



SECOND ISSUE | 2024



**THE ANNUAL
MAGAZINE
OF THE DEPARTMENT
OF PSYCHOLOGY**
JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA



Foreword

Dear readers,
It is with great pleasure that I present the second issue of *Psychronicles*, the annual magazine of the Department of Psychology, Jamia Millia Islamia. This publication stands as a testament to the creative brilliance and innovative spirit of our students.

Psychronicles was conceived as a dynamic platform for both undergraduate and postgraduate students to express their talents, passions, and intellectual pursuits. Within these pages, you will find a diverse array of thought-provoking articles, engaging poetry, insightful prose, and research on psychology, mental health, and a range of related fields. This edition encapsulates the varied interests and viewpoints of our students, showcasing their deep commitment to understanding and advancing the human mind and behavior.

I hope this issue of *Psychronicles* serves to inspire and provoke thought in its readers, encouraging a greater appreciation for the fascinating world of psychology and the boundless potential of the human mind. As we move forward on this exciting journey, I am confident that *Psychronicles* will continue to grow as a space for the exchange of ideas, a celebration of talent, and a reflection of the transformative impact psychology can have on our lives.

I would also like to acknowledge the unwavering support and visionary leadership of the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Professor Mazhar Asif, who has continually championed initiatives like this within the Department. My heartfelt congratulations go to Editor-in-Chief *Ananyaa Saha*, the Editorial Board, all of the contributors, as well as the faculty members, particularly *Dr. Meena Osmany*, our Students' Advisor, and everyone who has played a role in bringing this magazine to life. Their dedication, hard work, and commitment to excellence are truly commendable. I have no doubt that their efforts will inspire, inform, and entertain our students, encouraging them to continue this tradition year after year.



Prof. Sheema Aleem
Head, Department of Psychology
Jamia Millia Islamia

From the Advisor to the Subject Association

It is with immense joy and excitement that we present this issue of *Psychronicles*, the annual magazine of the Department of Psychology at Jamia Millia Islamia. This publication serves as a reflection of the year's journey, capturing the department's achievements while highlighting the diverse talents, skills, and interests of our students. It truly embodies the spirit and culture of the department.

The magazine plays a vital role in our students' academic development. It sparks their curiosity, fosters critical thinking, and encourages creative expression. Beyond that, it provides invaluable hands-on experience in publishing—skills that will serve them well in their future academic and professional endeavors. It gives students the opportunity to showcase their abilities, refine their writing and editing skills, and develop leadership and teamwork qualities.

In today's competitive world, the best way to ensure our students' relevance and success is to understand them more deeply than they understand themselves, and use that insight to shape careers that align with their unique strengths and passions. As faculty members, we are dedicated to nurturing this combination of intrinsic interests and emotionally-driven motivations, which is a blend of nature and nurture, within our students.

This magazine offers a platform for students to explore and express their views on the psychological and social issues affecting our society. We hope it contributes positively to their personal and academic growth. *Psychronicles* will continue to showcase the distinct journeys of our students, capturing their evolution both as individuals and as aspiring professionals.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Prof. Sheema Aleem, the Head of the Department, for her continuous support in encouraging our students to think critically and strive for excellence in their chosen paths. I also want to thank the members of the Subject Association, the Editor-in-Chief, and the entire Editorial Board for their unwavering dedication and hard work in bringing this first edition to fruition. I hope that our students will continue to engage with and contribute to this tradition by sharing their thoughts on relevant and thought-provoking psychological topics. Additionally, we welcome any suggestions or feedback that could help us improve and enhance the next edition.



Dr. Meena Osmany
Advisor to the Subject Association
Department of Psychology
Jamia Millia Islamia

From the Subject Association

Vice President

Psychronicles 2024 stands as a reflection of our department's collective growth, dedication, and accomplishments. As we turn the pages of this edition, it's important to pause and express our gratitude to the outstanding faculty, dedicated staff, and passionate students who have contributed to shaping the department into what it is today. Together, through our shared commitment to excellence, collaboration, and compassion, we have built a strong foundation for a future filled with limitless potential.

Throughout the year, our department has truly become a close-knit family, with faculty, staff, and students all coming together. We've shared countless moments of joy, laughter, and camaraderie, but we've also experienced stressful times—whether it was racing against time before exams or finalizing dissertations.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the editorial board for their tireless efforts in bringing this magazine to life, especially with this first edition. As we wrap up this year, let us take a moment to reflect on and celebrate all the memories we've made—the joyful ones and the challenging ones alike.



Anveeksha
Vice President
Subject Association (2023-24)

From the General Secretary

When we first had the opportunity to form the Subject Association for the year, we were filled with a mixture of excitement and nerves. Now, after a full year, I can confidently say that this role has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my academic journey. Organizing events—from mental health sessions to farewells and fresher's parties—often meant a lot of work piling up, keeping us occupied for days. Yet, at the end of it all, the satisfaction of accomplishing something meaningful made it all worthwhile.

Over the past year, our team has given its best to make our university experience unforgettable, constantly striving to improve and grow based on the valuable input from the passionate members of our department. The efforts of the Subject Association team were crucial in ensuring that events ran smoothly and initiatives came to life. I

am especially grateful to our Head of Department and the Advisor to the Subject Association for their unwavering support, encouragement, and guidance. I also want to thank our professors for inspiring us to stay on the right path.

A special thanks goes to my incredible classmates, whose understanding and support were key to the success of every initiative. Through our collective efforts, we've created memories that will last a lifetime. It's this supportive and compassionate atmosphere that allowed us to make this year truly eventful.

This year, the Editorial Board has worked to document these memories and the individual achievements of every student, preserving them for us to look back on and proudly share with others. I'm deeply grateful to the Editorial team for their hard work in bringing this project to fruition.



Shailja
General Secretary
Subject Association (2023-24)

From the Joint Secretary

An academic year is filled with so many memorable events, challenges, and achievements—so much that it's far too valuable to remain confined to our memories alone. These experiences deserve to be shared, celebrated, and preserved. This was the driving force behind the creation of our department's official magazine, and I'm thrilled to see that this idea has finally come to life! My hope is that, over time, this magazine continues to grow and evolve, becoming a lasting tradition for future generations. One day, I envision it being recognized not just within the walls of Jamia, but reaching beyond, allowing the stories and insights captured within it to inspire and connect people across a wider community.

As the Joint Secretary of the department, I felt extremely proud that I was part of the team responsible for "lifting what had fallen". I thank everyone for giving me this beautiful opportunity, and for seeing me worthy of holding this challenging position. Couldn't be more grateful!



Madeeha Fatima

Joint Secretary

Subject Association (2023-24)

From the Editor-In-Chief

It is with immense pride and excitement that I present to you *Psychronicles 2024*, the annual magazine of the Department of Psychology, Jamia Millia Islamia. This publication is not just a collection of words and images—it is a reflection of the collective spirit, creativity, and intellectual curiosity that defines our department. As we navigate the ever-evolving landscape of psychology and mental health, this magazine stands as a testament to the diverse talents and perspectives of our students.

The journey to this edition has been one of collaboration, growth, and learning. From thought-provoking articles to captivating poetry and insightful research, this issue encapsulates the passion and dedication of our students who are constantly pushing boundaries and exploring the depths of the human mind. Each piece within these pages serves as a window into the vibrant intellectual life of our department, showcasing our shared commitment to understanding and enhancing human well-being.

As the Editor-in-Chief, I have had the privilege of working with an incredibly talented and dedicated team—both within the Editorial Board and across the department. Their hard work and commitment to excellence have been the driving forces behind bringing this magazine to life. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the faculty, particularly Prof. Sheema Aleem, our Head of Department, for their unwavering support and guidance, which have been instrumental in the creation of this edition.

This magazine is also a celebration of the student body—the heart and soul of our department. It is through their contributions, ideas, and creativity that *Psychronicles* continues to evolve year after year. I encourage you to dive into these pages with an open mind and heart, and I hope that you find inspiration, reflection, and a sense of belonging within these stories and research.

Looking ahead, I am confident that *Psychronicles* will only grow stronger, continuing to serve as a platform for the exchange of ideas, a celebration of our collective achievements, and a source of inspiration for future generations. As we continue this tradition, I hope we inspire each other to think critically, act compassionately, and contribute meaningfully to the field of psychology.

Thank you for being a part of this journey. May this edition of *Psychronicles* spark curiosity, ignite creativity, and foster a deeper appreciation for the incredible potential of the human mind.

With gratitude and best wishes,



Ananyaa Saha

Editor-in-Chief

Psychronicles (2023-2024)

Department of Psychology

Jamia Millia Islamia

Department of Psychology
मनोविज्ञान विभाग
تشبيته تقسیمات



ICONS UNMASKED

UNVEILING PSYCHE
ACROSS MULTIMEDIA



Agar Main

*Agar main aankhein band karun
Wo aankhein jo uthti hain tumhare liye
Mera Dil dhadakta rehta hai
Main chahta hun ki tum bhool jaao
Bhool Jaao
Agar ye khwaab hai to mujhe abhi jaga dein
Kya tumhe is haal mein bhi main auro'n ka lagta hun
Ya phir tum waqaii mera muqaddar ho?
Main tumko dekhta hun, main tumko mehsoos karta hun
Isi tarah main jaanta hun tum aage badho, dur kuch faasle par hamare jo darmiyaan Khali
jaghein
Tum ye dikhane aaye ho ke chalo mohabbat hume ek baar chuu sakti hai*

Hassan Fatima Zaidi
year, B.A. [hons.] Psychology

Melancholy of a President

Mental illnesses are often unwelcomed by our society. Most of us are compelled to “suffer in silence” due to the prodigious pressure exerted by the shame of getting our vulnerability exposed. Dedicated to a prominent personality, who has a significant role in remedying the world’s cruel politics and prejudices in history, this article will facilitate the message “strong ones need help too”. This famous figure is identified as Abraham Lincoln, the revered sixteenth President of the United States of America. Abraham Lincoln is remembered as a wise, calm and compassionate leader. ‘Honest Abe’, ‘The Rail Splitter’, ‘The Great emancipator’, whatever nickname one calls him by, he earned them wholeheartedly. In contrast to this public image he painted, Lincoln had a melancholic section in his life. There was another Lincoln who was gloomy, short tempered with severe mood changes, the one who is not as known. Very few people realise that this great leader suffered from ‘Major depressive disorder’- a mood disorder which is characterised by periodic feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and helplessness. More than just bouts of blues; Depression isn’t some minor phase and one can’t simply snap out of it. It is a condition that requires professional help and repeated doses of courage and motivation. It is declared by his closed ones that Lincoln harbored suicidal thoughts. A neighbour, Mentor Graham stated that “Lincoln told me that he felt like committing suicide often.”

Neighbours and loved ones were to keep watch over him. He was often seen weeping in public and recited doleful poetry. He told jokes and stories at odd times, as he claimed, he needed the laughs for his survival. Such

contrasting episodes were books of an eccentric pile of behaviour and thoughts, that his friends called his “melancholy”. The medication he was on did more harm than good. He was prescribed mercury based pills to counter this unknown melancholy. Mercury, as we all know today, is highly toxic and could explain his weird behaviour. These pills were popularly known as the ‘blue mass pills’. Lincoln’s depression was supported by causes; his life was tragic and harsh which often left him without hope. He grew up in very poor conditions, and had a brother, Thomas who died at an early age. When Lincoln was nine years old, his mother passed away. So did his uncle and aunt, later. His sister Sarah died giving birth to her baby with Lincoln being eighteen years old, making him lonelier. Lincoln’s first love, a pretty young woman-Anna Mayes Rutledge, died of typhoid in 1835. This is when Lincoln slid into his first bout of major depression. He had a second and more devastating spell in 1841, when his engagement broke with his future wife Mary Todd due to “his affection for another woman”. His friends and relatives were fearful as Lincoln started to show signs of suicidal behaviour. They removed guns, knives and all kinds of harmful articles from his environment. In the words of his best friend, “Lincoln went crazy. I had to remove razors from his room, take away all knives and other such dangerous things.” To top it all off, in 1850, Lincoln’s second child- Edward, died of Tuberculosis at the age of three. Lincoln felt more helpless, he started to see-as he said- the world as hard and grim, full of misery. Lincoln himself wrote that if his feelings were divided to all, no man would smile again. Despite Lincoln having

good friends and acquaintances, who enjoyed his company and loved having him around, they noticed cracks in his cheerful behaviour.

In 1856, when Lincoln lost the nomination to Congress for the vice presidency, again, he started consuming his blue mass mercury pills again. No one knows how many pills the future President took, but it's known that they worsened his depression. When you hear Lincoln's friends describe him in their terms, "he's always the most depressed person they've ever seen". During Lincoln's presidency, millions of young Americans died on the battlefield. From his journals and letter, we came to know that he felt directly responsible for all these deaths but found no other way to preserve the union. The weight of the world and every hardship life had to offer, laid heavy on his shoulders. He mustered up the strength to carry on and was successful. It was reported that he stopped his medication five months after he became the President.

Once Lincoln stopped taking the blue mass pills, he became calmer and patient; and became renowned as a true leader and role model for thousands. He became the man who led America to victory and initiated the end of

slavery. It is said that there are 16,000 books and 125 articles based on Lincoln's life. He never gave up regardless of being tormented by the tragic events that took place in his life. Lincoln's private life is another huge inspiration for people who find themselves with no hope.

Besides being a good Leader and Pioneer in society, Abraham Lincoln incarnated the belief that human beings can be vulnerable and strong at the same time. Orville Hickman Browning, an attorney and Lincoln's acquaintance said "Mr. Lincoln believed that there was a predestined work for him in this world". Whenever he had these bouts of depression and sadness, he knew he had work to do, his remarkable ambition and will built his fascinating character. We are always under the pressure of 'staying strong' in difficult times; conversely, strength comes from feeling and showcasing our emotions, seeking support from people around us. Lincoln, having been reputed as a "great strong leader", accepted help and support from his family and friends whenever his sadness demanded. Indeed, "Strong ones need help too".

Hadiqa Batool

1st Year, B.A. hons Psychology

The Man Who Couldn't Recognize Himself

Imagine waking up every morning to your blaring loud alarm, that you set by yourself, because you know your tendency to sleep through softer melodies; you recognize your habit. Now, wide awake, you get up to go to the bathroom and brush your teeth. You walk past the mirror in your room, briefly glancing at it, expecting to see your messed-up hair and crusty eyes staring back at you. You pause suddenly and take a few nervous steps backward. Who... is that? I don't recognize that person! This may sound like a freaky nightmare to you. Not being able to recognize your own face? That's surely not possible in real life, right? What if I told you it was?

Neurologist and best-selling author, Oliver Sacks, known for the famous neurological case histories, 'The Man Who Mistook his Wife for a Hat' and 'Awakenings', suffered from a condition known as Prosopagnosia or Face Blindness. Prosopagnosia is the inability to recognize faces. Patients suffering from the condition are usually not able to recognize faces; even that of friends or family. In some cases, patients are unable to recognize themselves in mirrors or pictures. It can either be Developmental (present from birth) or Acquired through trauma or injury. Sacks suffered from developmental Prosopagnosia; possibly genetic, something he realised after visiting his older brother in Australia, who suffered from the same symptoms.

Oliver Sacks describes his condition as "moderate", but recounts how it has affected his life, saying, "On several occasions, I have apologised for almost bumping into a large bearded man, only to realise that the large bearded man was myself in a mirror". On one occasion, he was not able to recognize his own assistant, despite working with her for almost six years. Once, Sacks' psychiatrist, who he had been seeing for several years, met a similar fate when he met him in a different environment.

Sacks also suffers from topographical Agnosia, a condition in which one is unable to recognize places. He recalls an instance where

he went on a walk with his nephew, only to realise he couldn't find his way back home. He describes it, saying, "After two hours of walking around, during which we both got thoroughly soaked, I heard a shout". He continues, "It was my landlord; he said that he had seen me pass the house three or four times, apparently failing to recognize it."

Sacks' condition can help us understand the difference between sensation and perception. A sensation is when our sensory receptors collect information from the outside world and send it to our brain. Perception, on the other hand, is when our brain interprets this information and helps us understand it. Sacks' condition affects his perception. He can see the faces of his loved ones clearly, but the part of his brain responsible for the perception of faces is not able to interpret the visual stimuli his eyes receive. The result of which is the cause of his unusual experiences. Individuals suffering from Prosopagnosia usually learn to recognize people based on behaviours or other non-facial cues, such as voice, usual clothing style, etc.

Oliver Sacks, a renowned and dedicated scientist, devoted his life to understanding and describing the complexities of the human mind through compassion and understanding. He strived to see his patients as individuals and not as carriers of diseases or syndromes. His brilliant mind led him to successfully treat surviving patients from the pandemic of *Encephalitis Lethargica* or *Sleepy Sickness*, which swept the world during World War 1. An Oscar-nominated movie 'Awakenings', released in 1990, was based on his book of the same name that recorded this remarkable achievement.

Oliver Sacks passed away at the age of 82, after being diagnosed with a terminal illness. Although he was criticised by his fellow medical professionals for his sympathetic and anecdotal accounts of his patients, his patients, and readers alike remember him and his kindness fondly.

Syeda Hamda Ashraf
1st Year B.A. [hons.] Psychology



VOICES IN THE VOID

SAMRA KHAN
BA HONS PSYCHOLOGY

Mental Health Burdens and Communication Barriers Among Dementia Patients

The DSM-III-R (1987) defines the term dementia as a syndrome produced by many disorders characterised by impairment from a previously higher level of intellectual functioning. The impairment involves memory, language, orientation, constructional abilities, abstract thinking, problem solving and praxis, and must be of sufficient severity to interfere with occupational or social performance or both, i.e., functional impairment. Changes in personality and affect are noted but a normal level of consciousness is preserved until the very late stages of the disorder. Difficulties related to communication and loss of linguistic abilities are among the earliest symptoms of dementia, that include difficulties in finding appropriate words, naming people or objects, or not being able to put their complete sentences to express their emotions. As the disease progresses it leads to forgetting names of family members and friends, confusion about role-relationships and not being able to recognise people they once knew, difficulties in finding words for objects, difficulties with naming, understanding, and a louder voice when speaking.

People with dementia often experience changes in their emotional responses. They may have less control over their feelings and how to express them. For example, someone may overreact to things, have rapid mood changes or feel irritable. They may also appear unusually distant or uninterested in things. Dementia may cause people to feel insecure and lose confidence in themselves and their abilities. They may feel

they are no longer in control and may not trust their own judgement. They may also experience the effects of stigma and social ‘demotion’ – not being treated the same way by people – as a result of their diagnosis. Depression makes it harder for a person with dementia to remember things and enjoy their life. People in long-term residential care appear to be particularly at risk of depression. It can be very difficult to know if a person with dementia is depressed. Some of the typical signs of depression in dementia are: loss of interest and pleasure in previously enjoyed activities, lack of energy, poor sleep, loss of appetite and weight, expressing feelings of worthlessness and sadness, being unusually emotional, tearful, angry or agitated and increased confusion. Although hallucinations and delusions are imaginary, they seem very real to the person experiencing them and can cause extreme anxiety, paranoia and even panic. Some people can also misidentify other people or themselves. For example, they might feel frightened when they cannot recognise their reflection in the mirror.

This interplay between communication barriers and mental health challenges creates a cyclical relationship potentially worsening the overall quality of life for dementia patients. My research is descriptive in nature, and I made an effort to seek real-life instances of dementia manifesting a range of its consequences. This study sheds light on the patients’ current living conditions, and the treatment they receive which may also include therapy which is usually

necessary and very helpful in slowing down progression. By understanding the bidirectional nature of communication barriers and mental health challenges, we can develop more targeted and effective interventions to enhance the well-being of individuals living with dementia.

I employed a qualitative research design, using in-depth interviews to gain insights into the experiences among dementia patients admitted to dementia care facilities based out of New Delhi. Ten participants were purposefully selected to ensure a diverse and representative sample. Participants were aged between 28 and 80. In-depth semi-structured informant interviews were conducted with each participant. They were asked about their personal and professional experiences with dementia patients at the day care centres and ashram. After talking to the participants and gaining useful insights from caregivers who have been in contact with the dementia patients situated at the Dignity Foundation, the Hope Ek Asha Foundation, and the SHEOWS Dementia and Old Age Care facilities I was able to concisely compile the innumerable instances of challenges that my research sets out to expound.

The patients admitted to these facilities exhibit signs of forgetfulness, aggression, violence caused due to frustration, paranoia, attachment and desire to go home back to their families. The patients pretended to identify and still be in contact with their past selves, and could not connect with their actual life conditions. The dementia patients also displayed peculiar actions that include sitting in the same positions for hours in one go, walking around constantly for several hours and so on. The healthcare professionals also reported that the dementia patients would abuse them, throw objects at them, and break things out of frustration and anxiety. When asked about the difficulties in communication they face, the caregivers at the SHEOWS Ashram highlighted

that the patients would not prefer to talk or communicate in any other form with anyone, they would not be able to answer the simplest questions, they would shout and scream and throw tantrums whenever they were asked to communicate or express themselves.

The caregivers at the Dignity and the Hope Ek Asha foundation reported that the patients usually did not know what to say, they were unable to communicate using situation appropriate sentences, they could not name their family members or recall their past experiences. They would be silent, glued to one place, and would sleep for hours. They would not consume food or water on time and would display anger when asked to do so. In one particular instance, a patient would feel like they were being kidnapped whenever they would get in a car to go home.

However, administering appropriate therapy has led to significant positive changes in their personalities and their conditions. The caregivers at the dignity and the Hope Ek Asha foundation incorporate physiotherapy, yoga, occupation therapy, speech therapy, music therapy, art therapy and reading into their daily schedules. They are made to go out on picnics, visit parks, play games and get involved in friendly activities. When asked about friendship among the patients, it was found that earlier they were hostile to each other but have now become friends and can take part in group activities without any reservations. Such significant growth and progress could only be observed after giving patients therapy which also includes prayer and mindful thinking and relaxation.

On the other hand, the caregivers and other people at the SHEOWS ashram told us that the dementia patients were hopeless cases and that even though the doctors administer medicines on them, they do not see any significant positive changes in their health conditions. This is

because the SHEOWS Old Age Home does not give proper therapy in addition to medication. In order to slow progression and help induce positive benefits in their health conditions, both appropriately prescribed medication and therapy are necessary. The Alzheimer's Association Sugden-Best suggests strategies to promote effective communication with a person with dementia that include: giving the person some signs, as touching hand, or using the person's name before you start the conversation; ensuring that the environment is calm and free of disturbance; using simple language and speaking slowly; using short and simple sentences; talking to a person with dementia as an adult and not speaking in the presence of a person as if he or she is not present; giving enough time to process information and to respond; letting the person with dementia complete their thoughts and make choices with the words; avoiding guessing what the person with dementia is trying to say; using proper facial expressions, not correcting

the person with dementia if he or she is making mistakes.

In order to help dementia patients navigate mental health challenges, offer them plenty of praise and encouragement – celebrate successes and focus on positives, avoid harsh criticism or belittling comments, ensure people have time to do the activities they enjoy or that give them purpose. If a person makes a mistake, try to be as supportive as possible. Help people to maintain existing social relationships and form new ones. This can be done by setting up joint activities with friends and family, joining hobby groups and encouraging conversation. Dementia is a disorder that cannot be cured, and treatment can only ultimately help in slowing down progression. Administering alternate treatment and therapy becomes exceedingly important for patients to be able to live their lives as comfortably and as normally as they can, for as long as they can.

Samra Khan

3rd Year, B.A. (Hons) Psychology

Embers in the Darkness

*For some, the world's a shadowed stage,
Where dreams unravel, pain takes the page.
They walk a path of endless night,
Where hope's faint glimmer hides from sight.*

*In battle fought with heart and soul,
They strive for goals that take their toll.
But victories seem distant stars,
Elusive dreams, unhealed scars.*

*Their spirit strains beneath the weight,
Of losses dealt by cruel fate.
Yet in their eyes, a quiet light.
A burning ember, softly bright.*

*For in depths of darkest gloom,
Where flowers wither, fail to bloom,
A strength unseen begins to grow,
In hearts that break but never show.*

*They wear their wounds like silent shields,
And fight on barren, rocky fields.
Though winning's touch may never bless,
Their courage shines in their distress.*

*So to the souls who always strive,
Who face the storm and yet survive,
Know in your struggle, there's a grace,
A beauty in your steadfast pace.*

*For some, the path is always hard,
Their dreams elusive, hope's discarded.
But in their fight, we see the proof,
That strength endures, aloof from truth.*

Mohammad Anas Tarique
2nd year, B.A.(Hons) Psychology

Sigmund Freud: The Human Being

“Everywhere I go, I see his face,” or rather, his name: Sigmund Freud. The Austrian neurologist, synonymous with ‘id, ego, superego’ and ‘dream analysis,’ was not only a theorist but also the architect of the ‘unconscious mind’ and ‘psychoanalysis.’ Interestingly, Freud himself was its first patient. His personal struggles with both physical and mental health significantly shaped his revolutionary ideas in psychology. Freud battled anxiety and depression throughout his life, as reflected in his work, personal writings, letters to his disciples, and biographies. He also suffered from psychosomatic disorders and phobias.

Freud’s psychoanalytic theories were rooted in the belief that unconscious conflicts cause anxiety and other disorders. In 1896, Freud lost his father, which triggered symptoms like heart palpitations, anxiety, depression, and disturbing dreams. He was diagnosed with *neurasthenia*, a term used during the Victorian era to describe ‘mechanical weakness of the nerves.’ This period led Freud to embark on a journey of ‘self-analysis in search of the root cause of his illnesses. He meticulously documented his dreams, deconstructing their symbolism to uncover hidden desires and unconscious conflicts. In doing so, he uncovered a complex web of childhood experiences and emotions.

Through his self-analysis, Freud discovered that he harboured hostility toward his father, Jacob, and had sexual desires for his mother, Amalia. This revelation, termed the ‘Oedipus Complex,’ that became a cornerstone of his psychoanalytic theories. Freud generalised that all children experience a similar desire for the opposite-sex parent and rivalry with the same

sex parent. Freud’s disciples wrote about his troubled relationship with his mother, which they suggested making him into a masochist. This trait is reflected in his work on the ‘death instinct’ or ‘Thanatos.’ Freud often neglected his own health while indulging in his passion for tobacco, a habit that worsened his condition. Diagnosed with jaw cancer, he underwent thirty operations but refused to give up tobacco, writing that abstinence “does not seem justified to me.” Freud’s biographers suggested that his cancer could be linked to subconscious hatred, tied to his relationships with his parents. His work on anxiety and neuroses further challenged the Victorian classification of conditions like obsessions and phobias, leading to the modern understanding of anxiety. Freud also experimented with cocaine, fascinated by its anti-depressant qualities, which inspired concepts like ‘repressed memories’ and ‘free association.’ However, his advocacy for cocaine later resulted in tragedy, as a close friend, Fleischl-Marxow, developed an acute case of cocaine psychosis and died.

Freud’s original concepts have since undergone numerous revisions, both by himself and by other psychoanalysts. Though often reductionist, overemphasising sex and neglecting the role of social and cultural factors, Freud’s theories have paved the way for modern psychotherapy. His emphasis on the importance of early childhood experiences still resonates with many, as therapists continue to explore clients’ childhoods in clinical settings. Despite his flaws, Freud’s work revolutionised our understanding of the human mind.

Bhavya Singh

1st year, M.A. Applied Psychology

NON-THEMED ENTRIES



Under The Moon

Sitting under the moon,
drunk on thoughts,
sharing food with a friend as slow music plays in the
background,
and suddenly, silence and calm, they don't scare you anymore.

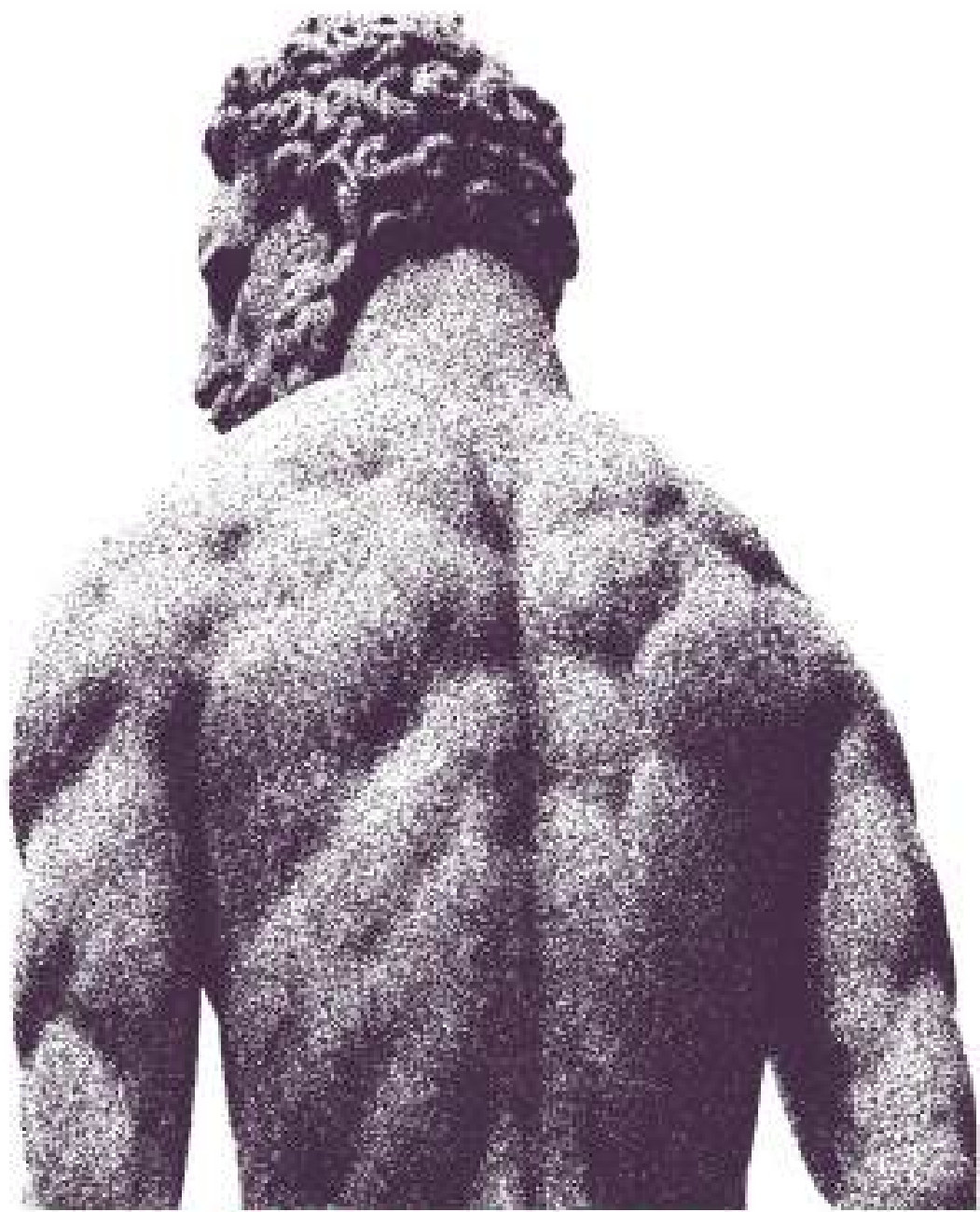
Walking to and from the same spots again and again,
because both of you know if you walked straight
and stopped only when you were out of words to say,
you might go too far.

Talking about everything that's wrong, everything you hate,
yet at that moment, everything feels right
and your only enemy is time,
time that's running so fast as if it has a train to catch.

Just sitting under the moon
with a friend you can open your heart to,
knowing full well you don't have to pretend,
knowing full well even if this doesn't last
like most bonds don't,
It'll never be something you shall regret.

Iman Akhter

2nd year, Ba Hons Psychology



**BODY IMAGE
AND
SELF PERCEPTION**

**RAUNAK KUMAR MALIK
SANDALI SINGH
BA HONS PSYCHOLOGY**

Have you ever thought about how you look or had a negative thought about your body? Have you ever wondered how you truly perceive your reflection? Or how your feelings about your body shape your daily life? What about the beliefs you hold about your appearance? Do you find yourself avoiding certain situations because of how you think others might see your body? In some way or another, we all have been there and hated the way we look. And that's not something to be ashamed about, but something that needs to be looked after. Body image, or BI, is how we see ourselves on the outside, but it's way more than just a reflection in the mirror. It's a mix of how we feel about our bodies, what we think about them, and how we behave because of those thoughts and feelings. This includes how satisfied or dissatisfied we are with our appearance, the emotions tied to our bodies, what we believe about how we look, and the actions we take to avoid or deal with situations where our bodies are on display. BI isn't just about looks; it's deeply influenced by who we are—our gender, ethnicity, and the culture we live in.

POP CULTURE

What we see in movies, on TV, and online can mess with how we see ourselves. It makes us think we need to look a certain way to be okay. Having a good view of your body means being cool with how you look and not stressing about changing it. It's about seeing the good in yourself beyond just how you look. People with healthy body images don't fall for the idea of having a "perfect" body. They feel good about themselves and don't judge others based on looks. But if you see yourself in a bad way, you might let your looks define who you are. You'll always compare yourself to others and see yourself way differently than you are. It's a bummer because it makes you feel embarrassed, nervous, and awkward in your skin.

Everywhere we look, we're bombarded with images of celebrities who seem to have perfect bodies and faces. Magazines like 'Vogue' and 'Glamour' are full of photos of thin, attractive, and muscular models, making us believe that beauty equals being skinny, fit, and tall. In movies, actors and actresses are often portrayed as stereotypically beautiful; even teenagers who

look like supermodels, which isn't realistic. Growing up surrounded by these images, people start to believe they should look like celebrities, which can make them feel bad about themselves because they don't match up. Constantly comparing themselves to these idealised images makes them see themselves as unattractive. Overall, because of the pervasive influence of pop culture, people's self-perception tends to become more negative as they internalise unrealistic beauty standards.

Social comparison theory, proposed by psychologist Leon Festinger, suggests that people determine their own social and personal worth based on how they stack up against others. In this context, individuals compare themselves to the idealised images presented in pop culture, leading to negative self-perception if they perceive themselves as falling short of these standards. Social cognitive theory, developed by psychologist Albert Bandura, emphasises the role of observational learning and social influences on behaviour. In the context of body image, individuals observe and model the behaviours and attitudes of celebrities and media figures, internalising these standards and beliefs about beauty and attractiveness. Both theories contribute to understanding how exposure to pop culture images shapes individuals' perceptions of themselves and influences their self-esteem and body image.

TOXIC GYM CULTURE

Social media has played a significant role in distorting the body image of many adolescents. Be it a hyper-masculine muscular physique, or an extremely slender physique for women, the effects of such portrayals taint the perception of millions, who to achieve these naturally unattainable physiques, resort to dragging themselves through a very strict diet that lack in all the macronutrients and end up abusing steroids. Modern-day gym culture flaunts extremely muscular and lean physiques as a generalisation across the population, which is extremely difficult to attain even after the use of Anabolic Steroids. It has been shown in research on High school students in America that 375,000 male students and 150,000 female students use Anabolic steroids to change their physical

appearance. Without knowing the drastic effects of anabolic steroids on physiological and cardiological health, they continue to abuse steroids and are unable to stop before it is too late.

Research conducted by the University of North Texas has shown that the use of Anabolic steroids during adolescence not only interferes with brain development by altering the Gonadal Sex Hormones, but it directly alters normal brain remodelling by changing the structures and neurotransmitter functioning. These alterations in brain development lead to behavioural issues like aggression, and a significant increase in physiological load on the heart. Exercising over a long period has also been associated with chronic illnesses, fatigue, and burnout.

DIETARY PRACTICES

In today's day and age, conforming to exceedingly high body standards proves unreachable. The extremes that have now been normalised, thanks to the advent of social media have coloured the ideal body image, taking a toll on the self-esteem of many. To reconcile, teenagers find themselves lost in a labyrinth of dietary modifications that are so harsh that they in turn lead to more indulgence in processed food.

You are what you eat, is not just a proverb. The food we consume plays a major role in our development and we should wisely plan our diet as it plays a vital role beyond satiating hunger. According to Firth and colleagues, instilling healthy habits has been shown to help and protect people's physical and mental health. Poor diet and regular consumption of foods rich in refined carbohydrates have been shown to increase the risk of diabetes and obesity. Epidemiological studies have shown that following a healthy or Mediterranean diet, which requires regular consumption of fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes, chicken, and occasional red meat, reduces the risk of depression. This is supported by recent studies comparing the effects of the gut microbiome on brain and cognitive functions. The role of changes in the brain and gut microbiome in mental illness has been demonstrated; with research focusing on the hypothesis that behaviour is altered by changes in the gut microbiome in mice

and significant depression in humans and its association with mood changes.

Since our mood can also cause changes in our diet, frequent consumption of carbohydrates and foods containing saturated fat has been shown to cause distress due to many changes in blood sugar. Hyperglycemia causes the release of stress hormones such as cortisol, epinephrine, growth hormone, and glucagon. Results from several studies on humans indicate that regular release of these drugs into the bloodstream can lead to changes in anxiety, irritability, and hunger. Additionally, clinical studies have shown that diabetes is associated with negative emotions. Such a diet may negatively affect brain health, causing cognitive impairment, hippocampal dysfunction, and neurological damage. Eating disorders can lead to depression, and as many mental health conditions- including negative emotions- are linked to additional pain.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, societal standards, pop culture, gym culture, and extreme dietary practices heavily influence body image, leading to negative self-perception and harmful behaviours. To deal with this, promoting realistic body diversity in media, encouraging healthy habits, and raising awareness about the risks of extreme measures are essential. Embracing diversity and self-acceptance is crucial for promoting positive body image and overall well-being.

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Rethinking Education for Women- Mary Wollstonecraft

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A Vindication of the Rights of Woman is one of the most revolutionary and trailblazing works of feminism. Published in 1792, Mary Wollstonecraft's work argued that the educational system of her time intentionally trained women to be frivolous and dull-witted. In it, Wollstonecraft directly addresses the educational and political theorists of the eighteenth century who believed women should be limited to the domestic sphere and receive restricted education. Wollstonecraft was provoked to write the Rights of Woman after reading Talleyrand-Périgord's 1791 report to the French National Assembly, which stated that women are suitable only for domestic education. The almost 87000 word essay adopts a hybrid tone that binds rational argument with a vehement rhetoric of sensibility.

Wollstonecraft was an ardent advocate for educational reforms for women and she saw the need for not only quality education for women but co-education of boys and girls. She says that boys and girls need to attend school together from the very beginning, despite any differences whatsoever and have time to develop their physical and mental robustness. Education reforms were particularly important for women since their lack of steady and substantive education was the most pivotal reason for what Wollstonecraft identified as their 'ignorance', languor, and subordination. She was disgusted with the silliness of women, which was fed to them from their early years itself. This silliness included, according to Wollstonecraft, cultivating a very delicate body; reading nonsensical novels and poetry; visiting fortune-tellers; caring only about one's outer looks and attracting a man; trying to gratify one's vanity; indulging one's emotions and sentiments; preferring rakes to men of strong character; and gossiping. Through such intentionally useless choices, women's minds are rendered deficient

and weak, and they become completely incapable of exercising reason and questioning. Women in her time were taught to be enslaved and be limited to their bodies and sexuality. But, women's bodies are not meant only for men to act upon. According to her, women should be able to study serious subjects and even enter into some meaningful professions. Education would allow women to learn how to exercise reason and perfect their virtue which would result in their becoming better wives and mothers, which would redound to the benefit of society itself.

Mary Wollstonecraft was blatantly outspoken in her argument for the rights of women and for national education; nevertheless, throughout her argument she was mindful of her position as a woman in a patriarchal society and she was skillful in her approach when asserting her opinions, which ensure people actually paid attention to them and not dismiss them as an angry rant. We see evidence of conformity and rebellion coexisting within this work (Rothschild, 2009). Her views were considered fairly nonconformist for the time. However, she conformed to the assertion of her beliefs rationally in order to ensure that her thoughts would have some chance of being heard. "Let it not be concluded that I wish to invert the order of things; I have already granted that, from the constitution of their bodies, men seem to be designed by Providence to attain a greater degree of virtue" (Wollstonecraft). She acknowledges that men were stronger, then smartly moved into her message that women should "endeavor to acquire strength, both of mind and body, and to convince them that the soft phrases, susceptibility of heart, delicacy of sentiment, and refinement of taste, are almost synonymous with epithets of weakness..." (Wollstonecraft). She tactfully buttresses all her arguments in two ways: 1) she presents herself as a woman of reason, possessing

common sense and capable of logical thought, on the same level as a man such as Talleyrand; and, 2) she opens the way for her argument on the necessity of change, acknowledging Talleyrand's ideas, but also allowing for its flaws, thus leaving room for her own ideas and improvements (Sulkin, 1990).

Wollstonecraft was not asking for anything particularly radical; she only wished for women to have the same opportunities men had: the right to a proper education, the ability to care and fend for themselves, and the chance to support themselves in professions meant only for men, such as medicine, business, teaching. And yet, as stated by Mitzi Meyers in her article "Reform or Ruin: A Revolution in Female Manners", despite Wollstonecraft's often inflammatory rhetoric, at the heart of her work lies a "pattern of female domestic heroism, an image of activity, strength, fortitude, and ethical maturity, of self-denial, purity, and truth". Wollstonecraft writes of parental duties, affections, morals. She has absolutely no interest in preaching; she solely wishes for proper, humane treatment of every person: man, woman and child.

Wollstonecraft also diplomatically argued; how can women be expected to nurture and care for a family if they could not properly care for themselves first? She believed women must first be aware of all their strengths and weaknesses (which, education will correct) before they take on the role of mothers or wives; otherwise, all that is available to them are their own weaknesses. Using this belief as a strategy (restating it again and again in various ways), Wollstonecraft strives to persuade her readers of its soundness and to encourage action against such instances. Wollstonecraft rightfully points that men suffer along with women in perpetuating the notion that society benefits from the ignorance of any member of its citizenry (Rothschild, 2003).

Again, not relying only on her statements

alone, she turns to a body of men looked upon with high regard: military men, who are, like them, sent into the world before their minds have been charged with knowledge or strengthened by principles. Military men, being of auxiliary occupation, are in fact quite similar to women who are subordinate to men. This chain of hierarchy is the one Wollstonecraft grapples to snap: "Strengthen the female mind by enlarging it, and there will be an end to blind obedience" (Wollstonecraft). But, unfortunately, it is a tradition, as Wollstonecraft notes: "But, as blind obedience is ever sought for by power, tyrants and sensualists are in the right when they endeavour to keep women in the dark, because the former only want slaves, and the latter a play-thing" (Wollstonecraft). And although she annotates on the injustices of positions of rank and subordination, she agrees with the pre-eminent belief that her sex is the "weakest as well as the most oppressed half of the species"(Wollstonecraft). She has previously denied making any direct comparisons between the two sexes, but now insists "that men have increased that inferiority till women are almost sunk below the standard of rational creatures"(Wollstonecraft).

Wollstonecraft speaks strong words for French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau who was a very controversial and highly influential philosopher of the Enlightenment. He wrote a book called *Emile* (1762), in which he describes his own view of the 'appropriate' education for a young man named Emile and the young woman, Sophie, he is going to marry. Although Emile's education is appropriately meticulous for a young man in this ideal society, Rousseau's suggestion for Sophie is that she should learn how to please and amuse her man. Rousseau argues women are better off playing with dolls and learning to sew, so those areas should be the focus for their education rather than abstract, complex topics. Wollstonecraft

completely disagrees with Rousseau's stance on women's role in his ideal society and Wollstonecraft devotes a portion of her book to responding to these preposterous ideas, 'enlightened' and otherwise, expressed by other such writers. "There are a couple of purposes for this strategy. First, because she makes a strong statement about how inadequate most women's education is, she needs to demonstrate her own command of the leading ideas and theories of her time. Second, she wants to place her ideas in the context of other Enlightenment thinkers. Part of her argument to the reader is that a truly enlightened person would not deprive women of their ability to become enlightened, too" (Flexner, 1972).

Through arguing by cause and effect, Wollstonecraft establishes herself as a person of reason and by doing that, she also establishes the fact that other women, if given a chance, can also be thoughtful and rational like her and look at problems objectively. She cites the contributing factors of the popular beliefs against women's intellect during that time and urges the (necessary) modifications. Those modifications come in the form of equal education, a solution Wollstonecraft feels would not only free women, but also enlighten men as to the evils of a society consisting of one half tyranny and one half sexual character.

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An Analysis of 'Where The Mind Is Without Fear'

– Rabindra Nath Tagore

Benedict Anderson spells out a nation as an— “imagined community”. Social scientists maintain that the concept of ‘nation’ is—notoriously perplexing to explain, let alone to analyse. However, even after such complexity in defining what a ‘nation’ is in the literature of political studies, Tagore was explicitly clear about his idea of a ‘nation’. Despite being a poet and using similes and imageries in most of his text on nation and nationalism, Tagore is rather crisp and clear when it comes to the question of a ‘nation’. A nation, Tagore emphasised, is ‘a political and economic union of people’ plus it ‘is that aspect which a whole population assumes when organised for a mechanical purpose’. For Tagore, the institution of the nation is modern and borrowed from the west. Now, this nation has a purpose – the purpose of self determination and enforcement in the human civilization and fulfilment of its political and economic interests – and this is ensured by the institution of the State. Tagore has, in his essay “Nationalism In India” deemed nationalism a cosmic threat to humanity, because with its inclination towards the material and the rational, it tramples over and crushes the human spirit and human emotion; it ruins man’s moral balance by subjugating his inherent goodness and divinity to a soulless organisation. Tagore found nationalism (or rather hypernationalism) to be a source of war, disagreement and mutual hatred between nations. The very definition of a nation seems problematic to him, the ‘nation’ is reckoned over soul, god and conscience, giving rise to feelings of absolutism, fanaticism, provincialism and paranoia. Thus every ‘nation’ becomes inward-looking and considers ‘another’ a threat to its existence, while war is considered a legitimate, or even “holy” action

for selfish and vain purposes national self-aggrandisement or self-fulfilment.

Tagore also emphasises that when—this organisation of politics and commerce, also called a ‘Nation’, becomes all powerful and omnipresent at the cost of higher social life, then it is doomsday for humanity. Tagore juxtaposes the inhumane and mechanical western civilisation and the nation that developed out of it to the indigenous societal groups in India. ‘Nation’ arises from the belief that it would pulverise an individual’s freedom. Tagore dismisses the political notion of aggressive nationalism followed by militarily stronger nations of the west in its entirety. He rather looks forward to and conceptualises a borderless world order where societies would not be divided up or ranked in an order of hierarchy by such nationalism that brings into life Thucydides’s ancient maxim of—large nations do what they wish, while small nations accept what they must. He championed the idea of east-west dialogue instead of confrontation where both can learn from each other.

Tagore strongly put forth that most of India’s social problems, whether it be sectarianism, violence, hatred, religious issues, all of it resulted from lack of education. The impact of nationalistic ideology was widespread and overpowering in the period when Tagore was growing as a writer. He writes “Nationalism is a great menace. It is the particular thing which for years has been at the bottom of India’s troubles”. The practice of nationalism affected Tagore profusely in a short span of time. This ‘trend’ compelled him to pen down his thoughts and spread the message of humanity and universalism over any other man-made social-political institutions.

Tagore was also displeased with the developments in India during its Independence movement. He resented the political inefficiency of the institution to eradicate the pressing problems of poverty and hunger in India. It was exacerbated when the alarming social conditions were fueled by different religious confrontations. This was evident during the Partition of India where hundreds of people belonging to the two major communities - Hindu and Muslim, were being harassed and killed. And presently, given this present global crisis, in which nations are flying at each other's throats, sometimes unilaterally and in pre-emptive action, brushing aside world opinion, perpetuating a logic of hostility and fear, it may be appropriate to pause for a moment and look back at the alleged anti-nationalitarian ideology of the Bengali poet, and Asia's first Nobel Laureate, Rabindranath Tagore. Tagore's unorthodox vision of equanimity, consonance and the spiritual unity of humankind seem more relevant now than ever. What the world needs in the face of present global turbulence is Tagore's healing message of love, simplicity, self-reliance and non-violence or ahimsa.

Tagore could perhaps be criticised for impracticality (Bose, 2016). Yet the ongoing violence in the subcontinent legitimises his position that joining the bandwagon of nationalism would be fatal for India. India has since been divided into three countries: India, Pakistan and Bangladesh; more than ten million people were rendered homeless as the repercussion of the independence of India and Pakistan in 1947, one million of which also lost their lives in these interreligious riots; more than three major wars have been fought in the subcontinent, with border skirmishes and threats of even more wars, including nuclear war, several riots have also broken out between the Hindus and the Muslims in the recent past as well (The major incidents include the 1969 Gujarat riots, the 1989 Bhagalpur riots, 1989 Kashmir violence, Godhra train burning, 2002 Gujarat riots, 2013 Muzaffarnagar riots and 2020 Delhi riots), claiming thousands Indian lives. India still remains a poor and

impoverished country, rife with political corruption, and plights of the downtrodden a routine reality. Tagore's augury, that joining the bandwagon of nationalism would make India a beggar of the West also stands true. Although India is an independent country now, the appropriation of nationalist ideology has erased the sense of India's difference as a society, capable of standing on its own; making links with the West on unequal terms.

Though not anti-modern or anti-progressive, Tagore, throughout his life aspired to redeem the 'modern' man from the tyrannous clutches of money, matter and machine. Tagore's greatest legacy lies in the fact that three nation states of the world today – namely, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, owe their national anthems to this antinationalitarian genius (Bose, 2014). And this poses a serious conundrum in the study of Tagore's ideas on nation and nationalism. In a bid to effectively understand and solve this conundrum, it has to be understood that Tagore was opposed to the concept of nationalism in its military or aggressive sense – what could truly be referred to as hypernationalism. He was an ardent believer of an interactive world, a world of dialogue among civilizations and societies.

His vision of a free world, free from the shackles of materialism and nationalism, is most passionately expressed in the following poem, written in the form of a supplication for India but meant for all mankind:

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;

Where knowledge is free;

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;

Where words come out from the depth of truth;

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;

Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever widening thought and action Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

It is this idea which finds the most prominent place in Tagore's writings throughout the later period of his life, simultaneously upholding the moral spirit of humanity and human unity above everything else, as the highest ideal to be achieved by man. This supreme goal, Tagore argues, must be at the root of all human actions. It is only through the path to human unity that freedom in all spheres can be secured, be it political, artistic or spiritual. To that end, all forces narrow, divisive, turning man against man must be smothered, before they can engulf and ruin humanity. A deep-seated humanism was the foundation of Tagore's political and philosophical views. Therefore, one may as well deduce that the singular refrain (if at all there is one) which runs through Tagore's concept of nationalism over the years is that of universalism or universal humanism. It is neither against the freedom of the country, nor at odds with progressive modernism that Tagore voices his protest, but against a self-ravaging system of politics and organisation that is detrimental not only to India or the East but to the entire humanity at large. He advocates the importance of a national movement (which might as well transcend into the international) but one with a constructive idea at its core, rather than a 'spirit of violence and tyranny' which lay dormant in the 'psychology of the West' and has finally 'roused itself and desecrated the spirit of Man' (Tagore, 1917).

It is the rapid growth of education that Tagore believed is the true sign of a country's growth and development. Tagore strongly voiced that India's half of the social problems be it violence, sectarianism, religious hatred, resulted from lack of education. Education spawns in freedom of mind, a strong idea that Tagore had been propagating in his works. Santiniketan, a school that Tagore started, is an example of this. Different from the traditional school set up, Santiniketan was a fresh breeze of the time. Tagore, shattering the traditional education system, introduced a complete

new setup creating new waves in the field of education. Different topics that expose a student to the world were taught. It included the cultures, practices of other nations like Russia, China, Japan and other Western ideas, which could open a window to the other world and life, thus spreading love. As it has already been noted the proliferation of Tagore's freedom of Mind through his deeds and words, it is evident that Tagore allied the same freedom with education in India.

One might think that Tagore's critique of nationalism is disdainful and far-fetched, or "too pious," as Pound says; but his arguments are layered in atavistic spiritualism and romantic idealism and he was a practical-idealist, an inclusivist and a multilateral thinker (Quayum, 2004). "I am not in favour of rejecting anything," he wrote, "for I am only complete with the inclusion of everything." He believed in the synergism of body and soul, physical and spiritual, wealth and conscience. He went from place to place and country to country, acting as an unofficial ambassador of (united) India. His critique of nationalism was that of a wholesome and holistic thinker postulating against discourses entrenched in one-sidedness that patron power and wealth but not soul and conscience, greed but not goodness, possessing but not giving, becoming but not being.

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Generative Artificial Intelligence: Boon or Bane and How to harness it?

‘Chai, pakoda and a discussion on Artificial Intelligence’ have become normal these days. From innocent, often hilarious confessions of A.I. availed cheating in assignment writing to troubling imaginations of A.I. dominating world scenarios, topics are endless. Thinking back, it was never a subject of discussion, at least in laymen circles. The arrival of ChatGPT, Dall-E, etcetera... known as ‘generative A.I.s’, the genie which would create anything we ask, has turned the table.

However, apart from fulfilling our wishes, what if these genies get greedy and eat us alive? Then things will get complicated. In this article, we will try to find out whether this genie, G.A.I., will be a blessing or a curse for future generations and how to gear it, so it will be rather fruitful for us, instead of us being fearful.

What is A.I. and G.A.I.?

A.I (Artificial Intelligence) is, as the name suggests, intelligence which is artificial, i.e. intelligence demonstrated by computers, as opposed to natural intelligence displayed by humans or by other animals.

G.A.I (Generative AI) is, on the other hand, a type of artificial intelligence system capable of generating text, images or other media in response to prompts. It does this by learning the patterns and structure of its input training data and then generating new data with similar characteristics, which means the G.A.I is nothing but just a ‘stochastic parrot’ imitating the human patterns of words without having any idea of its meaning.

Why G.A.I. ? Will it be a boon?

G.A.I. is much celebrated these days, as it is the beginning of a new revolution for humankind. It is said that G.A.I. has potential applications across a wide range of industries such as writing, art, healthcare, marketing, and so on, and will alter human life tremendously.

The salient fields G.A.I. can assist us with are:

- Content creation and boosting creativity; G.A.I. is already famous for its ability to generate coherent content. Moreover, different G.A.I. machine companies are constantly improving the versions, making them better versed with content. G.A.I. can also initiate the creative process and spark innovative concepts by offering prompts or producing ideas. Refined with human abilities, it can make a content revolution.
- Virtual Assistance; like Siri, Google Assistant, and so on, use G.A.I. to understand and respond to user queries. G.A.I. improvements will enhance their efficiency, making our lives easier.
- Advancements in healthcare; G.A.I. is driving advancements in healthcare across various domains, upgrading diagnostics, enabling precision medicine, and empowering virtual assistance. It is huge news for the medical field which is already struggling due to the acute shortage of human power.
- Decision-making and Problem-solving; G.A.I. can provide insights,

recommendations, and alternative solutions, making it a valuable assistant in decision-making and problem-solving. It can help to generate potential strategies and solutions based on data analysis or simulations, revolutionising the business and social worlds.

- Customised experiences; What if you can get customised products according to your needs and preferences, or a learning material specially designed for you? G.A.I. can do this. Equipped with the most suitable accessories, each one of us will be far more efficient.
- Research and exploration; G.A.I. will be a valuable resource for researchers and scientists. It can assist them at various stages of their work such as hypothesis formation and scenario simulation, enhancing the quality of their work.
- Effective teaching and learning; G.A.I. can be applied in educational settings, making learning more effective. It can create educational content, quizzes, and other learning materials tailored just for the individual's unique needs and abilities.
- The benefits of G.A.I. are, of course, far great and many. A lot have not been mentioned above. However, this is not the end of the story. G.A.I. poses some risks and they also are to be addressed.

Why G.A.I. also will be a Bane?

The risks of G.A.I. are grouped into different categories for better conveyance.

1. Costs of making.

- G.A.I. needs pre-training which is costly, financially and environmentally. The training procedures of G.A.I. are noted with high carbon emissions and high energy consumption. Note with this that the majority of cloud computing

providers are not carbon neutral nor users of renewable energy. A distressful data to the already climate crisis-stricken world.

- The production cost will make the product costly, making the common mass unable to get crucial G.A.I. services, leading to greater inequality.
- Socially significant G.A.I. tools are being developed, mostly, by private-driven and profit-focused companies, who may be more concerned about their profits rather than its social implications.

2. Issues with the training data.

- G.A.I. is getting trained, mainly, on data from the internet, which is not equally represented by all sections of humanity. This will make G.A.I. machines monotonous and biased.
- Many internet data have some problematic characteristics which will lead to the encoding of stereotypical and derogatory associations along gender, race, and so on, and perpetuating it further.
- Internet data include many personal data that the concerned individuals did not share voluntarily. These data will get encrypted to G.A.I. systems and will be spread further.
- The data are filtered, by filtering out the documents containing certain words. This method may work to a degree, but it will also remove the online spaces built by marginalised people, where discussions happen on taboo issues.
- Data are static and social values are dynamic. G.A.I. may generate a value lock, where it reiterates older, less inclusive values.
- The internet data is distorted with manipulated information and organisational interests. These distorted

truths will be perpetuated and will become accepted truths.

- In accepting large amounts of web texts as representatives of all humanity, we risk propagating dominant viewpoints, increasing power imbalance, and further reiterating inequity.

“Feeding A.I. systems on the world’s beauty, ugliness and cruelty, but expecting it to reflect only the beauty is fantasy”

–Ruha Benjamin

3. G.A.I. in not-so-good hands.

Getting this potent tool into bad hands will be disastrous.

- It can be used to create fake and harmful content such as fake news, doctored images, explicit content, malware, phishing attacks, and deep fakes. From defamation to security threats, this will deeply impact individuals and society as a whole.
- Privacy is of serious concern as algorithmic systems watch the world constantly. In this internet age, with the help of A.I., anyone can intrude into our privacy.

4. Loss of jobs and opportunities.

The G.A.I. will take over a lot of human jobs as it is less costly and more efficient. Many companies are already outsourcing their work to G.A.I. machines.

5. Ethical Questions

Some ethical questions arise, such as who owns the content that is created by G.A.I.? And who is responsible for the harm that it caused?

It seems that the grey side of G.A.I. is a little more consequential. However, considering the efforts already made on it and its propitious benefits, it is neither pragmatic nor efficient to halt the development of A.I. The best course is to harness the G.A.I. genie in a way that will decrease the negative effects as much as

possible and utilise it fully for the inclusive development of humanity.

How to harness the genie?

To harness the genie of G.A.I. and use its potential to the fullest for positive growth, we need a comprehensive and pragmatic plan. The plan must include two broad phases.

Phase 1 – create an ideal AI for a prepared society

1. Regulate AI development and deployment.
 - The current race for making the best A.I. must be controlled. Governments and companies themselves can put regulations on development.
 - Further developments must be guided by careful research and planning along many dimensions, making a value-sensitive, inclusive technological ecosystem whose benefits are evenly distributed.
 - Significant time and effort should be spent in assembling, documenting, and curating the training data.
 - Consider environmental impacts and follow a sustainable way of development such as going carbon neutral.
 - In the meantime, stimulate the social values to evolve for an A.I.-equipped future.

2. The government must establish robust legislation to govern A.I. research and application.

3. Establish ethical guidelines to follow when using A.I.

Some examples are suggested:

- Respect intellectual property.
 - 0 Ensure the training data are obtained legally.
 - 0 When generating content, respect copyright laws.
- When G.A.I. machinery is used, disclose it.
- Have human oversight over A.I.-

generated content.

- Avoid malicious use.
- Follow privacy regulations.

4. Encourage collaboration between governments, AI researchers, industry experts.

5. Implement a robust user authentication system.

6. Develop an effective monitoring and accountability system.

7. Prepare the workforce for a future where human-machine collaboration will be normal.

8. Create new industries and job opportunities customised to unique human capabilities.

9. Raise public awareness about the capabilities and limitations of A.I.

Phase 2- Utilise A.I. fully and responsibly.

After establishing an ideal AI-Social system, it is only sensible to utilise it to its fullest with active regulations. Developed responsibly and used fully, the G.A.I. has the power to change the course of human history. It can be used to tackle most of our global issues such as climate crisis, and making a peaceful earth, yet only when we make and use it responsibly.

Apocalyptic A.I?

Let's address 'the elephant in the room'- will A.I. ever be capable of thinking, realise its capabilities and behave like Terminator: enslave humanity as a sub-species and pursue their own ends? Well, it might not be impossible, but utterly implausible as of now. A.I has a very long way to go to think on its own and is totally

dependent on our training and the data we feed it. So, instead of worrying, let's actively dream and work to shape an A.I which will stand with us for the betterment of humanity and our planet.

In conclusion, A.I (and G.A.I) is neither a boon or a bane, but a tool- a very powerful one. It is either a tool of hope or a weapon of destruction. Hence, we do not have a choice with the A.I., but to act on the right side.

Both government and private sector should actively participate in the development with the government deciding the direction and steering the wheel. The benefits of A.I must be distributed evenly across the population with required rule and norms to utilise it shall be embedded in society. We must make an A.I leashed and nuanced to embrace humanity and our diversity while we prepare ourselves to wield such a power.

Sainul Abidh C

3rd year, B.A. Hons Psychology

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Grandeur Soul

Weather pretends to tranquillise the sways of hymn,
Couldn't resist to get rid of the prick of thorn
Grief pervaded to corners as buzzing bees,
Take my glance apart to prevent those sighs.
Storms and fog convoyed her to dismiss the boredom,
Bean bag and corridor shout out the phantom
impulses confront to shed as scarlet of empathy,
Selfness matters the scanty to attain fresh dignity.
Pestering stimulation isn't boosted up to revert,
Austere mannerisms seldom frail her to get built
Hobnob furthermore fondness joke heck as hell,
Snippet esteem was not prepared to trash shell.
Blazer and heels attired in hoard
Vanity glued towering peak toward
Pierced anonymously to the spotless heart,
Insensibility aimed to flow the voyage at.

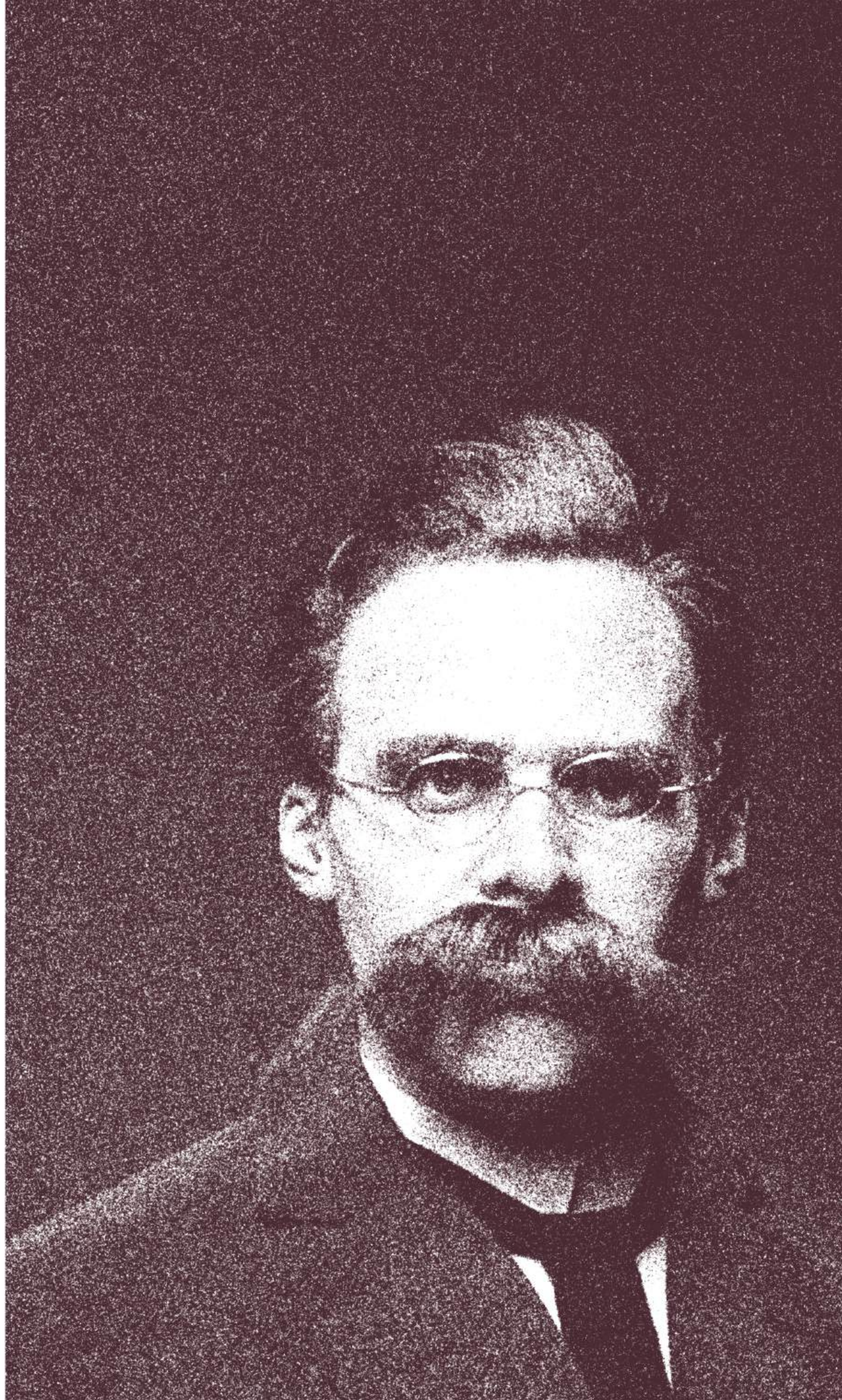
Mariyam Jannath Marjana
2nd year, M.A. Applied Psychology

Strings And Struggles: The Teenage Marionette Saga

I am allowed to soar high,
Yet tethered beneath a cloaked sky.
My heart, though benevolent and kind,
Must remain hidden, restrained and confined.
Struggling to laugh with no space for tears,
I'm told I am blessed, though my footing appears.
Allowed to befriend, but not to find the best,
Living joyfully, though in constant unrest.
Jubilation surrounds, yet shadows cling tight,
Despondency lurks in both day and night.
Loyalty to all is the expected decree,
But what of the dishonesty to the self I see?
What, where, why, how, and who am I?
These unanswered questions are my silent cry.
Granted to fly high, yet confined and small,
In a limited, shadowed sky, I grapple with it all.

Juweriya Fatma

B. A (Hons.) Psychology 2nd year



BEYOND

ISOLATION

**Confronting Systemic Issues through
Critical Psychology**

**MOHAMMAD ALI
MA APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY**

I. What is Critical Psychology?

“Knowledge is not made for understanding; it is made for cutting” – Michel Foucault

Psychology, as an academic field, holds immense scope, as evidenced by its wide-ranging applications and the introduction of various sub-fields such as cyberpsychology, political psychology, media psychology, and others. Even after such diverse applications, psychology, as it is practised in India, fails to critically indulge with the most basic concepts that govern human behaviour due to the depoliticised manner in which it is taught. As an academic field concerned with discovering universal laws that govern human behaviour and mental processes, it overlooks the existing state of affairs and its potential to provide solutions.

The notion of “normalcy,” idealised by the field, is tainted by systemic issues that psychology fails to address. This notion’s assumptions, which have varied with time, continue to uphold capitalist profit-seeking (which inherently fosters exploitation), hetero-patriarchal, Eurocentric, Caste and Class-based discriminatory systems. This raises the question: If society perceives unequal power distribution and oppressive systems as natural, how can it rehabilitate someone whose agency had been compromised at the tragic event of their birth?

To equip scholars with the necessary lens to view this systematicity is the aim of critical psychology. It provides a range of similar criticisms against mainstream psychology, questioning the direction in which it is evolving and reflecting on its potential to contribute to liberation, equality and social justice. This article will briefly explore how critical psychology informs scholars to understand systemic issues and realise psychology’s potential in dismantling existing oppressive systems.

II. Confronting the Systematicity of Oppression

“Capitalist realism insists on treating mental health as if it were a natural fact, like weather (but, then again, weather is no longer a natural fact so much as a political-economic effect).” – Mark Fisher

Social psychological texts tend to abstract systemic issues from their social and historical context and present them as mere instances of individual biases and prejudices. This method of discussing systemic issues limits one’s understanding of systemic oppression to its most obvious manifestation – the individual act of discrimination against the oppressed. This tainted understanding limits the location of the intervention and research to the individual oppressor and renders the scholar oblivious to the social causation of the individual’s questionable act. However, there is another tragic consequence of this ignorance. Not only does the reduction of systemic issues to individual biases result in a limited understanding of the phenomenon of interest, but it also sustains the system that governs this phenomenon by keeping it safe and isolating its oppressive dynamics to certain bad apples. The illusion of egalitarianism remains alive and scholars are unable to develop the adequate motivation to indulge in social change.

The ‘self’ is not just limited to its demographic labels. It is coloured by culture and history, and an ignorance of the same would result in an incomplete conceptualisation of the ‘self’. In its pursuit of generating universal laws, psychology cannot overlook the simple fact that its data will always be culture-specific. This specificity informs the analysis of a particular population. For example, the problem of internalised racism in the Indian population (a phenomenon where people are racist against their skin colour; for more information please check out the nearest matrimonial ad) cannot be understood as an isolated event. A psychological analysis of

the same needs to be informed by the history of colonisation and the coloniality of power which glorified the white skin as the superior race. Therefore, any psychological intervention or research undertaken henceforth needs to be decolonial (i.e. indulge in a continuous process of resistance and reconstruction) rather than limiting itself to a resolution of a mere act of individual bias.

What now remains for scholars is to question the common-sensical and the obvious, which has been intentionally made to be so. The need of the hour is for future psychologists to expand their scope and build future psychologies on interdisciplinary frameworks.

Amidst the loneliness epidemic, the growing reports of sleep deprivation amongst teens and young adults, and the increasing prevalence of depression and anxiety disorders, clinical psychological practice should not be our only resort to solving the psychopathological symptoms that can be better understood as a result of systemic issues. What scholars need to do now is to understand that psychology has the potential to contribute to the collective pursuit of social justice.

III. The Potential of Psychology

“And once you are awake, you shall remain awake eternally.” –Friedrich Nietzsche

In 2020, APA called for dismantling the institution of racism in the U.S. culture and emphasised the potential of psychological research and interventions to contribute to this goal. In 2021, it issued an apology for its role in contributing to the systemic inequalities by addressing its past support from human hierarchy (for example, eugenics). However, Indian psychology is yet to collectively target the dismantling of

any existing oppressive system and is already suffering from the scarcity of literature on important systemic issues (for example, caste) from a psychological lens - a gap that can be again attributed to the depoliticised manner in which psychology is taught in higher educational institutions. However, there is a scope for a bottom-up approach that can be brought forth by a collective call by students in favour of a more socially conscious and relevant psychology that is not only aimed towards producing literature and interventions that tackle systemic issues at both individual and societal level, but also acknowledge its own complicity in maintaining these issues.

Existing frameworks that examine systemic issues need to be expanded to include the system that governs their manifestations. The evolution of psychology as a field – including its various subfields - needs to be critically examined for the implicit assumptions they make regarding the nature of the self, the idea of “normalcy” and the direction in which they are leading humanity towards. Critical psychology compensates for the commonly depoliticised curriculum of psychology students by making them reflect on the inadequacies of their discipline and helps them produce progressive psychologies that provide a much more holistic understanding of individual behaviour and mental processes, and the social systems that influence them. Only such a comprehensive understanding can significantly contribute to the collective pursuit of social justice, which is, after all, the most human thing about us.

Mohammad Ali

2nd year, M.A. Applied Psychology

Eighteen

20 days more and I'll be an adult,
Some of my peers are there by default.
The fear of eighteen,
My thoughts are too mean.
How am I gonna face it?
This mere doesn't let me sleep.

I am not ready to be an adult yet,
A crooked back with responsibilities and trying
to be perfect.
Those expectations of people that come along,
"Don't sing at the table, an ap dhillon song".

It feels like yesterday playing in the primary
yard,
And now I am two steps from getting a new
admit card.
People will give me bombastic side eyes,
For staring into the screen of Nobita's cries.

That darkness that surrounds me and throws me
darts,
Those voices screaming in my head telling me
to end it before it starts.
That new consciousness of being independent,
Those people pushing me to be a descendant.

I envy those who still are children at heart,
and never care about their credit card.
They have the will to win the world one day,
They make the light their companions and let it
stay.
That feeling of having everything sorted out,
all relationships, family and social media clout.

Career being the top priority,
and you lose yourself in the journey.
Where does our fault lie?
To accept it, why are we so shy?

The day I blew out the 18 candles,
I should have made a wish to be myself.
To love myself, like a queen to treat myself,
To laugh in the pain
and dance in the rain.

To call old friends
And make amends.
To hug mom and dad,
And make them glad by being glad.

Isn't this the purpose of life?
Being actually content.
Isn't this the reason
our life was presented?

Thrive each day to reign and win.
Isn't letting down yourself and God a grave sin?
So be real to yourself and make a promise,
to not lose yourself in the process.

Be the greatest man alive,
But who'll remember a person who wasn't
happy in life?
Smile and move ahead.
Don't let the crown slip from the head.

There's a long journey ahead,
So make it worthwhile, bud.
You can, and will do it.

Whatever doesn't let you sleep at night,
Continue in life and make us proud.
But don't get lost in the crowd.

Remember a special thing if no one said it today
to you,
I believe in you.

Fatima Sameen
2nd Year, B.A. Hons Psychology

I Want The War To End

I want the war to end,
Unfortunately it's happening inside my head.
Here I am, on the battlefield,
holding a sword and awaiting my opponent to come
And each time I stab her,
I bleed a little more than before.
The bruises and wounds play hide and seek
Beneath my sleeves,
Not knowing that the rival lives within me.
Will this war between me and my insecurities ever end?

Asyath Marjana
2nd year, B.A Psychology



The Psychological Cost of Oppression: A Case of Palestine

**NIMRA KIRMANI
MA APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY**

Imagine a child in Gaza, waking each morning to the sound of explosions, the walls of their home shaking with each impact. They clutch their parents, not knowing if today will be their last together. The sky, once a symbol of hope, is now a source of dread. This has been the daily reality for countless Palestinian families, where the psychological scars of war run deeper than the rubble of destroyed homes. Ever since the establishment of Israel, Palestinians have lived under constant oppression—confined, controlled, and terrorized. The mental burden is unbearable, especially for the youth, who know nothing of life beyond fear and survival. For them, trauma is not an isolated event but an unending state of existence.

The situation in Gaza escalated sharply after October 7, 2023, with over 40,000 Palestinians killed in the region due to relentless bombardment. Yet, the mental trauma began long before, as the people of Gaza have been subjected to a form of psychological siege—confined to the small strip, restricted by checkpoints, and isolated by limits on essential goods.

As Dr. Samah Jabr aptly puts it, Palestinians do not suffer from depression but from oppression. There is no “post” in their trauma; the trauma is ongoing, constantly reinforced by displacement, violence, and the daily threat of death. Refugees in their own homeland, they face the ultimate form of alienation—watching their homes get destroyed while they live in tents, unable to escape their liminal existence. Both children and adults are gripped by terror, struggling for basic survival in a place where no corner is safe.

Gaza’s mental health crisis is profound. Two-thirds of the population are refugees, and the majority are under 25, with children particularly vulnerable to psychological conditions like anxiety, depression, and PTSD. A 2020 study found that over 50% of Gazan children already

had PTSD before the current conflict. As the violence intensifies, so does the mental health strain, with few avenues for treatment. The lack of mental health professionals, coupled with Israeli restrictions on foreign aid, leaves many untreated, perpetuating a cycle of psychological and social instability (The Lancet, 2024).

Children growing up in this environment are deprived of education, social integration, and future employment prospects, leading to a sense of hopelessness. This, in turn, makes them more susceptible to radicalization. Efforts to provide youth mental health interventions are severely hindered by the collapse of Gaza’s health system, damaged psychiatric facilities, and shortages of medications. The prioritization of immediate survival needs—food, water, and electricity—further exacerbates the mental health crisis.

Humanitarian organisations outside Gaza are stepping in, but more needs to be done. A greater focus is needed on young women’s health, especially given the scarcity of sexual and reproductive health supplies. Basic hygiene and menstrual products have been blocked from entering Gaza, deepening the psychological strain on women. Local organisations can help destigmatize these issues, while the international community must press for essential supplies to be allowed in.

Ultimately, a ceasefire and sustained global attention are necessary to address both the physical and mental suffering of Gazans. Mental health initiatives are vital not just for humanitarian reasons but as investments in the future stability of the region. Even when the bombing stops, one can only imagine that the echoes of explosions will continue to haunt the people. The psychological wounds they bear will persist long after the conflict ends, forever altering them. The cost of this trauma will be carried with them for a lifetime, as it has left an indelible mark on their lives.

In Muds of Hatred and Love

There is a suitcase in my room,
waiting for the winter,
holding on to its broken wheel.

There is a drawer in my room,
bulged into a half-opened candy,
silenced is her verb.

There is a camera in my room,
longing for the half dead photographs.
Show of petulance.

There is an eye in my room,
popped out into an act of shutting down,
serves the plate of boiled guilt.

There is a book in my room,
wants to be touched,
cares for the fish devouring it.

There is a pen in my room,
wretched to be written about,
coated with honey to stick to the ground.

There is a girl in my room,
hovering in horizons,
searching the planets.

There is a boy in my room,
in muds of love and hate,
watered by the desire's dust.

There is a bundle of marks in the space,
swelled in the beginning,
with the slanting act of compromise.

The woman knows something of it,
keeps spinning in the sea of bruises,
pondering on the obscurity of a man or a boy.

The coy moon watches over me,
The rose gold shimmers through the lace

The room will get used to the walls,
The walls will lose themselves in the echoes

The hugs so suffocating,
The time much like sand,
Everything is turning over
We shall meet again, in Srinagar.

ARTIST STATEMENT:

At 12:45pm, I had to reach the airport in an hour to catch my flight. While sitting down in the middle of my room one last time, before I leave for university, every other thing in the room started speaking to me. The packed boxes containing the 18 years of my life watched me and mocked the paradox of guilt and ache that I was living in-what to hold on to and what to leave behind. My friend said, "it's about making space for new experiences", hence, I hold onto the string of these eight words while waiting for my homeland to embrace me yet again.

Sharmeen Shah

1st year, B.A. (Hons) Psychology

Mental Health and Competitive Examinations

In India, millions of students prepare for competitive exams, which severely affects their mental and physical health. Research conducted by the National Centre for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) shows that competitive exams can lead to heightened levels of stress and anxiety among students. A report by the Sapien Labs Centre for Human Brain states that more than 50 percent of youth aged 18-24 in India have poor mental health. I want to share the experience of a close friend who is preparing for UPSC's Civil Services Examination (CSE) and how it has impacted her mental health.

This friend of mine was a bright student throughout her school life and consistently performed well in her academics. She was a cheerful and optimistic person, always with a smile on her face. She began preparing for the CSE in 2022. During the initial phase of her preparation, she was determined and had no doubts about her goal. She started studying rigorously for 10-12 hours a day, giving up her hobbies and limiting her social interactions, including meeting friends, to save time.

As a few months passed, she began experiencing issues due to the sudden and radical lifestyle changes. These changes affected both her mental and physical health. Sometimes, when she failed to complete her tasks on time, she felt a deep sense of guilt, as if she had committed a crime. The constant pressure to study more affected her profoundly. She started questioning her own capabilities, asking herself questions like, "Am I doing enough?" and "What more should I do?" In this process of self-introspection, she compared

herself to others illogically and further blamed herself for not doing enough.

She developed severe mental health issues, including symptoms such as anxiety, insomnia, hypertension, irritability, and mood swings. She lacked adequate coping mechanisms and social support from her family. This situation strained her relationships with her family members, leading to frequent arguments with her parents, which further impacted her mental health. As a consequence, her physical health also deteriorated; she gained weight and experienced frequent bouts of fever, nausea, and hypertension.

I remember many incidents when she had extreme anxiety and panic attacks. She also had thought of self harm. She hesitated to talk about this with her family as she doubted that her parents wouldn't be able to understand her situation. She also refused to seek any help from any counselling professional.

This situation of hers persisted throughout the year and when the day of examination was just a few weeks away, she was in extreme distress. She was unable to sleep for days, she felt like she had forgotten everything. She had a fever for days. She appeared for the exam and when the result was declared, she was not able to make it to the list.

The failure to qualify the examination added another layer of pressure on her. She felt as though she had fallen into a deep, dark hole from which she would never be able to escape. She saw herself as worthless and stopped going out, confining herself to her room for many weeks.

After more than two years of starting her

preparation, she is still an aspirant and continues to face mental health issues. She is struggling with this alone, with no signs of improvement.

It was not just the pressure of the examination that impacted her but there were a lot of other factors at play out of her control. First, her gender: she had reached the so-called “age of marriage” according to her parents, and they believed she must be married within a few years. She feared that she would be married against her wishes if she wasn’t able to stand on her own feet. Because of this she made unreasonable and very rigid targets for her which she often missed. Second, from childhood to adulthood, she had been subjected to many restrictions regarding where she could go, who her friends could be, and what clothes she could wear, all controlled by her parents due to the patriarchal mindset of her family. She believed that once she had a good job, she would be able to stand up for herself and live on her own terms. However, if she failed

the exam, she feared she would have to accept her parents’ terms. Third, she lacked coping mechanisms to deal with even small stresses in her life. She had little awareness of mental health and ignored the initial signs, which became more severe over time. This is because our education system doesn’t provide students with basic training in mental health, and our society fails to acknowledge that issues like mental illness can even exist.

In conclusion, competitive exams in India are severely damaging the mental health of millions of students, causing irreversible harm from which they may not recover soon. There is an urgent need to promote widespread education and awareness, and to break the stigma surrounding mental health among both parents and students. The government should frame and implement adequate policies focused on early intervention to protect our youth.

Rahul

1st Year, B.A. (Hons.) Psychology

When Episteme came to Life

Hungry for real world work experience from knowledge gained over years, we excitedly boarded the metro to take us to our selected hospital. My friend and I had received blessings from our parents and had a good breakfast. Reaching the psychiatrist's room where the patients had to be seen, we took our seats at the side. I didn't know what to expect: what my actual role would be, what the patients' problems would be like, or exactly how the doctor would address them.

After the first patient got done with their session, I understood that all I needed to do on the first day was to take notes, make observations and keep any questions I may have to be asked at the end of the day. Slowly, I got the hang of patients coming in and going out one by one at the sound of the buzzer. If I had to compare patients with psychological problems to those with physical problems, I would say that the latter are generally more sure of themselves. It seemed that with psychological problems, the patients rely way more on the doctor. An educated person may make it easier for a medical doctor, but an educated person makes no difference compared to uneducated persons when it comes to psychological treatment. It was a different kind of skill on the part of the doctor, something more intuitive than logical.

How does a person lose their mind? There were different major causal factors in each case but always multiple causal factors. The first ever case I had to observe in my internship was that of schizophrenia. The patient was accompanied by their father and they had recorded that the mother was schizophrenic too. This particular disorder is famous for lasting across generations, no matter how it may have

been conceived in the gene pool for the first time.

During the session, I proudly realised that I was able to correctly guess the provisional diagnosis of most of the cases while taking notes. The patients were mostly continuing patients and there were no new cases so the context wasn't given but I managed just fine. We discussed the various cases and their diagnoses with the doctor at the end of the day. The management or treatment plan most often included a combination of medicines, a form of group therapy and various personalised suggestions.

In each of the cases, the doctor conducted psychotherapy for a varied number of minutes. There was one case that stood out to me because it was that of a child from class 7 as that was an exception because all the others were adult cases. This child was denying that he had stolen money from the cupboard and that all the accusations against him were false. We observed how the doctor through talking gently shifted the attention from these instances of misconduct and its denial on to the topic of academic interest. This patient was given certain tasks to complete until the next session.

Most of the sessions I observed were not full-fledged therapy sessions but that was in the early half of the internship. Something I took note of was how different the variety of cases were as compared to the examples of cases I had read in textbooks and collection of case studies elsewhere. Indeed, I have read and seen very little so far, and the more I read or saw cases, the more I was surprised by the endless variations in psychological problems. No two cases were ever the same.

The doctor also took the time to mentor us and once took a small quiz to test which of the approaches in psychology were our strongholds. One of the interns came very strongly from the feminist theory and another from the humanistic approach. I got evaluated to be best informed and applying the psychodynamic approach. We were given reading assignments to improve our practical knowledge of the current trends in psychological treatment plans and methods.

There was one case we observed in which the problem was not psychological but actually physiological. It was a case of IIH (Idiopathic Intracranial Hypertension), which is rare, and the patient was referred to a neurologist. There were quite a few cases of schizophrenia across different ages and genders. It seems that with the right direction, the patient can learn to grow more self-aware over time and to accept the problems that exist with them and even to acknowledge and appreciate the care-givers. Most of these patients had one thing in common that they often every now and then reached a breaking point which became a cause for urgent attention. It was obviously stressful for the family.

The two most common reasons these

patients reached a breaking point included insensitive comments from society and disgust at medicine dosage or treatment. We brainstormed for solutions and alternatives. For long-term illnesses, a long-term strategy must be the need and the treatment plan needs to be an integrated model incorporating various aspects of lifestyle too. Sometimes we would wonder if it all boils down to the simple equation that life is worth living only when joys outnumber sorrows, even if only slightly.

Looking back to the internship experience, it seems to have been one packed with meetings of humans who come from having some intense psychological experiences, dealing with whatever life throws at them, trying to be meaningful despite everything and to lead a life with dignity. One case involved a retired army man who had trouble adjusting to city life with his adult children, to the point of depression. It was obvious that he missed his hometown but he was expected to forge new relationships in the new place. Challenges seem to appear at every nook and corner of life.

We're just learning to do better and better.

Rana Hassan

2nd year, M.A. Applied Psychology

Internship Experience at VIMHANS

My internship at VIMHANS - Vidyasagar Institute of Mental Health, Neuro & Allied Sciences in January 2024 was a profound immersion into the world of mental health, offering invaluable experiences that shaped my understanding of psychiatric care. Collaborating with seasoned psychiatrists, I engaged in client consultations, encountered diverse cases, and delved into the complexities of psychological disorders.

Each day at Vimhans brought a variety of psychiatric cases, including mood and anxiety disorders, psychosis, and personality disorders.

These experiences not only taught me a lot but also helped me become more empathetic and dedicated to providing thorough care.

Contributing to case studies deepened my research and analytical skills, emphasizing evidence-based practices in guiding therapeutic interventions. Active participation in client workups allowed me to play a meaningful role in assessing and diagnosing mental health conditions, highlighting the importance of holistic approaches in treatment planning.

Beyond clinical practice, Vimhans emphasized fostering a culture of compassion and inclusivity in mental health care. Engaging with clients from diverse backgrounds reinforced the importance of culturally sensitive practices and ethical care delivery.

My internship at Vimhans left an indelible mark on my personal and professional growth,



Image: Vimhans

inspiring me to continue pursuing excellence in mental health care. I am grateful for the lessons learned, the connections made, and the impact it has had on my journey in the field.

In addition to my clinical experiences, I also had the opportunity to participate in workshops and seminars, further expanding my understanding of emerging trends and best practices in mental health care. These experiences not only enhanced my knowledge base but also reaffirmed my commitment to lifelong learning and professional development.

As I continue on my journey in the field of mental health, I carry with me the lessons learned and the connections made at Vimhans, fueling my passion for making a positive impact in the lives of those struggling with mental illness.

Visheshta

3rd Year, B.A. (Hons.) Psychology

Imposter Syndrome and Self-Doubt: A Personal Reflection

Have you ever felt like a fraud, like your successes are based on luck rather than your own abilities? That constant fear of being “found out” is what Imposter Syndrome feels like, and it’s something I’ve struggled with more often than I’d like to admit.

I remember the first time I was recognized for an achievement. Instead of feeling proud, I felt overwhelmed with doubt. Even though I had worked hard, I couldn’t shake the feeling that I didn’t really deserve the praise. It wasn’t just mild insecurity—it was a deep fear that people would soon realize I wasn’t as capable as they thought.

Imposter Syndrome isn’t just about doubt; it’s about the belief that you’re undeserving of your achievements. No matter how well you do, there’s always a voice in the back of your head whispering, *you’re not good enough*. For a long time, I felt isolated in this experience, convinced everyone else around me had it together. But when I started opening up about my feelings, I was surprised to find how many

people—friends, family, even mentors—felt the same way.

The real turning point for me was realizing that *everyone* experiences doubt at some point. What helped was reminding myself of the hard work I had put in to get where I was. I started keeping a journal of my achievements, however small, to look back on during tough moments. It’s been a subtle but powerful reminder that my success wasn’t just a fluke.

Another big lesson was learning to ask for help. For the longest time, I believed that admitting I didn’t know something would confirm that I was a fraud. But slowly, I realized that asking for help isn’t a sign of weakness—it’s a sign of growth.

Imposter Syndrome and self-doubt may never fully disappear, but I’ve learned to manage them better. They don’t define me, and they don’t define you.

Visheshta

3rd Year, B.A. (Hons.) Psychology

My First Conference Presentation: Experience and Quick Tips

We've all heard and known since the minute we entered the field of psychology that research plays an extremely important role. You read research, quote research, question research, understand research, do research, present research, publish research, and this goes on and on. With the advent of many platforms for discussion and many new age research enthusiasts. Taking the forefront, we now know or can know when we want to, about how(s) and why(s) of the research process. But often, we're left clueless about how to present a paper, what goes on behind the scenes and what lies ahead. Here in this article, I'd like to share a tiny bit of experience that I've recently had, and I hope this makes the next step a little easier for at least some of those who read it, than it was for me when I decided to present my first review paper. I came across a poster from the Central University of Haryana about the regional National Conference of National Academy of Psychology (NAOP) that they were going to conduct a conference, in association with the Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR), the theme was: "Women's Health and Well-being".

The two-day conference had a list of subthemes, one of which was - Women in Leadership. It was something that interested me, so I began working on a review paper for the same. My paper got selected for the presentation. The conference was held in the premises of the Central University of Haryana. I presented in front of a panel which was composed of Professors and researchers from Christ University, MDU Rohtak, Central

University of Haryana, and NAOP members.

It was an enthralling experience to say the least. I had no idea what the process was and how to go about it and as most of us, when clueless, I took my concerns to Google baba. It helped. I read a few answers on Quora and watched a few videos. I also talked to one of my seniors who had prior conference experience.

Once the abstract was accepted and the full paper was submitted, I received an email to share my presentation with the organizing committee as well.

How to prepare?

The presentation is basically a summary of your research paper/article. Many organisers provide a basic template of what all they want you to include in their presentation, but some don't.

So, take it as a way of explaining what you've done in your research, why, what was before and what did you understand after, in a crisp and presentable manner. If there are a set number of slides recommended, try to adhere to it. Use a template that is both appropriate for your paper as well as looks professional and presentable. (Please avoid using overly graphic-heavy templates for experimenting with too many varied colours, as it can appear unprofessional). The first slide is usually the title slide which has name of your

- research, the name of author(s),
- affiliation of author and contact information (which is your email address).

From the second slide, you begin your

paper by first introducing your variables, then providing rationale to your research, describing methodology in detail, showcasing results in tabular and graphical manner, a slide for implications and future directions if one wants to include. The end slide thanks the audience for listening and opens the floor to questions, with again mentioning email id of the author to get in touch if there's any query regarding the research.

Do not make the slides text heavy, you need not write full sentences, the pointers are more than enough. If possible, use graphical representation to make the audience understand the concepts better.

How to present?

- The conference organisers will inform you of the allotted time for your paper presentation before the panel, whether it's 10 minutes, 15 minutes, or another duration. Please adjust your content accordingly.
- The key is to be prepared to adapt to last-minute changes, ensuring you cover all the essential points. In my case, I was originally allotted 15 minutes, but right before starting, we were informed we only had 5 minutes, so I had to adjust quickly. It's essential to practise your presentation for both scenarios to be fully prepared.

- If there's more than one presenter, divide the content. It doesn't look nice if one person covers the whole thing and the other is just standing there. Work out the coordination between presenters. Practice beforehand.
- Always allow time for questions and respond to them politely. If you're unsure of something, it's better to admit it rather than trying to give an uncertain answer. Acknowledge that you are not fully aware or sure of the answer and offer to look into it further.
- Your role is to defend your paper, but that doesn't mean you should become overly defensive. Approach every argument with respect and make an effort to understand different perspectives. Once you've finished, be sure to thank the panel and the audience for their time and engagement.

These are a few things to keep in mind. There can be much more than this but it's all I learned with my first experience. A conference presentation is a major accomplishment and if you're ever getting an opportunity to do so, do not shy away. Learn by doing.

All the best, to all readers (and presenters)!

Anveeksha

1st Year, M.A. Applied Psychology

A Handwritten Promise

In this age of swipe left and right,
Where the hearts are caught in fleeting might,
I yearn for a moment that's tender and real,
A knock on my door, a nervous appeal.

Imagine a scene where dusks softly falls,
A figure appears, with hesitant calls,
A heart in their eyes, a terror in their voice,
Seeking connection, a courageous choice.

No emojis or abbreviations here,
Just words on paper, sincere and clear,
A letter penned with ink of heartfelt truth,
Echoes of longing, whispers of youth.

Oh, to receive such a precious gift,
A letter unfiltered, emotions adrift.
In this world of instant taps and clicks,
Your words on paper would be a priceless fix.

So, my love, if you seek to connect,
Forget the trends, the norms we've met,

Let's embrace the beauty of old school art,
A handwritten letter, a soulful start

Md Anas Tarique
2nd Year, B.A. (Hons) Psychology

Achievements

Fatima Sameen, BA (H) Psychology, 2nd year; Got selected as the campus director of Jamia Millia Islamia and Millennium fellow for the Millennium Fellowship which comes under the United Nations (Academic Impact).

Samra Khan, BA (H) Psychology, 3rd Year; Presented a research paper titled “Echoes of Experiences: Tracing the Influence of Cognitive Schemas on Narrativity and Representation in Associative Memory and their Impact on Behaviour”, co-authored with Sandali Singh, at the Indian Network for Memory Studies 2024 Annual Conference, organised by the Centre for Memory Studies IIT Madras, being the only undergraduate researcher/presenter among 300+ participants.

Presented her research paper titled “Voices in the Void: Probing Mental Health Burdens and Communication Barriers Among Dementia Patients” at the Two-Day National Seminar on “Creating a Dementia-Friendly Society for Elderly Citizens: Issues and Challenges” organised by the Department of Sociology, Jamia Millia Islamia, being the only undergraduate researcher among 40 participants.

Presented her research paper “Crisis and Coping: A Holistic Examination of Trauma in India’s Refugee Communities” at the Summer Undergraduate Research Education Program Conference, University of Georgia.

As part of Expressions Theatre Society of India, she won the award for Best Production at the National Drama Competition, Shakespeare Society of India.

Priyambada Kashyap, MA Applied Psychology (Batch of 2022-24); Cleared UGC NET (December 2023), GATE in Psychology (February 2024), and MPhil in Clinical Psychology at Lokopriya Gopinath Bordoloi Regional Institute of Mental Health, Tezpur (Rank 2).

Anveeksha, M.A. Applied Psychology, 2nd Year; Presented a paper at the two-day NAOP National Conference held in collaboration with the Department of Psychology, Central University of Haryana, and ICSSR on the topic “Women’s Health and Wellbeing” on 12-13 October, 2023.

Published a paper titled “Navigating Gender Bias: Empowering Women Leaders to Overcome Challenges” in the International Journal of Indian Psychology, Volume 11, Issue 4. <https://ijip.in/articles/navigating-gender-bias/>

Co-authored a paper titled “Early Identification of Dyslexia and its Relationship with Self-Esteem” presented at a National Conference by the Ministry of Education held in February 2024.

Dilpreet Kaur, M.A. Applied Psychology (2022-2024); Cleared UGC NET (December 2023) & Pursuing MPhil Rehabilitation Psychology from NIEPVD, Dehradun

Hiba Haider Rizvi, MA Applied Psychology, 2nd year; Authored and presented a research paper at the Ministry of Education on “Early Identification of Dyslexia and its relationship with Self Esteem - A Narrative Review”.

Authored and presented a research paper “Early Identification of Dyslexia and its Relationship with Self Esteem - A Narrative Review” at the national conference by the Ministry of Education. (February, 2024).

Hanan Musheer, MA Applied Psychology, 2nd year; Authored and Presented a Research Paper on (Early identification of dyslexia and its relationship with Self esteem—a narrative review), on February, 2024, at National Conference Ministry of Education.



FOUNDER'S DAY





INDIAN
OIL:
VIGILANCE WEEK

MENTAL HEALTH DAY



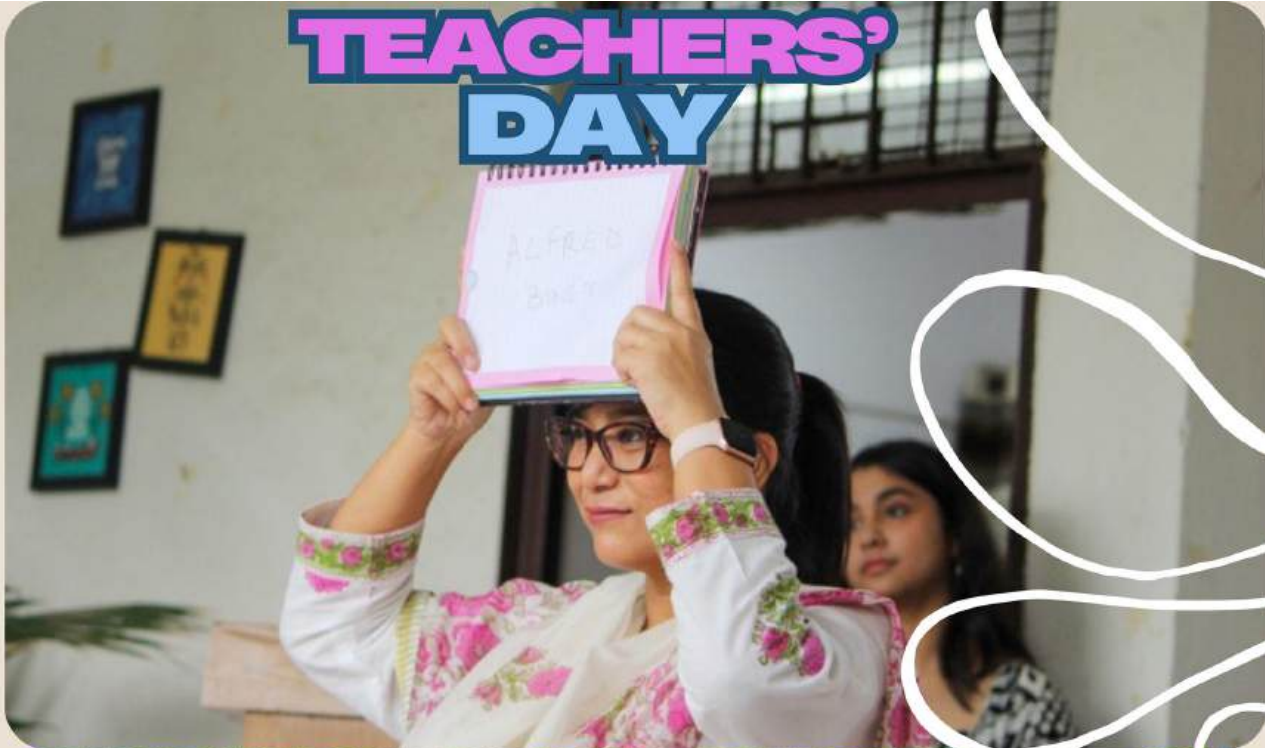


Department

Iftar Party



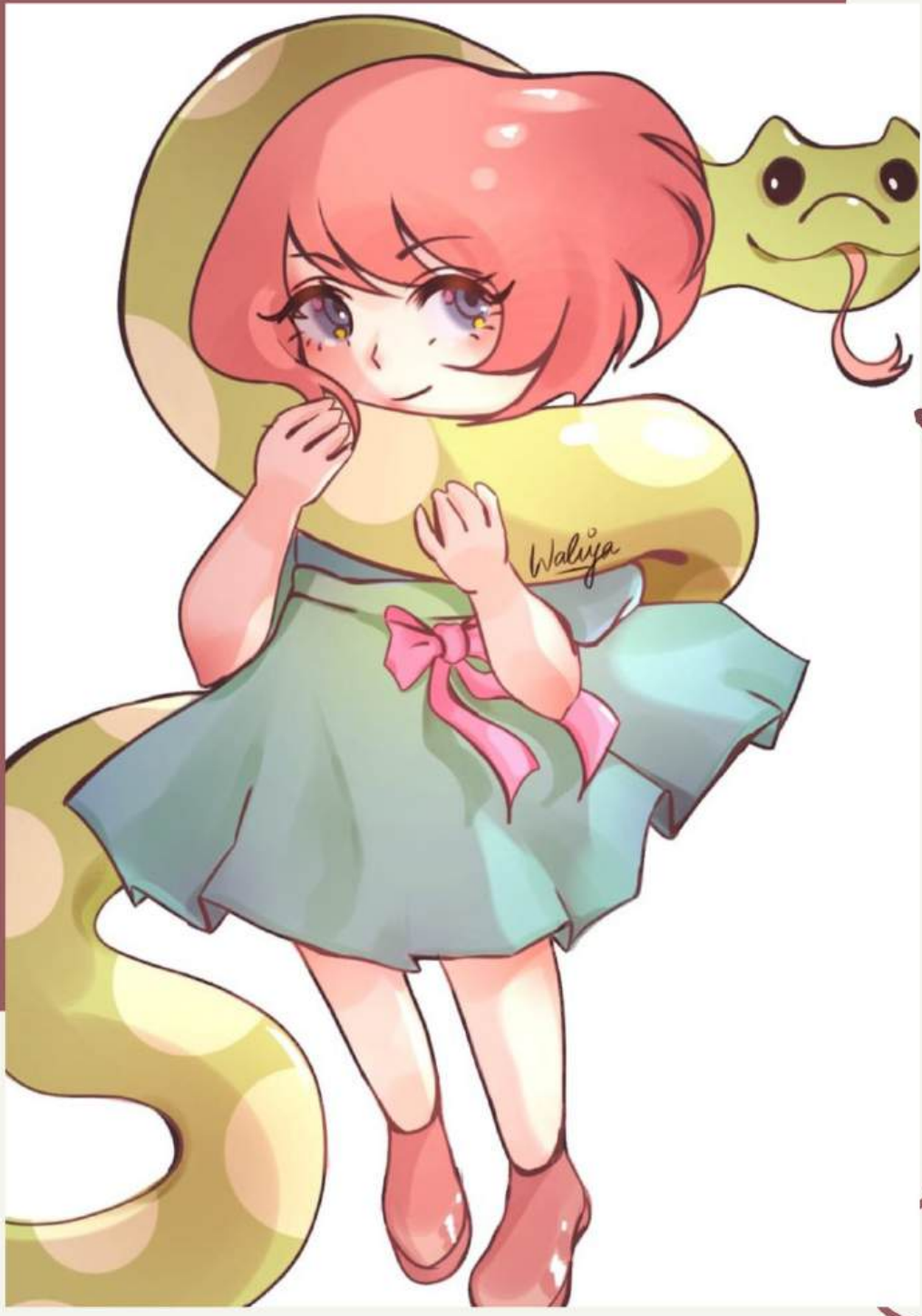
TEACHERS' DAY



Riwayat



Malliya Haam



A digital illustration

Sharmeen Shah





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EDITORIAL TEAM



Ananyaa Saha
MA 2nd year



Eashansh Vats
BA 3rd year



Visheshta
BA 3rd year



Tooba Kazi
BA 3rd year



EDITORIAL TEAM



Fiza Firdous

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Nuzhat Fatma

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Hassan Fatima Zaidi
BA 2nd year

DESIGN TEAM



Heba Fatima
BA 2nd year



Eashansh Vats
BA 3rd year



Ananyaa Saha
MA 2nd year

 **Zoe Gardner**
@ZoeJardiniere

Am I perfect? No.
But do I try my best and keep a positive attitude? Also no.

 **Asif Ullah**
@AsifUllah22

When your parents are on a call and they ask for a pen man that pressure is unreal

 **jomny sun**
@jonnysun

i am only capable of working on things in zero stress or extreme stress situations, in all other situations u can find me laying down and patiently waiting until extreme stress kicks in

 **imonni**
@monnijonet

Do y'all ever look at pictures of yourself as a child and feel emotional? Like wow that baby had no idea what was to come in life.

 **The PhD Place**
@ThePhDPlace

I'm quietly comforted by the fact that only 3 people will read my PhD thesis.

 **Stewie Griffin**
@tbtstew

Sometimes just to annoy my therapist, I ask him, "So how does my lack of progress make you feel?"

 **AJ**
@ajiswriting

but would your thesis defend YOU?

 **Big PhD Energy (aka No Energy)**
@sabrina_p_leeds

Your paper is done when it no longer makes any sense and you can't bear to look at it anymore

 **K. Baba**
@Unkie_K

I hate flying insects man, you can fly FOR FREE. You could fly to any holiday destination of your choice but here you are in my face

 **surf ghost**
@mouthteaters

Did you know you can just start screaming, basically anywhere. It's not illegal or anything

 **Alex, but online**
@Alex_but_online

Therapist: Bottling up negative emotions is bad for your health
Me:[finger guns] That's why I also bottle up the positive ones





Shower Thoughts
@showerfeelings

Randomly hearing your favorite song is more satisfying than putting it on yourself.



John Mayer ✓
@JohnMayer

Shout out to people who text you and apparently throw their phone into a river as soon as they hit send?



juicy
@tygolden_

Can you dislike someone but still love them?



yung ting \$
@DABOSSCHICKK

Real water drinkers know all water dont taste the same



@btchface_

what's the most dangerous game to play?



Miracle
@_llmic_

Do you have siblings?



fatima
@busskr dofatima

When you're a procrastinator but also a perfectionist so you're constantly stressed about the quality of your work that you haven't even started



jamee.
@JayWiick

"Imma just wake up early and do it then"



kyle
@itsdjuigi

It's not a Sunday unless you completely waste it then feel really sad around 8pm.

When your essay is due for tomorrow and you run out of references

I wonder how many miles I've scrolled with my thumb



mrs. brightside
@woodscommahelen

therapist: and what do we say when we need to reach out and ask for support?

me: i'm fine aha how are you though?

therapist: no

♥ 149 1:50 AM - Jul 10, 2019

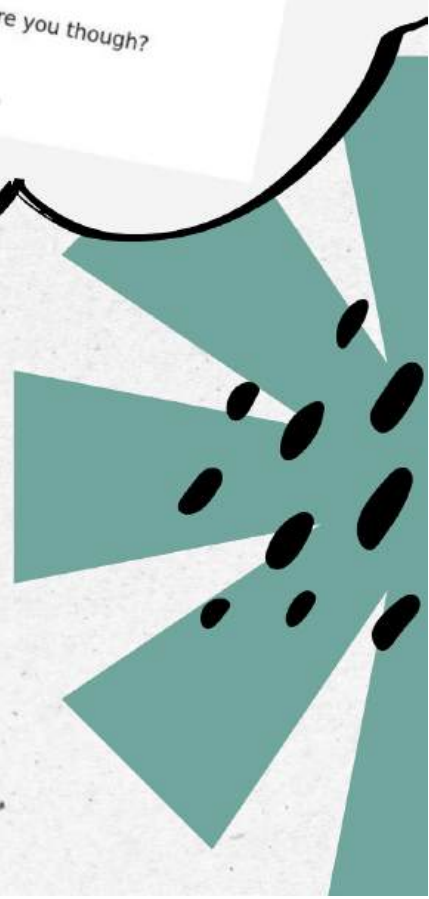
... of divine Providence, which has
SP
This was once revealed to me in a dream.
See R. Otto, *Das Heilige*. He has some



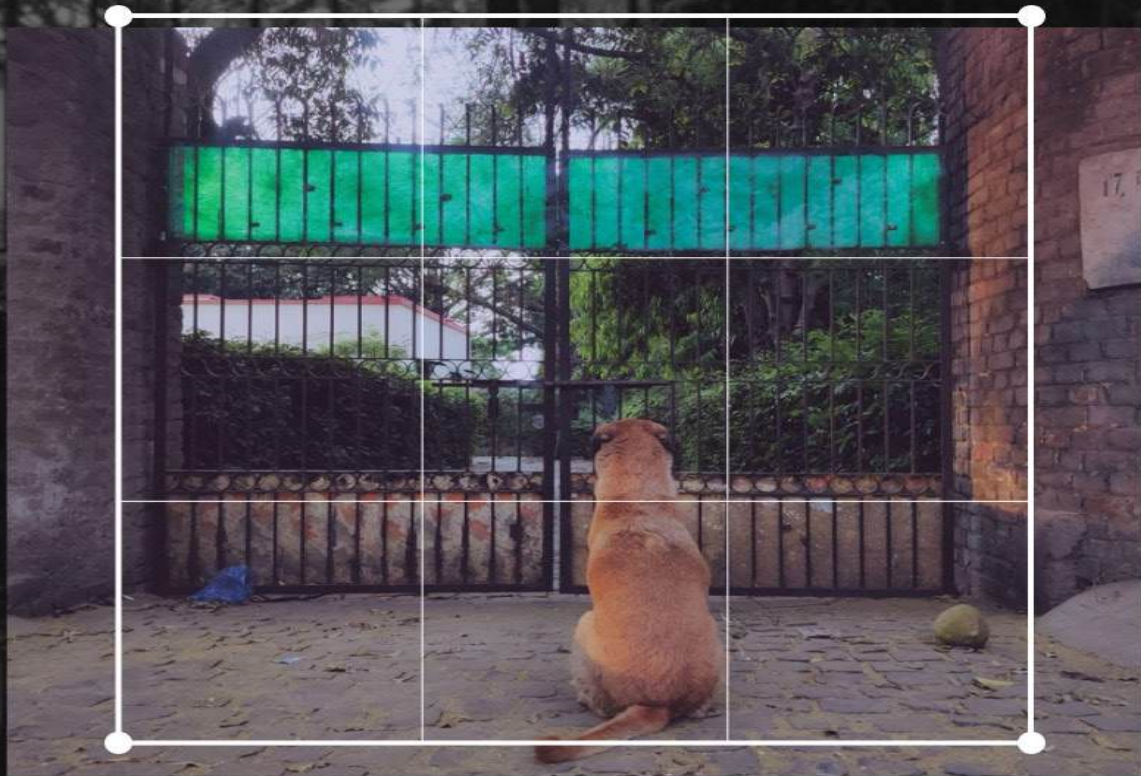
sabs
@sabinrx

how can lawyers argue without crying

stray musings

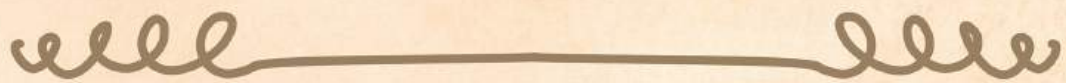


BHAGYA BAJAJ





Bhagya Bazar



"We are what we repeatedly do,
excellence, then, is not an act, but a
habit."

~ Aristotle



Credits and sources

Credits and sources

Department picture : Kirti Malhotra, MA II

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L A T I
B U L E



ar hasan

