renowned Indian psychoanalyst, author, and scholar, **Dr Sudhir Kakar** *shared his thoughts over the papers presented.*

Day 1

On day one of IC 23, Ms Kalpana Tanwar and Dr Amrita Narayanan presented their papers. You can find their papers published here on page 64 and page 43.

[Transcript of Prof Sudhir Kakar's reflections.]

First it was very kind of you to invite me to this two-day conference, conversations in a cultural perspective, and I think I would first like to highlight the cultural perspective which we are talking of here. So, in the last decade we have become much more aware of how much of our psychological knowledge is far from universal. Indeed, most of our knowledge on how human beings feel, think and act is derived from a small subset of the human population. Since 2010, following Harvard's psychologist Joseph's high influential essay, most people are not weird-

W-E-I-R-D. We have called this subset 'the weird' now famously Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich and Democratic: W-E-I-R-D. This small group of statistical outliers with a high proportion of mostly American and some European college students are both the producers and subjects of much of the contemporary psychological knowledge that we have then likely proceeded to generalise the rest of the human kind. For instance, to see the huge difference between the weird and other. Let us look at the notions of morality.

The chasm that divides WEIRD morality from others is observed in a 2012 experiment by social psychologist Jonathan Haidt who studied morality in 12 groups of different social classes in different countries around the world. Africa, South America, Europe, USA. During his interviews, Haidt would tell the interviewee stories and then ask, "Is there something wrong in how someone acts wrong in this story and if so, why?". One of the stories goes, "A man goes to the supermarket once a week and buys a chicken. But before cooking the chicken, he has sexual intercourse with it. Then he cooks it and eats it." Only one group out of the 12, showed a majority 73%, tolerated the chicken story, finding it acceptable. These were students from the University of Pennsylvania, a liberal Ivy League college in the United States and certainly the most 'WEIRD' amongst the 12 selected groups. Their rationale for the tolerance was, "It is his chicken, it is dead, nobody is getting hurt, and it is being done in private.

So, my hope is that this conference will help us begin the process of separating what is universal in a psychological knowledge of adolescents from what is actually truer of WEIRD societies and needs to be seriously questioned. It is a difficult task since most of the psychological texts you study in colleges and universities, which are WEIRD in their origins and assumptions. I hope we can start to become aware of a range of adolescent experiences, especially in the Indian setting that goes beyond the texts produced by WEIRD countries.

Amrita Narayanan gave us an excellent glimpse of the intergenerational dynamics of a mother-daughter relationship in modern India and its effect on the delayed expression of a girl's sexuality. Adolescence is thought of as a second individuation process which involves the shedding of family dependencies and the loosening of infantile objectize. As Peter Blau showed us, the finality of this inner break with the past shakes the adolescent emotional life to the centre. By the same token, this break opens up to him unknown horizons, rays of hope, and generates fear. For Indians, the finality of this break is neither desired nor achieved to the extent held to be mature and healthy in WEIRD psychology. This cultural dimension of the universal separation individuation process is highlighted by a popular myth. As I will talk to you later, popular myths, legends and so many others, perhaps tomorrow are part of a cultural imagination, which parts the cultural part of our mind to which we often pay very little attention by assuming the universality and the truth of what are often "WEIRD assumptions." So, in a version common to both South India and Sri Lanka, the myth was as follows. I'm sure or I hope that many of you would be familiar with this.

A mango was floating down the stream and Uma, Parvathi-the mother,
said that whoever rides around the universe first will get the mango.
In other versions, there were promises of the Modka. Skanda impulsively got on his
golden peacock and went around the universe. But Ganesha,
who rode the rat, had more wisdom. He thought, "What could my mother have meant by this?".
He then circumambulated his mother, worshiped her and said, "I have gone around my universe".
Since Ganesha was right, his mother gave him the mango.
Skanda was furious when he arrived and demanded the mango. But before he could get it,
Ganesha bit the mango and broke one of his tusks.

Here, Skanda and Ganesha are personifications of the two opposite wishes or the opposing wishes of the older child on the eve of what the analysts have called the oedipal phase. He's torn between a powerful push for independent and autonomous functioning and an equally strong pull towards surrender and re-immersion in the enveloping maternal fusion from which he has just emerged. Giving in to the pull of individuation and independence, Skanda became liable to one kind of punishment. Exile from the mother's bountiful presence and one kind of reward, the promise of functioning as an adult virile man. Going back to the mother and I would view Ganesha's eating of the mango as a return to and feeding of the breast, especially since we know that in Tamil Nadu, the analogy between a mango and a breast is a matter of common awareness. And so, the broken tusk is the loss of potential masculinity as a consequence. Remaining an infant, Ganesha's reward on the other hand, will be never to know the pangs of separation from the mother. Never to feel the despair at her absence, that Ganesha's is considered as superior to Skanda's is perhaps an indication of Indian cultural preference in the dilemma of separation versus individuation. He's one with his mother, in a wish not to have the sons separate from her; individuate out of their shared anima.

I don't know if you remember, perhaps you don't, because you are all younger people but there was one very important movie called Zanjeer in 1980's which made Amitabh Bachan into the big star he is today. It is almost the story of Ganesha and Skanda where Shashi Kapoor was one brother and Amitabh was the other. Amitabh goes out into the world and becomes and does all kinds of things, while Shashi Kapoor remains with the mother. In one of the climactic scenes, Amitabh Bachan asks Shashi Kapoor, "What do you have?" and this sentence by Shashi Kapoor, "Mere Paas Maa Hai" became one of the very, very famous sentences of film history.

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I don't know if you remember, perhaps you don't, because you are all younger people but there was one very important movie called Zanjeer in 1980's which made Amitabh Bachan into the big star he is today. It is almost the story of Ganesha and Skanda where Shashi Kapoor was one brother and Amitabh was the other. Amitabh goes out into the world and becomes and does all kinds of things, while Shashi Kapoor remains with the mother. In one of the climactic scenes, Amitabh Bachan asks Shashi Kapoor, "What do you have?" and this sentence by Shashi Kapoor, "Mere Paas Maa Hai" became one of the very, very famous sentences of film history.

While the Indian cultural imagination does not doubt the reality of separation, it refuses to admit that separation-individuation is the highest level of reality. Instead, the Indian vision of reality emphasizes union and oneness. Consider the Punjabi, I know it is also there in Bengali but perhaps also in other languages, the proverb about death: "It is like being shifted from one breast of the mother to the other". The child feels lost for that instance but not for long. What stands out in this proverb as Amrita Narayanan has pointed out, is that it is the continuation of breastfeeding rather than the aspiration of weaning and independence, implying that weaning dominates the Indian cultural imagination. Thus, one might say here about the existence of a range of psychic positions. Separation-individuation including the second separation-individuation is a universal process. Yes, but between a minimum of separation-individuation, needed to function as an adult in a particular society and a maximum which encases a person in narcissistic armour cutting all ties with families and community, there's a range of positions all of which need to be recognised by psychology as part of being. Human. Rather than closely identifying with any particular position on the continuum as the only one that is healthy and mature. This is important because we often take just one position and often as I said, implicitly because of the socialization, because of the studies we do. It is often one position which is more on one side of the continuum, rather than the other side which is emphasized by the Indian culture imagination. It doesn't mean that both are not right, it is only that there are different human experiences, of both of them are right including and especially in the cultural setting in which one is operating. I think, you've often heard, not often heard but one can imagine, a father

in the United States saying to the son who is 30 years old or 25 years old, "Uh, you're 25 years old and still living with your parents?". Whereas in India, somebody says, "You're only 25 years old and you've left your parents?". Elsewhere, Narayanan enumerates other grounds for the Indian position on the break from the parents. She tells us about the extended skin contact between the infant and its care takers in India as compared to say the United States. Breastfeeding in India, UNICEF report for 2018, tells us, continues for over a year for children of both genders at a rate of 79% compared to the United States where extended breastfeeding rates are around 6%. From breastfeeding, that Indian child proceeds not to spoon feeding but to hand feeding, less frequently to strollers than to being carried on the mother's side or back in skin contact and extended co-sleeping with parents or elder relatives. In this atmosphere of early life conveyed by visible skin contact over a long period, it would be reasonable to expect that the view of separating from the family would viralise the minimum necessary for autonomous functioning as an adult rather than the almost expected rebellious western separation.

As I said, "25 and you're still living with your parents? You're only 25 and not living with your parents?". It is not that one or the other answer is wrong or right, but which one is most adapted to living in a particular society. Coming to Dr. Tanvar's paper, I am mindful of the fact that she asked us not to address her as a doctor but doctors to me is just a sign of respect for her accomplishments and her wisdom. I was most impressed by her keenness to bring the theme of mortality, death to the consciousness of young people. Now you're all aware of the difficulty, the almost impossibility of the task. Not the thinking of death but the impossibility of imagining it. It is incomprehensible to fathom that my unique consciousness with its myriad memories, thoughts and imaginings will be snuffed out like a candle flame. Leaving not even a palpable darkness behind it. It is unendurable to contemplate that the mini ties of love and affection to a partner, children, relatives, friends which have sustained me all through my life will be irrevocably snapped. Fortunately, our awareness of our own death is a delible of thought not emotional conviction. We are capable of thinking of our death but incapable of imagining it.

In the Vana Parva of the epic, Mahabharata, 9th century before the common era, there is a story of a series of questions that the god of justice and morality- Dharma disguised as a Yaksha, a nature spirit asks the eldest of the five Pandava brothers.

Yudhishthira, who has come to an enchanted lake in which the four brothers
have found a watery grave. Impelled by a raging thirst, the brothers did not heed
the Yaksha's warning not to drink the water before answering his questions.
Yudhishthira is more patient and agrees to the Yaksha's stipulation.
His answer to one of Yaksha's last questions on,
"What is the most amazing thing in the world is?" and Yudhishthira answers,
"The day after day countless creatures are going to the abode of Yama, the god of death.
Yet those that remain behind believe themselves to be immortal. What can be more amazing than this?"

This remains true for all times and cultures. Death like birth are perhaps the only true universal experiences that are beyond the reach of the cultural lens. As far as the unimaginability of death is concerned, Yudhishthira has company in other religious traditions.

A Sufi once said Vice was asked, "What has grace brought you?" He answers, "When I wake up in the morning, I feel like a man who is not sure he will live till evening."

"But doesn't everyone know this?"

"They certainly do," the Vice said. "But not all of them feel it."

And it is not only the religious traditions, there is little difference between North India of 600 BC, the time of the Mahabharata, and central Europe of early 20th century where the founder of psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud writes, "It is indeed impossible to imagine our own death and whenever we attempt to do so we can perceive that we are in fact still present as spectators." Hence the psychoanalytic school could venture on the insertion that at the bottom no one believes in their own death or to put the same thing in another way that it is unconscious. Every one of us is convinced of his own immortality. It is poignant to observe how a person as he or she gets older becomes more and more concerned with how his loved ones recollect him in their memories after he or she is dead. As if he will be hovering around somewhere in a disembodied state registering their thoughts and feelings. The belief that psychic life persist after death is a lifeblood of all religions. Not just the ones that have their origin in India. Walk through a Christian cemetery and you will see the letters "R-I-P", or the full phrase "Rest in Peace" inscribed on the grave stones. The inscription in the case of belief that the dead person can still feel after death, rest be dead in a peaceful state of mind.

So how does one help young people imagine death even for a short while? We all know from personal experience that the emotional excitement associated within an event makes us remember what happened much better than when the emotion is absent. Let me share a dramatic experiment that illustrates this clearly and may help us to recommend concrete programs for the one doctor covered so courageously embraced. In this experiment reported in natures some years ago, two emotionally dissimilar stories were read out to the experimental subjects. The first story was boring and went as follows: A boy is driving through the city with his mother to visit his father who works in a hospital. There, the boy is shown a sequence of medical treatments. The second story was more dramatic. A boy is driving through the city with his mother in a car and is grievously hurt in a car accident. He is rushed to the hospital where he is subjected to a series of medical interventions.

The experimental subjects were then given a list of the hospital treatments to read and sent home. After a week, the subjects who heard the dramatic second story remembered the

treatment details better than those who heard the first one. To understand the mechanisms of the learning through the involvement of emotions, the experiment was repeated with a small difference. All the subjects were given 40 milligrams of propranolol, a medicine for the dampening of the sympathetic nervous system. A week later, the second group's memory of the treatments, the group exposed to the dramatic story had also diminished under the medical dampening of emotions. Here then, to make these kinds of programs, these kinds of interventions, however important they are, and they are very very important, we need to take assistance from literature, art, cinema and generally the psychology of aesthetic emotions to sensitize in ways in which we can make our educational efforts. The stories we need to tell in various forms to adolescents and to young people, emotionally compelling.

Day 2:

On Day two of IC 23, Ms. Lavanya and Ms. Ruchika presented their papers. You can find their papers on page 35 and page 14.   At the end of the all presentations, Professor Kakar, read out a few of his thoughts.

[Transcript of Prof Sudhir Kakar's reflections.]

Thank you very much again, it was a very, very rich experience listening to all of you. I think just for a small introduction again to remind you of what our focus in this two-day conference was. Our focus was the cultural conversations and I think we all have learnt a lot. Yesterday we discussed the presentations from the cultural perspective that is their Indianness, the cultural part of the mind that informs the behaviour and concerns of a vast number of Indians as it guides them through the journey of life. Seeded into a network of minds, we absorb our cultural imaginations, our Indianness not via the logic of our head but via the emotional stirrings of the heart and body in which this imagination, the Indianness, is encoded right from birth onwards.

Our cultural imagination shapes what has been called our vision of reality, that is not a set of philosophical doctrines, relevant only for religious and intellectual elites but beliefs bordering on convictions, many of them unconscious that are reflected in the lives, songs, stories of a vast number of people who share a common culture. It is the culture's vision of reality that interprets central human experiences and answers perineal questions on what is good, on what is evil, what is real and what is unreal, what is the essential nature of men and women and the world they live in and what is a person's connection to nature, to other human beings and to the cosmos.

A civilisation's vision of reality plays a significant role even in how it organizes knowledge, how it shapes the processes of attention, perception, reasoning and inference making. Disseminated through myths and legends, proverbs and metaphors, iconic artworks, the stories its members tell each other, enacted rituals conveyed through the tales told to children, are given a modern veneer in films. The cultural imagination is equally glimpsed in admonishes of parents in the

future vista's they hold out to their children. Indeed, even in their way, children are touched, fed and carried about as I gave the example yesterday. Of course, in an Indian, in an individual Indian, the civilisational heritage may be modified or overlaid by the specifics of culture, of a family, caste, class or ethnic group. Yet an underlying sense of Indian identity continues to persist even to the third or fourth generation in the Indian Diasporas around the world. And not only when they gather for a Diwali celebration or to watch a Bollywood movie, aspects of Indian identity may get submerged at various parts of their life cycle only to re-emerge at others, especially in old age. Thus, the English-speaking adolescent with his musical taste formed by western pop music is not an NRI, Non-resident Indian as he or she is derisively called. But an Indian closer to 'WEIRD' sensibility yet still recognisably Indian for instance in behaviour expectorant superior-subordinate interactions.

Coming to today's talks Ruchika's essay is a comprehensible, comprehensive, and admirable effort at studying the role of the father in the development of autonomy and identity in the adolescents in the Indian setting. In her essay, as we listened to others today I was surprised that the literature being reviewed was limited to psychological journals. I wonder if there were more contributions, even if still deficient on hopelessness, depression, etc., in professional journals of cultural anthropology or even social psychiatry that have been traditionally more sensitive to the Indian context. One book that came to my mind edited by Dinesh Sharma and published by Oxford University Press in 2003 is Childhood Family and Socio-Cultural Change in India which also has an essay on the father's changing role in the family. I was also intrigued to hear about James Marcia's identity formation theory. All the four stages, foreclosure, identity diffusion, moratorium, identity achievement are Erick Erickson's terms. In fact, Erickson often pointed out that identity is not an achievement but something that will again come to the fore when we question the next crisis of the individual's life cycle. Let me explore with you the father-adolescent, or more exactly father-daughter, relationship which has a big impact on the Indian women's cycle. This is an important relationship in the Indian setting and needs more attention than it has so far received. Within the atmosphere of general avoidance of close contact with men is a consequence of the segregation of sexes that takes place in both urban and rural areas after the girl crosses the age of 9 or 10.

There is one poignant statistic, the little time a daughter spends with her father and especially the culturally conjoined sessions of any physical contact between the father and the daughter as she enters puberty. I imagine the dis-prohibition of physical contact between father and daughter also has a source in the unconscious cultural imagination. The myths that narrate the father's desire for his daughter are easily found in ancient texts. Myths as I am saying or said before let what happens, lets what is happening outside, as what is happening inside. They are actually the dramatization of the unconscious individual desires in a culture. Myths in their classical form or popularized legends and folktales can give access to the vicious and fears from the deepest recessives of the psyche that is not otherwise easily available.

Prajapati, identified as Brahma the Creator, is described in the 'Satapatha Brahmana' as casting his eyes upon his own daughter and saying, "May I pair with thee?". When he consummates his desires, Prajapati is punished by the other gods. His body is pierced through. Numerous versions of this myth reflected in ancient myths as well as folktales narrates the untrustworthy nature of the father's desire and the need for forces outside the family to step in to protect the daughter from the father's lust. The mother is never the protective force, the role is reserved for other men, but it is worth wondering that as much as the son requires an alliance with the father to protect him from overwhelming femaleness, also part of many myths, the daughter too requires an alliance with the mother to protect her from the overwhelming nature of her father's desire. All these, as I said, are operating at the unconscious level. The absent father at the adolescent stage of a growing girl's life has been called one of the great tragedies of Indian family life.

I thought you might like to see how this issue makes an appearance in the psychoanalytic clinical setting. My notes on the first three sessions of a psychoanalytic therapy with an Urban young professional woman can perhaps convey some of the subjective experience of this psychic tragedy. It will also give a feel for what our yesterday's keynote speaker was stressing, the single importance of listening. How does an analyst listen? A very active listening, that has also been called listening with the third ear. It is listening to the patient's unconscious with the analyst unconscious. Let me come to that case.

"Meera is a 28-year-old advertising copywriter who feels depressed most of the time, empty and bereft of ideas at work and unable to form relationships. The first session after she lies down on the couch, we are both silent for a couple of minutes, although I imagine the silence seems much longer to her as she starts becoming anxious. The mix of hope and fear with which a patient begins an analysis sliding into the latter. The silence rather shifts in the inner space that is taking place in both of us. I can feel wisps of her anxiety floating through the space in my own body, in the stirrings of follicles of hair on my forearms, in the reflex swallowing of my emotions. This is her first share of silence and I know that over the months or years we will experience this in many varieties. Silences that will become painful, others of deep attunement, or one tingling with erotic energy. But also silences in which she will try to cast me out, become withdrawn, sad or resentful and angry and yet, if the therapy has gone well, leave an opening for me to engage her again and again. But this is the beginning, our first silence that should only lead her away from the spaces of ordinary life and not traumatize her. This is the very first session and I do not have a feel for how much anxious silence she can bear.

"What are you thinking?" I ask her in a friendly voice. The question is less about her thoughts and more an invitation to her to find words out of the silence, to build a bridge from the unsaid, perhaps even the unsayable, words that fortify the connection that has begun to be forged between us even before she has spoken. She does not reply yet at once. The thumb and fingers of her right hand are playing with beads of the thin gold chain around her neck. Her eyes are

closed, "I'm in a paddy field," she begins in English. "There's a low Bund going through the field and you are on the other side. I step over the Bund to you," she waits and then switches to Hindi. There was a pleasant feeling to the dream she says. "A paddy field", I say amusingly to both of us. She takes ownership of my pensive query. "Our family had paddy fields when I was a child. I remember walking with my father on the narrow mud embankments separating the fields. I would hold on tightly to his hand so that I didn't slip on the wet earth and fall into the flooded field. I remember my father overseeing the women planting the seedlings, bending down from the yoke waist, their sarees pulled up to their waist, their legs exposed, the women sometimes sang. We would listen to the song for a while before we returned home."

I feel the sadness in her voice. Inchoate memories without words of the losses in my own life begin to stir. "It all changed after my 12th birthday," she says. "My father became distant, he no longer took me with him on tours of his fields, I could no longer hold his hand. He would stop me from giving him a hug." "No more embraces, you will soon be a woman. You have to learn to be modest, restrained in your girlish behaviour." My mother would get a fit if I walked around the house in a skirt and not a saree. "What will the servants say?"

I'm aware that she also dreamt this dream away for me. Indeed, all dreams of a patient during an analysis or even shortly before starting one, are dreams she dreams for both for herself and for her analyst, whether or not he figures, explicitly in them. I let the dream swirl in my mind like a cube of ice in a single malt whiskey before taking the first sip. I've taken her dream as mine, I dream her dream of hope and fear. "It seems the dream is telling us of your hope in the work we are about to begin together. The tender shoots of paddy that have been planted, a low feeling of well-being as you cross over to me." Bandh in Hindi means closed but there is reassurance in the dream that the way it's not closed but open, I say.

My interpretation of Meera's dream is at a basic level. More in service of creating a relationship, deepening our connection, than an insight that surprises her. It is but one thread in the weaving of her story that we feel true to both of us. For as she spoke, and I let my mind wander in the landscape of her dream, there were other meanings also jostling for attention. The first sentence, "I'm in a paddy field" was in English. Meera did her BA in English Literature from the capital that is Delhi, Lady Shri Ram College before taking a course in commercial art. To be in paddy is British slang for being fit, being in fit of temper, raging at the father for turning away so precipitately, from the girl who was becoming a woman. I sense her hope that I will repair the damage caused by her father's withdrawal, rid her of the noxious rage but also her warning that I could be her target. Whenever my image in her imagination becomes fused with that of the ejecting father of her teens.

Third session, almost at the end, after being silent for a while, her silence is brimming with the unsaid. I can feel her struggle between words simultaneously reluctant to leave the refuge of silence and in the wish to communicate with me. The balance finally shifts in a figure of speech.

There was something else in the dream, I told you about the first time I came. Beside you is a round pillar that comes up to your waist, like a Shiva Lingam. It is an odd colour, more of brick than stone. I have an urge to kneel down and hold it. I become aware of the noises outside the room, a rickshaw with a defective muffler passing on the road, the washer man next to my house who has set up a stall in the footpath for ironing clothes scolding his teenage daughter. Furtively, I look at my wrist watch and there are still 10 minutes left till the end of the session. I realize that the shift in my attention is due to my reluctance to engage with this fresh image of Meera's dream. I close my eyes; the outside noise recedes and wisps of my early state of reverie begin to trail into my consciousness. An image floats up.

"There is a story of a boy who is a great worshiper of Lord Shiva, who flung his hands around the Shiva Lingam, and clung tightly to it when Yama came to take him. Defeated, the god of death had to go back empty handed," I say. In choosing to view the phallus solely as one of the grey or black stone of Shiva, I'm colluding with Meera, picking up on the meaning I have assigned to the Lingam of her dream. Isn't there another version? That when Yama tried to pull the boy off the Lingam, it broke? Shiva was so angry at the damage to the Lingam that he cursed Yama that he would no longer be able to carry out his assigned task. Since no one died anymore, the world became overpopulated and Shiva soon had to take his curse back.

I mused to myself, though not exactly in the words that I write here, that we equate death with the self, stripped of all memories, stretching back to infancy of which the most vital are of persons we have loved and who have loved us. What we fear is less the end of the body than the end of all our relationships past and present which constitutes the mind. What we sense in death is its inconceivable loneliness, a solution of psychotic proportions.

Meera has imbued the Lingam of her dream, a phallus which is both mine and not mine with a godlike power that can keep at bay, the unimaginable dread of a self that is empty of all ties. I think I understand my own disquiet, perhaps I have a sense that there are deeper terrors of total abandonment underlying her presenting symptoms.

I'm afraid that I do not have much to comment on Sonia's and Lavanya's papers except today's questions for their and our consideration. As a country with high prevalence of depression, the estimated afflicted population in the age group of 13 to 24, is almost 15%. Any contribution like theirs, that would lessen their suffering is welcomed. Both papers used tests of depression, anxiety, and hopelessness. There are a number of such tests in use in different countries, almost 40 some more popular than others. I would have liked, perhaps, to know a little more about the reason for selecting the particular tests in Lavanya's and Sonia's papers. Are they especially suited for the Indian setting? For instance, we have anecdotal evidence that in traditional India, depression is often experienced in a somatic rather than in a psychological language. Not, "I'm feeling sad", but "My heart is sinking". Do the selected tests take such cultural aspects of depression into account? Do we need such tests? Sensitive to how depression, anxieties and stress are experienced and talked about in the Indian context? Perhaps, a project to be taken up?"

And yes, music is by far the superior language of emotions. Our own classical music realized this by classifying each Raga not only according to the time it should be sung or played but also so the mood or emotion it would heighten. Love, laughter, anger, compassion, disgust, horror, heroic, wonder, peace and spiritual devotion. What explains the Indian penchant for not awarding the so-called lyrics of hopelessness as much as in some other cultures and in fact, often welcoming them. Which is also true of Iran, where the singing of ghazals is very much preferred over the singing of very happy songs. A song of love, of loss of love are as much part of the popular film music as are others that celebrate the joyfulness of desire satisfied.

This is not absent in western music as in its famous tragic operas or the yarns of blues in jazz. The aestheticisation of sadness raised to a level beyond that of an individual life can also give a kind of hopefulness and with that I would like to end and thank you all for letting me join you in this venture.

Book Review

A review of **Doolally Sahib and the Black Zamindar: Racism and Revenge in the British Raj** by MJ Akbar. *New Delhi. London. Oxford. New York. Sydney. Bloomsbury. 2022. Pp 327. Rs 544. Hardcover*

by Manab Bose
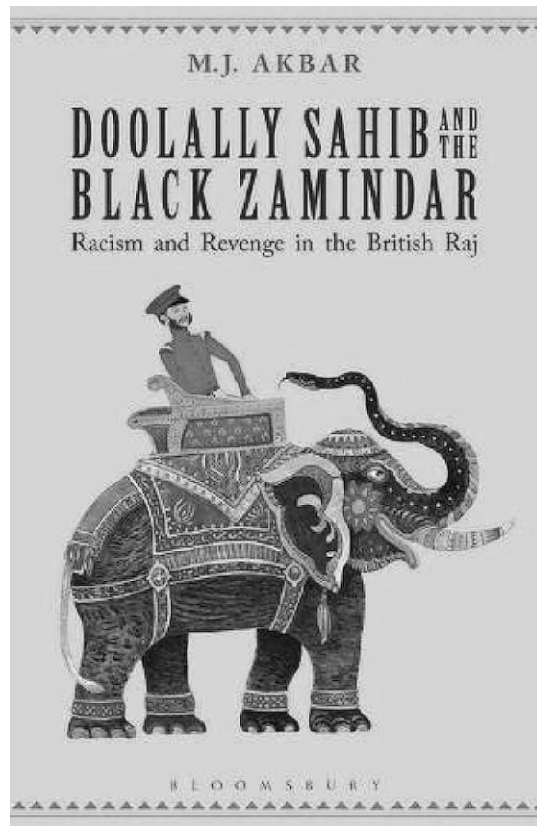
The jacket of the book alerts us that it

…draws upon the letters, memoirs and journals of traders, travellers, bureaucrats, officers, and the occasional bishop and is a chronicle of racial relations between Indians and her last foreign invaders, sometimes infuriating and always compelling.
The British had lost just one out of 18 wars between 1757 and 1857. Defeated repeatedly on the battlefield, Indians found innovative and amusing ways of giving expression to resentment in social mores and economic subversion. When Indians imitated the sahibs, they turned into caricatures; when they absorbed the best that the British brought with them, the confluence was positive and productive.

Akbar's central thesis is that most aristocratic Indians and the new ruler lived parallel lives, adding to the mysticism of white superiority. From white-skinned models promoting local products to a pronounced mythical preference for white soaps and face-creams to transform dark skin, Indians continue to consider everything white as superior. It explains the paranoid need to attend a mediocre college or course located in some little known and racially violent place in the West.

It also explains the unexamined copying of Western models of training instead of experimenting with hybrids and blends that address local problems. So is the case with psycho-social analysis and interpretation in India. Nothing is available in the Indian education system as yet about extension of Psychology into subjects such as socio-analysis, psycho-history, psycho-dynamic theories and practice. The option to study these overseas is of course available to the privileged few. The book review, in this context, is an attempt to build awareness and encourage young Indian students of social sciences to study, research, write and present about psychodynamic interpretations that are grounded in Indian perspectives.

Most critics tend to label the Indian condition of inferiority and insignificance in the Indian psyche as residues of traumatic experiences from 200 years of wrongdoing under colonial rule. Trauma is evident particularly in the communities located in the Northern and Eastern regions of India but cannot be automatically extended to the South of India which remained insulated from the ravages of foreign invasion. The richness of India's civilizational ethos measured against the preoccupations mentioned above therefore appear paradoxical unless viewed under an indigenous psycho-social lens. To the Indian, right and wrong are relative; depending on its specific context, every action can be right – or wrong. In lessening the burden of the individual's responsibility for his actions, the psycho-social view of right action removes the guilt suffered in some societies by those whose actions violate rigid thou-shalt and thou-shalt-not axioms. Instead, an Indians actions are governed by a permissive and gentle, but more ambiguous, thou-canst-but-try ethos.

Every civilisation has a unique way of looking at the world. This world view, the civilization's centre of gravity, is a cluster of ideas which define the goal of human existence, the ways to reach this goal, the errors to be avoided and the obstacles on the way. The world view interprets central human experiences and answers perennial questions on what is good and what is evil, what is real and what is unreal, what is the essential nature of men and women and the world they live in, and what is man's connection to nature, to other human wings and to the cosmos.

There are identifiable, specific elements in the dominant, Indian world view about beliefs and attitudes - many of them not conscious - of a vast number of Indians that are reflected in their lives, their songs and their stories. These beliefs are disseminated through myths and legends, proverbs and metaphors, conveyed through tales told to children, and glimpsed in the admonitions of parents. The world view is absorbed from early on in life, and not through the head but the heart.

Iconic socio-analyst and psychotherapist, Sudhir Kakar (2007), born and raised in India but trained overseas, has this to say:

For centuries, Indian civilization has conveyed to the growing child the almost
somatic conviction that there is an order, even if hidden and unknown, to our visible world.
That there is a design to life that can be trusted in spite of life's sorrows, cruelties and injustices.
The Indian mind, then, tends to convert even the slightest ray of hope into a blaze of light.

The main feature of Indian ethical sensitivity, different from Islamic and Judeo-Christian traditions, is a pronounced relativism which has become entrenched in the Indian way of thinking. Kakar asks and explains:

For how does any individual know what is right action, that
he is acting in accordance with moral law and in conformity with the truth of things?
The traditional answer has been that he cannot since right action depends on the culture of his country,
the historical era in which he lives, on the efforts required of him at his particular stage of life and,
lastly, on the innate character that he has inherited from a previous life.

An Indian can never know the configuration of all his actions in an absolute sense. There is no book, nor authoritative interpreters such as the Church which can help by removing doubts on how the individual must act in each situation.

The author is neither a psycho-therapist nor socio-analyst. Indians know Akbar as a distinguished writer and Member of Parliament. During his long journalistic career, he launched Sunday in 1976, as Editor of India's first weekly political news magazine. He went on to launch two daily newspapers, The Telegraph in 1982, and The Asian Age in 1994. He has also been editorial director of India Today and The Sunday Guardian. He is the author of several internationally acclaimed books, including India: The Siege Within and Gandhi's Hinduism: The Struggle Against Jinnah's Islam. He also has four collections of his columns, reportage, and essays. Akbar joins the just a decade-old legacy of dialogue at international seminars and books a la Shashi Tharoor, an MP and erudite speaker, and films that highlight the violent atrocities of colonial rule, Akbar's book can be read as yet another call to lengthen our distance with The West while resurrecting the pride in the India that was before the invaders came.

Akbar painstakingly describes key aspects of life and living that have survived in India even today. The snippets remind us that acquired meanings make us ambivalent, feeble, and at best caricatures. Right at the outset, in The Preface, Akbar's research picks up this quote from the memoirs of Reginald Heber, Lord Bishop of Calcutta from 1823 to 1826, that:

The British could never comprehend the laissez-faire Indian attitude towards 'holy men',
whether they took the form of impecunious beggars, fake madmen or genuine fakirs.
Indians knew the difference, laughed away the dubious or the charlatan and
revered the Hindu ascetic 'with a double quantity of dung and chalk on his face,
who was singing in a plaintive monotonous tone to a little knot of peasants,
who seemed to regard him with great veneration.

The ambivalence never left British consciousness. In the 1930s, Winston Churchill underestimated a half-naked 'fakir' called Gandhi who could survive without food for three weeks. The Indian mind worked on a very different trajectory from the British. Akbar points this out when he quotes Heber once again:

On Monday, 16 June 1823, the Right Rev. Reginald Heber, Lord Bishop of Calcutta,
his wife Amelia ...went by the Ramsgate steamboat to board the Thomas Grenville at Lower Hope.
Two evenings later, the winds turned favourable, and the Grenville sailed for India.
They anchored at the coastal island of 'Sauger', or Sagar, at the point where the river Hooghly
decants into the Bay of Bengal, at daybreak on 4 October after a night of thunder and lightning.
At noon villagers came aboard to sell. ...The most interesting visitor,
a man dressed in muslin, who spoke good English, asked if any of the officers on board
would intrust their investments to him, or if anybody chose to borrow money at 12 per cent.

Bishop Heber keeps meeting Indians intermittently throughout the book, showcasing strengths that were obvious to a benevolent eye. There were marvellous and heart-warming exceptions in this extraordinary panorama, people who transcended racial prejudice and served as a reminder of what might have been had the British made India a second home and merged with its culture instead of treating it as a fortune-hunter's paradise.

Akbar mentions Fray Sebastien Manrique, a Portuguese, who held Dhaka merchants with awe because they weighed their money rather than count it. Akbar quotes Manrique describing the skill and industry of Bengalee craftsmen…

…as wondrously adroit in all manufactures, such as cotton and silks,
and in the needlework, such as embroideries, which are worked so skilfully,
down to the smallest stitches, that nothing prettier is to be seen anywhere.

He then quotes Nick Robbins who wrote in his memoirs that:

The Indian subcontinent was then the workshop of the world,
accounting for almost a quarter of global manufacturing output in 1750,
compared with just 1.9% for Britain. Within the Mughal Empire, Bengal was the richest province,
described by Aurangzeb as 'the paradise of nations'.

Dhaka's exquisite, light, translucent, gossamer-thin muslin, described as 'woven air', became the high point of fashion in 18th-century London and Paris. Fast forward to the Cannes Film Festival. Indian female actors in Western dresses appear strutting caricatures. A well-draped Indian handloom or silk saree turns heads at international forums even today.

Akbar's meticulous research brings to the reader the strengths of Indian literature, music, poetry, cuisine. In The Wise Fly (Chapter 1), Akbar explains why the might of India's feudal rulers are traditionally tested by two voices raised on behalf of the people: the sage and the satirist. The sage or 'sufi' or sadhu is empowered by a moral mystique derived from the divine right of mendicants. He identifies with poverty and was rarely seen in court. The satirist, armed with pungent common sense, sat in the company of kings, charged with the dangerous responsibility of puncturing hubris. The greater a king, the more he needed a counterintuitive mind to preserve his benevolent rule. Previous rulers, even the invaders, adapted to the culture and kinship of their subjects. In The Punch and Vindaloo Show (Chapter 2), Akbar presents vignettes about how Humayun's grandson, Jehangir, made the Gujarati khichri his main meal on the days of the week he became vegetarian. There was no home leave for officials and soldiers of the Mughal Empire; India was their home. The British were rarely in sync with Indian sensibility: they ate differently, dressed differently, thought differently and laughed for very different reasons from the Indian. For them, home was always the island they had left behind.

In Beef, Beer, Ham and Baboo Hurry Mohan (Chapter 4), Akbar's research shows how

...the stage was set for Thomas Babington Macaulay, historian,
Whig MP for Leeds and flag-waver of the Empire.
...Macaulay's certainties were uncomplicated. Britain, at the pinnacle of civilization,
could help India play slow catch-up by turning natives into miniature Englishmen.
His central project was to shift education from an implicitly useless Sanskrit or
Persian-based knowledge to 'useful learning'.

He then quotes from archives what Macauley presented to British Mps:

A Western education would fashion a class of persons,
Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste,
in opinions, in morals and in intellect.

Lord Bentinck was pleased to pass the English Education Act 1835, just before the end of his term. Macaulay incorporated the dialectics of white supremacy into British Indian policy.

Years later, Gandhi is credited with a brilliantly acerbic remark made in response to a question from a self-satisfied British journalist:

Journalist: What do you think of Western civilization?

Gandhi: I think it would be a good idea.

There was one art in which India never lost its independence: cuisine. In the war of the palate, a new spirit of laissez-faire entered the English kitchen. Victorian women may have complained that Indian food was too 'acid' when they arrived in India but returned home with altered taste buds. Recipe books in English on 'Indian cookery' became bestsellers. Vendors for Edmunds' Empress Curry Powder, sold in bottles, reminded customers that it was not necessary to live in a hot climate to enjoy spicy food.

Akbar reserves his best, perhaps, in the concluding research in the final chapter, The Englishman in India Has No Home and Leaves No Memory. He quotes one William Russell, a travelling journalist visiting the white-only Simla Club in 1857, who asked

> *a native gentleman one day if he ever heard servants complained of us,*
> *or laugh at us, or try to enter into the spirit of our revelries.*

The answer was conditional, 'I will speak the truth, if the Sahib will not be displeased at it.'

The Indian continued, 'Does the Sahib see those monkeys? They are playing very pleasantly.
But the Sahib cannot say why they play, nor what they are going to do next.
Well, then, our poor people look upon you very much as they would on those monkeys,
but that they know you are very fierce and strong and would be angry if you are laughed at.
They are afraid to laugh. But they do regard you as some great powerful creatures
sent to plague them, of whose motives and actions they can comprehend nothing whatever.'

Western analysts continue to find narratives of true events from Indian history and its psychodynamic interpretations difficult to accept. History is bound up with conflicts and struggles within the mind of man, and there is evidence of the increasing need to recognize that the psychological man lives in a history that extends beyond him. Indian readers would be interested to know that socio-analysis provides a perspective on human nature based on insights from Darwin about human evolution, Freud about 'unconscious' motivation, and Mead about the dynamics of social interaction.

Socio-analysis adds to the burden of history struggling to redefine 19th century versions as clear narrative or epic or inevitable destiny. Socio-analytic discourse that is also intersubjective will sharpen insights and perspectives about Indians, helping move the resurgence of a 'Make in India' beyond popular rhetoric. Akbar's book is of course a must read for all Indians, especially for the Indian diaspora. Read it in order not only to grasp the rich heritage of an ancient civilization but also to draw its linkage with the modern science of psychodynamic thinking and practice.

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Upcoming events

<p align="center">**Event - I**</p>

The Inward Change Conference (ICC) 2023, Summer and Winter

Date: 09 to 15 December 2023
At Yuva Mitra, Sinnar, Maharashtra

ICC is Sukrut's flagship three-phase internship for the training and education of professionals in psychoanalytic psychotherapy. Offered annually in summer and winter, ICC is now in its 20th year.

Phase 1 is open to graduates. It offers exploration into the world of human feelings as central to decision-making. This stand-alone entry phase seeks to build awareness of, make sense of, regulate, accept, express, and transform emotional experiences that impact human behaviour. The immersion also helps explore and arrive at new meaning-making and choice-making, hitherto unexamined in the unconscious of human psyche.

Please note: Participation beyond Phase 1 necessitates a process of discussion with a senior professional at Sukrut.

If selected to attend Phase 2 and beyond, Sukrut recommends a commitment of a three to five-year period for psychoanalytic study, application, and practice in areas that could range from offering individual therapy to group work to consulting and teaching leadership and organization psychodynamics. Interns will also need to attend Intersubjective Study sessions, offered in three parts, delivered online every Saturday.

Phase 2 is psychoanalytic and invites deeper explorations into the self and its interface with systems.

Phase 3 continues to be psychoanalytic, requiring deep immersion in both the personal conscious as well as the collective unconscious in order to diagnose below-the-surface sources of toxic transferences and counter-transferences – in both the self and in systems.

Sukrut will provide a Certificate to all who successfully complete all three phases of the Internship and the Intersubjective studies and seminars.

On completion of Phase 3, it is likely that you will be invited to join Sukrut events as a Facilitator/ Consultant/ Psychotherapist. Post internships, individuals are encouraged to plan and implement supervised interventions for issues faced by children, adolescents, adults, families, and groups. Alternately, you could begin supervised work in Organization Psychodynamics.

Who can attend?

You must be a Graduate in any subject, a budding Psychologist, a Post-Graduate in Rehabilitation and Social Sciences with a few years work experience, passionate to explore the world of feelings and decisions, as well as to bring change in people's lives as a Psychotherapist informed by psychoanalysis.

Limited bursaries are available to self-sponsored individuals who will need to make a request in writing.

If you are curious to learn more about ICC, please contact any of the following:

Gracy Jebastina at +91 98448 78236 / jebastina@gmail.com

and

Manab Bose at +91 98809 32293 / manabbose1@gmail.com / manab.bose@iimu.ac.in

Sukrut's next 12-week Intersubjective Study, a course that enables insights and reflections based on psychoanalytical thinking, starts in July. Interested candidates are requested to read the following carefully.

INTERSUBJECTIVE STUDY 2023.1

SUKRUT
facilitating life...
The Psychotherapeutic Centre

FOCUS AREAS:

PART 1
Psychology and Key Psychoanalytic Theories

PART 2
The Self in Philosophy, Comparative Religion, Geo-politics, Geo-economics, Psycho-history, International Racism

PART 3
Psychoanalytic Study & Reflective Seminars

WHEN:

PART 1 & 2
Online, 12 Saturdays
– 4:30 pm to 6pm (IST).
15, 22, 29 July 2023 /
05, 12, 19, 26 August 2023 /
02, 09, 16, 23, 30 September 2023.

PART 3
Part 3, online, most Saturdays from 29 July 2023.

A. THE CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy is a practice that demands knowledge about the human condition in increasingly complex social contexts. Study of interrelated subjects assist.

Sukrut has been sensitive to the growing need to curate intersubjective perspectives in the larger relational system in which social phenomena crystallize, and in which experience is continually and mutually shaped.

Language is becoming one of interacting subjectivities, reciprocal mutual influence, colliding organizing principles, conjunctions and disjunctions, attunements and mal-attunements – a vocabulary attempting to capture the endlessly shifting, intersubjective context of intra-personal and intra-social experiences.

The need, therefore, is for an intersubjective approach that helps us diagnose currents beliefs and actions that continue to stem from our civilizational ethos, rooted in our philosophy, our religion, our political and economic systems -

– not as products of isolated mechanisms – but as forming at the interface of recip-rocally interacting worlds of experience. The constantly changing complexity in which we live today cannot be understood apart from the inter-subjective contexts in which they take form (Stolorow, R. and Atwood, G. 1992.

Contexts of Being: The Inter-subjective Foundations of Psychological Life. Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press).

The objectives of these interphase studies, (mandatory for interns undergoing the final two phases of internship) is to create a reflective space for intellectual and professional development so as to:

1. Develop insights and perspectives for diagnosis of mental health,
2. Enable space for reflections from the practice of psychoanalytic psychotherapy,
3. Enable psychodynamic diagnosis of business and organization, in teaching and consulting.

B. THE CURRICULUM

Registered participants will receive a timetable of the Part in which she/he has enrolled, as well as an online link. Post-session they will receive a set of reading material on the subject covered in the online session, by way of preparation for a seminar the following week.

C. THE FEES

Rs 5000.00 (USD 60 / Euro 56 / GBP 45) per participant for the twelve (12) online sessions. Bursaries are available. Please write to manabbose1@gmail.com should you need one.

THE SUKRUT WAY

Sukrut is a psychotherapy clinic in Bangalore, India founded by a group of psy-chotherapists, in 2003. Starting with psychological services to school teachers and adolescents, Sukrut therapists offer services to schools, hospitals, rehab clinics, industry, and stressed individuals from all walks of life. Psychotherapists associated with Sukrut are informed in psychoanalytic psychotherapy and have committed careers in child, adolescent, and adult mental health. Sukrut offered its 7th. International Conference in February 2023, will soon release CITTA, her first journal on psychoanalytic applications and thinking, and offers education and training such as these intersubjective courses.

Submissions Invited

The Editorial Team of Citta welcomes submissions in the realm of psychoanalysis, as well as intersubjective submissions in disciplines such as history, geography, economics, politics, sociology, anthropology and literature. In particular, we are interested in works that shed light on India's civilizational ethos, examining the tensions that arise between theory and the lived reality in India.

Equally encouraged are contributions that draw upon personal experiences of psychoanalysis and delve into the intricate processes of identity development. It is our hope that the publication of such submissions will not only contribute to the growth and development of psychoanalytic thinking but also foster a sense of community and dialogue among our readers.

If you have valuable insights, research findings, or thought-provoking ideas to share, please contact our Editor at priya24@gmail.com.

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