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Understanding Psychology in the Context of Relationship, Community, Workplace and Culture

 Springer

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Ajay K. Jain · Shabana Bano
Editors

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*Dedicated to
Prof. Girishwar Misra
for encouraging us to bring out this volume*

Foreword

Psychology is spreading its branches in possible directions. While the growth and proliferation is deeply supported by strong roots of precursors, theoretical and empirical research is needed to strengthen its sustainable expansion. The edited volume “*Understanding Psychology in the Context of Relationship, Community Workplace and Culture*” is a genuine attempt in this direction.

The volume is placed on four strong pillars: culture, community, workplace and relationship. The first pillar, **culture**, is a unifying force. However, this understanding was lacking in the beginning of the evolution of psychological science. I have had the good fortune of organizing a national seminar titled “Psychology in Indian Context” in early 1980s. Although the seminar was successful in terms of involvement and participation of great scholars, many researchers were apprehensive of the “cultural tag”. They argued that we are fragmenting a science which is already fragmented. This dissenting voice was not limited to this seminar in India. As a participant and observer in a large number of international conferences during eighties and nineties, I also came across scholars resenting transcultural efforts. Fortunately gone are those days; we are now convinced that cultural matrix is a surer way of enhancing meaningfulness in psychology.

The focus on cultural parameters has greatly helped us to attenuate ethnocentric bias. The transcultural efforts have not only helped us to examine the generality of findings across cultures, the approach has aided us to discover *novel phenomenon* in new cultures. Such efforts have generated multiple methods of investigation. The labels cross-cultural psychology, cultural psychology, emic psychology, indigenous psychology and ethnic psychology represent singular objective of enriching meaningfulness in psychology by adopting somewhat variant approach routes.

The present volume subserves this unique purpose of building a cumulative science by both the methods of uni-cultural explorations and cross-cultural comparisons. In the study of smartphone overuse in Malaysian University students, causal model is examined with a view to generating intervention inputs. Apart from providing information with respect to the role of staying connected and feeling loneliness, the import of the local vis-a-vis universal is explicated. Similarly, mental health and well-being issues of secondary school students at mainstream schools

in Australia is analysed with a view to generating implications for current practice with alternative school students in Australia. However, the focus is not restricted to uni-cultural models. Wherever needed, it has gravitated towards comparison across cultural/subcultural groups. An exemplary study involving Indian diaspora from Denmark and the U.S.A. has been included in the volume. Interestingly, the use of narratives is helpful in getting around the problems of typical quantitative research. At the same time, suggestions are generated for wide variety of domains such as communications, interconnections, multiple belongings, inclusion/exclusion and promotion of linkages.

In the context of comparative framework, the study that examines relational attitude and mutual acceptance of Hindus and Muslims in India is a pointer towards ongoing intergroup contact and mutual acceptance in India. It is important to recognize that these kinds of studies provide a deeper understanding of pluralism. Though the study is highly relevant to Indian scenarios, this has relevance also for other plural and multicultural countries of the world. Another study examining implicit prejudice faced by Afghan students in Delhi is equally significant, even if the definitive conclusion would require a bigger sampling frame of Afghan students.

If needed no argument to convince one that indigenous model of psychotherapy is yet to be evolved in an adequate manner. However, the topic highlighting *Bhagavad Gita* as a therapeutic model is a laudable assertion in this direction. The authors have rightly asserted that Gita would open up creative space to understand behavioural and existential perspectives. The capitalization of this indigenous approach would, however, requires more and more research that bridges the gap between the conceptual and the empirical.

The second pillar on which the edited volume is placed involves **community**. Humans seek communities. Relationships with others are central part of human existence. The inclusion of community parameters serves two essential needs. The focus on the community contexts of behaviour offers further contextualization of behaviour in a sociocultural system. Second, the thrust on community contexts provides effective ways to prevent problems rather than treat them after they arise. The field emphasis promotes healthy functioning for all members of a community rather than involving a section of the community.

Although the benefits of uni-cultural and cross-cultural investigations have been described, the issue of diversity in community context also requires between groups and within-group analysis. The within-group studies in a community provide deeper understanding of population parameters such as socio-economic status, education level and income levels. The interpretations obtained from between-group studies sometimes become possible only in the light of within-group analysis.

An added advantage of community focus is the shift from an individualistic to a structural/ecological perspective. This shift is useful for problem definition. Einstein once remarked: "The formulation of a problem is far more essential than its solution". How we define a problem shapes the questions we ask, the methods we use to answer those questions and the way we interpret the answers. The specification of community-relevant factors such as substance abuse, mental illness and domestic

violence deepen our understanding of community, thereby increasing our skills for working effectively in diverse contexts.

The delineation of *social capital* as well as social barriers is a distinct possibility. A remarkable illustration of this social capital is handled by the paper on *Swachh Bharat* where the benefits of collective efficacy have been amply demonstrated. The paper also illustrates the dynamic interplay between theory (social identity model) and empirical outcome (collective action). Similarly, a qualitative in-depth interview is reported focusing on themes including neighbourhood, religion, peer groups, settings, childhood experiences and close relationships in the context of substance disorders in India. These studies, in addition to a few other investigations included in the edited volume, bring home the fact that an objective and elaborate contextualization of psychological parameters is essential for understanding and evaluating psychological findings.

A somewhat characteristically different article explores biophilic design and points out its implications for psychological well-being. Drawing on the evolutionary trends, a number of evolutionary psychologists (e.g. Buss, 2000) have conceptualized and suggested the possible avenues of modern living that parallels ancestral environments. However, it is expected that psychologists would design empirical studies to test many of its projections and predictions.

I would also like to draw researchers' attention towards the possibility of *programme evaluations*. The extensive research on community-relevant dimensions has taught us the benefits of programme evaluation. More of its use in Indian context would be helpful to build a robust psychology in India. It may be added that the four-step model of programme evaluation includes: *identifying goals and desired outcomes, process evaluation, outcome evaluation and impact evaluation*.

Workplace constitutes the third pillar. It is a common observation that growth and spread of *positive psychology* during the last part of twentieth century and first part of twenty-first century has exercised a tremendous influence. Instead of adopting disease-centric model of human behaviours, researchers have reoriented themselves to use positive explanatory concepts. Martin Seligman and his associates have provided conceptual leads, and their impacts are reflected in almost all branches of psychology.

The domain of workplace is no exception to this "New Look Approach". The article on positive leadership deals with the core concern of trust and the paper reviews positive parameters such as stability, safety, hope and meaning. The basic objective appears to be the development of a comprehensive model linking positive workplace, parameters and organizational effectiveness in Indian context. An additional merit of this kind of discussion includes a changing shift towards virtuous cycle in work life. However, this does not mean that negative constructs are to be completely divorced from scientific analysis of work behaviour. What is needed is a positive work focus to mitigate some negative phenomena. The paper addressed to understand the struggles faced by women employees is a remarkable attempt.

In recent years, workplace issues have acquired new dimensions and new significance. There has been a greater influx of women into the workforce. The growth of technology has also changed many aspects of work culture. There is a strong conflict

between employees' motivation to work for a good living and their motivation to experience "meaning" while working. As a result, new issues have been identified; new concerns have been expressed and new approaches have been adopted to get around these problems. While a comprehensive treatment of all these issues is beyond the scope of a single volume, a few representative topics have been included.

The fourth pillar of this volume, **relationship**, is a humanistic force. The understanding of psychology is inadequate without an appreciation and evaluation of human relationship. Even the evolutionary process has provided the bonding hormone *oxytocin*. Sigmund Freud, in his classic dictum, stressed the role of work and love (relationship) as basic components of life well-lived.

In recent decades, a large number of psychologists have articulated theories of human happiness (well-being). While there are variations across definitions, measurements and manifestations, relationship appears as an inescapable component of happiness/well-being. In the eudaimonic definition of well-being, Ryff (1989) views a high scorer as having warm satisfying trusting relationships with others. Such a person is concerned about the welfare of others, capable of strong empathy, affection and intimacy and understands give and take of human relationship.

Though an extremely useful construct, its dimensions and manifestations are many-fold. It may not be possible to bring together works relating to all facets of human relationship. Yet some salient features of relationship have been depicted. The relational attitude of Hindus and Muslims is reported with the help of empirical investigation. Implicit prejudice experienced by Afghan students in Delhi is documented.

Papers dealing with some limited aspects of human relationship are not to be seen as exhaustive, but they need to be viewed as suggestive. It is a welcoming signal that contemporary psychologists are collectively declaring the saliency of human relationship, particularly the saliency of **flourishing relationship**. This edited volume is one of the voices in the collective slogan of building flourishing relationship.

Finally, I would like to indicate that the edited volume would fulfil an important objective of maximizing understanding. The contents have both theoretical and applied flavours. The approaches involve the tested ones as well as emerging avenues; the diversity embraces both the etic and the emic. I would like to thank Dr. Surendra Kumar Sia and the other editors for a commendable job. It is a great job to bring together scholars and researchers of different persuasions to a common platform. Greater is the task of persuading and procuring finished products (published papers) in time. As a long-time seminar maker in the past, I share the pain and pleasure. **Cheers!**

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Preface

Psychology has been playing an important role in taking care of the behavioural abnormalities and utilizing human potential. However, the contexts are changing each moment. Therefore, we cannot stop just at the existing contributions of psychology to the society. As time progresses, psychologists need to acclimatize with environmental changes and customize psychological principles accordingly. Behavioural scientists have the responsibility to examine and unravel the dynamics behind behavioural change patterns in the contemporary society which in turn can help in identifying the causes and devise the appropriate remedial measures. Thus, deliverables of psychology, whether in the form of process or outcome, to the society need to be augmented over time keeping the end user's interest in mind. The present volume is a small step in that direction.

The book includes improved version of some shortlisted presentations in the XXIXth annual convention of National Academy of Psychology (India) held at Pondicherry University, India. It focuses upon deliverables which can have valuable contribution for relationship development, community growth and positive cultural transmission. This anthology deliberates some innovative concepts which may help in understanding some of the contemporary behavioural issues and also discusses some novel psychological methods, tools and procedures which can have immense social utility in strengthening relationship, rejuvenating community and restoring behavioural capability. The present volume is a nice compilation of chapters contributed by scholars from different countries deliberating scientifically upon various substantive issues

The book begins with foreword by a highly knowledgeable scholar in the area of organizational psychology and cross-cultural psychology, Prof. Fakir Mohan Sahoo, who is Research Professor at XIM University, Bhubaneswar, and former Professor and Head of the Centre of Advanced Study in Psychology, Utkal University. He received Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship for his doctoral work from Queen's university, Canada. His other achievements include UGC Career Award, Ind-Shastri Fellowship and Professional Associateship accorded by East-West Centre, Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.A. The introductory chapter by Prof. Surendra Kumar Sia briefly touches upon some of the contemporary process driven as well as output driven deliverables

of psychology in the context of relationship, community, workplace and culture and the necessity for augmenting the same.

With further extension of the introduction, the volume comprehensively elucidates some of the significant deliverables of psychology to the society in five sections, namely—identity and relationship, psychology for gainful employment, psychology customized to the community, culturally embedded psychology and alternatives for maximizing psychology.

Identity represents an individual's social face, which develops out of social interaction. It influences relationships and also gets influenced by relationships. Moreover, there can be important behavioural factors to understand in the dynamics between identity and relationship. Psychology can contribute immensely in identifying and explaining these factors in the present-day world, fostering the way for national integration, communal harmony and productive social relationships. Catering to this objective, there are three chapters in the section of "*Identity and Relationship*".

The present volume contains six chapters in the second section titled—"*Psychology Customized to the Community*". Psychology has a role in addressing behavioural issues at the community level, like respect for diversity, development of a sense of community, empowerment of members, prevention of mental illness and fostering mental health at a community level and initiating changes for community-wide happiness and wellbeing. These six chapters cover some of the important behavioural issues related to community, like suicide prevention among farmers, cyberbullying in the context of school and college, risk factors of smartphone overuse, mental health of youth who are not from mainstream schools and sociocultural contexts of substance abuse, collective participation in cleanliness programme.

In the third section "*Psychology for Gainful Employment*", there are three chapters dealing with psychology at workplace. According to World Health Organization's report on occupational health, about one-third of one's life is spent on work. Work can have both a positive and detrimental effect on the health of the worker, including mental health. Psychology can make a major contribution in amplifying positivity in the workplace. It can suggest pathways to generate happiness and satisfaction in employees by deriving purpose from their employment. Assessments and interventions based upon behavioural domains have the potential to enhance employee involvement and engagement. With this intention, this section deliberates about emerging leadership approaches in the context of workplace and issues related to empowerment of female employees.

The section on "*Culturally Embedded Psychology*" embodies three chapters delineating the influence of culture on psychological processes. The important role of culture in shaping human cognition and behaviour should always be one of the major focuses for psychologists. They have been analysing the relationship of psychology with socially shared values, beliefs and practices. In this section, we will have chapters deliberating about how classrooms can play an important role in reflecting and implicitly promoting cultural meaningful messages, how cultural variation results in differences in ethical beliefs and thinking and how culturally significant epics like Bhagwat Gita can help in understanding the human nature and dynamics of psychotherapies.

The last section, titled “*Alternatives for Maximizing Psychology*” reflects upon means beyond conventional strategies, techniques and approaches which may help to enhance the utility of psychology. In this section, there are two chapters elaborating issues like attributes and behavioural implications of biophilic design and constructivist grounded theory as a more realistic oriented research method in behavioural science.

The chapters are based upon evidence and experiences from different countries and set-ups. Readers will surely get a lot of input and information to take care of behavioural issues in the society pro-actively, as well as retro-actively. We are thankful to all the authors for their valuable contributions to this volume, despite their hectic schedule. We are quite sure, this book will be a very useful resource for students and researchers interested in social psychology, community studies, social work, school psychology and work behaviour. The book will also be useful for policy-makers, human resource managers and mental health practitioners.

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Varanasi, India

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Acknowledgements

Words are not enough to express our gratitude to Prof. Girishwar Misra who was the first person to suggest us and encourage us further in bringing out this volume after the XXIX Annual Convention of National Academy of Psychology (India) was successfully organized at Pondicherry University in December, 2019. Our heartfelt thanks to him. We are really indebted to Prof. Fakir Mohan Sahoo for going through all the eighteen chapters and writing the unputdownable foreword for this book.

Our sincere thanks to Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) for providing partial financial assistance to organize the XXIX Annual Convention of National Academy of Psychology (India) and International Conference on “Making Psychology Deliverable to the Society” held at Pondicherry University, India, from 20 to 22 December, 2019. The book includes improved version of some shortlisted presentations in this conference. We also express our sincere gratitude to the faculty members in the Department of Applied Psychology, Pondicherry University, for providing their untiring help and support in organising the conference.

We are indebted to all the authors for their contributions in this volume and more so for putting up with the delay, of course for an impressive outcome. Our proposal for this edited volume was accepted by Springer. We are grateful to Ms. Satvinder Kaur for her valuable inputs and practical advice from time to time. We also express our sincere thanks to Mr. Ramesh Kumaran and Mr. Karthik Raj for their help and support.

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Chapter 1

Introduction: Augmenting Deliverables of Psychology in the Context of Relationship, Community, Workplace and Culture



Surendra Kumar Sia

Abstract The introduction touches upon the deliverables of psychology for the development of contemporary society. It commences the deliberation with the emphasis on human happiness. Vouching for the all-time contribution of psychology, the chapter suggests for augmentation of deliverables corroborating with the change in need patterns of the human being in different behavioural contexts. The four contexts as expounded in this volume, namely—identity and relationship, community, employment and culture—have been emphasized in this introductory description.

Keywords Deliverables · Development · Happiness · Relationship · Community · Employment · Culture

Introduction

Psychology has been playing a pivotal role for development of society and human happiness. The key of any initiative for development and happiness is availability and utilization of resources. Whether it be a developed, developing or underdeveloped country, resources need to be utilized optimally and judiciously. Usually, we visualize three types of resources—natural resources, human resources and capital. The importance of human resources cannot be ignored, since appropriate utilization of natural resources and capital necessitates capable and motivated human resources. Health and education are viewed as important domains of human resource. But it will be incomplete without psychological resources. Society pursues development successfully when its human resources are not only healthy and educated, but also motivated and resilient. Therefore, there is always a need to mobilize as well as actualize psychological resources.

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Development and Happiness

We cannot envisage social development devoid of happiness. Development is not just delivering basic public goods. It involves the hope and aspiration for a brighter future which goes beyond the survival needs. It would be misleading to narrow down development to the stipulation of life-sustaining elements like food, shelter, education and health care. Development in society must be viewed as a multifaceted aspect, with happiness being the central theme. Happiness, is a post-scarcity narrative aiming for a holistic approach to development (Patel, 2018). Similarly, Hall and Helliwell (2014) view that human development indices can help us to assess whether genuine progress has taken place, if subjective well-being has increased. Happiness could be an integral component of development and capability strategies (Hirai et al., 2016). Thus, the orientation of psychology for development in society also pays heedful attention on human happiness. Happiness or well-being, as used interchangeably by psychologists, refers to “optimum psychological functioning and experience” (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

Individuals in society strive for happiness which can be hedonic and or eudaimonic. Describing happiness as hedonic pleasure has a long history. Even during fourth century B.C., the Greek philosopher Aristippus propagated that the objective of life is to experience maximum amount of pleasure. Psychologists who endorse hedonic view tend to focus on the predilections and pleasures of the mind as well as the body (Kubovy, 1999), or in other words the physical and emotional pleasure. Everybody in this world wants to reduce pain and experience pleasure. Psychology has far-reaching contributions, whether in ameliorating unpleasant states or inculcating pleasing experiences.

At the same time, being human beings, we should strive for eternal happiness. Even age-old philosopher like Aristotle and Buddhist psychology consider hedonic happiness to be a short-term ideal which makes the individual slave of desires. True happiness is achieved through the expression of virtue, i.e. doing what is worth doing. Ryff and Singer (1998, 2000) contemplate well-being in terms of human flourishing and describe it not just as the attainment of pleasure, but as “the striving for perfection that represents the realization of one’s true potential”. In a similar vein, eudaemonic psychologists suggest that one of the key elements to existing mainstream sustainable development concept is human development by inner happiness (Kittiprapas, 2015). This inner happiness is achieved when we actualize our potential and add meaning to our life by doing something for others and relating with others. Many a time, it may involve struggle, pain and sacrifices, particularly in collectivistic cultures. Thus, there is a possibility of dilemmas. Culturally embedded principles of psychology can guide us to overcome these dilemmas more realistically and transform the sorrows to peaceful pleasant experiences.

Needless to mention that psychology has been guiding and helping individuals to come out of their abnormal and disturbed mental states and to utilize their potential. However, this is not just a one-time affair. As we know, change is the only constant

for any society. We need to adapt to environmental changes and customize psychological principles accordingly. As required, new theories may be developed and new principles may be formulated to explain the mechanisms behind behavioural issues in the changing societal scenario. In other words, there is always a need to augment the deliverables of psychology to the contemporary society. The present volume aspires to fulfil that need as far as possible.

Augmenting Deliverables of Psychology

Psychology took formal shape as a sovereign field in the year 1879, when the German scientist Wilhelm Wundt established the first laboratory of psychology in Leipzig. But it will be unfair to completely detach it from its long philosophical base. Because psychology has stood up as a deliverable field to the society, due to its strong traditional knowledge base as well as purpose-driven adaptations. Around 600 to 300 BC, Greek philosophers deliberated upon a wide array of topics which we now consider as psychology. Socrates and his followers—Plato and Aristotle—authored about various topics like pleasure, pain, motivation and rationality, etc. Moreover, psychologists suggest the contributions of ancient Indian traditions like—Buddhist psychology (David, 1914); Vedic psychology (Dandekar, 1941/1981); psychology of yoga (Taimini, 1961); Dravidian psychology (Shaktidharan & Sathya Kumar, 2001)—towards psychological deliverables even before these Greek philosophers. The traditional and philosophical base has shaped psychology as a deliverable field for the human society.

The deliverables need not be tangible products only. They can be tangible, they can be intangible; they can be products or services; they can also be theories and models explaining behavioural issues in various social set-ups. In any science, including psychology, knowledge passes through different layers—no knowledge to new knowledge, new knowledge to theory-building, theory-building to principles of application, principles of application to discovery of solutions, discovery of solutions to translation, translation to production, production to optimization, optimization to end-user integration (Mandal, 2019). Broadly, it can be mentioned that psychology involves three major stages—theory-building, deriving principles from theories to discover solutions and translating the solutions into the form of products or services for optimal utilization by the end-users. At each stage, psychology fetches deliverables to the society. Through theory-building, we deliver to the society, by filling up the knowledge gap. Psychologists consider these theories as robust bases to chalk out principles to deliver solutions for behavioural issues in the society. Solutions are like prototypes. Psychologists should not stop there. They should translate the solutions into customized diagnoses, therapies, interventions and other services which can be of optimum utility for target groups. It is true that psychology is not lagging behind. It is moving in tandem with the society through translational deliverables like customized therapies, automated behavioural diagnoses, enhancement of psychological capital, persuasive appeals to change behavioural intentions, etc.

However, this should continue in updated manner. The continual aim of psychology should always be to become more translational.

The deliverability of psychology needs to be augmented further and further, for greater benefit to the society. We should not be stagnant at one point. Whether theory-building, application or translation, all three functions of psychology should be iterative. With the intention of making psychology more translational, we should not ignore the importance of basic researches. Basic researches are process-driven researches carried out by psychologists to gather more knowledge, explain the underlying mechanism of constructs, which in turn substantiate, modify or negate an existing theory. If required, they develop a new theory. For example, leadership as a construct has lot of importance in different social set-ups. We all know the age-old theories of leadership behaviour in terms of the trait approach like the great man theory (Carlyle, 1841) the type approach like the Ohio study of 1945 (Stogdill, 1948) and Michigan study in 1950s (Yunker, & Hunt, 1976). There have emerged newer and newer theories across time, namely contingency theory (Fiedler, 1978), transformational theory (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Burns, 1978), nurturant-task leadership (Sinha, 1984) and servant leadership (Patterson, 2003). Presently, we are discussing one of the latest theories of leadership—distributive leadership (Whitby, 2006), authentic leadership (Avolio & Luthans, 2006), etc. Thus, corroborating with social changes, we must come out with new theories and models to explain emerging behavioural issues.

The professional acumen of psychology will be enhanced when principles are generated from newly developed theories and existing principles from classic theories are modified for application in different contexts. For example, principles based upon the social identity model (Van Zomeren et al., 2008) could be applied in the context collective action for community development, or principles from the theory of planned behaviour could be used for eco-friendly house construction (Sia & Jose, 2019), principles from Bhagwat Gita for psychotherapy (Shukla, 2018), etc. Thus, application-oriented new principles need to be formulated by psychologists to put forth solutions for behavioural exigencies in multifarious behavioural contexts. These solutions are like prototypes or frames of reference. When we translate these principle-based solutions to ready-to-use products or services, the deliverability of psychology is further augmented through optimal utilization by members in society. Therefore, over time psychologists should come out with new tests, interventions, therapies and modules for various challenging issues like Internet addiction, a sustainable environment, cyberbullying, positive schooling, ethnic integration, subordinate motivation, etc., to fulfil social purposes.

With this background in mind, the proposed volume intends to portray some of the significant deliverables of psychology to the society in five sections, namely—identity and relationship, psychology for gainful employment, psychology customized to the community, culturally embedded psychology and alternatives for maximizing psychology.

Identity and Relationship

Identity represents an individual's social face, which develops out of social interaction. It influences relationships and also gets influenced by relationships. Moreover, there can be important behavioural factors to understand the dynamics between identity and relationship. Identity plays an important role in maintaining and enhancing the group relationship. It is suggested that identity clash is the principal cause behind collective violence (Krug et al., 2002). Partition of India occurred along religious line. Therefore, religious identity continues to be one of the major reason intergroup conflict in India (Tripathi, 2016). Psychologists have a responsibility in inculcating positive intergroup relationship and strengthening national integration. They are also putting their best effort. Drawing from contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954; Berry, 1997), psychologists postulate that contact and sharing among social groups can substantially reduce prejudice and promote mutual acceptance under various conditions such as—equal status, common goals and support even other out-groups not involved in interaction (Al Ramiah & Hewstone, 2013; Lemmer & Wagner, 2015; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). However, persistent effort is expected from the psychology fraternity to identify more effective mechanisms as well as different acculturative agencies which can foster imperishable social harmony because we still encounter situations which are unacceptably violent (Tripathi, 2016).

Another facet of identity and relationship is global and cross-national connections or in other words transnationalism. It is the process of maintaining two or more cultures simultaneously. It is like the integration dimension of acculturation (Berry, 1980, 1997) where the individual adopts the culture of the host nations as well as maintains the culture of the nation of origin. Psychologists need to explicate the behavioural means for diasporic to thrive upon transnationalism. Most of the times the transnational families stay separated from each other but they have to hold together with the sense of collective welfare and unity across national borders (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002). There is a need to analyse issues such as citizenship, religion and nationalism as they relate to national identity in transnational scenario (Sahoo & De Kruijf, 2016). Diasporic movements are taking place in a world characterized by contraction of time and space. New communication technologies making it simpler to stay in touch with the places and people one has left. In other words, we can say the online transnationalism is facilitating to maintain feelings of longing and sense of belonging (Guzder & Krishna, 2005). Psychologists can examine the behavioural implications of various factors facilitating transnationalism in the present twenty-first century.

Moreover, we need to suggest the ways about how the implicit prejudice can be eliminated. Outwardly, a group may show off a state of coherence and solidarity towards the other group, but implicitly it may be something different as the true feelings and emotions are concealed. Psychology can contribute immensely in identifying means as well as explaining mechanisms which can foster the way for national integration, communal harmony and productive social relationships in the present-day world.

There is a need to broaden psychologists' understanding about the relationship of global environmental and social changes with local communities and the multifarious impacts of those changes on human cognition, behaviour and well-being with reference to social identity. New theories and models may be developed, or existing ones may be verified for their applicability towards collective action in challenging social contexts. Two forms of collective action are possible. One is through community cohesion and stable relationship, and the second one is through perceived interdependent future and shared intention for social transformation (Beard & Dasgupta, 2006). The Clean India Mission of the Government of India necessitates collective action based upon the desire for social transformation. Although individualistic approaches based upon theories like theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) and norm activation model (Schwartz, 1977) result in some change for the desired pro-environmental behaviours like clean neighbourhood, these effects may not be adequate and may decay over time (Fujii et al., 2009). Therefore, greater importance should be bestowed upon the collectivistic approach to overcome this inadequacy. Moreover, psychologists should try to verify the utility of models of collective action, such as social identity model of collective action (Van Zomeren et al., 2011) in fulfilling challenging social objectives like Clean India Mission since it requires wider sustained wider participation.

Psychology Customized to the Community

Psychology is not meant only for students, academics and therapists. It has a greater role in taking care of broader social issues. To a major extent, psychologists and psychological agencies are fulfilling these objectives. However, it is imperative on the part of our psychology fraternity to orient our applications and interventions towards community to integrate the end-users maximally. We need to examine and understand the psychosocial issues among different sections of the society, particularly the minorities. We have to identify the ways to assist disenfranchised members feel more comfortable and connected with their communities. Concerted effort should be made in formulating, executing and evaluating pragmatic community-based interventions.

One of the challenges before the community psychologists is prevention of farmer suicide. Suicides by farmers have been matter of political debate, constitution of commissions and recommendations (Behere & Behere, 2008), but initiatives to associate mental health status with farmer suicide and chalking out community wide behavioural strategies to tackle this are largely lacking (Garg, 2019). Psychologists can develop interventions to enhance resilience and reduce psychological distress among the farmers.

Substance abuse has become a problematic public health issue. It has been reported as a "chronic relapsing disease" with the relapse rate varying from 56.8 to 81.8% (Peacock et al., 2018). Definitely, this would not augur well for any community. We need to adopt a multilevel perspective to understand and deal with the aftermath generated due to substance abuse and harm (Poznyak, 2019). While deliberating

about drug abuse, most of the researchers restrict their approach either to a medical perspective or to a criminological perspective. There is a need to go beyond the traditional perspectives and analyse from a societal perspective (Ronzani, 2018). Social context can have significant contribution in initiation and maintenance of substance abuse.

Information technology (IT) is considered to be one of the key enablers for many present-day innovations leading to improvements in lives and society in various forms such as better education, health care, cleaner and energy-efficient environment. (Atkinson & Castro, 2008). However, as behavioural scientists, we must not ignore the darker side of it. Misuse or overuse of IT can have far-reaching behavioural adverse impacts. Two such disturbing impacts in the context of community are—cyberbullying and smartphone overuse. India is reportedly one of the expanding economies, with rapid adoption of information technologies (Maiti et al., 2020). However, research in India on issue like cyberbullying and other adverse online experiences are inadequate (Blaya et al., 2018). Another challenging issue before the behavioural scientists is smartphone overuse. All of us feel the presence as well as the absence of smartphone as a device of necessity, perhaps ignoring the danger of its overuse. It is reportedly found that overuse of smartphone among children and youth in the age range of 10–24 years encounter severe negative experiences like depression, anxiety and stress (Sohn et al., 2019). Therefore, psychologists in general, and Indian psychologists in particular, should figure out the determinants as well as consequences of these darker behavioural correlates of information technology along with possible remedial measures at individual and community level.

We live in a world bombarded with technological hazards and environmental challenges. Complicated ecological and technological challenges like global warming and technology abuse as well as psychological distress generated by these problems—cannot be resolved through isolated individual efforts (Bullard & Johnson, 2000). Collective action at community level is very much required to face these challenges effectively. Usually, the present-day demands distract and discourage individuals from standing up to the social and environmental crises and uniting with others to resolve them (Stokols et al., 2009).

Psychology for Positive Work Environment

Organizations and employees have to work together for creating a more positive and proactive work environment so that a proper balance can be maintained between economic and human goals (Froman, 2010). An individual spends around one-third of his waking hours at work. Therefore, feeling good at work place and functioning well in the employment are two core elements of the overall happiness or well-being of a person. Higher level of happiness is strongly linked to better task performance (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005), low turnover (Boehm & Lyubomirsky, 2008), higher effort and fewer work-related injuries (Keyes & Grzywacz, 2005). Since work influences well-being, and well-being of the members is vital for organizational success,

it becomes incumbent on the part of the organization to promote and maintain well-being at work (Dewe & Cooper, 2012; Hone et al., 2015). Psychologists are carrying out research and practices in the areas of positive organizational behaviour with the intention of creating virtuous organizations (Froman, 2010). This endeavour by should be maintained persistently, and the psychologists should guide the organizations with contingent tools and interventions to lead as well as empower the employees for gainful employment.

The present-day organizations are characterized by uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (Rodriguez & Rodriguez, 2015). In these circumstances, it becomes imperative on the part of the leaders to exhibit positive leadership by restoring trust, hope and feeling of stability among the subordinates. Positive leaders nurture performance and growth in themselves, in their subordinates and also in the organization as a whole (Cameron, 2008). Positive leaders enact those behaviours which make the subordinates experience positive emotion (Kelloway et al., 2013). Therefore, psychologists should figure out and suggests the ways to the management which can help them to lead by adopting strengths-based approaches in order to boost positive emotion and work performance of the subordinates.

Another aspect of importance in the context of organization is employee empowerment, specifically the empowerment of women employees. Empowerment will be achieved successfully only when the discrimination is eliminated. Although gender equality has improved, working women still experience strong gender bias in Asia Pacific countries (Business Standard, 2021). The psychology fraternity needs to put sincere effort in identifying the genesis of and remedies for this problem. We have to unravel whether the cause is from the organization itself or it goes beyond that. Structural inequalities may create the feeling of lack of control on the part of women which in turn may make them feel less powerful at home and at work (Cassidy, 1997). All of us invariably believe that female employees experience high stress due to their multiple responsibilities. But, it may not be true in all the cases. Researchers suggest that multiple role engagement as such does not contribute to high stress or lower level of life satisfaction by the women employees (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Sumra & Schillaci, 2015). It implies the responsibility of behavioural scientists to undertake thorough in-depth analysis of micro- as well as macro-perspectives of women employees.

Culturally Embedded Psychology

Behaviour and culture are complimentary to each other. Thoughts and actions of the human being influence cultural practices as they develop over time and vice-versa (Lehman et al., 2004). We need to understand how do culture and mind help in each other's development (Chiu & Hong, 2013). Moreover, we should also work out the mechanisms through which culture can become a resource to pursue valued goals including psychological therapies and interventions. Cultural norms and practices pave the way for a person to lead the social life in a predictable and smooth

manner. But how do we learn those and what are the various sources for learning those norms? Psychologists should dissect the various agencies of enculturation so that adequate insight can be gained to utilize the cultural resources for the benefit of the human being at right time and in appropriate manner. School is such an important agency which has significant cultural bearing for the children (Vallance, 1974). When students take part in various classroom activities, they are pulled into cognitive patterns that are culturally shared. These need not be imposed by the teachers on the students. Students themselves involve actively in the process with their own cultural expectations (Rogoff, 1998). Therefore, psychologists can take up research in the school set-up to identify the culturally relevant domains which can be further helpful for different policies, practices and interventions.

In addition to the emphasis on culturally important social agencies, the behavioural scientists can put effort to extract practical principles and guidelines from various traditional knowledge bases which can help the counsellors/therapists as well as the clients to come out of unsolvable paradoxes. One such rich traditional knowledge base is The Bhagavat Gita. Counselling and psychotherapy are integral component of clinical interventions in the management of a patient with emotional and behavioural disturbances. But many a times the therapists encounter dilemmas in dealing with the difficulties of their clients. Perhaps, the traditional resources, mythologies or epics like The Bhagavat Gita could be of immense help in finding a solution. The Bhagavad Gita is not just a dialogue between Arjuna and Lord Krishna in the battlefield; it contains a lot of inputs relevant for psychotherapists and counsellors. It is the unrecognized textbook of counselling for many of the psychological problems (Sharma, 2014). The usefulness of the dialogue as a model of counselling and also application to present-day psychological therapies need not be limited to the Indian context only (Reddy, 2012). It encompasses various relevant constructs like cognition, emotion, desires, etc., in a pragmatic way (Bhawuk, 2011). Therefore, psychologists interested in original thoughts should take up the challenge to explicate the behavioural inputs from traditional cultural resources in a systematic and scientific manner.

Moral and ethical development is another behavioural domain which is influenced significantly by culture. No society can survive without moral values (Wehner, 2020). Ethical values demarcate behavioural boundaries which guides the individuals as well as communities in following the acceptable path. Socio-cultural theory advocates that cognitive and affective development takes place through individuals' participation in social and cultural activities (Scott & Palincsar, 2013). Culture plays an important role in moral development. There is a need understand the nature and dynamics of enculturation as well as to analyse the issues related to cultural variation in the self (Miller, 2001). Moreover, we being posited in a globalized world for our academic, professional and social purposes, we should enrich ourselves with the ethical practices in global context. However, students are not dispensed with adequate information about practising ethics in a global context (Zhu & Jesiek, 2017). We, the behavioural scientists, have a responsibility to examine and suggest the means for it.

Conclusion

The role and importance of psychology in social development and human happiness is undeniable. Psychology, from the inception of this discipline, has been contributing towards these two goals in the best possible manner. Still, there is a need to augment the deliverables of psychology whether it is through process-driven approach or product-driven approach. In the present volume, the authors have deliberated upon some of those deliverables corroborating with the behavioural issues in the contemporary society. We have to maintain the momentum further by incorporating unconventional orientation in research method like grounded theory approach and also venturing into less-attended behavioural issues like pro-environmental behaviour, elderly care, etc. The chapters in the present volume may encourage the psychologists to put sincere effort persistently for theory-building, solution generation and end-user integration.

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Part I
Identity and Group Relationship

Chapter 2

Exploring Belonging and Interconnections: Narratives from the Indian Diaspora



Rashmi Singla and Sujata Sriram

Abstract The Indian diaspora estimated at 17.5 million is one of the largest in the world (UN Report, 2019). Skilled Indians were invited to fill gaps in the labour market in Europe and the U.S.A. from the beginning of the second millennium. A psychosocial perspective on the Indian diaspora, from Denmark and the U.S.A, is the focus of this paper. The theoretical frameworks include diasporic subjective processes of dispersal, connectedness (Dufoix, 2008) and processes of multiple inclusion/exclusion and ambivalence about belonging (Kalra, 2005), along with the life-course perspective (Levy, 2005). Transnational linkages between India (*desh*) and the Indian diaspora abroad (*videsh*) are explored. The empirical cases (Singla, 2008; Singla, 2015; Sriram, 2014) are based on qualitative in-depth interviews with families and young people and diasporic couples in exogamous marriages. Some current transformations, especially related to digital interconnections are also included. The narratives indicate changing paradigms about India, multiple belongings, differential engagement in the receiving society and India related to generational and couple formation patterns. There is a nuanced understanding of belongings and marginalities of Indian diasporics through multiple belongings involving “emotional citizenship”, ongoing negotiations at diverse levels, virtual interconnections and exclusion from various groups in the country of origin and the host country. Suggestions for promoting interconnections, communication and linkages between the Indian diaspora and India are delineated.

Keywords Indian diaspora · Interconnections · Multiple belonging · Inclusion/exclusion · Marginalities · Promoting linkages

This chapter considers the linkages of members of the Indian diaspora with their country of origin, focusing on the Indian diaspora in Denmark, and the U.S.A.

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It addresses some strategies for maintaining connections among Indian diasporic communities by focusing on both the here and there—the country of residence and the country of origin. The first-person voices and interests of the diaspora are central to the chapter. Additionally, historical and policy-related aspects are briefly presented to contextualize experiences in Denmark and the U.S.A.

A version of this paper was presented at the National Academy of Psychology (NAOP) conference, December 2019, in Pondicherry, close to the state of Tamil Nadu, where Tranquebar is situated. The year 2020 marked 400 years of (colonial) connection between Denmark and India. India's Scandinavian secret, Tranquebar/Tharangambadi, is regarded as the historical beginning of Indian-Danish colonization in 1620 (BBC, 2021). Tarangambadi, or “land of the singing waves”, proved to be too much of a tongue twister for the Danes, who altered the name to Tranquebar. While Pondicherry is hailed as a “slice” of France in India, Tranquebar, with its rich Danish heritage, remains out of the limelight. The British—to whom the Danes sold Tranquebar in 1845 for 1.25 million Indian rupees—did not regard it as a significant part of the British Empire. The interconnections between Denmark and India make scant mention of Tranquebar. This connection is taken up later in the chapter, relating to diversity in connections between India and its diaspora as well as the previous colonizers.

Members of the diasporic communities are active agents who transform society and confront marginalization, rather than being seen as just clients whose well-being commands attention (Drèze & Sen, 1989). The Indian diaspora, as a transnational community, is extremely heterogeneous and dynamic. The United Arab Emirates (UAE), U.S.A. and Saudi Arabia host the largest number of migrants from India (Economic Times, 2021). There are approximately 30 million individuals who claim Indian origin, who have contributed to global economic, cultural and psychosocial interconnections over the past few decades (Convert PIO, 2017). Globalization and liberalization, coupled with the rapid advancement of transport and communication technologies, have intensified the socioeconomic, political and cultural ties of migrants with their countries of origin (Stiglitz, 2002). Diaspora actors and communities are increasingly recognized as a resource in international relations for economic and sociocultural collaborations, also, also in their country of origin (Mahalingam, 2017). India topped the remittance chart in 2019, pulling in US \$83 billion from its global migrant workforce. China followed with US \$68.4 billion. The World Bank projected a decline of remittance flows in 2020 across all regions due to the COVID19 pandemic (Remittances, 2021). The diasporic communities have undergone transformations in various aspects of their lives through interconnections between the country of origin and country of residence; new perceptions of belonging and forms of transnationalism have been created.

This chapter focuses on the Indian diaspora in Denmark and the U.S.A., referencing qualitative empirical studies based on first-person experiences illuminating psychosocial aspects, followed by some suggestions for promoting interconnections, communication and links between the country of origin, that is, India, and its diaspora. The focus is on the voices of the persons, along with state provisions for the diaspora, which involves differences, similarities and belonging in diverse contexts.

The Concept of Diaspora and Transnationalism Processes

Although “Diaspora” historically refers to the dispersal of the Jews after the Babylonian exile, the term as used today refers to any group of people who dwell far from their country of origin. From a social–psychological perspective, a core issue in being diasporic is reconciling individuality with community, a constant need to clarify one’s position in relation to the power holders, to one’s own identity and to issues of power, identity and ethics (Dencik, 2014). Diaspora is about dispersal from a referent origin, while maintaining connections and managing distance (Dufoix, 2008), which directs our attention to the process of transnationalism. Being diasporic today implies transnationalism, defined as the process of inhabiting two worlds simultaneously, through an attachment and commitment to two or more nations at the same time. Transnational families live some or most of the time separated from each other, yet hold together and create what a feeling of collective welfare and unity across national borders (Bryceson & Viorela, 2002, p. 3). The proliferation of affordable communication technologies through the internet is central to important transformations in our social and intimate lives, as it affects transnationalism.

Transnational networks and links between India (desh) and the Indian diaspora abroad (videsh) are a part of this process. There has been a re-evaluation of the self-identity and exercise of power in the virtual space, illustrated in the study of Indian transnationalism online (Bhatia, 2018; Sahoo & Kruijff, 2014; Singla et al., 2020) and in the present paper.

While migration from India has always been present historically, the term “diaspora” was not conventionally used to refer to people of Indian origin living in various parts of the world. The terms commonly used were Non-Resident Indians (NRI¹), “Overseas Indians”, or “People of Indian Origin” (PIO). The term “diaspora” as a collective was first used in academic discourse in 1994, at an International Conference on the Indian Diaspora at the University of Hyderabad (Raghuram & Sahoo, 2008), and a Centre for the Study of Indian Diaspora at the University of Hyderabad was established in 1995 (Jayaram & Atal, 2005).

Historically, migration from the Indian subcontinent goes back to colonial and pre-colonial times. After the abolition of slavery in the British colonies in 1833–1834, the need for labour for plantations in the Caribbean, Malaya and Mauritius arose. Indentured labour from India filled this deficit, wherein the emigrant had to work for a specified employer for three to five years. A few migrants served as clerks and teachers as part of the colonial expansion to the Middle East, East Africa and South Africa, along with some petty traders and shopkeepers, referred to as the “old diaspora”. They had very little contact with their country of origin, with many of them losing touch with the language but retaining aspects of the culture (Bhat & Bhakra, 2007; Kapoor, 2003).

The period after the Second World War heralded another movement of people of Indian origin. This was the movement of twice-migrants: people of Indian origin who had moved to countries in Africa and the West Indies, who saw the opportunity

¹ NRI have been jokingly referred to as Non-Returning Indians.

to move to the UK, Canada and Australia and later to the U.S.A (Bhachu, 1999). Many of these individuals were compelled to leave behind a greater part of their savings and wealth in their flight out of East Africa as a result of the nationalization of Indian-owned businesses. Very rarely did these people return to India.

The next wave of migration from India came after 1965, to Europe and the U.S.A, of individuals seeking education and employment. Many of these individuals married and settled in their host countries. Their children became the second generation, who are the focus of the studies mentioned in this paper.

Indians in Denmark

Denmark, along with other Nordic countries,² is characterized by the welfare state model, which emphasizes egalitarian and extensive benefit levels, wealth redistribution, and promotion of gender equality and maximization of labour force participation (Guribye & Overland, 2014). At the same time, there are processes of exclusion, xenophobia, inequality and poverty, among others. Denmark was one of the regions where highly skilled migrants (and their families under the green card scheme) were invited to fill gaps in the labour market since the 2000s. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was a demand for unskilled labour leading to the first wave of the Indian diaspora, followed by a formal halt to non-Nordic migration in 1972. Since the 1970s, immigration consisted mainly of refugees and family reunification from Middle Eastern and Asian countries. However, these diasporic communities were underexplored academically, almost totally absent from any mapping of the Indian diaspora (Jayaram, 2005; Tejada & Khadaria, 2014).

According to Statistics Denmark (2021), there were 15,304 Indians in Denmark, which included persons of Danish origin, immigrants and descendants with Indian ancestry. There has been a steady rise in numbers among the Indian diaspora, due to the arrival of information technology (IT) professionals, doctors and students in recent times (CPH India, 2016; Indian Embassy, 2017; Singla & Varma, 2019).

Indians in the U.S.A

The Indian diaspora in the U.S.A constitutes the largest growing ethnic minority group in the U.S.A, which has a relatively short history of about 50 years. The present Indian diaspora in the U.S.A consists largely of post-1965 migrants, who have shaped themselves into a socially, politically and economically powerful minority group. With a population of more than 4.5 million in 2019 (Pew Research Center), Indian-Americans make up 1.2% of demographics in the U.S.A. As the Indian diaspora in the U.S.A has become larger, it has also become more influential. The inauguration

² Sweden Norway, Finland and Island are other Nordic countries.

of Kamala Harris as Vice-President in the U.S.A is an indication of the political coming of age of the Indian-American diaspora. Apart from Ms. Harris, there are 20 Indian-Americans in positions of influence in the administration, referred to as the “samosa caucus” (Prakash, 2021).

The first post-1965 wave of migration from India was of urban, middle-class, educated individuals seeking opportunities for education and work. The information technology boom in Silicon Valley attracted Indians to the software industry. Many of these migrants were fluent in English and had aspirations for upward mobility. Their access to social capital ensured the rapid growth of the population as one of the wealthiest migrant groups in the U.S.A. Many of them married in India and took their spouses back to the U.S.A with them (Hickey, 2006; Kapur, 2003; Kurien, 2005; Sheth, 2001). Alongside, there was the movement of the Indian diaspora from East Africa (Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda) and the West Indies, the twice-migrants. Many Indians moved to Britain from Africa with the rise of independence movements in the 1960s and then moved to Canada and the U.S.A for better prospects. The connection to India for the twice-migrants was more diffuse as compared to those who came directly from the motherland.

The presence of the Indian diaspora in Denmark and the U.S.A. and their connections with India are related to the diaspora policy changes taking place in India.

Diaspora-Related Policies in India

Diasporic relations have taken a significant shift with economic liberalization, especially in the global South. When, pre-liberalization, highly skilled and educated Indian citizens migrated to other countries for better job prospects, it was seen as a disservice to the nation, contributing to the brain drain. “Brain drain” is gradually being replaced by “brain gain”, which tellingly enough is being called “the diaspora option”, though this can be debated. With economic liberalization, India and many other countries realized the importance of the diaspora and the need for recasting the diasporic relations in the framework of emotional and flexible citizenship. Currently, there is a division of OIA-Overseas Indian Affairs dealing with the Indian diaspora matters under the Ministry of External Affairs—MEA (Mea, 2021). It was in 2005, that the government of India introduced OCI—the Overseas Citizen of India, for those whose parents or grandparents had or were eligible for Indian citizenship on 26 January 1950; an OCI was granted a lifelong visa (Noujoks, 2009). Moreover, OCIs were freed from procedural requirements such as registration and reporting and were allowed rights of residency and participation in business and educational activities in the country.

While the policies such as OCI resulted in ease of procedures for overseas Indians, psychosocially they created a reinvigorated sense of belonging, which were earlier non-facilitating and ambiguous in nature. This made it easy for overseas Indians

to relate to, and engage in, economic activities similar to Indian citizens. The policies have sought to expand and deterritorialize the concept of India in an attempt to promote economic and social development (Lum, 2012). Recent Indian policy reforms have made it possible for the Indian diaspora to engage with India socially, culturally and economically. The following section presents empirical studies about the Indian diaspora, dealing with psychosocial aspects of belonging and marginality in the context of Denmark and the U.S.A.

Empirical Explorations of Diaspora and Belonging

The theoretical framework driving the discussions and analysis includes subjective processes of dispersal, connectedness (Dufoix, 2008; Vertovec, 2000) and processes of identification, as well as inclusion and exclusion from belonging, especially in the country of settlement (Kalra et al., 2005). Multiple identifications (rather than identities), as argued by Bauman (1998), as an open-ended activity in which we are all engaged, whether by necessity or by choice, are part of the framework. These, along with simultaneity of belonging, are possibilities in transnational social spaces. The postmodern celebration of mixed race has brought in the consideration of multidimensional models, allowing the possibility that an individual can have simultaneous membership and multiple fluid identities with different groups (Aspinall & Song, 2013; Root, 2001).

We also focus on some macro-processes related to nation-states reimagining the relationship between domicile, citizenship and belonging since the 1980s: from exclusion to the recognition that diasporics may be mobilized to invest in the territories left behind (Raghuram & Sahoo, 2008). The postcolonial multilayered history of the Indian diaspora, Scandinavian benign colonialism and self-perceived innocence when it comes to colonialism and racism, are also included in the framework (Poddar, 2013). As mentioned earlier, the colonial history of Nordic countries including Denmark is overlooked when the focus is on the migration in the current period.

While the Nordic Countries are lauded for policies of progressive gender equality, they have capitalized on this image of progressiveness that serves to obscure Nordic colonial complicity (Mulinari et al., 2009) and its ongoing legacies. The membership and belonging in Nordic countries is complicated by the visibility of migrants and the colonial discourses that permeate many aspects of society and come from its history of colonialism and participation in reifying racial hierarchies among the Nordics. Immigrants must negotiate their identities through these existing discourses, choosing how and when to resist or adopt to Nordic/national norms. According to some dominant narratives, race and racialization are of the past in Europe, if they ever existed in the Nordic countries (Keskinen, et al., 2019). Critical research has pointed out that racialized welfare logics operate in the welfare state practices. Scandinavian countries often see themselves as “innocent” and “outsiders” when it comes to colonialism and racism, and there is a resistance to talk about these

exclusions (Benign Colonialism, 2015; Poddar, 2014). Mulinari et al., (2009, p. 2) note the absence of critical discussion in relation to these racial processes in Nordic countries, which never went through a critique of colonialism and its presence in everyday environments and encounters, in contrast to countries such as the U.K. in the aftermath of the dismantling of the British Empire.

Qualitative in-depth interviews of ethnically intermarried/couples of Indians in exogamous marriages with a Danish spouse identify themes relevant to Indian diasporics in Denmark (Singla, 2011, 2012). Singla's Indian background (Indian diaspora in Denmark); her ability to speak Hindi, Punjabi, Danish and English; her professional position as a university researcher; and her age provided a balance between an insider and an outsider perspective with regard to the participants. The participants were offered a choice of language for the interviews. Most chose English or Danish, some chose Hindi or Punjabi and a few a mixture of these.

The analytical strategies adopted were those of meaning condensation combined with post hoc categories grounded in the narratives of the participants. Temporal changes, as well as a metaphorical framework of pull and push, were used for analysing diasporic relations. The major themes covered here concern diasporic processes and contacts. Other themes relating to family relations, job trajectories and experiences of psychosocial intervention are covered elsewhere (Singla, 2008, 2015).

Some issues of acculturation and cultural identity emerge from the exploration of belonging among adolescents and families of Indian origin living in Southern California (Sriram, 2014). An ethnographic approach was used to understand experiences of living in the U.S.A. Membership in a culture requires an understanding of cultural activities, routines, rituals and beliefs and shades of meaning. The interviews and observations allowed access to participants' stories in their own voice. The interviews, in English, helped define what it was to be Indian in the U.S.A: the influence of the family and community, religious and cultural practices, awareness about identity markers, interactions with other Indian communities and perceptions of discrimination by the majority community.

The empirical studies provide a nuanced understanding of belonging and marginality of Indian diasporics in Denmark and the U.S.A, focusing on different analytical levels: personal, group and structural (Singla, 2008, 2015; Sriram, 2014).

Some Paradoxes in the Danish Situation

There are paradoxes about a minority's situation in Denmark. Suurpää (1998) notes that accentuation of hierarchical differences between Danes and ethnic minorities coexists with a pursuit of equality. For Indians in Denmark, there are several cultural associations that organize cultural programmes during festive seasons, while engaging with the expat community (CPH India, 2016). In addition, there are cyber-networking activities such as India Internet Day (IID). The partial racial exclusion of Indians from Danish society is a paradox. There is inclusion in the educational arena

and in the labour market, as indicated by high levels of education and income as compared to other ethnic minorities and even among Danes. The average income of Indians before tax was 389,300 DKK (approx. 62,887 USD), which was the highest among the non-Western immigrants (Statistics Denmark, 2017, p. 69). One reason for the educational aspirations can be attributed to the Danish welfare regime, which affects the transition to adulthood. Completion of education can be accomplished without experiencing overwhelming financial difficulties due to a combination of extensive state provision with some assistance from the family (Naidoo, 2005; Singla, 2004, 2005). This is in line with the contention of Raj (2007) that the diaspora invests in and creates a social energy, which can be comprehended as the diasporic capital. Diasporic capital must be understood as the combination of different social energies, including social capital, cultural capital, human capital and economic capital. The role of the community on the youth depends on the manner and process through which the diasporic capital is invested and is used by the parents as well as the young people themselves.

Rajiv, an Indian in an ethnic intermarriage with a Danish woman (Singla, 2015), reveals a pattern of intense transnational connection. He had lived for three years in Denmark and had frequent contact with his parents in India, illustrating the concept of transnational social spaces, where two or more national states become a part of a single new social space (Faist & Kivisto, 2010). Rajiv travelled to India once or twice a year, sometimes with the objective of providing financial advice to his father. This is in line with the conceptualization of a transnational family: where there are strong and sustainable ties between the person and a network of family and relatives based in other countries (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002). Regular communication, sharing resources and family burdens and decision-making processes help maintain the bonds, ensuring the welfare and interest of other relatives. Rajiv explained:

We have to figure out the situation and someone has to take all that over, because they [parents] are getting old and want to simplify their life, you know they have a big house, which they are taking care of all the time (Singla, 2015, p. 164).

Rajiv had high levels of economic capital, he mentioned almost no experiences of exclusion in Denmark. He had close emotional ties with the extended family in India and in the U.S.A. where some of his relatives lived, through the Internet and Skype.

These narratives illustrate how close emotional relationships can be maintained with family members, illustrating the concept of “emotional citizens” in the country of origin and other countries, by visiting and through the Internet and social media. This is also confirmed by the narratives of Indians in Britain (Charsley, 2012; Williams, 2010), twice-migrated Indians from Uganda (Bachu, 1999), newer migrants and newly arrived skilled migrants (Raghuram, 2008).

However, it would be too simplistic to conclude that transnational marriage implies intense, frequent relations with extended family in the country of origin. For highly educated Raaka from India, married to Danish husband Klaus for the past eight years, there was limited contact with family members in India. Raaka was aware of her responsibilities towards her family and fulfilled her duties and with regard

to her parents' residence. She explained about the financial support offered through purchase of apartments for her family in India. Her husband Klaus was co-owner of the apartments, which indicated his supportive stance towards her family:

I had a necessity to find a place to my parents, because they lived with me, and I got married and I moved out and I knew that they need a place to live. Therefore, we bought two apartments, Klaus and me actually, we settled our parents in one of them and in the new apartment, my brother lived, so that he could take care of them. (Singla, 2015, p.167)

Raaka's narrative indicated her filial responsibility towards her parents. Thus, there can be transnational ties in particular domains of life, without frequent ongoing communication and high emotional involvement. Her narrative challenges media-driven stereotypes of marriages where there is an asymmetry of rights and resources in genders relations, with women having a lower position. At the same times, he underscores her experiences of racism and discrimination, especially in relation to getting a job in Denmark in keeping with her qualifications after two years of stay.

But then I could not find a job in Denmark. It was very, very difficult to get a job in Denmark... If there is a foreigner coming in, and this is only if it is necessity, if there is a position where they can't find a Dane (Singla, 2015, p. 148).

These narratives confirm that transnationalism implies reciprocal sharing of the joys and sorrows across national borders, and even the experiences of exclusion. This can be seen among other groups, such as Turkish women in Denmark, providing care and economic support to their families in their country of origin (Mirdal, 2006).

The narratives from Rajiv and Raaka—who can be structurally positioned as reunited spouses—document the differing patterns of transnational relations, which, for some, include economic contribution to the family in India and experiences of exclusion. Buciek and Juul (2007) discuss how remittances contribute to the feeling of being included and to possession, which is an important aspect of belonging and is perhaps one of the reasons for aforementioned India's ranking as the highest remittance-receiving nation. In spite of these differences, all participants in the study underscored their belonging to the country of origin in varied forms. However, we cannot generalize about the nature of transnational contact based on structural categories, such as type of migration, gender and socioeconomic belonging only, as the intersection of these factors with subjective aspects, such as the nature of relationships, the agency of the persons involved and the choices made, is important. Consequently, our understanding of a simplistic definition of transnationalism is challenged through our broad social–psychological approach when we focus on the persons involved in these transformation processes. Transnationalism is more about the quality of the contact and how it affects everyday life than just about the structural categories (Singla, 2015).

Danish society is characterized by an illusion of homogeneity, a collective amnesia and official silence regarding mixedness through the past centuries (Singla, 2015). The shadows of the colonial past combined with twenty-first-century anxieties have influenced present immigration policy, which is reflected in the negative experiences of some of the Indian diaspora participants, especially the Danish partners' critique of exclusionary and discriminatory practices. The belonging and marginality of the

young Indian diasporics should be perceived in this context, as argued by Kalra et al. (2005), that diaspora shifts attention away from viewing migration as a one-way process. They appeal for an understanding of the complex transnational identities and conceptualize diaspora as both a positive embracing of transnational affiliation in the context of Indian postcolonial history and a defensive posture by communities in the face of a hostile host telling them they do not belong. A more focused dynamics related to these ambivalences and exclusion processes, also including the Indian diaspora in Canada, are delineated elsewhere, Singla and Ganapathy-Coleman (2020), while additionally detailed gender dynamics are covered in Singla and Runciman (2019).

The current socio-political situation in Denmark contributes to a feeling both of belonging educationally and workwise and of being marginal socially, related to the almost overlooked colonial history. Empirical studies of the Indian diaspora in the U.S.A, focusing on a relatively younger age group, indicate both similarities and differences.

The Indian Diaspora in Southern California in the U.S.A

Indian-Americans in the U.S.A currently number almost five million (US Census bureau 2019). They are the largest group of Asian Americans, after the Chinese. The Indian-American diaspora has to develop an identity, with differing issues for the first and the second generations in a multicultural environment. The pejorative term “American-Born Confused Desi” (ABCD) has often been used to describe the second generation who are neither Indian nor American or who may be both simultaneously. They have been described as confused, without understanding their cultural identity and having multiple individual problems (Poulsen, 2009). The development of identity is crucial for adolescents and may be difficult for adolescents from ethnic minority groups. Developing a bicultural identity, considering the demands of the families, along with the requirement from the peer group and the wider society in school and other social settings, posed problems for adolescents. Developing a hyphenated Indian-American identity, with elements of being Indian and American, occurred in a third space, separate from the family and the peer group (Bhabha, 2004). Selective acculturation (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001) helped choose what to include from the host society, while retaining some family ideals and beliefs, embedded in family and community networks. The values and ideals espoused by the family could contradict what was expected by the host nation (Moinian, 2009; Sodhi, 2008; Sriram, 2014).

Apart from developing identity, the participants had to deal with the pressures of being part of a model minority. The dilemmas associated with model minorities had to be resolved by the second generation (Bhatia, 2007; Dhingra, 2007; Kibria, 2002), a process made more complex because the host country saw them through old lenses; and expected them to behave similarly to the first generation. It is important to consider the inheritance of particular human and social capital from the parents and

its effects on shaping the identity of the second generation in the above mentioned third space (Sriram, 2014).

Many participants spoke of two distinct selves: an American self that contrasted with the Indian self. Both emerged as distinct entities appearing in different contexts. The Indian self was seen at home, in interactions with siblings, family and the wider Indian community. The American self-emerged in school, where there were few Indian children, and the Indian self could fade into the background, allowing them to blend in and not stand out. Fifteen-year-old Divya said, “The American part comes out in school, while the Indian part comes out over the weekend”. In the words of 20-year-old Razia,

I think every Indian kid goes through this ABCD idea, because his or her culture clashes with American culture. Their parents have this one idea of them, they bring their ideas from India, and then they have to reconcile those ideas they have with the ideas of American culture... I think ABCD is a good description of sometimes the way you feel. Confusion—I am American, I am definitely American, and I am Indian... It is this weird, in-between middle ground that you have.

While many families celebrated Indian festivals, friends from other races and religions were rarely invited for the celebrations. As 15-year-old Divya said,

American/white friends are not called for Diwali and Kollu,³ they may feel left out. Not because I would feel embarrassed, but just because do not want them to feel left out. I have never tried it, maybe I should. I generally feel that’s the time for Indian friends.

Indian clothes were worn for Indian festivals. Girls wore traditional Indian clothes more often than the boys did. However, many participants expressed reservations about wearing Indian clothes to school or in situations where there were few Indians. Many girls shared that Indian clothes were brightly coloured and made them stand out, something that many of them were not comfortable within middle and high school. As 17-year-old Swati said,

Indian clothes for Indian festivals, when I get to see other Indian people, at the Diwali mela. I won’t wear Indian clothes to school—it’s awkward, too bright, they stand out, not the kind of thing that people wear to school in America. I wear kurtis to school. I would not wear churidar and kurta to school. It’s out of the norm, and not something that I would like to wear. . . . School is not related to Indian clothes, people would think it weird. Wearing jeans and a top or shorts makes me fit in better.

Indian-American children first encountered prejudice in the form of name-calling, teasing and taunting in school. Some children and their parents spoke of bullying in middle school, when they were taunted about smell and references to curry. Issues of discrimination and prejudice from the host community emerge from a recent study by Badrinathan et al. (2021) where it was reported that half the Indian-Americans in the U.S.A faced discrimination, usually based on skin colour.

Prejudice and bullying were felt more often in middle school than in elementary and high school. In elementary school, teachers acted as a buffer between the

³ Kollu is the traditional women’s festival from South India celebrated during Navratri (Nine Nights) during fall.

second-generation Indian-American children and the majority of white children. In middle school, this buffer was less evident, and many children spoke of being teased. Many participants had Indian names, which others made fun of. Youth said they spoke differently at home and at school because they were teased about their Indian accent. During gatherings, a medley of voices and intonations were heard—with adults speaking with clear Indian accents, while youth and young adults spoke with American inflections.

While the Indian self was an important part of who they were, there were some who could be considered “whitewashed”. The terms “coconut” and “whitewashed” were used by Indian origin youth as derogatory references to someone who had forgotten, or who refused to accept, the Indian part of the self. As 22-year-old Sparsh said, “You saw Indian kids in school who were completely whitewashed. They didn’t want to associate with a single thing about being Indian”. When asked about what coconut meant, I (Sriram) was told “brown on the outside, white inside”. As 21-year-old Deven said,

I see myself as an American; I identify more with my American side than I do with my Indian side. I’ve grown up here; I’ve never spent any time in India, for more than a month. Most of my interactions have been with American society. My friends have been American. I don’t agree with everything that is American, but at the end, I say that I am American.

Most of the second-generation Indian-American youth had limited fluency in an Indian language, with girls being more fluent as compared to boys. Many said that they could understand something said in the mother tongue provided it was said slowly and clearly. While many of the youth watched Bollywood movies, with English subtitles to understand the dialogue and the drama, the familiarity with an Indian language was directly associated with the connection with India. Families with relatives in India, who visited, or and who themselves vacationed in India regularly were more likely to have access to an Indian language. When parents did not communicate in an Indian language, there was limited opportunity to use the language. While there were classes in Hindi and Gujarati being offered along with religious training, few young people availed themselves of these opportunities. Razia stated:

Indian kids my age, we don’t talk to each other in Hindi or Tamil... We talk to each other in English. Unlike Chinese kids who talk to each other in Chinese, even though they’re born and brought up here. We just talk to each other in English. In India as well, everyone talks in English. India uses English so much, there’s no need to use another language.

Events such as the celebration of India’s Republic Day indicated important aspects of belonging. Celebrations were organized by the Federation of India Association, San Diego chapter, which was part of the National Federation of India Association (NFIA). The programme began with the national anthems of both countries. While children sang along to the Star-Spangled Banner, very few of the Indian-American adults in the audience accompanied them. During the Indian National Anthem, many more of the adults sang along. Both the American flag and the Indian flag were displayed on the stage. There were many Indian networks in the city, each working for different goals. Organizational splits occurred as a result of ego

clashes between leaders of the organizations. Groups belonging to the same ethnic origin came together to celebrate events specific to the geographical area of origin in India. These groups reinforced the regional insularity and the reified notion of being Indian. San Diego had active State and Regional Associations from Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Bengal, Karnataka, which organized cultural events for occasions such as Republic Day of India and Diwali.

Rayaprol (2010) argues that some young immigrants of Indian origin in Pittsburgh and New Jersey in the U.S.A may resist cultural pressures and form their own unique identity, different from that of the parental generations in the third space (Bhabha, 2004). However, some of them may find themselves to be more traditionally Indian than their counterparts in India and thereby experience marginality in that context. There were differential levels of belonging to both here and there, depending on aspects such as life-course positioning, gender, socioeconomic position and the number of years living in the country of residence.

These narratives illustrate some of the processes, including paradoxes and dilemmas, of the Indian diaspora in different age groups, ranging from belonging, inclusion in and exclusion from various groups in the country of origin as well as the country of residence, along with their transnational engagement. These processes reflect both a changing pattern of emigration from India—as illustrated through diaspora-related policies in India, and immigration-related policies in Denmark and the U.S.A, such as the “green card schemes”, as well as changing connectivity related to technological changes—Internet, Skype and so on. There was an intertwining of the micro and macro levels in comprehending the similarities, such as a sense of belonging in the country of residence along with connection with the country of origin, for the Indian diaspora in the Danish and the American contexts.

The deterritorialized Indianness along with the “emotional citizenship” played an important part in self-understandings of diasporics in both contexts. While the contradiction of here versus there exists, the dual connectedness through sociocultural ties via filial connections on one side and daily interactions and identification with the host society on the other are negotiated by the nuances of hyphenated beings such as Danish-Indian or Indian-American. Filial connectedness was enhanced by changes in Indian policies facilitating easier connections, thereby strengthening the sense of belonging. In addition, collective religious organizing emerged as a process of addressing unmet needs as well as a strategy of dealing with religious belonging, which is outlined below. Religious organizing was an illustration of agency of the diasporic communities.

Addressing Unmet Social Needs: Religious and Social Organizing

As the size of the Indian diaspora in Denmark and the U.S.A increases, we consider the role of religion in the dynamics of immigrant belonging in host societies. Warner

(2007) has discussed how religion works in the assimilation and integration of immigrants into the host society. The earlier paradigms of considering assimilation through Judeo-Christian frameworks no longer hold true for the U.S.A, with migrants coming from varied religious backgrounds. For many of the Indian diaspora in California, there was continued allegiance to religion and religious organizations. Most immigrant groups experienced a degree of religious freedom not found in many countries (including where the state religion was Islam), which allowed them to express their religiosity with fervour. In both countries of residence and India, the state allowed freedom of religious expression and practice, although Denmark is a Protestant, Lutheran country.

In Denmark, there was the Bhartiya Mandir, a Hindu temple representing different Hindu Gods, established in 1997, and Sri Katpaka Vinayar Mandir, established in Næstved in 2012. Moreover, there were temples in smaller towns such as Herning, Slagelse, a Hare Krishna temple and two Sikh temples in Greater Copenhagen. The role of the temple, mosque and church as places of social gathering was more in India and the U.S.A as compared to Denmark (Opinionen, 2014; Sriram, 2014). Nonetheless, both religious and social needs were met through these institutions, though there were also conflicts related to differential interests among the diasporics.

In California, most Hindu families had shrines in their homes. The city had larger temples, which served both religious and secular functions. The Shri Mandir in San Diego, established in 1994 in Little India, was established as a commonplace of worship for all Hindus of various sects. The priests in the temple were trained in India and carried out religious rituals and worship observances according to the Hindu calendar.

The other Hindu temples in the city were the Hare Krishna temple and the Shiva Vishnu temple. Though the Hare Krishna temple in San Diego was the oldest Hindu temple, most Indians visited only during Janmashtami.⁴ The temple was perceived as too secular and not Indian enough. The Shri Mandir and the Shiva Vishnu temple held classes on Indian cultural traditions for young children on Sundays and combined social as well as religious functions. The Self-Realization Fellowship Temple in Encinitas was established in 1920 by Swami Yogananda. However, most Indians did not visit the temple for worship, claiming that it was not Hindu enough.

The presence of Hindu temples in both California and Denmark reflects the attempt to re-create socio-religious structures from the country of origin, albeit in a transformed form. The temples function as community centres serving social, cultural and religious needs of the diaspora, in line with Vertovec's 2000 analysis of Hindu temples in London. While Hindu groups outnumber other migrant religious groups in both U.S.A and Denmark, we recognize the presence of other religious groups, such as Muslim and Christian Indians. In the U.S.A, they adopted their own religious spaces and practice. There was a mosque meant only for South (East Asians: desi Muslims Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis worshipped at a separate mosque. There was a collective of Christians from India, called the Indian Christian Fellowship. As the number of Indians increased, there was a desire to establish distinct spaces for the

⁴ Janmashtami is a festival to celebrate the birth of the Hindu God Krishna.

practice of religion, with teachings in Indian languages. While second-generation youth sang hymns in English, their parents preferred to sing in their mother tongue.

In Denmark, diasporic Christians and Muslims used the mosques and churches used by members of the same faith from other countries. Recreation of the social space through collective religious practices was facilitated by the presence of such places of worship in Danish and the U.S.A. The presence of these institutions, without any state assistance, reflecting continued religious–social practices, implied awareness, resource mobilization and participation of the diasporics in their own development.

We would now like to revisit the Danish colonial history in relation to India, through aforementioned Tranquebar/Tharangambadi in Tamil Nadu. Two Indian diaspora scholars (daughter and mother) currently Danish residents, discuss the notion of “ignoring” –as a strategy. They recollect indentured labour migration of 321 Indians from Tranquebar to another Danish colony St. Croix in nineteenth century (Skadegård Thorsen & Chandhok Skadegård, 2021). While “The Danish Tranquebar Association” a volunteer agency formed in 2002 by Danes is involved in social activities in Tranquebar, among others, 2004 Tsunami aid (BBC. Com, 2021). These two narratives, former about historical power misuse and latter about contemporary humanitarianism, illustrate the vast diversity of interconnections between India, its diaspora and the past colonizers.

Promoting Interconnections

We present some suggestions for promoting interconnections and links between the country of origin, India, and the country of residence, based on the reflections in this chapter. While analysing varied aspects of belonging among the Indian diasporic community in Denmark and the U.S.A, we interpret that parallel processes of articulation of needs of belonging by the diaspora, on one side, and policy and process interventions by national governments for the “better”, on the other, may be leading to worse connectedness. Some diasporic feel a positive affiliation, a pull towards the country of origin, which can be enhanced and sustained by diaspora-related policy changes such as visa relaxations for entry. These could be perceived as procedural ease for overseas Indians, leading to the creation of an invigorated sense of belonging, which was earlier bureaucratic and ambiguous in nature. Furthermore, a series of welfare and supportive provisions have made it easy for the Indian diaspora to relate to and even engage in economic activities like any Indian citizen can do. However, there are still bureaucratic barriers to carrying out economic activities, and there are useful lessons to learn from countries like China and Mexico, which encourage dual belonging of their diaspora through diverse policies and strategies (Portes & Rumbaut, 2014).

Among young people in the empirical studies, in spite of some experiences leading to feelings of not belonging, especially due to the restrictive policies for foreigners in the past few years in Scandinavian countries, paradoxically most young adults felt at home here and there, as they had hardly addressed the myth of return, characterizing

the diaspora processes in their self-definition and life trajectories. In the sample from the U.S.A, many of the youth considered coming to work in India, but not to live there. India was a place for a sojourn; home was in the U.S.A. The visits to India, for some, were marked by discomfort, an inability to deal with the weather, intrusive questions from people (family and others), and often water- and food-borne illnesses.

Analysis of return-migration programmes in recent decades has indicated limited success in India and some return of skilled migrants to countries such as China and the Republic of Korea, along with transnational involvement with both country of origin and destination, moving away from the simple brain-drain/brain-gain model of the 1960s. This study of highly skilled returnees to India emphasizes their suggestions related to better infrastructural function, better remuneration packages, adaptation of anticorruption measures and increased governmental support (Tejada & Bhattacharya, 2014).

These suggestions contribute to an understanding of limited return to India by the diasporics studied in Denmark and the U.S.A. This limited return-migration coexists with the concept of emotional citizenship and flexible citizenship (Lum, 2012) entailing the process of affective transnationalism. However, we cannot predict the future pattern of transnationalism or return, and thus, the long term, generational sustainability of transnational institutions, illustrated here as meeting the religious-social needs of Indian people, is difficult to predict.

Acceptance of dual cultural affiliations and belonging of diasporics to the country of residence are significant. The lesson for the parental diasporic generation can be illustrated by the historical suggestion in 1905 to the Indian diaspora in Mauritius by Mahatma Gandhi: “Educate your children and participate in the public life of your country of adoption” (Gayan, 2003, p. 43).

An important issue to consider, relates to the changes in perception of minority groups in the host country. In the recent COVID-19 pandemic, the Indian diaspora in the U.S.A was instrumental in mobilizing large amounts of aid for cities and communities in India (Aid to India, 2021). Similarly, in Denmark as well, the Indian diaspora, especially the youth, was active in collecting aid for pandemic-related issues (Singla, 2022, under review). The generous economic contributions highlight the abstract feelings of belonging among the young diaspora members in concrete material terms. The idea of integration with real involvement of the diaspora, rather than assimilation on terms set by the state, allows a minority culture to retain aspects of the culture of origin. The metaphor of a mixed salad rather than a melting pot has been used in the U.S.A. In the Danish context, however, the state provides a rather rigid, emotionally violent frame for dealing with the issues of difference and belonging in relation to migrants under the name of state-managed “integration”, where the societal and academic focus on the concept of migrants’ belonging to the diaspora is almost non-existent.

Our case studies illustrate the contributions made by religious organizations in meeting unmet needs of belonging for the diaspora. They document the possibility of richer, nuanced processes where the local diaspora can reach out to newcomers and provide networks of information and resources to facilitate awareness-raising, respect and, eventually, various forms of belonging. The interconnections would involve

harnessing the potential in these non-governmental organizations and coupling them to the formal state system of provision, contributing to the integration of new arrivals on terms set by the state, in the short and the long terms.

One of the suggestions concerns the positive flow of media images and messages through global technologies, for example, the Internet and Indian films and culture, to enhance online transnationalism, considering that these global media processes are about feelings of longing, recreating representation and a sense of belonging (Guzder & Krishna, 2005). In recent decades, the international migration of semiskilled and highly skilled Indians has seen an upsurge due to demand in certain sectors, such as the software industry, directing attention to the Indian diaspora far more visibly. These changes imply enhancing connections between the country of residence and the country of origin to address the issues of belonging in both contexts. Connections between India and the host countries have been facilitated by the spread of technology. The ease of connectivity between *desh* and *videsh* has contributed immensely to the feelings of interconnectedness and belonging. Transmission of news is as rapid as the Internet allows. Where earlier, diasporics depended on letters and telegrams for news from the country of origin, today it is facilitated by the click of a mouse. WhatsApp, Skype and FaceTime among others have shrunk distances, in the global village, yet digital technology has its limitations and there are risks for exclusions, increased global inequalities and digital feudalism.

Thus, the stimuli provided by governments in India and the countries of residence, and increasing connections between people in India and the Indian diaspora thus can lay the basis for constructive change, taking into consideration the current context and the historical experiences. Inclusion and rights for Indian diasporics in the host country and in their country of origin are necessary for promoting mental wellbeing and belonging, as economic opportunities as well as social–emotional inclusion are significant and a challenge for not only India, but also the host countries and the diaspora as well.

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Chapter 3

Out-Group Contact, Intercultural Strategies and Mutual Acceptance of Hindus and Muslims



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Abstract The study examined the role of out-group contact in intercultural strategies and mutual acceptance of Hindu and Muslim groups. A sample of 538 participants (mean *age* = 34.20, *SD* = 12.62) including Hindus (*n* = 238) and Muslims (*n* = 300) was taken. An instrument developed and used in an international project (called MIRIPS, Berry in Mutual intercultural relations. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2017) was adapted and given to members of the two groups for measuring their degree of out-group contact, intercultural strategies and mutual acceptance. Results showed that those Hindus and Muslims who had greater contact and opportunity for interaction with the members of the out-group emphasized their cultural affiliation less than those who had less out-group contact. It was also revealed that out-group contact facilitated mutual acceptance and enhanced the use of integration and coexistence intercultural strategies, but less use of reduced separation strategy both in the case of Hindus and Muslims. The findings of the study suggest that out-group contact has the potential to promote harmonious intergroup relations even though the cultural identities may be strong. Implications of these findings for handling the problem of the Hindu–Muslim relationship in India are discussed.

Keywords Out-group contact · Intercultural strategies · Mutual acceptance · Cultural identity

Introduction

Psychologists for a long time have been interested in studying the dynamics of intergroup relations. They do this hoping that they will be able to find strategies for intergroup conflicts which will lead to establishing harmonious and peaceful relationships between groups. More than ever, this is needed today as we are living in

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unacceptably violent times. Most nations around the world face one or the other kind of intergroup conflict. The challenge, which psychologists face, is to understand how and under what conditions such conflicts surface and how they can be minimized. The vast literature that is available in this area is a testimony to the researchers' concerns (Bohma et al., 2020).

One key factor that has been found central to these conflicts is social identity. Tajfel (1978) showed that grouping people based merely on arbitrary features has the power to generate in-group bias, which subsequently becomes the basis of intergroup conflicts. In general, people tend to divide all humans they come into contact with into "us" and "them" categories. This leads to prejudiced, biased and negative perceptions of the out-groups, and attributions of overly positive qualities to the members of in-groups. Social categorization has been suggested as the basic building block of identity (Turner, 1982, 1987), which, as already pointed out, is endemic to intergroup conflicts. A series of studies have shown that identity clashes are at the root of collective violence (Kalin & Sambanis, 2018; Krug et al., 2002). Social identity theory holds that people are motivated to achieve a positive distinctiveness for their groups because it allows them to have a valued positive self (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The need for positive self-esteem for own group leads to the making of social comparisons, which in consequence give rise to social competition (Tajfel, 1982) further resulting in the development of negative attitudes towards out-group members (Oakes & Turner, 1986; Turner, 1987).

Attitudes towards out-group and intergroup relations are influenced not only by social competition in real life but also by abstract perceptions of intergroup relations (Blumer, 1958). Positive perceptions of relations between groups have been found to be positively correlated with attitudes towards out-groups (Bano & Mishra, 2005). The way intergroup relations are portrayed in the media or advocated by political leaders also influences the perception of intergroup relations. Similarly, the history of relations between groups and expectations regarding their future relations is some other important factors that influence intergroup perceptions (Brown & Ross, 1982; Tripathi, 2016). To take an example, the historical memory of the partition of India in 1947 regulates the Hindu–Muslim relationship in the present time. This is true even for the millennial who has not been even the witness to this event.

Cultural identities continue to be an important ground for identity conflict since the partition of India (Tripathi, 2016). Communal violence in India can be attributed to the perceived threat of some Hindus that Hindu culture (i.e. the majority group in India) is threatened by an Islamic culture take over. This results in their continuous attempts to preserve their identity and position, which consequently intensify their separation-based relational attitudes towards Muslims (Mishra et al., 2017; Tripathi, 2016; Turner & Brown, 1978).

However, theoretical discussions related to these social groups have ignored how members of these two groups relate with one another in real-life situations (Billig & Tajfel, 1973; Turner, 1978; Walker & Pettigrew, 1984), particularly in situations where Hindus and Muslims are required to negotiate their lives interdependently. Many Hindus carry mixed feelings about Muslims as they view them as persons who were once Hindus, but converted to Islam. They often expect Muslims not to be

culturally in sync with them. They also expect them to cede cultural space to them, and where it is not possible, to at least share the same space with them (Tripathi, 2016).

The intergroup contact theories (Allport, 1954; Berry, 1990) state that contact and sharing between members of social groups are effective in reducing prejudice, promoting mutual acceptance and fostering positive intergroup relations under certain conditions, including equal status, shared common goals, and voluntary contact (Al Ramiah & Hewstone, 2013; Lemmer & Wagner, 2015; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Uluğ & Cohrs, 2017). Intergroup contact reduces prejudice in both dominant and non-dominant groups not only when contact is voluntary, but also when it is not voluntary (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000). On the other hand, in this research, intergroup contact was studied in isolation, without considering the social environment, which includes the underlying structure of social division and power or status differentials (Tajfel, 1982). Furthermore, most contact studies have concentrated primarily on the attitudes of members of advantaged or majority groups and have generally ignored the members of the disadvantaged and minority groups (Foster & Finchilescu, 1986; Lemmer & Wagner, 2015; Paluck et al., 2019; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Preston & Robinson, 1974). In contrast, studies related to social change have largely focused on the precursors of marginalized groups' mobilization, as social identification, perceived injustice and perceived efficacy (van Zomeren et al., 2008).

It has been found that a broad range of factors may change the impression and effectiveness of intergroup contact. For example, intimate intergroup contact has been found to reduce prejudice to a great degree than do more superficial forms of intergroup contact (Davies et al., 2013). The salience of a specific social identity also determines the nature of interactions that take place in intergroup situations. The depersonalized nature of interactions relative to personalized interactions between the members of an in-group and out-group tends to accentuate group differences, rather than foster intergroup acceptance, especially in situations where social identity is particularly salient (Brewer & Miller, 1984; Tajfel, 1978, 1981). Personalized interactions refer to responses based on the specific relationship between individuals. They involve direct interpersonal comparisons by individuals with other individuals across group boundaries. Continuous personalized interaction diminishes an individual's salient social identity in future interactions that take place and enhances positive out-group attitudes (Bornman, & Mynhardt, 1991).

Berry (1976, 1990) has examined the relationship of groups living in multicultural societies in a framework of acculturation. Acculturation refers to cultural and psychological changes resulting from contact between two or more cultural groups. It is argued that individuals facing acculturation confront issues relating to individuals' propensity for the maintenance of their cultural heritage and desire to have contact with the members of the host group or lack of it. A positive or negative response to each of these issues yields four varieties of relational attitudes (Berry, 1976). These are called integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization (Berry, 1990; Mishra, 2007). These options are now referred to as "acculturation strategies" (Berry et al., 2011) or "intercultural strategies" (see Berry, 2017). In this paper, we will use the term "intercultural strategies" because the Hindu and Muslim

groups have not only been in contact with each other in India but have also lived and negotiated their lives together for many centuries.

Under “integration”, maintenance of one’s cultural identity as well as movement to become an integral part of a larger societal framework is the option taken by the acculturating individuals, whereas in “assimilation”, relinquishing one’s own cultural identity and moving into the larger society is the option taken. The third option, “separation”, refers to engaging with one’s own culture while rejecting the values of the host culture. Under the fourth category, “marginalization”, members of the acculturating groups reject the values of their own culture as well as of the host culture.

Researchers in India led by Ramesh Mishra (see Mishra et al., 1996, 2017) have also identified “coexistence” as another important intercultural strategy. It involves the presence of distinct elements (e.g. values, traditions, customs and practices) of two or more cultures, in the life of individuals belonging to different cultural groups. In this case, the element of two cultures exists side by side without evaluating them or applying any standards of comparison (Mishra et al., 1996).

Our previous research has shown that schools serve as acculturative agents in developing belongingness (Tripathi & Mishra, 2006) and intercultural strategies (Bano & Mishra, 2011). Both Hindu and Muslim adolescents, who attended traditional monocultural schools (i.e. with students and teachers belonging to one particular cultural group, with limited interaction and sharing with members of out-groups), have strong preference for separation and marginalization. Among Hindus, a weaker tendency towards integration, assimilation and coexistence was evident in the Sanskrit school-going students. In contrast, in the case of students attending modern or secular schools (i.e. where both students and teachers belonged to diverse cultural groups), integration and coexistence were found as the dominant intercultural strategies both in the case of Hindu and Muslim students (Bano & Mishra, 2011; Tripathi & Mishra, 2006). These studies bring out certain conditions, which favour or interfere with the development of certain forms of intercultural relations among groups and individuals who stay in contact with members of other cultural or social groups.

The Hindu–Muslim Relationship in India

Mishra et al., (2017) have documented from a historical perspective, the nature of the Hindu–Muslim relationship in India, which has unique features because of the composite fabric of Indian culture. It has been noted that the Indian culture has evolved from different shades of varying textures and colours of races and religions. India has maintained a pluralistic and composite cultural character since ancient times. The ethos of composite culture is also enshrined in the constitution of India. It was in the late medieval period of India’s history that a creative synthesis of Hindu and Islamic civilizations occurred which represented the zenith of India’s

composite cultural tradition, called the “Indo-Islamic” tradition. There are two inter-related dimensions of the Indo-Islamic tradition. On the one hand, it has manifested itself in syncretistic traditions of music, art, literature and architecture. On the other hand, it has found expression in folklore, dressing styles, food habits and many other cultural features. The Sufi and the Bhakti movements, both of which reinforced each other, played a crucial role in the development of this syncretic tradition.

A remarkable achievement of Indian culture lies in its mutual respect and accommodation of diverse social identities as well as the acceptance for a creative synthesis of these identities. This has been one of the major factors in nurturing pluralistic ethos of Indian culture. Nevertheless, one should not gloss over the fact that conflicts between groups based on national identity and subnational identities have been increased in recent years. In addition, subnational identities sometimes have tended to acquire rather pathological overtones which threatened the unity and integrity of the country. This has surfaced in the form of communalism as well as other fissiparous tendencies.

The negative Hindu–Muslim relations that we witness today are traced back to the policy of divide and rule of the British (Thaper, 1992). The shared memory of partition riots and bloodshed (and frequent communal riots thereafter) has further reinforced the communal identity of Muslims (Engineer, 1989). Electoral democracy has in a very large measure contributed towards the development of such communal identities, even more in independent India.

It is to be noted at this point that the dynamics of Hindu–Muslim relations in India show different patterns from those of other nations because of certain peculiar features of the Indian cultural context. A convenient classification of these groups is often attempted by placing them along a “majority–minority” dimension. The majority group represents Hindus at the national level, while the definition of “minority” is relatively fluid. For example, “minority” is largely used to refer to Muslims in many parts of the country, but the definition of majority and minority is not the same for different regions of the country.

The nature and status of minority groups are also very different in India from some other parts of the world (Tripathi & Mishra, 2006, 2016). The major difference lies in what may be called “entitlement”. The multicultural nature of Western societies has largely become possible due to the immigration of people from other parts of the world. Many of these groups are still seeking their place in the societies they have moved to. The land did not originally belong to their ancestors, but since they are there and wish to remain there, many are in the process of seeking some “entitlement” to land and other resources. In India, such entitlement to land and other resources is not sought by minority groups. They have been there from the beginning and always shared the resources with other groups. They have been equal partners with other groups in building the history of the nation. This has resulted in a kind of relationship among groups that in terms of entitlement is different from those found elsewhere.

Another difference is noted in the process of social identity formation of these groups (Tripathi & Mishra, 2006). The issue is whether the social identities of these groups get constituted through a process of independence from other groups, or by a process of interdependence between groups. There is much historical evidence to

suggest that “coconstruction” of social identities has taken place, facilitated also by various other groups. The extent to which a group has influenced the other groups in the construction of its identity has to be an important factor in determining their long-term relationship.

Psychological literature provides us with enough evidence regarding the negotiation of identities between these groups (Tripathi & Mishra, 2006). There is also evidence to suggest that the construction of new identities happens in the case of smaller groups in the course of acculturation, which requires redefining oneself to other groups. This does not necessarily involve a clash between personal and social identities. One finds a considerable amount of evidence to support this. In the state of Punjab, it is often found that one brother is Hindu and another is Sikh (Tripathi & Mishra, 2006). Similarly, in the Western districts of Uttar Pradesh, there are families in which one brother is Hindu and another Muslim. Such social/religious identity differences never get in the way of family or interpersonal relationships.

India, thus, is a place where diverse cultural groups have been living together by sharing positive and negative experiences. But that is not to deny that intergroup conflicts do not take place. They do quite regularly. Such conflicts pose a threat to the notion of the Indian society which is believed to be a society having “Unity in Diversity”. It is in this context that the present study has been designed. The focus is on examining the intercultural strategies of Hindus and Muslims. Its main objective is to study how individuals belonging to these two groups maintain their cultural identities while relating with the other group(s) in a multicultural Indian society. This is because management of Hindu–Muslim relationships within a complex, culturally plural society like India, poses a serious challenge for social stability and development in a world, which is becoming increasingly less tolerant for the minority groups.

The Present Study

Because both Hindu and Muslim groups have been living together for a very long time, this study sought to understand how it is reflected in the relationship the members of the two groups had as reflected in the use of intercultural strategies in relating with each other and their mutual acceptance of each other. We expected that in such individuals of the two groups, who had greater opportunity for contact, interaction and sharing social and other spaces with members of the out-group would show greater use of integration and coexistence intercultural strategies, and also will be high on mutual acceptance than those whose sharing of social, economic and cultural spaces was less and interaction was limited largely to the members of their in-group.

Table 3.1 Sample distribution

Groups	Hindu ($N = 209$)		Muslim ($N = 277$)	
Out-group contact	Low contact	High contact	Low contact	High contact
	$n = 107$	$n = 102$	$n = 136$	$n = 141$
	Median = 13.00		Median = 20.00	
	Mean = 19.39		Mean = 19.67	

Participants

A convenience sample of 486 participants (mean *age* = 34.20 years, SD = 12.62) consisting of Hindu ($N = 209$) and Muslim ($N = 277$) participants was drawn by using quasi-randomization procedure. Each group included males and females between the age ranges of 20 and 55 years. The details relating to the two groups are given in Table 3.1.

Measures

An omnibus instrument consisting of several questionnaires and scales (Berry, 1990; Berry et al., 2000) that had been developed and used in a large-scale multinational project, called Mutual Intercultural Relations in Plural Societies (MIRIPS, in which we also had participated) was used in this study also. However, for the present study, we adapted it and used it to measure cultural identity, out-group contact and the five intercultural strategies (i.e. integration, coexistence, assimilation, separation and marginalization).

A new measure of “mutual perception” was created by aggregating participants’ scores on “tolerance” and “attitude towards the out-group” measures, as the two measures had a high positive correlation. The scales were translated from English to Hindi and Urdu languages, using translation and back-translation procedures (Brislin, 1970). Alpha values of measures of different intercultural strategies were integration = 0.66, assimilation = 0.52, separation = 0.68, marginalization = 0.47 and coexistence = 0.68. Most of the items required participants to rate each statement on a 5-point scale. The sample items for each measure are given in Table 3.2.

Analysis of Results

The data were analysed by using 2 (religion: Hindu and Muslim) \times 2 (contact: low and high out-group contact) ANOVA for variables of interest. To examine the role of out-group contact in intercultural strategies and mutual acceptance, a group median-split technique was followed to divide Hindu and Muslim samples into low-

Table 3.2 Sample items

Sample items	Score range
<p><i>Cultural identity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am proud of being Hindu • I am proud of being Muslim 	10–50
<p><i>Integration</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel that Muslims should maintain their own cultural traditions but also adopt those of the Hindus • I feel that Hindus should maintain their own language but also learn the language of the Muslims 	4–20
<p><i>Coexistence</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muslims should maintain their own customs, but there is no harm in adopting the customs of the Hindus • It is important for me to be fluent in Hindi, but there is no harm to be also fluent in Urdu as well 	4–20
<p><i>Assimilation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muslims should engage in social activities that involve Hindus only • I prefer to make only Hindu friends 	4–20
<p><i>Separation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel that Hindus should maintain their own cultural traditions and not adapt to those of the Muslims • Muslims should engage in social activities that involve their own group members only 	4–20
<p><i>Marginalization</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is not important for a Hindu to be fluent either in the Hindi language or the Urdu language • Muslims should not engage in either their own group's social activities or those of the Hindus 	4–20
<p><i>Mutual acceptance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is good to have people from different religious and ethnic groups living in the same country • We should promote equality among all groups, regardless of religious or ethnic origin 	4–120

and high-contact groups. This procedure was preferred over the split based on a common median to enable comparisons within each group. It was also necessary as a substantial discrepancy was found between mean and median in the case of Hindus.

Cultural Identity

Both Hindus and Muslims displayed strong cultural identity, but Muslims ($M = 47.78$; $SD = 4.31$) had a stronger cultural identity than Hindus ($M = 45.08$; $SD = 7.25$), as shown in Table 3.3. Muslims also scored higher on the in-group contact measure than Hindus. For out-group contact, the findings suggested that those among Hindus and Muslims, who had more interaction with the out-group members, had

Table 3.3 Mean, SD and *F* ratios on measure of cultural identity

Groups	Hindu	Muslim	Total	<i>F</i> ratios
<i>Low contact</i>				Religion = 30.35** Contact = 32.59** Religion × contact = 12.30**
Mean	47.32	48.35	47.90	
SD	4.70	3.38	4.03	
<i>High contact</i>				
Mean	42.59	47.22	45.78	
SD	8.57	5.00	7.10	
<i>Total</i>				
Mean	45.08	47.78		
SD	7.25	4.31		

p* < 0.05, *p* < 0.01

relatively weaker cultural identities, compared to those who had less contact with the out-group members. Further, it was found that out-group contact made a significantly greater impact on the cultural identity of Hindus (*M* = 42.59; *SD* = 8.57) such that it became weaker, but not so in the case of Muslims (*M* = 47.22; *SD* = 5.00).

Analyses using religious groups and out-group contact as main factors and various intercultural strategies as dependent variables were also carried out. The findings for each intercultural strategy are detailed below.

Coexistence Strategy

This was found to be the most preferred intercultural strategy of Hindus (*M* = 14.35; *SD* = 4.12), as evidenced by the overall means for different intercultural strategies, which are given in Tables 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8. The main effect of out-group contact was found significant such that out-group contact led to a greater preference for the coexistence strategy, both in the case of Hindus and Muslims. A significant interaction between out-group contact and religion, however, showed that the coexistence strategy was subscribed more by Hindus (*M* = 15.74; *SD* = 3.40) than by Muslims (*M* = 14.38; *SD* = 3.02), as seen in Table 3.3.

Integration Strategy

Table 3.5 shows the analysis for the integration strategy. It was found that scores on the use of the integration strategy were significantly higher in the case of Muslims (*M* = 14.86; *SD* = 3.36) than Hindus (*M* = 13.65; *SD* = 4.15). Integration was actually the most preferred strategy of the Muslims. Out-group contact raised the

Table 3.4 Mean, SD and *F* ratios on measure of coexistence strategy

Groups	Hindu	Muslim	Total	<i>F</i> ratios
<i>Low contact</i>				Religion = 0.60 Contact = 25.80** Religion × contact = 12.60**
Mean	13.02	13.90	13.51	
SD	4.32	3.03	3.67	
<i>High contact</i>				
Mean	15.74	14.38	14.95	
SD	3.40	3.02	3.25	
<i>Total</i>				
Mean	14.35	14.14		
SD	4.12	3.03		

** $p < 0.01$

Table 3.5 Mean, SD and *F* ratios on measure of integration strategy

Groups	Hindu	Muslim	Total	<i>F</i> ratios
<i>Low contact</i>				Religion = 12.53** Contact = 38.44** Religion × contact = 5.12*
Mean	12.29	14.20	13.36	
SD	4.28	3.45	3.95	
<i>High contact</i>				
Mean	15.08	15.50	15.32	
SD	3.50	3.16	3.31	
<i>Total</i>				
Mean	13.65	14.86		
SD	4.15	3.36		

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

Table 3.6 Mean, SD and *F* ratios on measure of separation strategy

Groups	Hindu	Muslim	Total	<i>F</i> ratios
<i>Low contact</i>				Religion = 66.92** Contact = 51.85** Religion × contact = 23.95**
Mean	14.49	10	11.98	
SD	4.41	3.51	4.51	
<i>High contact</i>				
Mean	10.34	9.21	9.68	
SD	3.9	3.27	3.59	
<i>Total</i>				
Mean	12.46	9.6		
SD	4.65	3.4		

** $p < 0.01$

Table 3.7 Mean, SD and *F* ratios on measure of assimilation strategy

Groups	Hindu	Muslim	Total	<i>F</i> ratios
<i>Low contact</i>				Religion = 4.92* Contact = 20.69** Religion × contact = 1.13
Mean	5.09	5.84	5.51	
SD	2.19	2.27	2.26	
<i>High contact</i>				
Mean	6.37	6.64	6.53	
SD	2.97	2.51	2.71	
<i>Total</i>				
Mean	5.72	6.25		
SD	2.67	2.42		

p* < 0.05, *p* < 0.01

Table 3.8 Mean, SD and *F* ratios on measure of marginalization strategy

Groups	Hindu	Muslim	Total	<i>F</i> ratios
<i>Low contact</i>				Religion = 4.76* Contact = 9.81** Religion × contact = 0.98
Mean	6.36	6.05	6.19	
SD	2.94	2.63	2.77	
<i>High contact</i>				
Mean	7.43	6.61	6.95	
SD	2.98	2.8	2.9	
<i>Total</i>				
Mean	6.88	6.33		
SD	3	2.73		

p* < 0.05, *p* < 0.01

level of preference for the integration strategy both in the case of Hindus (*M* = 15.08; *SD* = 3.50) and Muslims (*M* = 15.50; *SD* = 3.16). The interaction effect between religion and out-group contact was found statistically significant. It showed that greater contact of Hindus with Muslims raised the level of their preference for the integration strategy significantly more than it did for Muslims.

Separation Strategy

Findings related to the separation strategy are presented in Table 3.6. As can be seen, Hindus were found to score higher (*M* = 12.46; *SD* = 4.65) than Muslims (*M* = 9.60; *SD* = 3.40) on this measure. Out-group contact had a significant effect on this measure. A significant interaction effect between out-group contact and religion was

also found, which showed that out-group contact led to a reduction in the use of the separation strategy more in the case of Hindus compared to Muslims.

Assimilation and Marginalization Strategies

Tables 3.7 and 3.8 show that these were the least preferred intercultural strategies for both Hindus ($M = 5.72$; $SD = 2.67$; $M = 6.88$; $SD = 3.00$) and Muslims ($M = 6.25$; $SD = 2.42$; $M = 6.33$; $SD = 2.73$) (Tables 3.7 and 3.8). Assimilation strategy was slightly more preferred by Muslims and marginalization by Hindus. The main effect of out-group contact was significant in both cases indicating that it acted as a facilitator of the assimilation strategy. A counter-intuitive finding was in evidence when it was found that out-group contact resulted in raising the levels of Marginalization and not in its reduction. Religion and out-group contact interaction was not found to be significant.

Mutual Acceptance

A significant measure of intergroup relations used in this study was that of mutual acceptance. Both Hindus and Muslims showed higher levels of mutual acceptance, but Muslims ($M = 84.11$; $SD = 22.65$) showed greater mutual acceptance than did Hindus ($M = 71.37$; $SD = 23.92$), as shown in Table 3.9. For both Hindus and Muslims, out-group contact led to greater mutual acceptance. This effect did not vary much for either of the groups.

Table 3.9 Mean, SD and *F* ratios on measure of mutual acceptance

Groups	Hindu	Muslim	Total	<i>F</i> ratios
<i>Low contact</i>				Religion = 36.05**
Mean	65.41	81.25	74.27	Contact = 18.22**
SD	23.46	23.36	24.60	Religion × contact = 2.45
<i>High contact</i>				
Mean	77.61	86.89	82.99	
SD	22.88	21.75	22.65	
<i>Total</i>				
Mean	71.37	84.11		
SD	23.92	22.65		

** $p < 0.01$

Discussion

The findings of this study support our contention that out-group contact plays an important role in fostering positive intergroup relations. This provides further support to the studies that show how intergroup contact plays a positive role in the reduction of prejudice (Pettigrew, & Tropp, 2011). What such studies do not show are the ways in which intergroup relations are improved which this study sought to do. We found that out-group contact not only facilitated mutual acceptance, but it also enhanced the use of integration and coexistence intercultural strategies, both in the case of Hindus and Muslims. In promoting harmonious intergroup relations, Allport's contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954) highlights the role of contact with members of the other group much more than it does in the case of contact with in-group members. It also sets down certain conditions under which such contacts will improve intergroup relations. This shows that there can be both good and bad contacts and that it is the nature of contact which decides whether intergroup contacts will have positive or negative outcomes.

This study does not focus on the present conditions of intergroup contact but draws only from the history of Hindu–Muslim relations. What may be of interest to researchers is the overall finding that intergroup contact leads to a reduction in prejudice not only in the case of the dominant group but also the minority group. This happened when the contact between the groups was not designed but took place in natural settings (see meta-analysis by Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011). Intergroup contacts between those who are culturally different in different spheres of life are believed to have positive effects because they allow groups to develop greater understanding, mutual acceptance and positive relationships (Berry, 1984; Berry et al., 2021; Christ & Kauff, 2019; Dovidio et al., 2017; Pauluck et al., 2019; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011).

In the context of the Hindu–Muslim relationship in India, these findings need to be understood in a slightly different light. As mentioned earlier, both Hindus and Muslims in India share a large part of the Indian culture. Many Hindus and Muslims participate in each other's festivals and respect each other's cultural values and practices. More so, they also share each other's cultural spaces. There are Muslim poets like Raskhan, Raheem and many others who have written in the praise of Hindu deities like Krishna, and then there are Hindu poets who have written and sung "kawwalis" in the praise of "Maula". The enhanced out-group contacts do not help the members of the two groups in claiming that they are better humans, its much bigger role is in the restoration of mutual trust.

This study brought forth several interesting findings. We, for example, found that those Hindus and Muslims, who had greater contact and opportunity for interaction with the out-group members, downplayed their religious affiliation much more than those who had less out-group contact. One explanation for this could be that this happened due to the reduced out-group homogeneity effect, which made such members of the two groups feel more comfortable with each other.

Another explanation lies in the common assumption based on the consequences of living in a multicultural society. It has been suggested that confidence in one's

social identity provides a basis for the respect individuals develop for the members of the other groups (Berry et al., 1977). This is because when people view themselves positively, they are likely to have a positive feeling about others. In many Indian cities, such as the city of Varanasi, and in a great number of villages, contact between Hindus and Muslims takes place almost routinely and both Hindus and Muslims feel culturally secure. This shows up in a variety of social exchanges between them as we have pointed out above (Mishra et al., 2017).

An important issue that needs to be understood based on the findings of this study relates to why integration and coexistence emerged as the most dominant intercultural strategies, and why assimilation and marginalization were found to be the least preferred intercultural strategies both in the case of Hindus and Muslims. One way to understand this will be by noting that India is a pluralistic society if one goes by its constitution, and it has been so since ancient times. Preference for integration and coexistence is consistent with the plural ethos of the Indian society, which can be impaired by the preference for assimilation and marginalization intercultural strategies (Mishra et al., 2017).

The findings can also be explained by looking into the context in which Hindus and Muslims engage with each other in day-to-day life. Tripathi and Mishra (2016) note that the interdependence of Hindus and Muslims forms a solid basis for the nurturance of what has come to be called the *Ganga-Jamuni* culture in India. The term refers to the confluence of the two sacred rivers of India, namely Ganga and Yamuna. They originate from different points and flow through different routes carrying white and bluish shades of water, but meet along their journey at a point from where they flow on together as one stream, with the water getting a new tinge (Mishra et al., 2017, p. 294).

Both Islam and Hinduism have contributed to each other's culture, leading to the creation of a syncretic culture at the national level. In our previous work, we have found integration and coexistence also to be strongly preferred intercultural strategies, not just of Hindu and Muslim groups (Bano & Mishra, 2011; Mishra et al., 2017), but also of other social groups, such as the native Adivasi (tribal) groups in India (Mishra, 2007; Mishra et al., 1996).

How is one to explain given the above findings the result that greater out-group contact enhanced the preference for marginalization strategy in both Hindu and Muslim groups. Could it be because of what may be some bad intergroup contacts? Another possibility is that out-group contact provides people with an opportunity to closely know each other, including their problems. This knowledge makes people rational in arguing against religion as being a source of conflict and in seeing religion that is used as a source for drawing boundaries between groups. People may see more clearly that it is in the name of religion that they are divided and manipulated by political leaders. In this process, problems like illiteracy, poverty and unemployment, etc., which both the groups face, are set aside. The participants may have felt that the relationship between an individual and God is a personal one, and it can be developed without any religious affiliation.

The results showed that compared to Hindus, Muslims were not only slightly more inclined towards integration and assimilation strategies of relationship, but

they displayed stronger cultural identity and showed greater acceptance of the out-group. It may be noted that the Indian constitution grants equal rights to all of its citizens either Hindus or Muslims. Therefore, Muslims have the right to preserve their religious identity as well as their cultural heritage. They also have been granted certain privileges based on their personal law that are not available to Hindus. This allows them an opportunity to live their lives in a fairly secure environment.

We have noted earlier that people are more likely to have a positive feeling and respect for others when they have confidence in their own identity, they view themselves positively, and feel secure. Conversely, those who feel insecure are likely to hold less positive attitudes towards multiculturalism and towards members of the out-group (Bano & Mishra, 2014; Berry et al., 1977; Taylor et al., 1979).

Having said that, we will need to understand why Hindus display a stronger separation strategy and relatively less mutual acceptance of Muslims. Could this be due to the divide that is sought to be created by the political parties for their vested interests? We also need to understand that the construction of the “other” cannot be ruled out even in pluralistic societies. The differences between groups often become the ground for “othering”. One such ground used is of “purity”. It may be recalled that racial purity was behind the atrocities that were committed by Hitler against the Jewish people. The notion of purity is applied by Hindus to each and every aspect of their life (from birth till death), including even matters like a dress and food (Bano & Mishra, 2006, 2011).

Tripathi (1987) points out that the idea of “purity” is germane to Hinduism and “...for a Hindu the journey of his life is a constant search for purity and refinement” (p. 238). For traditional Hindus, people who have not found refinement through rites and rituals (*samskaras*) are considered “impure”. Non-vegetarian food is still considered impure, sinful and social taboo in traditional Hindu families (Bano et al., 2018, p. 9). Bano and Mishra (2006, 2014) found that even young Hindu children were asked by their parents to keep away from Muslims because they prefer non-vegetarian foods. For many Hindus, contact with Muslims may threaten their purity and may put their Hindu identity at stake (Bano et al., 2018, p. 9).

Due to a negative image of Islam in the larger world, some Hindu politicians advocate that Islam is a threat to Hinduism. This suspicion is fuelled by sporadic incidents of terrorism that take place in some parts of the country. It is also true that the perception of many Hindus of Muslims has come to be affected by Islamophobia (Green, 2015). This can be seen in various social media posts. To minimize perceived dangers, some Hindus prefer to maintain their distance from Muslims as much as possible, even though, for most Hindus, the preferred strategy is coexistence (Mishra et al., 2017).

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study revealed that coexistence and integration were the dominant intercultural strategies of Hindus and Muslims. Out-group contact resulted in

greater mutual acceptance among those Hindus and Muslims. Separation strategy was preferred by those who had less out-group contact. The question that gets posed here is: How can one nurture and support positive intercultural strategies through which peaceful and harmonious relations between Hindus and Muslims can be promoted? To us, it appears that it can be done by maintaining a cultural ethos of interdependent relations where Hindus and Muslims both live their lives with some bittersweet memories, but promote memories of shared spaces in the process, interacting with each other and giving mutual respect. We will have to learn and develop social policies that can lead to the institutionalization of the ways of “unothering” that can create shared social and economic spaces for the two groups (Tripathi, 2020).

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Chapter 4

Is Higher Education Really Ushering Us Towards “Implicit Intergroup Harmony”? : A Study of Implicit Prejudice Faced by Afghan Students in Universities of Delhi



Akanksha Dochania

Abstract The present research suggests that intergroup harmony between Indian and Afghan students implicitly is non-existent owing to the “Afghan” image in higher education set-up in Delhi. To investigate the problem, two studies were conducted to explore the existence of implicit intergroup harmony between Indian and Afghan students studying in universities in Delhi. In Study 1, Afghan students ($N = 18$) reported facing prejudice in the form of microaggression because of their nationality (Afghanistan) they belong to. In Study 2, prejudice of Indian students ($N = 140$) towards Afghan students was examined using should–would Questionnaire (Monteith et al., 1998). The results showed that Indian students did not report any kind of prejudice towards Afghan students explicitly as they were oblivious about their own beliefs about Afghans. The findings received from both the studies indicated that a gap existed between the responses obtained from Afghan students and the Indian students. The gap further hinted towards the absence of intergroup harmony implicitly between both the groups. The present paper therefore attempted to probe the larger question, which is, the role of higher education in implicitly reducing intergroup harmony between diverse groups and what is the panacea for reducing implicit prejudice among students and pedagogues.

Keywords Implicit prejudice · Afghan students · Higher education · Intergroup harmony

Introduction

A well-established line of research in social psychology that focuses on reducing prejudice and bias among groups erupts from a well-known theory called “contact hypothesis” developed by Gordon Allport in the 1950s. According to the theory, when two groups are in contact, it can lead to more acceptance and tolerance towards

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each other. The contact theory has been one of the most distinguished and prominent theories in social psychology of prejudice reduction. There are many other social psychological theories which have sprung after, aiming at reducing prejudice, such as social categorization, Decategorization, mutual differentiation (Recategorization and integration (Townley et al., 2011). Having said that, keeping in mind the complexities that exist today where people have become consciously aware of their own biases and prejudices and are now better in concealing their honest emotions, or perhaps some are unaware of their unconscious beliefs and prejudices; therefore, these prejudice reduction theories may not serve the purpose fully and congruously in an attempt to decrease prejudice implicitly. In such complexities, even when two groups are brought together in an interactive “progressive” environment, such as higher education set-up, one cannot surely state that the contact will lead to less prejudice implicitly as the person can show amicable behaviour towards the out-group member but implicitly can still hold prejudice towards the outgroups.

The concept of intergroup harmony states that two groups are in harmony with one another. According to Cambridge dictionary, Harmony is defined as “a situation in which people are peaceful and agree with each other, or when things seem right or suitable together”. Implicitly, the meaning of harmony is complicated and opaque. Though explicitly a group may display a state of harmony towards the other group, implicitly and latently, however, the story is not that simple as the real feelings and emotions are concealed and are manifested in indirect forms which are otherwise seen as innocuous. The situation is especially grave when it occurs in an environment where people are expected to be acceptable to different groups. One such situation is universities and colleges where the students are edified and trained to be unprejudiced and tolerant towards outgroups. The present paper therefore aimed at revealing and questioning if the so-called education is leading towards implicit intergroup harmony or just dispensing ways to camouflage the real sentiment towards a specific outgroup.

Implicit Prejudice

In one of the classic papers of Greenwald and Banaji *Implicit Social Cognition: Attitudes, Self Esteem, and Stereotypes* (1995), it was found and claimed that social action and behaviour very much function at a level which is implicit and unconscious. The significant element of any implicit thinking is that our judgements are very much influenced by our past experiences in a manner where the actor is completely unaware of it. The definition of Implicit Cognition (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995) is that “the traces of past experience affect some performance, even though the influential earlier experience is not remembered in the usual sense- that is, it is unavailable to self-report or introspection”.

In contemporary society, overt and unconcealed verbalization or statements have vastly declined, despite superficial analyses reveal that disturbing expressions of prejudice are pervasive (Banaji & Greenwald, 1994). Banaji and Greenwald in one of their classic papers *Implicit Prejudice and Stereotyping* (1994) advised and discussed

the importance of exploration of the unconscious operation of stereotypical beliefs, prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory behaviour. They suggested that contemporary social psychologists in the process of probing and studying unconscious can identify and acknowledge the powerful and robust effect of indirect, elusive and seemingly innocuous expressions of stereotypes and prejudice. In years of research, studies are done, and thousands of participants participating across the globe, and dozens of research methodologies conducted have significantly confirmed that the unearthing of implicit bigotries as definite, omnipresent as compared to “explicit” or automatic display of attitudes that are prejudiced in nature. The way prejudices and stereotypes functions do not really require to have hatred or personal anger towards any group or its members or being aware of it. In actual fact, prejudice and bigotries are “implicit” in nature among those people who believe that they hold good intentions towards others; in other words, it is involuntary, out of one’s control and unconscious; however, it has found by several researches that despite making many efforts individually to reduce to, it has been found to be immune, having said that, by making some modifications in the environment we live in can actually help in minimizing or even reversing bigotries.

Higher Education and Implicit Prejudice

Campus heterogeneity can enhance higher education by expanding critical thinking, increasing intellectual engagement, widening cultural awareness, enlarging democratic sensibilities and practising perspective-taking. At the same moment, nevertheless, the racial minority students who contribute to heterogeneity frequently discern their campus environment as uninviting and not providing encouragement and emotional help.

The unconscious processing of the mind critically impacts how teachers and White students view the marginalized groups. It is especially seen in the context of school discipline and punishment of the marginalized students. Subjectivity and unconscious beliefs of the teachers tend to play an imperative role. Discrepancy can creep in owing to the race of the student when taking disciplinary measures as the automatic associations of the teachers can shape their perception and understanding of the event in hand. Few studies have shown that when it came to disciplinary measures students of colour were given more severe and stern actions and were sent to office for trivial issues which were more subjective in nature, and on the other hand, when it came White students, the disciplinary measures were more merciful and sparing and were sent to office only when they breached the objective guidelines like smoking or damaging properties of the school.

Covert or implicit prejudice happen to function deep within the cognition that it becomes almost implausible to recognize and concede it. The omnipresent functioning of implicit prejudice in higher education among teachers and students thus becomes one of the most significant yet alarming quandary that necessitates scrutiny and to ascertain the panacea which implicitly thrives genuine intergroup harmony

among students from diverse outgroups and the pedagogues in not just higher education but in educational institutions at large.

The Present Research

Research Context

From bygone times, India is viewed as a favoured landing place for Afghan merchants or Kabuliwalas, who would not only traverse across the alps to trade spices, dry fruits and attars (perfumes), works of literature, including a well-liked short story, *Kabuliwala*, by Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore. Accenting on the fact that *Kabuliwala* has been the most remembered memory of Afghanistan for the Indians. The emotional and poignant character of *Kabuliwala* leaves a heart touching and heart rending experience. However, the impression and the conception of Afghanistan and the Afghans changed with the rise of terrorism within the country. People around the world began to map Afghanistan when the horrid 9/11 attack took place. The real challenge that hold today for Afghanistan is to change the perception of terrorism and negating the equation of Afghanistan with terrorism. According to Global Terrorism Index, which is an all-inclusive report that actually examines and investigates the effect of terrorism on 163 countries, by housing 99.7 per cent of the world's population, Afghanistan ranks second as being most affected by terrorism (2016). An Afghan male student said, "some Indians take Afghanistan as a nation of warmongers. I have often been asked if I know Osama bin Laden, or can I operate an AK-47". Another Afghan student reported that, "most Indians think all Afghans are Taliban" (2018).

In the present time, one does not have to make a lot of effort to locate an Afghan restaurant on the road behind the Lajpat Nagar market. It is interesting that it is not called Afghan Street or Little Kabul for no valid reason: there are Afghan pharmacies and eating joints all around the place. According to the UNHCR report, the total Afghan population across the country runs into well over 2,00,000 in the first half of 2014. The largest group of refugees that are registered in India belong from nationalities which are Afghanistan, Myanmar and Somalia (Mehta, UNHCR report, 2015).

Overview

Keeping the above framework in mind, the objective of the current paper is to capture the same event and scenario among university students of Delhi towards Afghan students owing to prejudices and stereotypes they have about their nationality and being an "Afghan". There are two sections in the current paper. Firstly, we will explore the experiences of Afghan students, and then, we will assess and explore the explicit

prejudice of the Indian students. It is hypothesized that Afghan students will report encounters of prejudice being exhibited towards them in the classroom implicitly, and secondly, it is hypothesized that owing to appear desirable and acceptable in eyes of others and in society at large, or perhaps they are not aware of their own true hidden feelings, Indian students will not explicitly report stating or displaying any prejudices towards Afghan students. Therefore, a disparity is expected to occur between the beliefs and feelings of Afghan students and Indian students.

Method

Participants

Eighteen undergraduate Afghan students from Delhi University (Shaheed Bhagat Singh College, Gargi College, Daulat Ram College), Private University (Amity University, Gurgaon and Noida), International University (South Asian University) and Public University (Jawaharlal Nehru University) were interviewed. Their age ranged from 24 to 29. Due to possible effects of culture-, and/or gender-based restrictions and limitations, most of the participants were male, except two female participants. Out of these 18 participants, 12 belonged to Pashtun tribe, 4 were from Hazara tribe out of which one was female and 2 belonged to Tajik tribe out of which one was female.

Measure

The questions for the interview were semi-structure in nature, and the questions adopted were inspired and driven by Nadal and others'. The interview questions were changed and modified keeping in mind the context of the study (nationality), for instance, *think about a time when you may have been blatantly discriminated against because of your nationality, describe a time in which someone had made a disparaging (hurtful, negative) remark or used derogatory language about your nationality, describe a situation when you felt that someone treated you a certain way because of stereotypes about your nationality*, etc. Since the interview questions were in semi-structured format, the number of questions was not fixed and therefore was dependent on the participant's responses.

Results and Discussion

The thematic analysis revealed four overarching themes which highlight on the new phenomena of microaggression: *Endorsing Nationality Microaggression towards Afghans as Terrorist*, *Assumption of Nationality Homogeneity*, *Assumption of Afghan male as terrorist in comparison with Afghan female* and *Effect of Media in portraying Nationality Microaggression towards Afghan male*. These four themes are strongly linked to one another. The first two themes: “*Endorsing Nationality Microaggression towards Afghans as terrorist*” and “*Assumption of Nationality Homogeneity*” illustrate on how nationality plays an important role in advancing microaggression towards Afghans and how the out -group (Afghans) are seen as homogeneous entity because of their nationality. The next two themes: “*Assumption of Afghan male as terrorist in comparison with Afghan female*” and “*Effect of Media in portraying Nationality Microaggression towards Afghan male*” stress upon the fact that gender difference exist between two gender out-group (Afghan male and female) owing to nationality and the effect of media in reinforcing nationality microaggression towards one gender out-group, i.e. male. We will now discuss each theme with their relevant sub-themes in detail.

Theme 1: Endorsing Nationality Microaggression towards Afghan as Terrorist

The first theme captures the objective that nationality is the endmost reality and adds a new dimension to the phenomenon of microaggression. We wanted to understand and inspect the kind of behaviour and treatment Afghan students get because of their nationality inside the campus, inside the classroom, or the department, by the Indian classmates. Consider the following extract of microaggression faced by an Afghan student based on their nationality.

Extract 1 (M, P10):

I was talking to a friend of mine from my class only and suddenly someone shouted, “hey, you Afghan bin laden” and I turned to see and I saw it was my good friend who came smiling at me. I felt so embarrassed and angry as he was shouting at the corridor and calling out that name. Very surprisingly, they all are my such good friends and I know they do not mean to hurt me but still, it hurts and it feels bad. My nation is attached to so many bad things-war, violence, terrorism. We are where we come from, it is our identity as simple as that. It is the harsh reality indeed.

Mostly all of the participants (P1,2,3,4,6,7,9,11,12,13,14) have reported similar accounts as mentioned above. From the above extract, it can be inferred that the participant experienced microaggression is based on one’s nationality. Another important thing that can be taken into consideration is that these remarks that are made against the Afghan participants are made in a manner that is oblivious to the Indian students themselves as they are delivered in the form of a joke, remark or a comment. According to Harwood, Choi and colleagues (2015), who have worked on racial microaggression in the classroom, talks about numerous ways in which a student of race, ethnicity or gender can be demeaned by their respective classmates or teachers. One of them being racist conversations, direct or overheard. Because the current

study looks into nationality as an issue, hence I will be discussing the narratives with nationality as its basis. It can also be observed from the above extracts that the Afghan participants like others believed that the kind of behaviour that is manifested towards them is because of the nationality they belong to and find no other reason for such form of prejudice. In the work of Minikel-Lacocque (2013), the students of different race and ethnicity have shared their experiences where they were assigned nicknames, were stereotyped, ignored and sometimes starved in the class and or on campus by the predominantly White students. In the above extract, the participant shares a similar encounter in the campus where the participant was called by a “nickname” by his classmate. Name-calling or giving nicknames is often termed as microassaults by Sue (2010) which is defined as often conscious actions or slurs such as using epithets. However, in the present scenario, the perpetrator seemed oblivious of the severity of using such denigrating byname for the participant and most probably did not realize that his name calling has hurt the participant. It should also be taken into account that the extracts mentioned above, as well as other participants who report similar predicament are all male participants, which provides another novel understanding in the literature of gender microaggression. This point will be discussed in detail in later half of this study.

Inside the Campus- Implicit Prejudice Displayed by the Teachers

Many participants (P2,6,7,9,10,11,14,18) have reported that teachers have displayed hidden form of prejudice towards them based on their nationality. They also delineate that sometimes the teachers consciously or unconsciously say things to them which reflect the concealed feelings that they hold towards Afghans. Moreover, many participants believe that in an education setup like a classroom the teachers could not camouflage the prejudice that they have towards Afghan students.

Extract 2 (M, P2):

One of my teachers (name is hidden) had very negative perceptions about Afghans. There was a time where one of my Afghan friends could not answer the question in class, so the teacher started abusing him, and it was not just limited to him but took it to his nationality, our nationality. The teacher was very rude to me too. He used to abuse other Indian students too, but the words he used for me were very different from the ones he used for the others. It made me feel different. He was a very biased teacher.

Here, again the participant discussed how their nationality works against them. Even in an academic setting where the teachers are supposed to show equal treatment to all the students, they exhibited microaggression towards Afghan students. Many participants reported that teachers used indirect means such as scolding, making comments or simply staring (non-verbal) as forms of microaggression. A study done by Allen, Scott and Lewis (2013) discusses microaggression at teacher level where the teachers have their own biases and prejudices towards African American and Hispanic students. Berk mentioned in his work that microaggression in classroom is not only limited to student to student but also is delivered from the teachers too, wherein the students of different race and ethnicity face microaggression that are

constructed in various forms like getting stereotyped, asking uncomfortable questions and making remarks in front of the class. The above extracts clearly demonstrated that even teachers hold hidden forms of prejudice towards Afghan students. Harwood, Choi and colleagues (2015) spoke of offensive lecture content displayed by the teachers which disturbed many students coming from particular race or ethnicity. Vachuska and Brudvig (2018) mentioned in their work that White teachers often used offensive language towards Black students in the classroom.

The above extract showcases the experiences of microaggression faced by Afghan participants inside the campus displayed by the Indian classmates and the teachers. The narration presented above reflected that microaggression can take many forms, which are exhibited through jokes, comments, remarks towards participants owing to the participants' nationality.

Theme 2: Assumption of Nationality Homogeneity

When others assume all Afghan students share the same behaviour, values, practices and beliefs they make the judgement that there is no difference between members of a certain group. It is believed that an entire group/nationality is homogeneous in nature. As defined by Ostrom and Sedikides (1992), outgroup homogeneity occurs when people judge members of out-groups as more similar to one another than they do members of in-groups. Many participants (P1,3,4,6,7,11,13,14,15,18) have proclaimed that several times they are viewed by the Indian students, teachers and by outsiders (outside the campus) as "all are the same". All the male participants except one have experienced the assumption of nationality homogeneity in some way or the other. An important factor to be taken into account is that most participants have spoken about of being seen as homogeneous group based on the nationality they belong to, plus the perception that has build around that nationality, i.e. terrorist/terrorism.

Extract 3 (M, P 11):

I remember when I went to Foreigner Regional Registration Offices (FRRO) for my visa work, the person who was handling the Afghan nationals was irritated and annoyed by the crowd and the noise, so he shouted, "You all are same, you Talibanis, you all cannot even stand in one line"!.

In the above-mentioned extract and the narration shared by the other participants, they happen to experience out-group homogeneity by the Indian students and the outsiders (outside the campus) on the basis of their nationality. Park and Judd (1990) suggested that people may have cognitively stored previously acquired beliefs about the group and access those beliefs when making homogeneity judgements and such group specific beliefs could develop automatically. Sue, Capodilupo and Holder (2008) showed in their work that Black students often received denigrating messages such as "You cannot be trusted", "You all are the same" from the White classmates. It is important to reconsider the fact that most of the participants spoke about how terrorism was the main issue to which they were linked over and over again by the classmates and the others. In the above extract, the participant shares how he is linked with terrorism (Taliban), because of his nationality. Most

of the participants reported that individuality/having one’s own identity were never considered, but were perceived as a homogeneous entity based on their nationality by the classmates which further generated prejudice. Brezinski in her work showed that many Black students spoke about “Monolithic Targeting” where the White teachers viewed Black males in collective deficit form and were verbally labelled by the White teachers as being mischievous, having a problematic behaviour and disengagement with the educational process; in addition to this, many African American on campus have had encounters of being viewed as aggressive, threatening or criminal based on the association build up with their race and criminality. Ostrom and Sedikides (1992) have discussed in their paper about several basic social needs that motivates people to perceive out-group as homogeneous and in-group as heterogeneous; for example, one such need is Need for Predictability, where in time of external threat, people tend to place all outgroup members in a single category. Like I said in the beginning that nationality microaggression and assumption of nationality homogeneity are very much interlinked, so I would like to bring into notice that it is because of the homogeneity effect that leads to microaggression (hidden form of prejudice) towards the Afghan students. In the above extract, again it were the male Afghan participants who were viewed as a homogenous entity or group, therefore leading to microaggression.

I would also like to point out nationality microaggression does not exist independently, but is very much linked to several other factors like gender and media (Environmental microaggression) and how they all together contribute to the emergence of nationality microaggression towards the target group (male Afghan students). These factors will be discussed in detail one by one. Firstly, let us look into the gender aspect of microaggression where only the male Afghan students are aimed at.

Theme 3: Assumption of Afghan Male as Terrorist as Compared to Afghan female

Sue, Capodilupo and colleagues (2007) have discussed gender microaggression in the context of women facing discrimination and subtle form of prejudice at work place, universities where the main debate was over restrictive gender roles and sexism faced by the women. However, the current study discloses that it is the Afghan male participants who have faced discrimination and subtle form of prejudice (microaggression) because of their nationality in comparison with Afghan female participants. The main argument of this context is that despite being from the same nationality (Afghanistan), it is the Afghan male participants who faced microaggression and not the Afghan female participants.

Extract 4 (F, P5):

One of my college friends said that since you are an Afghan so your brothers or uncles might be knowing Taliban. What I felt from his question was that because if a man comes from Afghanistan they ought to have connections or contacts with the terrorist groups. The pictures of Afghan men are made up in their minds. I have personally not faced any such issues, though I have heard this kind of thing from my male Afghan friends many times. In fact I am very happy to be here in Delhi.

The above extract reports a clear gender difference among Afghan male and female participants. As it can be noticed from the extract, the participant report experiencing no such discrimination or facing negative comments such as “terrorist” in the campus or outside and consider themselves lucky because the Afghan girls have heard many such comments made against the Afghan male students because of their nationality. Most of the Afghan male participants (P7,9,10,11,12,13,15,18) have agreed to the fact that Afghan female students are seen as vulnerable, positive and efficient students by the classmates, teachers and by the outsiders, hence are treated with respect and are cordial towards them in comparison with Afghan male participants. Poolokasingham, Kleiman and colleagues (2014) showed in their study that South Asian Canadian men were assumed as terrorists, and as a threat to the society, it was also reported that no female participants shared any such experiences. In the current study, despite mentioning their nationality, the female participants have encountered and received optimistic and more upbeat outlook in college and outside, however, in comparison with the previous extracts mentioned by the Afghan male participants where they have undergone microaggression is solely because of their nationality. Halls and Fields (2015) showed in their work that gender difference existed for Black males; they reported that assumption of criminality was worse for Black men, in fact younger men reported that they were frequently stopped by the Police and were stared at as if they were “hyper-visible”. Eggert wrote an article where she emphasized and illuminated the point that because of centuries old gender images and stereotypes according to which war and violence is always seen as a man’s domain, whereas women are supposedly seen as non violent, more than often constructs a perception or tendency to associate terrorism and extremism with men while women are seen as victims of extremism or potential actors for positive change. She further reports that female radicalization and involvement in terrorism is indeed a global phenomenon and hence necessitates to change the outlook in perceiving only men as violent or extremist. One study done by Hotckins (2016) illuminated on Black males facing microaggression in the classroom by the White teachers. Similarly, in the current study, there are many reasons behind this reasoning, one of them being the effect of the media and how they portray Afghan male in the global arena in addition to the development of nationality microaggression towards Afghan male. It is extremely imperative to look further, and I will be discussing it in detail as my next theme.

Theme 4: Effect of Media in Portraying Nationality Microaggression towards Afghan Male

As it has been discussed very much in detail by the extracts discussed above in all the above themes, it is clear that Afghan male participants have been singularly targeted for nationality microaggression. Now, I would like to bring in focus that all the participants irrespective of gender believed and maintained that media is the biggest culprit in creating an image to the world which is not only negative in nature but situates the male gender in a pedestal that makes them extremely vulnerable and susceptible to discrimination and subtle form of prejudice (microaggression) because of the nationality they belong to. Most of the participants have focused on television

and newspaper as a source of spreading and reinforcing the detrimental effect, and few of the participants have spoken about social media too.

Extract 5 (M, P6):

The media does play a very important role in building negative perceptions about Afghans and Afghanistan in general. It only shows suffering, terrorism, killing so obviously when we see news in our daily lives we all do come up with perceptions like, “we are cruel and dangerous people”.

From the above extract, it is clear that the media plays a pivotal role in creating a negative and unpleasant impression of the Afghan male participants and about the country itself. All of the participants irrespective of gender believed that the media creates an image of the Afghan men and its nationality which is not only untrue, but very much exaggerates and magnifies the events which further builds in an adverse form of perception (microaggression) towards the male gender and the nationality. Environmental microaggression (Pierce et al., 1978) refers to numerous demeaning and threatening social, educational, political or economic cues that are communicated individually, institutionally or societally to marginalized groups. Environmental microaggression are powerful and can be transmitted through symbols, inaccurate media portrayals of marginalized groups in films, television, radio, print media. Therefore, the current study is also focusing on the environmental microaggression (media) exhibited towards particular gender out-group (male) and the nationality it belongs to. Manjiver in her article mentioned how negative media portrayals drive perception towards the immigrants, and she further adds by saying that the more the message is repeated—in this case—the news media, it becomes a “fact” even when it is not true, and most sensationalist one-liners are not accurate. But because most people cannot do the research themselves, their only source of information are these messages that are fed over and over again.

In the present study, in the above extracts and other narrations, the participants narrated how media very insensitively show terrorism and the Afghan men related news on television focusing only on the miserable side of the country and portraying it as the overall picture of the nationality which automatically conditions the mind of the people and how thereafter this generates into prejudice towards specific male gender out-group owing to the nationality they come from.

The above analysis of the narrations shared by the Afghan students showcased that microaggression existed especially, nationality microaggression on various levels inside the campus of universities of Delhi.

In the next part of the study, I will now explore the prejudices of the Indian students explicitly. As mentioned before, it is expected that due to social desirability or perhaps oblivious about their own true beliefs and feelings, Indian students will report no explicit prejudice towards Afghan students.

Method

Participants

One hundred forty Indian undergraduate students from various universities in Delhi (Delhi University, Private Universities-Amity University (Gurgaon and Noida), Central University (Jamia Milia Islamia University), International University (South Asian University) and Public University (Jawaharlal Nehru University) were contacted via friends and relatives. The age group of the participants ranged from 18 to 21 years. Out of these participants, 48 were Indian male students and 91 Indian female students. Out of them, 84 belonged to Hindu religion, 35 were Muslim students and 20 were Sikh students.

Procedure

The researcher carried out a questionnaire (*Should–Would Questionnaire, Monteith and Voils, 1998*) on a larger sample through an online form (Google form) to test whether Indian students studying in various universities of Delhi explicitly display prejudice towards Afghan students. Online form made it really feasible for the researcher to gather responses from far across universities which was otherwise inaccessible and unreachable within the region of Delhi/NCR. The researcher adopted Monteith et al. (1998) should and would questionnaire, which was further modified and changed as per the context of the study; in other words, the original questionnaire dealt with prejudices towards Blacks, and therefore, the variables were changed to Afghan male/Afghan people. The questionnaire consisted of 11–12 items, each in *should* and *would* sections, keeping the format crisp, easy to fill and less time-consuming for the participants. The should–would questionnaire is very much influenced by Devine's (1989) analysis of automatic and controlled components of prejudice and stereotyping.

In the current study, the participants were asked to imagine themselves in situations involving members of the stereotyped group. In the beginning of the form, the participants were provided with the clear instructions and the required information as to how to move forward with the questionnaire. The participants were presented with diverse situations, and participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they *should* (beliefs) respond towards the target group (especially in situations which involve Afghan male) irrespective of whether their behaviour is consistent or not consistent with their beliefs; in the next section, the participants were required to indicate the extent to which they *would* (initial, gut level reactions) respond towards the target group which may or may not be align with how they should react towards the target group (especially in situations which involve Afghan male). The participants were basically contacted through friends of friends, relatives, in other words snow-ball sampling technique was employed. No monetary reward was involved which was

stated clearly before the questionnaires were distributed via text messages attached with the online form. It was made sure that the sample of the group be as diverse and large as possible so that a clear picture could be captured.

Measures

Participants responded to the questionnaire items using a seven-point Likert-type scale, which ranged from 1 (strong disagreement) to 7 (strong agreement).

All the participants completed a 23-item questionnaire. The first section consisted of 12 should items (i.e. concerning how participants believed they should respond in a variety of situations involving Afghans). The second section consisted of 11 would items. These items were constructed such that each one was intended to correspond with a should item. However, to minimize the possibility that participants would consciously attempt to compare or match their should and would responses, the would items appeared in a random order different from that of the should items. Participants were instructed to rate these items on the basis of how they actually would respond in the given situations, regardless of how they thought they should respond.

Should items, for example—*I, believe that I should not think of Afghans in stereotypical ways, if I have an Afghan classmate I should assume that he/she is just as capable of completing intellectually challenging tasks as my Indian classmates, I support Afghans in their struggle against terrorism, I believe that I should never avoid interacting with someone just because he/she is from Afghanistan, I should not feel uncomfortable about having an Afghan roommate, I should not feel uncomfortable in the company of Afghan people, I do not believe that Afghan men typically have terrorist like tendencies, I should not feel uncomfortable shaking hands with Afghan male/female, I believe Afghan students study hard as Indian students, I believe that laughing at jokes that play on the stereotype of Afghan male is wrong* were reverse scored.

Would items, for example—*I would not be upset if a member of my family married an Afghan immigrant, I would not be troubled if an Afghan family moved into my neighbourhood, and if I get to know that it is an Afghan male walking towards me on an empty street, I would feel worried about his intentions* were reverse scored.

The should and would items were reverse scored as necessary so that higher numbers always reflected greater prejudice. Then, each should item was subtracted from the corresponding would item to create discrepancy scores.

Results and Discussion

The present paper deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data collected based on the frame of the current study. The main objective of the present study was to find

Table 4.1 Average, mean, standard deviation and p value for should and would items

	N	M	SD	P(0.05)
Should	26.24	2.51	1.34	t(139) = 1.231, P = 0.215
Would	26.72	2.66	1.41	

whether Indian students studying in various universities of Delhi display explicit prejudice towards Afghan students, and hence, it was hypothesized that Indian students will show no direct/explicit prejudice towards Afghan students studying in various universities of Delhi. Data collected from the questionnaire (should-would) were analysed using inferential statistics using independent sample T test. T test was used to find the significance of difference between means of two independent samples. The study sought to establish and predict negligible or insignificant differences on should (belief) and would (gut reaction) items/questions responded by Indian students.

The should–would responses obtained from the Indian students were reverse scored as where it was necessary and required, and the scores were calculated by taking out the average for all should items and all would items separately and then later compared to see the difference between the scores. The total scores of should items were 2506 and the average came out to be 26.24. The total scores of would items came out to be 2543 and the average 26.72. As the scoring of the questionnaire items said that higher number reflected higher prejudice, hence the total scores and average on both the should and would responses suggested that Indian students (*Hindu—85, Muslim—35 and Sikh—20*) showed no prejudice towards Afghans as the scores in would items and should items were almost same (Table 4.1).

The present study aimed at exploring the prejudice of Indian participants in explicit form (questionnaire) to assess and understand if the participants distinctly and categorically state or proclaim their prejudices towards the Afghan students. The current study employed should–would questionnaire which involved statements to examine and consider how they should (belief) and how they would (gut reaction) react in a given situation. In both should and would situations, the participants gave unbiased and sound responses. As hypothesized, the findings came out to be in sync with the expectations that the participants will not explicitly state their biases and prejudgements towards the Afghan students; however, the findings were not statistically significant.

In summary, the findings of the current study was in sync with the hypothesis that the participants will exhibit no prejudice explicitly and will report unbiased and unprejudiced beliefs and attitude towards the Afghan students in given situations. These results displayed the gap that existed between the narrations of the Afghan students who claimed that Indian students exhibit prejudices implicitly (microaggression) and the denial of the Indian students explicitly that they do not hold any kind of prejudices or stereotypes against the Afghan students.

General Discussion and Conclusion

The present paper strived to understand if implicit intergroup harmony exists between Indian students and Afghan students studying in universities in Delhi. The findings from both the studies revealed that a gap existed in the beliefs held by the Indian students towards Afghan students as opposed to what is explicitly affirmed by them. In an education set up, it is expected from every student to not to be just tolerant and acceptable towards diverse outgroup students but to genuinely develop intergroup harmony. Unconsciously, however, the deep rooted prejudice have led to camouflaging their true sentiments which further gets transformed into negative remarks, jokes (microaggression). Intergroup harmony implicitly has been found to be absent in classrooms of higher education where otherwise we believe that education removes prejudices.

A very important question that urges us to wonder and inquire is how education really helps us in reducing prejudice in implicit form? As it has been studied and found that education has perhaps provided myriad ways to mask and disguise the true feelings and beliefs towards the outgroup, but the real question remains that in an education system where it is expected to be brought up as a civilized person, not just academically but mentally too, how is that the students pursuing higher education in universities of Delhi hold implicit prejudices towards the outgroup? What is it that education is failing in thriving and establishing in the youth? An imperative and pressing question that needs to be probed and explored in a society of so-called educated youth.

The present research showcased the urgency and the imperativeness of revisiting our education system and the curriculum, as the latent prejudices were recorded inside the classrooms of the universities of Delhi by the Indian classmates and the Indian teachers towards Afghan students, especially male Afghan students.

A plethora of empirical work has been done in prejudice reduction in education (Conard, 1988; Pine and Hilliard, 1990; Dovidio and Gaertner, 1999; Johnson and Stephan, 2001; Abound et al., 2012; Ross and Bondy, 2013; Scacco and Warren, 2016; Godsil, Tropp, and MacFarlane, 2017; Costello and Dillard, 2019; Drake and Taylor, 2019; Kahlenberg, Potter and Quick, 2019) but the larger question remains—Do they implicitly aid in reducing prejudice among students and teachers towards outgroups, communities and genders? Education has always been known to open the minds of the people, preparing and training them to be unbiased and prejudice-free towards several outgroups, genders and communities. It can be seen from far off that it all appears very optimistic and simplistic, but when viewed from a closer lens, it is vicious and strenuous to bring change in the education system and the implicit mind and its functionality. Having said that, several major and minor changes and shifts in the education curriculum and in the education system and in the minds at large can perhaps bring forth intergroup harmony implicitly among the communities, groups and genders thereby minimizing prejudices latently. In sync with the above statement, perspective-taking, self-involvement, self-regulation are some prejudice reduction interventions. Having said that, one of the most influential strategy which

has been formulated by Devine et al. (2013) for long-term reduction in implicit bias and prejudice is—a prejudice habit-breaking intervention. The idea is rooted in the fact that implicit prejudice and bias are like a habit which can be minimized to a great extent through a combination of awareness of implicit prejudices, concerns about the effects of that bias and the approaches one can employ to reduce these biases. It has been argued by Devine and colleagues (Devine & Monteith 1993) that there are two main roots from which a person feels motivated to break down the prejudice habit. First, it is important that people are aware of their own biases, and second, people must be worried or show some form of concern about their biases before they actually make the effort or show some form of motivation to minimize it. Additionally, it is imperative for people to know when their biased responses are likely to occur and how to actually try to supplant those biased responses to something which are more compatible to their objectives. The intervention has multifarious nature and has been found to have conceptual equivalence with several areas and their approaches, such as cognitive behaviour therapy, health behaviour change (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997) and the fundamentals of adult learning (Howell, 1982). The habit-breaking intervention is a 12-week intervention programme which has shown to reduce long-term implicit bias and prejudices dramatically. As it is evident that finding a method which can implicitly reduce long-term prejudice can be a huge challenge, but with the intervention formulated by Devine and others (2013), it has given us hope where we can strive to propose that prejudice habit-breaking intervention method can be employed in not just in higher education setup or in schools, starting with children as young as 10-year olds who in reality absorb implicitly from their parents, media, peers, teachers as to how to view certain members belonging to a certain group from a prejudiced lens, but also test the application of this method at workplace where people face implicit prejudice every other day due to their race, ethnicity, gender. The method can be employed and tested at various diverse fields and therefore aiding in reducing and minimizing the prejudices implicitly.

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Chapter 5

Collective Participation in Swachh Bharat Abhiyan: Proposing the Applicability of Social Identity Model of Collective Action



Surendra Kumar Sia and Antony M. Wilson

Abstract Social campaigns, like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, are the most widely used strategies by governments in various countries for enhancing citizens' motivation to behave in pro-social manner. In these type of campaigns, social scientists use some theories from the field of social psychology like norm activation model and theory of planned behaviour and as reference point, which emphasize upon individualistic approach for behavioural change. Although we can incorporate change in pro-environmental action by adopting individualistic approach, but the magnitude of change may not be large scale, and moreover, it may decay over time. Therefore, there is a necessity to explore the probable contribution of collectivistic approach to overcome the inadequacy of individualistic approach for behavioural change. Some researchers have made attempts to explain collective action by developing new theories or models. One of those theories is social identity model of collective action (SIMCA) model. From the time of its inception, this theory has been used in understanding social movements and protests. However, attempts to verify its applicability in the environmental context is very few. Swachh Bharat Mission, being a wider community-based initiative, requires collective effort and sustained participation. Therefore, in this paper, an attempt has been made to understand and analyse the possibility of applying this SIMCA model pertaining to Clean India Mission.

Keywords Collective efficacy · Social identity · Collective guilt · Collective action

Clean India Mission, which is popularly known as Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, was set in motion by the Indian central government on the occasion of 145th birth anniversary of Gandhiji. Once Mahatma Gandhi had viewed that if asked to choose between *swatantrata* (independence) and *swachhata* (cleanliness), he would give priority to *swachhata* or cleanliness (Indian Express, 2018). The paramount intention of this *Abhiyan* is dispensing sanitary facility for everyone. It has two components—rural (*gramin*) which is being monitored Drinking Water and Sanitation Ministry and the urban (*sahar*) monitored through Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry. The objectives

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of this drive include complete sanitation, solid and waste management, clean villages and supply of safe potable water. “Sanitation” is an all-inclusive process consisting of efficacious management of human waste, solid waste, liquid waste, industrial waste and hazardous wastes (Gore, 2018). Many countries face the challenge of maintaining proper sanitation for their population, with the possibility of “water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH)”-related diseases (WHO, 2015).

In a developing nation like India, waste management has always been a challenge. Due to accelerated population growth, unorganized government machineries and lack of public awareness cities are struggling to efficiently manage the country’s ever-increasing quantity of trash (Nayak, 2015). The urban population is growing more than 20% every year since 1980. Poorly organized waste management can lead to critical health consequences and irreparable deterioration of the environment. Efforts by government, industry and citizens need to be integrated for the required improvement (Singh, 2015).

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan as a Pro-Environmental Movement

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, which was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of India, has become one of the India’s massive campaign for cleanliness with involvement of large number of people including celebrities, leaders, employees, non-governmental, etc. (Tayal, & Yadav, 2017). It is an apolitical mission focusing upon the cleanliness of the nation. The sole objective of this mass drive is to persuade more and more people to make India as clean as possible. The major aim of this campaign is to establish it as a global programme involving the construction of toilets, promoting awareness about sanitation among rural population, cleaning the streets, bringing change in the behaviour of the citizens and presenting India in front of the world as an ideal nation (Singh et al., 2018).

An attempt has been made to provide cleanliness drive a larger base since 2014. However, the cleanliness initiative is not very new in India. Various cleanliness programmes have been carried out in the past, even much before it became part of the Indian government or the United Nations Programme. Sant Gadge, a saint who is believed to live between 1876 to 1956 in Amaravati district of Maharashtra, used to promote and be physically involved in public hygiene as well as cleanliness programmes, particularly in villages (Kumar, 2014). This revered saint began a revolution in Maharashtra by visiting village to village along with a broom in his hand for cleaning and preaching hygiene. In the honour of Sant Gadge, the Maharashtra government conducted weeklong cleanliness programme, in 1995–96 (Kumar, 2014) and in the year 2000–2001, the Maharashtra government started the Sant Gadgebaba Gram Swachhata Abhiyan (Dhaktode, 2014). The Central Rural Sanitation Program (CRSP) was launched by the Government of India in 1986 which was revised again in 1992 and was basically a subsidy-oriented scheme. In 1999, this programme was restructured with a lot of changes and was launched as the Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) (Pardeshi et al., 2008). It intended for greater household involvement providing

a range of toilet options to promote increased affordability. The Rural Sanitation Programme of central government was restructured as Total Sanitation Campaign in 1999. In addition to that, in 2003, government began a new scheme called Nirmal Gram Puraskar for villages with the purpose of covering sanitation, clean environment and making the village free from open defecation (Snehalatha et al., 2014). The TSC was renamed as Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan in 2012.

The nation should not take up Swachh Bharat Abhiyan just as another re-naming ritual. All of us are well aware that change can be initiated by each of us. Each citizen of this nation needs to get involved so that this mission can be success rather than only holding the government responsible. There is a need to bring change in the attitude and outlook of the community members towards hygiene which in turn can make them to deliver the change expected by the world (Nayak, 2015). Despite efforts to address the challenge of open defecation, the situation in India is not very encouraging. Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) needs to be implemented efficaciously with all the stakeholders accepting their respective responsibilities so that India can become a clean and open defecation-free country. This requires awareness raising and behavioural change initiatives (Gore, 2018).

Pro-Environmental Action: Individual and Collective Perspective

Pro-environmental behaviours can be highly varied and context dependent. We can demarcate them as individual and collective behaviours. Individual behaviours include a wide array of behaviours like waste management, buying green products, using electric vehicles, use of public transportation, recycling, reducing car use, switching off lights when not in use, etc. Different researchers use different indicators. Moreover, individuals may take part in collective environmental action in the form of sharing information, participating in environmental movement and programmes, signing petition, joining associations or organizations promoting pro-environmental policy (Stern, 2000).

Individual Perspective

Psychological models have tried to understand the antecedents of pro-environmental behaviour. Patchen (2010) articulates comprehensively about three major frameworks which have been referred to understand individualistic environmental behaviour. These are—Schwartz's norm activation model (Schwartz, 1977), Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour (1991) and Stern's value-belief-norm model (2000).

Norm activation model advocates that knowledge of the individual about the consequences and felt responsibility for these consequences the activates personal

norms leading to altruistic behaviours including ecological behaviours (Bamberg & Möser, 2007; Nordlund & Garvill, 2002). The value-belief-norm theory further added personal values to this norm activation model. Values are motivational components which shape desired results and behaviours (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987). Ten such universal values have been advocated by Schwartz (2010) under four categories in opposite continuums, namely—“traditionalism values vs openness values”, and “self-enhancement vs self-transcendence values”. According to this value-belief-norm theory, the self-enhancement vs. self-transcendence continuum values influence three beliefs—ecological worldview, awareness about the outcomes and perceived efficacy in reducing that threatening outcome. These beliefs, in turn, induce the obligatory feeling on the part of the individual to act in pro-environmental manner (Koustova, 2017). Based upon theory of planned behaviour, pro-environmental intention and behaviour can be predicted by environmental attitudes, perceived behavioural control (same as personal efficacy), and subjective norm (Ajzen, 1991).

Webb (2012) views that usually government initiatives propagate change in individual, presumably with the intention of not threatening the status quo. However, these strategies would ultimately be self-defeating since those vouch for change in the behaviour without focusing on the context which would fundamentally be inadequate for sustained environmental change (Cherrier, 2012; Klein, 2014; Webb, 2012). Thus, there is a need to encourage and support collective action also.

Collective Perspective

Individuals can have shared responsibility with others. Many a times, one individual's contribution may not have expected outcome unless a required level of participation by others is reached. Consequently, environmental action is a collective issue necessitating collective response. This action cannot be enacted individually, but is based largely on willingness by everybody to coordinate (Ostrom, 1999). These collective actions include individuals with common interests which propels them to act as a “countervailing power” against influential agencies including government or authority (Olson, 2002). A person engages in collective action when he/she considers himself or herself as the representative of the group, and hence, the action is directed at benefitting the whole group (Wright et al., 1990). People behave cooperatively due to different reasons like norms (Pagliaro et al., 2011), empathy (Brosig, 2002; Rimé, 2007) and social identity (Berkman et al., 2015). Bamberg et al. (2015) discuss three integrated models which may be helpful in explaining participation in collective action for pro-environmental purpose. These are—dual-pathway model, SIMCA model and the encapsulated social identity model.

Drawing on the triad of motives (Klanderman, 1984)—collective, normative and reward motives, Sturmer and Simon (2004) elaborate cost–benefit paths in the dual-pathway model. They integrate the dual-pathway model with theory of reasoned action and suggest that the intention to participate in collective action is determined by both collective motive as well as reward motive together. Moreover, normative motive

develops the obligation to participate representing subjective norm domain. Thus, the dual (cost–benefit) pathway explicates the role of extrinsic rewards in individual’s collective participation, whereas social identity pathway explains participation based upon individual’s obligation to act due to internalized motives corroborating with the goals of the movement (Bamberg et al., 2015).

The SIMCA model propounded by Van Zomeren et al. (2008) integrates three components—collective efficacy, collective emotion and social identity. People initiate action when they identify with the social group, experience strong emotional reaction and believe that their conjoint effort can be effective. This model also stresses the significance of social identity in the appraisal of collective emotion and collective effectiveness.

Thomas et al., (2009, 2012) advocated about a different way of causation with the help of their encapsulated model of social identity in collective action (EMSICA). They modified the role of social identity and placed it as outcome of both collective efficacy and collective emotion. Therefore, besides the direct effects of collective efficacy as well as collective emotion, social identification can mediate effects of both efficacy and emotion on intention to participation intent in collective behaviour.

Social Identity Model of Collective Action (SIMCA): Pro-Environmental Perspective

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan has been implemented in the form of a mass drive with the intention to spread the awareness about and intention for cleanliness all over India. It is based upon the social campaigning approach which is frequently used by governments in various countries for motivating individuals to act pro-environmentally and pro-socially (Mckenzie-Mohr, 2000). The initiatives in these campaigns, which usually adopt social marketing approach, have some limitations as they lack adequate understanding about the context of behavioural change (Sia, 2020).

Social marketing practitioners use some theories of social psychology like theory of planned behaviour (TPB) and norm activation model as point of reference (Haustein & Hunecke, 2013). They largely adopt individualistic approach for initiating and strengthening behavioural change. Although we can incorporate change in pro-environmental action by adopting individualistic approach, but the magnitude of change may not be large scale and, moreover, may decay over time (Fujii et al., 2009). Hence, to come out of this inadequacy, the social scientists and particularly the psychologists have the responsibility to supplement it with collectivistic approaches towards pro-environmental change. Moreover, as all of us know, India is primarily a collectivistic nation. Hence, there is a need to understand the behavioural mechanism behind successful collective action for the purpose of effective Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

Psychologists are putting effort and developing new models to understand and explain sustainable action on the part of community members. One of those models

has been propounded by Van Zomeren et al., (2008, 2011) named as “social identity model of collective action (SIMCA)”. The core component of this model centres around social identification which is assumed to play a pivotal role for social change. More the individual identifies with the group or community, higher becomes his/her commitment to bring change in the society and s/he intends to exhibit coordinated collective effort to achieve shared goals (Craig & Richeson, 2012; Wright & Baray, 2012) like Clean India Mission.

People become motivated, according to SIMCA model, participate in collective action as a result of social identity, emotional motivation and collective efficacy. Social identity means identifying with a group through socially shared understanding (Van Zomeren et al., 2008). Emotional motivation comes from perceived injustice. But as far as environmental pollution and dirtiness is concerned, directly or indirectly, each of us is responsible to some extent. Therefore, for the purpose of environmental cleanliness, unlike anger which arises from perceived injustice, other emotions like guilt or shame are more relevant. Collective efficacy refers to the feeling on the part of the individual that collective action, of which s/he is part, would result in achievement of their common goal. Individuals who possess higher level of collective efficacy reportedly participate more in community activities and exhibit greater support for government policies on climate change and implementation of those policies in their communities (Thaker, 2012). Rees and Bamberg (2014) applied the SIMCA model to verify collective pro-environmental behaviour. Moreover, they included an additional construct—social norm. Social norm refers to the perceived social pressure from significant others for participation in collective action. Collective action being socially embedded may be influenced due to the behaviour and expectations of other significant members in the community.

Behavioural Propositions for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Clean India Mission)

The social identity model of collective action (SIMCA) has primarily been applied to understand social movements and social protests. It integrates three major constructs which result in collective action. These are—social identity, perceptions unfairness and collective efficacy. Brügger et al. (2011) examined the applicability of this model to understand collective effort for climate protection. In the same manner, Homburg and Stolberg (2006) reportedly observed that beliefs about collective efficacy are stronger predictors pro-environmental behaviour compared to self-efficacy beliefs. However, barring these few studies, sufficient effort has not been made in verifying the utility of SIMCA model in connection with pro-environmental behaviour. We need to carry out more and more researches to verify the usefulness of this model to understand collective environmental initiative. As all of us know, the Clean India Mission is a collective programme for which larger collaborative effort and sustained participation is the necessity. Keeping that in mind, in the present chapter, we have

attempted to explicate the possibility of applying SIMCA model to understand the intention to take part in Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

Importance of Social Identity in Swachh Bharat Abhiyan

Social context of the individual plays important role in determining his/her interest and intention for participation in any collective action (Bamberg et al., 2015). Researches reportedly observed that immigrants with higher supportive ethnic networks had higher level of participation in collective protests (Klandermans et al., 2008). As suggested by Van Zomeren et al. (2011) in their SIMCA model, social identity is an important determinant that makes an individual ready to take part in collective actions. *Swachh Bharat Abhiyan* being a collective initiative would be greatly influenced by social identity. Sense of community (SOC), a strong indicator of social identity, is considered by Sarason (1974) as one of the founding stones of self-definition. It refers to the “perception of similarity to others, an acknowledged interdependence with others, a willingness to maintain this interdependence by giving or doing for others what one expects from them and the feeling that one is part of a larger dependable and stable structure” (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Talò et al. (2014) in their meta-analysis depict positive relationship between SOC and involvement of the individual in community-oriented activities. Studies by researchers reportedly reveal positive relationship of sense of community with social participation (Berry et al., 1993; Cicognani et al., 2008; Singh, 2019). In the same manner, community belonging has been found to have strengthened the change in health-enhancing behaviour and could be an integral part of strategies for health prevention (Hystad & Carpiano, 2012). In another study, it was reported that observed that most of the participants who trusted their neighbours had a belief of working with others for bringing the required change (Cooper & Innes, 2009). Social identity contributes significantly in enhancing self-esteem and reducing ambiguity of the individual and moreover helps in coping with the fear of mortality. Persons who identify with group invest their resources to realize a shared goal (Fritsche et al., 2018). Based upon the extant literature, the following proposition is formulated by us,

Proposition 1. Social identity would be a significant predictor of an individual's participation in Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

Social Identity as a Contributor of Perceived Social Norm

Social identity as a construct can have varied meaning across disciplines. It can be broadly defined as an extended representation of self-concept, referring basically a displacement of the level of self-concept from an individual self to that of collective self (Hogg, 2003; Reed, 2004) and implies to what extent a person identifies with his/her reference group. This is one of the major determinants behind adherence to

norm (Goldstein et al., 2008). As observed by researchers, social identity shapes the way individuals comply with the descriptive norm of the community (Bearden et al., 1989; Terry et al., 1999). As per the arguments of the psychologists, in the salience of social identity (Forehand & Deshpandé, 2001; Forehand et al., 2002), people follow the norms in such a manner that they contemplate social identity as a valued factor in life (Reed, 2004; Terry & Hogg, 1996). Against this background of literature, we are formulating the following proposition:

Proposition 2. Social identity would significantly predict the perceived social norm.

Significance of Social Norm in Swachh Bharat Abhiyan

Social norms get shaped as a function of interpersonal communication, including both verbal and nonverbal, about behaviour among a member of group in specific social contexts (Hogg & Reid, 2006). These norms have a significant role in modifying behaviour in the context of group or community. Hence, there is a need to inquire about how and when do they influence (Manning, 2009). As pointed out by Stürmer and Simon (2004), motive arising out of this social norm, i.e. normative motive, can have a significant contribution in individual's behavioural intention to participate in collective action. Realizing this importance, Van Zomeren et al. (2011) included social norm, i.e. the expectations from significant persons or agencies, as perceived by the individual as a further contributor of collective action in their model. It can be assumed that perceived social norm could be an effective link in between social identity and the intent to take part in collective actions like clean India mission. This addition of "social norm" not only enhances conceptual rigour but also creates the scope to design interventions for motivating community members to be part of collective environmental action (Bohner et al., 2010; Perkins et al., 2011; Sia, 2020).

It has been observed in studies that personal norm significantly mediates between attitude and behavioural intention for pro-environmental action (Sia & Jose, 2019). Norm, as perceived by a person, can significantly influence his/her behaviour (Cialdini et al., 1990). Descriptive norm, which is basically the perception regarding the commonness in enactment of specific actions among group members, can directly influence behaviour (Rimal, 2008). Similarly, researchers suggest that moral obligation, which arises usually out of perceived social norm, can mediate in the association between social identity and pro-environmental behaviour (Van der Werff et al., 2013). Therefore, with the help of these literature, we are framing the following two propositions:

Proposition 3. Perceived social norm will have a direct positive contribution for participation in Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

Proposition 4. Perceived social norm will mediate between social identity and participation in Swachh Bharat Abhiyan

Collective Emotion and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan

The SIMCA model is originally built on the idea of relative deprivation and construes participation in protest as the behavioural reaction to perceived inequity (Van Zomeren et al., 2008). These reactions are usually group-based anger denouncing a present state of affair that is perceived as unjust. The role these negative emotions including anger and outrage in mass protest has been investigated adequately (Iyer, et al, 2007; Van Zomeren et al., 2008, 2011). But, unlike anger, other emotion/s may have significant function when we try to understand collective pro-environmental behaviour. In social protests, like the one led by Anna Hazare, the emotion of the participants/members was aimed against people indulging in corruption or injustice. But as far as environmental pollution and dirtiness is concerned, directly or indirectly, each of us is responsible to some extent. Therefore, in this situation, it is difficult to make out the perpetrator towards whom anger can be pointed. Rather, for the purpose of environmental cleanliness, emotions such as guilt and shame are more suited (Bamberg et al., 2015). Self-directed collective emotions like guilt or shame appear to be pertinent in the context of motivating community members to be involved in collaborative climate action (Böhm, 2003; Ferguson & Branscombe, 2010). Psychologists suggest that the emotions of guilt and shame are associated with corrective and self-critical actions along with high level of engagement (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). Contribution of guilt and shame have been examined by Bamberg and Moser (2007) in explaining individual approach to pro-environmental behaviour. Researchers have also established the contribution of collective guilt towards different collective pro-environmental behaviour like climate action (Bamberg et al., 2015), nature cleaners environmental movement in Iran (Keshavarzi, McGarty & Khajehnoori, 2021), donations to environmental causes (Harth et al., 2013), pro-environmental food consumption (Onwezen, 2015) and recycling programme (Pensini, & Caltabiano, 2012).

The following proposition is being formulated.

Proposition 5. Collective guilt will contribute towards participation in Swachh Bharat Abhiyan

Collective Efficacy and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan

Klandermans (1984) suggested for the integration of personal and socio-structural determinants of collective action. Drawing on from theories upon attitude-behaviour association (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977a, 1977b), he viewed that motives behind collective action can be assessed through value-expectancy outcomes. This expectancy domain is a crucial factor, since it reflects individuals' expectation about—whether collective action would lead to goal achievement or not (Van Zomeren et al., 2008).

Resource mobilization theory (McCarthy & Zald, 1977) proposes that social movement involves rational actions exhibited by group members to protect and or promote collective interests which can pressurize the authority to fulfil their demands. Initially, researchers emphasized mainly the objective resources (group size, financial support, etc.) facilitating social movements. However, soon it was realized that the objective resources possessed by the group may not be more important than members' subjective perception regarding the ability of whole group in carrying out collective actions. This subjective sense can be termed as collective efficacy (Bamberg et al., 2015). Thus, collective efficacy is considered as a key factor for collective action. It is one of the proximal contributors for collective action and can be defined as "the shared belief that one's group can achieve its goals through combined effort" (Bandura, 1997; Mummendey et al., 1999). In other words, it may be viewed that collective efficacy fosters a feeling of collective strength among the members of a group or community and make them believe that they are capable of changing the situation (Drury & Reicher, 2005). Therefore, more the sense of collective efficacy, higher is the people's engagement in collective action (Hornsey et al., 2006). Based upon collective efficacy, we formulate the following proposition.

Proposition 6. Collective efficacy will contribute significantly towards participation in Swachh Bharat Abhiyan

Conclusion

Some of the current psychologists have taken initiatives to verify the applicability of models of collective action in the context of sustainable consumption and production level (Hielscher, Seyfang, & Smith, 2011; McKenzie-Mohr, 2000). Although, we do not come across with Indian studies, some contemporary studies carried out abroad have investigated the accomplishment of community-based pro-environment drives and portray promising findings from qualitative studies (Büchs et al., 2012; Fisher & Irvine, 2010; Seyfang, 2009) as well as from quantitative studies (Hargreaves et al., 2008; Keshavarzi et al., 2021; Staats et al., 2004). However, unfortunately we do not come across with any such attempt by Indian psychologists to analyse the motivational factors which influence an individual's decision to take part in collaborative and community-based pro-environmental behaviour. If we could identify the motives, we could plan better in the direction of more public mobilization for collective actions like *Swachh Bharat Abhiyan*. Seyfang (2009), based upon a survey, viewed that mobilization issue is a crucial point for climate-related projects. According to his survey, most of the project coordinators experienced severe difficulties in mobilizing additional members other than those green lovers. Therefore, effort by the Indian psychologists to verify the applicability of models of collective action in determining the motivational factors behind individual's intention to be involved in *Swachh Bharat Abhiyan* could be a valuable derivable to the nation.

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Part II
Psychology Customized to the Community

Chapter 6

Efficacy of Psychological First Aid (PFA) by Peer Support Volunteers for Suicide Prevention in Farmers of Punjab



Harprit Kaur, Amandeep Singh, and Sarabjeet Singh

Abstract With the alarming rate of farmer suicide in Punjab, RAPID model-based psychological first aid (PFA) was used by peer support volunteers (PSVs) to prevent suicidal ideation and psychological distress and enhance resilience among farmers of various villages of Punjab. The study involved a total of 260 farmers from various villages of Punjab. They were administered Punjabi translated versions of the Modified Scale for Suicidal Ideation (MSSI; Miller et al., 1991), the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ; Goldberg The detection of psychiatric illness by questionnaire, 1972), and the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC, Connor and Davidson, Depression and Anxiety 18:76–82, 2003). Five sessions of intervention focusing on psychological first aid (PFA)-based therapy were carried out. The paired t-test results of pre- and post-intervention phases revealed psychological first aid proved to be effective in inhibiting suicidal ideation and psychological distress while enhancing resilience of the farmers studied.

Keywords Psychological first aid · Peer support volunteers · Suicide prevention · Farmers

Introduction

Suicide is the act of an individual intentionally ending their own life (O'Connor & Kirtley, 2018), and it usually starts from brooding about suicide to attempting suicide to an act that ends up in death (Wetherall et al., 2018). Every year over 800,000 persons worldwide lose their lives by suicide. Suicide deaths were most common in low- and middle-income nations (79%), where the majority of the world's population (84%) lived (WHO, 2019). In 2016, the South-East Asia region's suicide rates (13.4

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per 100,000) were higher than the global average (10.5 per 100,000), with India accounting for 215,872 suicides in the South-East Asia region (WHO, 2019). In 2019, 1,39,123 suicides were reported in India, showing an increase of 3.4% compared to 2018, and the rate of suicides has increased by 0.2% during 2019 over 2018 (NCRB, 2019). Higher suicide rates for farmers, 100 years after Durkheim (Lester, 1994), have been identified as a manifestation of a larger socio-economic malaise that causes the crisis in Indian agriculture (Mishra, 2014). Information within India, the data from the agrarian state of Punjab revealed that there had been a 37.5% increase in Farmers' suicide in Punjab from 2018 to 2019 (NCRB, 2019).

A large body of empirical research has been devoted to identifying the psychological risk factors associated with suicidal ideation. Suicidal ideations (SI) are suicidal thoughts or ideas, a broad term that encompasses a variety of thoughts, urges and preoccupations with death and suicide (Hou et al., 2021). It is suggested that suicidal ideation can strongly predict suicidal behaviour or suicide attempt (Hou et al., 2021). Nonetheless, several psychological factors like psychological distress, cognitive distortions, low self-esteem, poor wellbeing, depression and low resilience are thought to be possible mechanisms that may underlie the development and maintenance of suicidal ideation and behaviour (Arafat et al., 2021; Georgiades et al., 2014; Scoccoet al., 2017). Psychological distress, also known as mental discomfort, is a set of symptoms and experiences in a person's inner life that are often regarded as disturbing, perplexing or unusual (Zhang et al., 2020). Studies have shown a relationship between psychological distress and suicidal ideation (Eskin et al., 2016; Wu et al., 2020).

Similarly, *resilience* is described as the ability to adapt and cope well in the face of threats or challenges (Berk, 2013). Studies have shown that resilience can act as a buffer in developing suicidal ideation or suicidal behaviour (McGuire et al., 2021; Siegmann et al., 2018; Turban et al., 2020). Research evidence supports intervention programmes, such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) or dialectical behavioural therapy (DBT), with a particular interest in problem-solving strategies, have shown to be efficacious in the management of suicidal ideation/behaviours and other psychological problems (Currier et al., 2012; Linehan et al., 2006; Rudge et al., 2020).

However, providing these psychological services/interventions in rural areas can be arduous for suicide prevention initiatives. Loring et al. (2016) listed a few challenges in providing psychological interventions in rural communities. These challenges include lack of mental health awareness, lack of continuing education and training opportunities; lack of psychological amenability; limited supervision; inadequate access to resources and information; and social challenges around the client-counsellor relationship. In that case, research has shown that when the sources are not available in the rural communities, psychological first aid can be an effective way of preventing suicide (El-Amin et al., 2018; Everly & Lating, 2017).

Psychological first aid (PFA) is a method of aiding people in the aftermath of disasters and humanitarian crises to alleviate acute distress and develop short- and long-term adaptive functioning (Ruzek et al., 2007; WHO, 2013). Assessing people's needs and worries, assisting them in meeting basic needs, listening without pressuring

them, soothing them, connecting them to information, services, and social supports, and safeguarding them from further threat are all part of PFA (WHO, 2013). Based on these WHO's core principles of PFA, in the present study, the John Hopkins RAPID psychological first aid (Everly & Lating, 2017) was used, which relies on five distinct steps. RAPID is an acronym that denotes the model's constituent stages, including rapport and reflective listening, assessment, prioritization, intervention and disposition.

The Johns Hopkins' PFA tool consists of five steps (Everly et al., 2012). Step one, rapport and reflective listening: employed throughout the engagement with a person in crisis, with the purpose of establishing rapport through active and reflective listening skills such as paraphrasing with empathy. The second step, assessment, focuses on assessing psychological and basic physical needs. Prioritization is the third phase, which stresses the relevance of triage principles by emphasizing on the severity of instances that require immediate attention. Step four, intervention, tries to reduce distress and increase functional capability using cognitive and behavioural therapies such as cognitive restructuring and diaphragmatic breathing, as well as basic needs provision. Step five, disposal and follow-up: this is a continuous procedure that continues until the situation is stabilized, involving persistent care, addressing their requirements, and regular monitoring. Studies have shown that RAPID PFA has been effective in community-capacity building and enhancing resilience among rural individuals with various psychological problems, such as trauma, depression, PTSD, psychological distress and suicidality (Everly & Lating, 2017; Maldonato et al., 2020; McCabe et al., 2012).

The significant aspect of PFA is that it may include volunteers who hold key positions in rural communities, such as health workers not specialized in mental health and psychosocial support, community health workers, teachers, community leaders or clergy and youth (O'Connor et al., 2011; WHO, 2013). These volunteers could serve as a gatekeeper, recognizing those who are at danger and guiding them to the proper resources (Everly & Lating, 2017). WHO (2013) has recently underlined the role of community service in preventing suicide and how communities may help by providing social support to vulnerable people who are at risk of suicide by increasing social connectedness and strengthening coping skills (WHO, 2013; Coppens et al., 2018). Keeping that in mind, therefore, the present attempt was made by establishing a peer support system that can be a community service that may aid in the prevention of suicide among farmers of Punjab. Studies have shown that peer support volunteers are those people who can voluntarily provide support or services to people with mental health problems and also promote self-efficacy and hope through sharing experiential knowledge and through modelling recovery and coping strategies (Henderson et al., 2017; Salzer, & Shear, 2002).

Given the desperate need for the prevention of farmers' suicide in Punjab, an effort was made to see the efficacy of psychological first aid for the prevention of farmers' suicide in Punjab: by youth (peer support volunteers) who would identify distressed farmers in Punjab and impart a structured brief RAPID-based psychological first aid (PFA) to them. The main objective of the present study was to extend the evidence of the effectiveness of brief RAPID-based psychological first aid (PFA) on farmers of

Punjab with suicidal ideation, psychological distress and low resilience in a farming community Punjab state. There is little evidence available in Punjab about the efficacy of psychological first aid, especially in the rural farming community of Punjab, so this study is the first of its kind. It was hypothesized that psychological first aid would alleviate suicidal ideation and psychological distress and enhance resilience in suicidal farmers of Punjab.

Method

Participants

The sample for the present study was selected using purposive sampling. The peer support volunteers (PSVs) from Punjab approached one thousand male farmers. These farmers were screened on a threshold score of Suicide Behaviours Questionnaire-Revised (SBQ-R, Osman et al., 2001), and, out of 1000 male farmers, 260 male farmers scored above the threshold score of 8. They were further selected in the study and were given the Modified Scale for Suicidal Ideation (MSSI, Miller et al., 1986), General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12; Goldberg, 1972), and the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC; Connor & Davidson, 2003) These farmers identified from across eight districts of Punjab naming Fatehgarh Sahib, Patiala, Bathinda, Mansa, Ludhiana, Barnala, Amritsar, and Faridkot districts of Punjab, within the age range of 20–80 years ($M = 46.31$, $SD = 21.08$) and were living in intact families. These farmers were identified by 178 peer support volunteers (97 males and 81 females) belonging to Fatehgarh Sahib, Patiala, Ludhiana, Bathinda, Amritsar, Mansa and Sangrur districts.

Demographic Characteristics

Demographic data of age, place of residence, family type and marital status of farmers ($N = 260$) have been presented in Table 6.1. In terms of their residence, 25.4% farmers belonged to Bathinda and Mansa districts. Majority of the farmers came from nuclear family setup, that is, 82.30% and majority of the farmers; that is, 92.30% were married (Tables 6.2 and 6.3).

Table 6.1 Demographic characteristics of the sample and descriptive statistics

Demographic characteristics	N	% age	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Age (Years)	260		20	80	46.31	21.00
Nuclear	214	82.3				
Family type joint	46	17.7				
<i>Districts</i>						
Amritsar	6	2.3				
Barnala	9	3.4				
Faridkot	15	5.7				
Bathinda	66	25.3				
Fatehgarh Sahib	45	17.3				
Ludhiana	7	2.6				
Mansa	66	25.3				
Patiala	19	7.3				
Sangrur	27	10.3				
<i>Marital status</i>						
Married	240	92.30				
Unmarried	15	5.76				
Divorced/Separated	5	1.9				
Scores on suicidal ideation	260		0	35	4.16	8.06
Scores on psychological distress	260		1	12	9.64	2.46
Scores on resilience	260		3	95	38.88	25.87

Table 6.2 Demographic profile of peer support volunteers

Characteristic	Category	N	%
Sex	Male	97	57.7%
	Female	81	48.2%
Residence	Fatehgarh Sahib	29	17.26
	Patiala	32	19.04
	Mansa	26	15.47
	Sangrur	19	11.30
	Amritsar	15	8.92
	Bathinda	21	12.50
	Ludhiana	36	21.42

Measures

In the current study, farmers were administered a Punjabi translated version of the Suicide Behaviours Questionnaire-Revised (SBQ-R, Osman et al., 2001), the Modified Scale for Suicidal Ideation (MSSI; Miller et al., 1986), the General Health

Table 6.3 Means and standard deviation of pre- and post-scores of farmers on suicidal ideation (MSSI), psychological distress (GHQ-12) and resilience (CD-RISC)

Variables	Pre-intervention		Post-intervention		<i>t</i> (259)	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Suicidal ideation	4.19	8.06	0.02	0.16	40.31	0.04
Psychological distress	9.64	2.46	1.70	1.70	8.32	0.002
Resilience	38.88	25.87	71.87	11.22	-25.12	0.005

Questionnaire (GHQ; Goldberg, 1972), and Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC; Connor & Davidson, 2003) by peer support volunteers (PSVs). The assessments were done before and after the intervention.

The Suicide Behaviours Questionnaire-Revised

The Suicide Behaviours Questionnaire-Revised (Osman et al., 2001) has four items that measure four levels of suicidality: lifetime suicidal ideation/ suicide attempt, frequency of suicidal ideation, suicide threat and the likelihood of committing suicide in the future. The cut-off score for the general adult population is seven, and the psychiatric population is 8. It means a score above or equal to the cut-off score is clinically significant. The score ranges from 3 to 18. The higher score reflects the higher the suicidal behaviour. Research has found that it yields good psychometric properties. Aloba et al. (2017) found its internal consistency to be $\alpha = 0.83$.

The Modified Scale for Suicidal Ideation

The Modified Scale for Suicidal Ideation (Miller et al., 1986) has 18 items that measure the intention of suicidal ideation, competence to attempt suicide and amount of communication about suicide (Miller et al., 1986). The MSSI has been adapted from the Beck Scale for Suicidal Ideation (Beck et al., 1979). The items are scored on a 0–3 point Likert scale. The score ranges from 0–54. The higher the scores, the higher will be the suicidal ideation. The range of its severity has been divided into three categories: 0–8 = none/low, 9–20 = mild/moderate, and 21 + = severe. Research has found that it yields an internal consistency of $\alpha = 0.94$ (Clum & Yang, 1995).

General Health Questionnaire-12

The General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg, 1972) is a 12-item self-administered mental health screening instrument that is designed to determine the severity of psychological distress a person has encountered in the last few weeks. This scale only covers illnesses or patterns of adjustment linked with distress since it focuses on breakdowns in normal functioning rather than life-long features. Each item on the scale has four response options, ranging from “far than usual” to “much less than usual”. For this study, the GHQ scoring system (0–0–1–1) was adopted over the basic Likert scale of 0–1–2–3. The total score was calculated by adding all of the components on the scale, which ranged from 0 to 12. The mean GHQ score for a group of people was proposed as a rough guide to the appropriate cut-off point (Goldberg et al., 1998). As a result, the cut-off point 5 is chosen in this study to identify the respondents’ mental health level based on the mean GHQ score. High scores imply psychological distress, as well as deterioration in health. As a result, the GHQ-12 is a useful tool for determining general mental health.

The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale

The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (Connor & Davidson, 2003) is a 25-item self-report measure that ranges from not true at all (0) to, rarely true (1), sometimes true (2), often true (3), and true nearly all the time (4). Respondents choose their responses based on how they felt in the month leading up to the assessment. A higher number indicates better resilience. The overall score ranges from 0 to 100. The CD-RISC has good psychometric qualities and can distinguish between people who are more resilient and those who are less resilient. It has a high level of internal consistency of reliability (0.89) (Connor & Davidson, 2003).

Procedure

The present study was comprised of two stages in the research. In the first stage, “Life Skill Awareness Camps” were organized at Punjabi University in Patiala district and Punjab Agricultural University in Ludhiana district campuses to sensitize youth studying in graduate or post-graduate courses and hailing from a rural background about farmers’ suicide in Punjab and also to motivate them to become peer support volunteers (PSV) for the prevention of farmers’ suicide in Punjab. After identifying 178 peer support volunteers (PSVs), capacity building of the PSVs was started. Selected PSVs were psycho-educated about suicide and were trained to impart structured rapport and reflective listening; assessment; prioritization; intervention and disposition (RAPID) model-based psychological first aid, which was used as crisis

intervention. As the selected PSVs were not trained psychologists or counsellors, in the training workshops, they have imparted skills towards early identification of at-risk populations and were given guidelines for providing psychological first aid (PFA) to distressed farming families. Practical and experiential workshops were organized under the guidance of the authors of the present research, who were trained as clinical and community psychologists. These workshops and training sessions were conducted in 20–25 PSVs, which primarily focused on confidentiality protocols and listening skills. Some booster capsule related RAPID model-based PFA was also held to train the PSVs. In brief, the capacity building was done according to the scheduled framework, having the following focus areas.

Focus A

Rapport building and familiarization of the PSVs to the concept role of peer support in suicide prevention. In this project, the focus of PSVs was shifted from the concept of distress or suicide to more positive aspects. A pledge was taken from them to commit to the identification of at-risk individuals in their respective villages and adhere to confidentiality protocols. A pre-assessment was done of their understanding of the signs and symptoms of the suicide risk population.

Focus B

Complete knowledge about levels of suicide risk and indicators for the same through psychoeducation, role plays and case vignettes. Provided training of psychological tools that can be used for standardized measurement of depression and suicidal risk. Provided knowledge about possible causes and treatment modalities.

Focus C

The PSVs were taught using basic counselling skills for RAPID model-based PFA, crisis intervention and controlling major deterioration in the identified population. Practical training was given for the same, through role-play and case vignettes.

Focus D

Possible pitfalls were explained, and their management discussed, and post-assessment of the trainees.

Focus E

The PSVs who required more inputs were given booster training in the deficit areas.

Follow-Up Sessions

In addition, follow-up booster sessions were also held with selected PSVs to review their progress, help in their pitfalls and reinforce the work accomplished.

In the second stage, the study was further conducted in *three phases*. In the first phase, selected PSVs approached 1000 male farmers from Punjab. Based on a threshold score on the Suicide Behaviours Questionnaire-Revised (SBQ-R, Osman et al., 2001), 260 distressed farmers from the districts mentioned above of Punjab were given the Modified Scale for Suicidal Ideation (MSSI, Miller et al., 1986), General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12; Goldberg, 1972) and the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC; Connor & Davidson, 2003). In the second phase, RAPID model-based PFA as an intervention was given by PSVs to the 260 farmers over a period of six weeks (Myers, 2001). Their responses were recorded by the PSVs writing down the answers. In the *final phase*, the Modified Scale for Suicidal Ideation (MSSI, Miller et al., 1986), General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12; Goldberg, 1972) and Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC; Connor & Davidson, 2003) were again administered to the farmers by PSVs after a gap of six weeks, to see whether RAPID model-based psychological first aid's a crisis intervention effective in the farmers, in terms of alleviating the suicidal ideation and, psychological distress, and enhancing the resilience.

Ethical clearance was obtained by the Advisory Committee (AC) of the project under the National Agricultural Science Fund (NASF), the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). All participants were briefed about the current study and that they would be helped to learn a method by which they can manage their current crisis. This was done in a language the participants understood, viz. Hindi and Punjabi. The participants were informed that they could withdraw at any time from the study without giving reasons. The confidentiality of the information was assured, and written informed consent was also obtained from the participants.

Data Analyses

A paired sample t-test was utilized to examine the difference in pre-post intervention scores on Modified Scale for Suicidal Ideation, psychological distress and resilience in the sample under study. For the analyses IBM SPSS for Windows version 20 was used.

Results

The paired sample t-test results shows that intervention has significantly reduced suicidal ideation, $t(259) = 42.30$, $p < 0.04$ and, psychological distress, $t(259) = 8.32$, $p < 0.02$, while improving resilience, $t(259) = -25.12$, $p < 0.05$.

Discussion

As had been proposed, it was found that the RAPID model-based psychological first aid (PFA) has been effective in alleviating suicidal ideation and psychological distress and enhancing resilience among the farming community of Punjab.

Previous research is in line with the current finding of the efficacy of psychological first aid in preventing suicidal ideation/behaviour. Several studies have demonstrated that psychological first aid frameworks and models, such as the Israeli Association for Emotional First Aid (ERAN; Gilat & Shahar, 2009); the Consensus-Derived, Empirically Supported, Competency-Based PFA Training Model (McCabe et al., 2014); Group-Based Mindfulness-Informed Psychological First Aid (Hechanova et al., 2015), the ALGEE Mental Health First Aid Action Plan (Kitchener & Jorm, 2017), Disaster Mental Health and Community-Based Psychological First Aid (Jacobs et al., 2016) and RAPID PFA (Everly & Lating, 2017) have been effective in preventing cognitive distortions, such as hopelessness, cognitive rigidity, helplessness, post-traumatic stress, depression, anxiety, low resilience and suicidal ideation/behaviour while enhancing a sense of coherence, self-efficacy and resilience (Hambrick et al., 2014; Levy et al., 2020; Minihan et al., 2020).

In the present study, WHO (2013) principles-based RAPID psychological first aid was used with suicidal and distressed farmers of Punjab. The results are in line with previous studies, which indicate that it can be an effective public health intervention, specifically well-suited for rural areas wherein mental health resources are scarce and a stigma related to it (Everly & Lating, 2017); Maldonato et al., 2020). In the current pandemic COVID-19 crisis, recent studies have also highlighted the importance of the RAPID -based model of PFA in the prevention of mental health issues (Francis et al., 2020; McIntyre & Lee, 2020; Shah et al., 2020). For example, Ahmed and Firdous (2020) conducted a study in India that highlighted the importance of teachers' role in providing psychological first aid to students, and how the RAPID model of Johns Hopkins is one such model for psychological first aid that teachers can use to help students deal with emotional challenges.

The main reason why the RAPID model has been effective in rural community setups in the prevention of suicidal ideation and psychological distress could be that the RAPID model PFA fundamentally emphasizes over calming and orienting emotionally overwhelmed individuals who consider suicide, solutions to the problem that is creating the pain that is perceived as intolerable, inescapable and interminable.

As a result, PFA focuses on providing practical assistance, contact, and involvement, as well as providing safety and comfort, improving problem-solving abilities, increasing motivation for problem-solving, and gathering information about an individual's current issues and needs (Everly & Lating, 2017). Similarly, in the present study, the PFA-trained PSVs were able to provide a supportive environment to the distressed farmers, which helped mitigate the suicidal ideation and distress. Another possible reason could be that it is generally seen that individuals who are suicidal disagree with a psychopathology-related explanation of suicidal thoughts and the idea that professional help is needed; this was the case among farmers of Punjab. In the case of some farmers in the present study, they reported that they were not comfortable taking psychological assistance from a therapist or a psychiatrist because they felt that the same interpersonal processes that operate in their natural environment would also operate in the therapy. The assistance that PSVs provided helped them alter the disruptive interpersonal processes and generated a help-promoting and healthy environment in their families. As a result, the RAPID model-based PFA may have enabled those suicidal individuals in the current study to seek help from peer support volunteers by allowing them to build a friendly atmosphere, which helped them alleviate mental suffering and reduce suicide intention and psychological distress.

In recent times, on “World Mental Health Day”, the WHO (2019) emphasized that psychological first aid (PFA) can help in reducing mental health disorders by giving training to the community people. The current findings also suggest that setting up peer support volunteerism and their capacity building has been reducing suicidality among farmers of Punjab. In suicide prevention studies, it has been observed that peer support volunteerism can be one of the community services which can provide comfort to those people who cannot access mental and physical health facilities, especially in rural communities. It is helpful when there is stigma related to mental health facilities, which prevents them from accessing any mental health facility (Barik & Thorat, 2015; Chappell Deckert, & Statz-Hill, 2016; Everly & Lating, 2017; Sijbrandij et al., 2020).

Thus, one strength of the present study could be that we could train youth studying in urban areas but belonged to rural backgrounds. They could go back to their roots and connect with their people who were suffering, which helped maintain therapeutic efficiency. Secondly, the present study helped empower those villages of the districts as mentioned above by giving training on PFA, and it can be carried further later on in those villages. Finally, the present study is relevant to the mental health professionals or psychologists to conduct more sensitization programmes for the youth focusing on various mental health issues. The aim of these trainings should be focused upon the community's welfare, and train youth to provide psychological first aid to the ones in need (Singh et al., 2019).

Conclusions

The present study extended the evidence in the Punjabi rural community setup. The present study has shown that the RAPID model-based PFA has effectively alleviated suicidality, psychological distress, and low resilience. The current study propagates the benefit of RAPID model-based PFA in preventing suicidal cognitions, suicidal behaviour and low resilience among farmers of Punjab. The current study also highlights the importance of peer support volunteerism in youth, which can act as an informal support system to individuals in adverse conditions and improve their well-being, resilience and psychosocial functioning. There is no previous evidence of treating suicidal farmers in Punjab. Therefore, the present study is particularly relevant to educational settings and community settings:—for example, in colleges, by providing training and sensitization programmes to youth, aimed at developing and inculcating more sensitivity towards mental health issues, with the ultimate goal of increasing the welfare of others; as well as community work for eradicating psychosocial issues like suicide, drug abuse, and stigmas and stereotypes about mental illness. In times of crisis, peer support volunteerism can benefit those individuals who cannot access physical and mental healthcare facilities.

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Chapter 7

Comparing the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Secondary School Students at Mainstream Schools, Alternative (Flexi) Schools and Unemployed School-Aged Youth



Nicole Wright and Marilyn Campbell

Abstract Most Australian young people attend a mainstream school. However, some are excluded from or cannot cope with mainstream schooling for various reasons and leave prematurely. These young people could work, attend an alternative flexi school or do neither. If they do not attend any schooling and are unemployed, they may become vulnerable to various current and future adverse life outcomes, including poor mental health. For mainstream secondary school students, school connection is a protective factor for their mental health and wellbeing. However, the state of the mental health and wellbeing of alternative flexi school students or young people who do not attend school or work is unknown. The current study therefore compared these three groups with a survey on their mental health and wellbeing. Students attending two alternative flexi schools and a youth support service, which help students who are not at school or work, were randomly selected to participate. The Longitudinal Survey of Australian Youth data set was used to measure the mental health and wellbeing of mainstream school students. Results revealed there were no significant differences between the mental health and wellbeing of the two cohorts who were not in mainstream school; however, their mental health and wellbeing were not as robust as those who were attending mainstream schooling.

Keywords Alternative flexi school · Young people · Unemployed · Mainstream school · Student · Mental health · Wellbeing

Most Australian young people obtain an education by attending a mainstream school (Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations [DEEWPR], 2010). Studies have shown that for mainstream school students being connected to

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a school is a protective factor for their mental health and wellbeing (McGraw et al., 2008; Noble et al., 2008; Shochet et al., 2006; Stanwick et al., 2006). However, some young people are excluded from or cannot cope with mainstream schooling for various reasons and leave school prematurely. These students could obtain work, attend an alternative flexi school or do neither. If they do not attend any schooling and are unemployed, they may attend a youth support service. Although we know the mental health and wellbeing of mainstream students, the state of the mental health and wellbeing of young people who attend alternative flexi schools or who are not in schooling or work is unknown.

A state of good mental health is a cognitive state that means an individual can realize his or her own abilities, cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and can contribute their community (World Health Organization, 2001). Positive student wellbeing is a state of positive mood, attitude, resilience, and self-satisfaction relating to being a student (Fraillon, 2004). However, several recent large-scale studies have suggested that young people are more likely than other age groups to be experiencing significant mental health issues at present (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2008; AIHW, 2011; Johnson et al., 2013; Lawrence et al., 2015).

For Australian children and young people, there are two stages of mainstream schooling: primary school and high school (Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations [DEEWR], 2010). Students begin primary school when they turn five to attend a prep year. Primary school concludes when the student turns 12, with the completion of year six. Students must attend high school at age 12, when they attend year seven. They are required to attend high school until the year they turn 16, or when they complete year 12 (DEEWR, 2010). Attending until year 12 allows the student to achieve a Senior High School Certificate.

As mentioned before although most Australian students attend mainstream schools there are some who cannot for various reasons. It has been suggested that mainstream schools fail to cater for students who are struggling with the aversive life circumstances that can force them to leave (McGregor & Mills, 2012). The reasons students may find it difficult to function in mainstream school include dealing with serious issues such as socioeconomic disadvantage, an inability to control their behaviour when angry or frustrated, symptoms relating to poor mental health and being bullied (Burns et al., 2008; Helbig, 2011; Johnson et al., 2013; McGregor, 2009; Saunders et al., 2008; Zins et al., 2007). Often it is the inflexibility of many aspects of the mainstream school system that fails to cater for the needs of these students including the school practices, curriculum, culture and environment (Thomson & Russell, 2009). Accordingly, if students have a history of repeatedly being suspended from or being asked to permanently leave a variety of schools, they may be excluded from the entire mainstream system (Johnson et al., 2013; McGregor, 2009).

One of the options these young people have if they leave mainstream schooling early is to attend an alternative school (Independent Schools Queensland, 2015). Alternative schools consist of two main types, those schools that offer an educational philosophy that is different from mainstream schools, such as Montessori schools, and Steiner schools and those schools which offer flexible learning, recognizing the difficult lives outside of school that many of their students' experience. Flexi schools

recognize that their students might not be able to come to school regularly or hand in assignments on time. They offer learning which suits the student. These types of schools are relatively new in Australia but are one of the fastest-growing types of schools.

However, some school-aged students do not attend any mainstream or alternative flexi schools and do not find work. These unemployed young people often live in a rural or remote area, have a physical or intellectual disability and are males from an indigenous or non-English speaking background. Unemployed young people can be supported by their family, friends or a youth support service to deal with their current situation. A youth support service provides assistance to groups who need additional or specialized help to remain engaged with society and ultimately may re-access school or employment (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services [DCCDS], 2017).

Mental Health and Wellbeing of Students Attending Mainstream School

One of the protective factors for students' mental health and wellbeing has been shown to be attending a mainstream school (Dockery, 2010; McGraw et al., 2008; Nguyen, 2012; Shochet et al., 2006; Stanwick et al., 2006). Attending school may also increase general feelings of happiness among students (Dockery, 2010; Nguyen, 2012). School also has a positive effect on individuals' future general and mental health (Stanwick et al., 2006). Thus, attending school can lead to a more successful and happy adult life, including the ability to form healthy relationships and obtain full-time employment (AIHW, 2011; Bond et al., 2007; Noble et al., 2008). Feeling connected to a school community can also decrease symptoms related to depression and anxiety in some students with these disorders (McGraw et al., 2008; Shochet et al., 2006).

Alternative School Students

Students who attended alternative flexi schools, however, were found in a qualitative study across five Queensland school sites, to be experiencing a diverse range of social and emotional issues, including issues with their mental health (McGregor & Mills, 2012). One New Zealand study also found that alternative school students experienced more issues with their physical and mental health than mainstream student populations (Denny et al., 2004). Alternative school students have also been found to have higher levels of depressive or anxious symptoms (or both) and/or attempted suicide more often than their mainstream school counterparts (Denny et al., 2004).

Unemployed Students

Leaving school prematurely is an issue because young people who are unable to maintain their education are less likely to gain active employment and more likely to experience the social and economic disadvantage, poorer physical and mental health, and social isolation that is related to unemployment (Eckersley, 2008; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare [AIHW], 2011). This cohort may be more likely to experience poorer mental health than people with higher educational attainment and earning capacity (Johnson et al., 2013) and become part of a group who could be vulnerable to various current and future adverse life outcomes, including poor mental health (Eckersley, 2008; Thomson & Russell, 2009).

The Current Study

We know attending a mainstream school increases students' mental health and well-being, while being disengaged from education and employment is likely to have a negative impact on their mental health and wellbeing. However, there are very few empirically robust studies to examine this likelihood. There is also no information about whether attending an alternative flexi school has a positive impact on the mental health and wellbeing of students. Further, there are also no studies found that compare the mental health and wellbeing of mainstream school students, to alternative school students and to young people who do not go to school or have any employment. Thus, the current small pilot study compared the mental health and wellbeing of alternative school students to a group of young people who were neither at school nor employed. These results were then compared with a cohort of mainstream students.

It was hypothesized that the cohort of alternative school students would experience significantly better mental health and wellbeing than the young people who were neither attending school nor employment. It was also hypothesized that the mental health and wellbeing of the mainstream school students would be more robust than the other two cohorts who did not attend a mainstream school.

Method

Participants

A total of 42 young people, 45% male ($n = 23$) and 55% female ($n = 19$) were randomly selected from two alternative flexi schools. A further 26 young people, 47% male ($n = 12$), 51.5% female ($n = 13$) and 1.5% transgender ($n = 1$) were randomly selected from a youth support service who were not attending any educational institution and were not employed. These sites were chosen for convenience.

Table 7.1 Demographic data for the three groups

	Mainstream school	Alternative (flexi) school	Neither work nor school
Number	11,398	42	26
Mean age	18.5	17	18
ATSI ^a (%)	8	14	26
Non-indigenous (%)	91	86	74
Maori	–	14%	26%
Male (%)	49	45	47
Female (%)	51	47	51
Transgender	–	–	2%
Living independently (%)	1	23	42
Excluded from school	–	61%	26%

^aATSI—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

All participants were aged between 16 and 23 years ($M = 18$). Mainstream school students' data were drawn from the Longitudinal Survey of Australian Youth (LSAY), which is a large longitudinal survey of many variables available to any researcher ($n = 11,398$) and was used as the data for a third comparison group of mainstream students. The LSAY, 2006 and 2009 cohorts were inspected and the mean age of this cohort when they filled out both the K6 and Happiness scales was 20. Therefore, this was not suitable to age match with the 58 participants to conduct a statistical comparison. Therefore, only the descriptive data of the LSAY cohorts were inspected and compared with the alternative school students and the young people who neither go to school nor work. Most of the alternative flexi school students (61%) had been excluded from mainstream school but this was not so with the young people who were not at school or work (see Table 7.1).

Measures

A questionnaire was administered containing three parts, a mental health measure, a wellbeing measure and questions on demographics. Mental health was assessed using the K6 Psychological Distress Scale (Kessler et al., 2003) and wellbeing was assessed using Stanwick and Sui's (2012) Wellbeing and Happiness Scale. These measures were chosen to enable comparison with the already collected data from The Longitudinal Survey of Australian Youth for mainstream school students.

K6 Psychological Distress Scale (Kessler et al., 2003)

This scale was used to assess participants' current mental health status as indicated by their self-reported symptoms of anxiety and depression. The K6 is a shortened version of the K10 (Kessler et al., 2003). The K6 was chosen so that a comparison of the mental health of alternative flexi school students and young people who neither go to school nor work could be made against the LSAY mainstream school students. The measure was also chosen because reliability and validity studies of the K6 indicate it is successful in identifying serious mental illness in normative populations (Kessler et al., 2003). Various studies have also indicated that this scale is highly successful in detecting symptoms of anxiety and depression separately (Cairney et al., 2007; Gill et al., 2007; Kessler et al., 2003).

Participants indicated "How often in the past 4 weeks have you experienced the following symptoms". Frequencies of "All of the time" were scored as five, with "None of the time" which was scored as one. Full-scale scores on the five-point, self-report Likert assessment ranged from 6 (minimum) to 30 (maximum). Scores below 18 are considered normal, whereas scores over 18 indicate serious levels of psychological distress (Kessler et al., 2003; Nguyen, 2012). For this sample, the Cronbach alpha was 0.92.

Wellbeing and Happiness Scale (Stanwick & Sui, 2012)

This scale consists of 12 items. The maximum wellbeing score possible is 48. Participants were asked to tick the box that "indicated how happy you feel about the following areas of your life". Four levels of happiness could be selected. A "Very Happy" response was scored as four, whereas a "Very Unhappy" response was scored as one. Areas of life included "The money you get" and "Your life as a whole". An overall happiness score was obtained per participant. The measure was chosen because the scale has good reliability and validity, internal consistency and uniform loading when used to assess wellbeing across different groups of young people (Stanwick & Sui, 2012). The Cronbach alpha for this sample was 0.99.

Short-Answer Demographics

Participants' demographic information was collected in a single page short-answer questionnaire. Example questions include "How old are you?", "What culture do you identify with?", "Why did you leave mainstream school? (i.e. Were you expelled?)" and "Who do you live with?"

Procedure

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the university's Human Research Ethics Committee and from the participating alternative schools and youth support service sites. The paper-based survey was distributed to young people at the alternative school and youth service sites. Participation was voluntary and responses were anonymous. The young people filled out the survey in a quiet, private space at their site which took approximately 5 min. All data collection took place during between May and November 2016.

Obtaining informed consent differed slightly for participants who were over 18-years-old or were living independently to those who were living with their parents or guardians. A paper consent form was signed by participants after they read an information sheet that explained the purpose and process of the study. Signed consent forms were also obtained from parents to give permission for participants who were under 18-years-old and living at home.

Data Analysis

A descriptive analysis was conducted by calculating mean scores and standard deviations for each scale across the two groups of alternative school students and young people who were neither at school nor working. The distribution of mean scores on the happiness and wellbeing scale across groups was skewed; hence, the nonparametric Pearson's chi-square test was used to compare the groups (Pearson, 2009), although t-tests could have been robust enough to compensate for the skew. The alpha level was set at 0.05 and SPSS for Windows version 24 was used for all the analyses. Due to the large variation between the characteristics of the mainstream school student group as compared to the alternative school student and young people who were not at school or working, descriptive data were used to compare the mental health and wellbeing of the three groups.

As the Longitudinal Survey of Australian Youth data set features scores from the same groups of young people across time, the data were initially analysed to ensure that participant results were not influenced by historical effects. Z-scores revealed that scores did not change significantly across Y06 and Y08 cohorts for the Wellbeing and Happiness scale ($Z = 0.0842$, ns). Z-scores revealed that K6 Psychological Distress scale scores remained stable across time and cohorts ($Z = 0.093$, ns). Second, there was too much variation between the ages of LSAY participants who recorded both K6 Psychological Distress Scale scores and Wellbeing and Happiness Scale scores and the alternative school students and young people who were not at school or not working. For example, the K6 Psychological Distress Scale was only administered to participants ages 19 and 20-years-old. However, a comparison using descriptive data from the LSAY sample was still considered a valid contribution. As it provided K6 Psychological Distress Scale and Wellbeing and Happiness Scale

results from a sample of mainstream students that were considered to be indicative of the broader population of mainstream school students. However, the LSAY sample was not statistically comparable to the other two sample groups.

Results

Alternative School Students Compared with Those not Attending School or Employment

Analysis of the data using Pearson’s chi-square test revealed there were no significant differences between the K6 Psychological Distress Scale and Wellbeing and Happiness Scale scores of the alternative school students compared to the young people who were neither attending school nor employment (see Table 7.2).

Pearson’s chi-square tests were also conducted to explore the relationship between the variables of cultural identity, school exclusion, participant age and the K6 Psychological Distress Scale and Happiness and Wellbeing Scale Scores. Cultural identity [K6 scale, $\chi^2(42, N = 68) = 40.38, p > 0.05$] [WHS scale, $\chi^2(50, N = 68) = 55.76, p > 0.05$], school exclusion (K6, $\chi^2(21, N = 68) = 23.70, p > 0.05$] [WHS, $\chi^2(25, N = 68) = 20.86, p > 0.05$], and age [$\chi^2(147, N = 68) = 134.280, p > 0.05$] [$\chi^2(175, N = 68) = 192.563, p > 0.05$], did not significantly influence participants’ mean scores on either the K6 Psychological Distress Scale or the Wellbeing and Happiness Scales.

Pearson’s chi-square test was conducted to explore the relationship between the gender and the mental health and wellbeing of the alternative school students and the young people who were not at school or working (see Table 7.3).

There were no differences for gender on either of the scales ($\chi^2(42, N = 67) = 42.86, p > 0.05$)

Table 7.2 Comparison of scales for alternative students and unemployed

	K6 ^a		Wellbeing and happiness ^b	
	M	SD	M	SD
Alternative school students	16.74	5.91	34.01	6.26
Young people not at school or working	14.15	7.79	36.61	7.79

^aK6 scale, $\chi^2(21, N = 68) = 18.60, p > 0.05$

^bWellbeing and happiness scale, $\chi^2(25, N = 68) = 30.81, p > 0.05$

Table 7.3 K6 and wellbeing and happiness scores by gender

Gender	Number	K6		Happiness and wellbeing	
		M	SD	M	SD
Males	35	12.86	4.50	36.66	6.868
Females	32	19.00	6.27	33.25	6.58

The scores of the transgender student have been excluded from this analysis for statistical purposes

Table 7.4 Descriptive statistics for the K6 and wellbeing and happiness scores for the three groups

	<i>n</i>	K6		Wellbeing and happiness	
		M	SD	M	SD
Mainstream	11,398	10.43	1.12	40.42	1.42
Alternative	32	16.74	5.91	34.01	6.26
Not at school or work	26	14.15	7.79	36.61	7.79

Comparison of Three Groups on the K6 and Wellbeing and Happiness Scales

Mainstream students ($M = 10.43$, $SD = 1.42$) reported a lower rate of psychological problems than alternative school students ($M = 16.74$, $SD = 5.91$) and young people who were not at school or work ($M = 14.15$, $SD = 7.79$). Additionally, the mainstream school students ($M = 40.42$, $SD = 1.11$) reported a greater positive state of wellbeing than both the alternative school student group ($M = 34.01$, $SD = 6.26$) and the young people who were neither at school nor work ($M = 36.61$, $SD = 7.79$). There was little variation in the participants' scores on both scales in the mainstream school student group. However, there was a large amount of variation in participants' scores on both scales in both the alternative school students and the young people who were not at school or work due to the small sample sizes (see Table 7.4).

Discussion

The study found that there appeared to be no differences in the mental health and wellbeing of alternative secondary school students compared to young people who were not attending school and were unemployed. This contrasts with findings that young people who attend neither education nor employment experience very poor mental health and wellbeing issues (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2011; Eckersley, 2008). These results may indicate that attending an alternative flexi school did not have a positive impact on the mental health and wellbeing of its students. Alternatively, it could be that young people attending a youth support service or an alternative school both have equally protective influences. While delivering the

practical and emotional support it is mandated to do, the youth support service may be supporting its clients in a similar way to the alternative schools (DCCSD, 2017; Independent Schools Queensland, 2015). Hence, cohorts attending these two institutions may be experiencing better mental health and wellbeing than young people who do not attend anywhere for support although this has not yet been established. It is worth noting that the mean K6 scores reported by both the alternative flexi school students ($M = 16.74$) and the young people at the youth support service ($M = 14.15$) were below the clinical cut-off for psychological distress. However, it was shown that both groups scored higher on mental health problems and lower on wellbeing measures than mainstream school students. This is in line with several studies that have shown that being connected to a mainstream school has a positive impact on students' mental health and wellbeing (Dockery 2010; McGraw et al., 2008; Nguyen, 2012; Shochet et al., 2006; Stanwick et al., 2006).

There was a large amount of variation in scores on both the mental health and wellbeing scales within the alternative school students and young people not at school or work, but not among mainstream students. This may indicate there are several variables that influence the mental health and wellbeing of alternative school students and young people who are not at school or work, other than being connected to an educational institution. However, being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, their age or if the student was excluded from mainstream school was not associated with mental health and wellbeing in either the alternative school or in the group not at school or work. Gender was also investigated as an associated variable with mental health and wellbeing in these two groups, but it appears that there were no differences. This is in contradiction to studies which have shown females may be more likely than males to experience symptoms associated with mental illness such as clinically significant levels of psychological distress (ABS, 2008; AIHW, 2011; Denny et al., 2004; Lawrence et al., 2015).

Research also suggests that being male, ATSI and excluded from school may all be factors that lead to long term unemployment and contribute to other negative life outcomes including poor mental health (Johnson et al., 2013). In the current study, the variables of cultural background, age or school exclusion did not seem to influence the mental health and wellbeing of the non-mainstream school groups. Contrary to previous research being female did not significantly negatively influence the mental health and wellbeing of the non-mainstream school cohorts (ABS, 2008; AIHW, 2011; Denny et al., 2004; Lawrence et al., 2015).

An interesting finding was that ATSI young people were over-represented within the group who were neither at school nor work. Accordingly, it could be suggested that mainstream and alternative schools may not be sufficiently catering for this student population. Students who have been excluded from mainstream school were also over-represented in the alternative school student group. This supports the idea that alternative schools are successfully providing a flexible and supportive learning environment that caters for students who are unable to attend or have been permanently asked to leave mainstream school (Independent Schools Queensland, 2015).

Limitations and Future Research

One limitation of the current study is the small and unrepresentative sample. This limited the power of the statistics used to find differences. The skew of the data also limited the tests which could be used with data. Future research is needed to extend this small pilot study to a larger sample. The participants in this study also lacked significant representation of groups such as ATSI students, students from non-English speaking backgrounds and transgender students. While between-groups research design has proven successful in previous research, with large sample cohorts of alternative school students, it may not have been adequate in this research (Denny et al., 2004). Therefore, when measuring the effect attending an alternative school may have on the mental health and wellbeing of a limited number of students, a research design that included both a between-groups and across time measurement may be more statistically robust. This would highlight improvement or decline depending on the duration that the alternative school students had been attending the school and could perhaps show a difference between their mental health and wellbeing as compared to the young people who neither attend school or work.

Additional research in this area should include exploration of the impact of other mediating factors on the mental health and wellbeing of alternative school students. This could include the influence of participant variables such as socioeconomic status, living in a rural or urban setting and physical health. Finally, a group of young people who are not engaged in a youth support service should be chosen to appropriately represent those who were not at work or school. This may negate the impact of any protective influence attending a youth service may have.

Implications for Practice

The current study indicates alternative schools and youth support services could be providing their attendees with greater protection of their mental health and wellbeing than we would hypothesize for those young people who are not supported in any way. Further research could affirm this positive influence and support these organizations in applying for funding. It also identifies an area of further research for the NVCR, Longitudinal Survey of Australian Youth research project (Nguyen & Anlezark, 2009).

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Chapter 8

Cyberbullying and Online Negative Experiences of School and College Students in India



Damanjit Sandhu and Kirandeep Kaur

Abstract India is now one of the world's most diverse ICT markets, with consequences for Indian society as a whole, including children's lives. As elsewhere, in India too, the opportunities afforded by ICT have been abused thus giving rise to the threat of cyberbullying and other online negative experiences among youth. The scientific research on cyberbullying is at its nascency in India. The purpose of this chapter is to synthesize limited research on cyberbullying and other online negative experiences among Indian youngsters including gender differences and place it in a new context in order to serve as a springboard for new research that will bridge knowledge gaps. This chapter highlights the key findings of a series of quantitative as well as qualitative (Focus Group Discussions, Living Lab Approach, Interviews) studies on the issue of cyberbullying in Indian students across various age groups and educational settings (schools and higher education), emanating out of Indian-European Research Networking Programme "Bullying, Cyberbullying, Pupil safety and Well-being" (2012–2016) (Indian-European Research Networking: Bullying, cyberbullying, pupil safety & well-being, n.d.) and further extending beyond its realm. Across these studies, evidence is available on the prevalence of cyberbullying victimization and perpetration, risky online behaviour, gender differences in cyberbullying involvement, common ways in which both genders are victimized, cyberbullying as an extension of conventional bullying in schools, frequency and duration of cyberbullying victimization and perpetration, and the psychosocial consequences of cyberbullying victimization. Social-emotional difficulties in cyberbullying perpetrators and the relationship issues of cyberbullying perpetrators with parents and peers have also been noted. Furthermore, some significant findings regarding reporting of cyberbullying victimization, knowledge about the identity of the perpetrator, and the actions taken by the parents and school authorities while handling the cyberbullying-related complaints have emerged.

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Introduction

India is one of the world's largest economies, with a rapid adoption of information and communication technologies (Maiti et al., 2020). As more Indians gain access to the Internet, the threat of cyberbullying has grown, with teenagers being the most vulnerable victims (The Wire, 2018). In actual fact, there is a dearth of literature on the risks of electronic media use among Indian children and youngsters. In India, research on problems such as children's and youth's online behaviours, cyberbullying, and other negative online experiences are at its nascency (Blaya et al., 2018a, 2018b).

The purpose of this chapter is to synthesize available research on cyberbullying and other online negative experiences among Indian adolescents including gender differences and place it in a new context in order to serve as a springboard for new research that will bridge knowledge gaps. This chapter sets out to present the findings on the issue of online negative experiences specifically cyberbullying among Indian students emanating out of Indian-European Research Networking Programme entitled "Bullying, Cyberbullying, Pupil safety and Well-being" (2012–2016) (Indian-European Research Networking: Bullying, cyberbullying, pupil safety & well-being, n.d.) and subsequent research efforts, which included a series of quantitative and qualitative studies on the subject.

The Indian-European Research Networking Programme

The Indian Council for Social Sciences Research (ICSSR) initiated the "Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Pupil Safety and Well-being" (2012–2016) research networking initiative in cooperation with the French Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR), the German Research Foundation (DFG, Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft), the British Economics and Social Sciences Research Council (ESRC), and the Dutch Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) (Germany, France, Netherlands and London). It was India's first-ever multilateral social science research collaboration. This networking sought to vindicate and economize Europe's attempts to partner with India in order to deliver high-quality, high-impact social science research that tackled significant global concerns such as cyberbullying, online student protection and wellbeing. Four European research teams and two Indian research teams were taken together for this cross-national cooperation and contact between Indian and European researchers. This networking culminated in the exchange of information and knowledge, collaborative publications, and the development of tools for practitioners on the topics of peer victimization, online negative interactions, and cyberbullying among students (Indian-European Research Networking: Bullying, cyberbullying, pupil safety & well-being, n.d.).

Cross-National Comparison

The Indian-European Research Networking made cross-national comparisons of digital usage, online risk-taking and online negative experiences of children and adolescents including cyberbullying from the participating countries. Age, gender, different levels of education (school/college/university), frequency of Internet use, uses of electronic devices, possible risks taken when being online, duration and type of hurtful/negative experiences while being online, post-reactions to negative experiences and kind of mediation/support received including reporting the incident, parental involvement and cybervictimization and cyberperpetration were the bullying parameters on which the participants from various countries were compared. Drawing upon various issues with the cross-national researches and comparisons as detailed by Samara et al. (2019), the Indian-European Research Network focused on avoiding the methodological inconsistencies (such as utilizing different methods to assess frequency) and divergences/discrepancies in definitions of cyberbullying by employing an operational definition of the phenomenon and developing various survey tools for data collection using a mix of strategies in an attempt to ensure the tools transfer across cultures such as translation and back translation of the items, factor analysis of the items, and inclusion and exclusion of explanations in various languages. The same survey instruments were administered to the adolescents on all the participating sites, and comparisons were made. For example, Blaya and colleagues (2016) collected data for studying online victimization among Indian and French school children and higher education students using “The online risks and victimization: an indoeuropean survey” developed as a part of the Indian-European Research Networking Programme and compared the digital usage, online risk-taking and negative online experiences including cyberbullying among French and Indian youth.

Another important issue in cross-national studies of bullying is the translation of the word bullying into different languages, and how it, or cognate words for it, are understood. Thus, as a part of the Indian-European network “The Cartoon Test”, designed as part of a European Commission (EC)-funded programme of research on bullying which took place between 1997 and 2001, was revised to update for example of cyberbullying on social networks, and also to take account of some particular Indian scenarios. The Cartoon Test was used to find out more about how different terms are used in India to translate bullying and specific terms for North (dhakeshahi and baarbaar tang karna) and South India (Tunpuruttal, cintutal and Keli) were identified (Smith et al., Smith, Sundaram, et al., 2018).

Corresponding to Samara et al. (2019), when the Indian-European research network started to explore the phenomenon of negative online experiences among young people including cyberbullying it was found that there were only a few isolated research studies available on cyberbullying in India for comparison with the European research on the given topic and most of the available evidence could not be directly compared due to methodological inconsistencies and divergences in definitions of bullying behaviour. These discrepancies led the researchers to conduct

multiple cross-national comparative surveys among various participating countries. These national groups represented different cultural norms, languages, and different levels of work done on bullying (such as research and anti-bullying intervention) where the same bullying instrument was used and different comparisons were made.

Understanding the Concept of Bullying and Cyberbullying

Bullying is the commonest form of violence among students (Sandhu, 2020). Despite the fact that there is a plethora of descriptions of bullying in the literature, the standards set out by Olweus are well known (Pepler et al., 2008; Rigby, 2002). Olweus (1993, p. 9) defined bullying as “A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students. It is a negative action when someone intentionally inflicts, or attempts to inflict, injury or discomfort upon another. (And) in order to use the term bullying, there should also be an imbalance in strength (an asymmetric power relationship): The student who is exposed to the negative actions has difficulty in defending himself or herself and is somewhat helpless against the student or students who harass”.

With the exponential development in information and communication technologies, bullying has evolved to include the online community. With the permeation of the Internet into the general lives of people, all kinds of transgression have become more rampant and widespread (Donegan, 2012). Bullying has effectively migrated from the schoolyard to the Internet (Jaishankar & Halder, 2009). Today, traditional bullying has evolved into a more serious issue, known as cyberbullying (Donegan, 2012), a new phenomenon with a rising incidence involving Indian students (Sandhu, 2020).

Simply put, cyberbullying is a form of bullying that takes place using digital media (Zych et al., 2019). There are several conceptual definitions of cyberbullying provided by different scholars but an integrative definition of cyberbullying summarizing the existing definitions of cyberbullying is presented by Tokunaga (2010), he described cyberbullying as any behaviour performed through electronic or digital media by individuals or groups that repeatedly communicates hostile or aggressive messages intended to inflict harm or discomfort to others (p. 278).

This definition incorporates several salient characteristics of cyberbullying: electronic or digital technology (e.g. communication across one or more digital media); harm or discomfort (e.g. messages that insult, attack, embarrass, exclude, spread rumours about, or harm the relationships of the cybervictim); and action by an individual working alone or a group working collectively (Savage et al., 2015).

An Indian definition in these lines is “Cyberbullying is abuse/harassment by teasing or insulting, victim’s body shape, intellect, family background, dress sense, mother tongue, place of origin, attitude, race, caste, class, name calling, using modern telecommunication networks such as mobile phones (SMS/MMS) and Internet (chat rooms, emails, notice boards and groups)” (Jaishankar, 2008, p. 13).

Research in India on access of electronic devices, digital usage, online negative experiences like cyberbullying and its psychosocial impact among Indian youngsters is limited. Evidence is available on the prevalence of cyberbullying victimization and perpetration, risky online behaviour, gender differences in cyberbullying involvement, common ways in which both genders are victimized, cyberbullying as an extension of conventional bullying in schools, frequency and duration of cyberbullying victimization and perpetration, and the psychosocial consequences of cybervictimization. Social–emotional difficulties in cyberbullying perpetrators and the relationship issues of cyberbullying perpetrators with parents and peers have also been reported. Furthermore, some significant findings regarding reporting of cyberbullying victimization, knowledge about the identity of the perpetrator, and the actions taken by the parents and school authorities while handling the cyberbullying-related complaints have also emerged.

Cyberbullying Victimization and Perpetration in Indian School and College Students

The number of investigations on the prevalence of cyberbullying among Indian adolescents is limited (see Table 8.1). Sandhu and Kaur (2017), for example, analysed the extent of cyberbullying victimization among 357 11th and 12th grade students, and found that a significant per cent of students (52.10%) reported experiencing cyberbullying, mainly by social networking sites. Likewise, a high prevalence of cybervictimization (65%) among 560 North Indian adolescent pupils (aged 13–17 years) was also reported by Kaur (2017).

Blaya et al. (2016) conducted a cross-national study that compared secondary school students from Punjab and Tamil Nadu (North and South India) and the Cote d’Azur district (south of France). The study included 1021 Indian students of 14–18 years of age and 1312 French students of 13–18 years of age. The findings revealed that a higher percentage of the Indian sample had received spiteful and wounding communications on the Internet and on their cell phones, had derogatory or hurtful remarks publicized about them, were excluded from online groups, were threatened and were humiliated on the web. Considering cyberbullying perpetration, a pioneering research by Sandhu and Kaur (2019) reported that of 600 school-going adolescents aged 13–15 years, 32% were involved in cyberbullying as perpetrators.

Whatever the discrepancies in the rates of cyberbullying victims and perpetrators, research shows evidence that the menace of cyberbullying does not stop at the school gates. Little research has been dedicated to this issue (Blaya et al., 2018a, 2018b). As stressed by Chapell and colleagues et al. (2006), many young people who were bullied in primary and secondary school are bullied later on at university. This leads us to think that online behaviours learnt from younger ages might carry on to early adulthood (Blaya et al., 2018a, 2018b), although there is a lack of scientific evidence for this.

Table 8.1 Prevalence of cyberbullying perpetration and victimization among Indian adolescents

Study (year of publication)	Country	Participants	Prevalence
Sandhu and Kaur (2017)	India	$N = 357$ 11th and 12th grade students	52% of the participants reported experiencing cyberbullying victimization
Kaur (2017)	India	$N = 560$ North Indian adolescent pupils (aged 13–17 years)	High prevalence of cybervictimization (65%) among adolescent pupils
Blaya et al. (2016)	Punjab and Tamil Nadu (North and South India) and the Cote d'Azur district (south of France)	$N = 1021$ Indian students of 14–18 years of age and 1312 French students of 13–18 years of age	A higher percentage of the Indian sample had received spiteful and wounding communications on the Internet (38 vs. 17) and on their cell phones (35 vs. 20), had derogatory or hurtful remarks publicized about them (34 vs. 11), were excluded from online groups (38 vs. 10), were threatened (35 vs. 9) and were humiliated on the web (33 vs. 7)
Sandhu and Kaur (2019)	India	$N = 600$ school-going adolescents aged 13–15 years	32% were involved in cyberbullying as perpetrators
Blaya et al., (2018a, 2018b)	India and France	$N = 1355$ college students from India ($N = 904$ students; aged 18–24 years) and France ($N = 451$; aged 18–37 years) college and university students	Significant involvement of college and university students as cyberbullying victims in both India (15.2%) and France (12.4%). A higher number of French students emerged as the perpetrators of cyberbullying (8.4% vs. 2.1%)

A pioneering research in line with this by Blaya et al., (2018a, 2018b) sampling a total of 1,355 college students from India ($N = 904$ students; aged 18–24 years) and France ($N = 451$; aged 18–37 years) found significant involvement of college and university students as cyberbullying victims in both India (15.2%) and France (12.4%). A higher number of French students emerged as the perpetrators of cyberbullying (8.4% vs. 2.1%). The same study also provided information about the frequency and duration of cybervictimization and cyberperpetration among Indian and French students. The Indian victims were notably more likely to experience frequent victimization, with one out of every four victims reporting it almost every day and 16.5% reporting it at least once a week. In terms of duration, the Indian students were more likely to say that the problem lasted about a month (28.5% vs. 12.1%), or several years (13.9% vs. 1.9%). Further, the frequency and duration of cyberbullying perpetration show similar patterns as for victimization, with 23.1% of the Indian perpetrators reckoning they were involved as perpetrators of cyberbullying almost every day versus 0% of the French respondents; 16.2% of the French respondents cyberaggressed at least once a week while among the Indians, the percentage was 51.7%. The vast majority of the French aggressors responded they were involved less often versus 19.3% of the Indians. As for the duration of their involvement, the French perpetrators were twice as likely as the Indian ones to declare they cyberaggressed once while the Indian perpetrators were more likely to state they were authors for longer periods of time with more than one out of three bullying for a few days and one out of four bullying for about a month. However, it seems that a small percentage of the perpetrators in France (6.1%) have developed a “career”, since they reported their behaviour had lasted several years, which is not the case for the Indian ones. Overall, findings from this study seem to reflect that the Indian students are more involved in cyberbullying.

In summary, the recorded incidence of cyberbullying among Indian youth varies from one analysis to the next, making it impossible to achieve a reliable estimation for both cyberbullying victimization and perpetration. In addition, research has shown that a large number of college students are engaged in cyberbullying, suggesting that cyberbullying is a common occurrence in Indian schools and universities, though in actuality only one report contained a college/university sample. It highlights the need for more research into cyberbullying, especially in college or university environments.

Risky Online Behaviours in Indian School and College Students

Blaya and colleagues (2016) compared the online risk-taking among Indian and French students and the findings revealed that overall, Indian students engaged in riskier practices than French students. For example, Indian respondents showed a greater likelihood of getting on to the Internet to discuss private matters and seek

new friendships, but the difference was not as high for seeking new friendships. Indian participants were even more likely to impersonate others and share personal information online. Despite numerous public awareness programmes, youth in both the countries took chances that could result in adverse consequences for them.

The online victimization of Indian and French students was contrasted in the same report, and there was no substantial gap, with a comparable proportion of students reporting a negative Internet experience. 49.2% of Indian students and 50.8% of French students reported experiencing at least one of the six types of victimization measured by the survey. A higher proportion of males were victimized as compared to the females in the Indian sample (55% vs. 38.2%), whereas a higher proportion of French females were abused more often as compared to the French males (56.8% against 45%).

Negative experiences of the samples from both the countries differed. In France, the most frequent form of victimization was to receive hurtful messages on cell phones, while in India respondents most commonly reported receiving spiteful messages on the Internet and being removed from online communities. More Indian respondents received hurtful messages on the Internet and on their phones, had negative messages posted about them publicly, were removed from online communities and were harassed and insulted on the Internet. Analysis has found that Indian students more often than French students experienced multivictimization.

Further, expanding the age range to include a total of 1355 college students from India ($N = 904$ students; aged 18–24 years) and France ($N = 451$; aged 18–37 years) studied the risky online practices among the college students in India. The findings revealed that the Indian students take more of all risks than the French students, both as perpetrators and as victims. However, in each country victims and perpetrators tend to adopt similar online behaviours. The Indian victims significantly tend to have more risky behaviours for all items, and the difference is particularly significant for looking for new friends online, posting personal information and pretending to be someone else when online. As for adding strangers, the difference is less significant. Trend is identical for perpetrators engaged in risky online behaviours such as seeking new friends, exchanging personal details, impersonation or masquerading and making friends online with strangers.

Gender Differences in Cyberbullying Involvement of Indian School and College Students

Considering the gender involvement in cyberbullying previous research (see Table 8.2) has shown that male and female adolescents differ significantly in cyberbullying involvement. Equal involvement of female and male students as cyberbullying victims was reported by Kaur et al. (2014), whereas Sandhu and Kaur (2017) reported females (38.6%) being targeted significantly more than the males (13.50%).

Table 8.2 Gender differences in cyberbullying involvement

Study (year of publication)	Country	Participants	Gender differences
Kaur et al. (2014)	India	<i>N</i> = 410 adolescents of 13 to 16 years of age	Equal involvement of female and male students as cyberbullying victims
Sandhu and Kaur (2017)	India	<i>N</i> = 357, 11th and 12th grade students	Females (38.6%) were targeted significantly more than the males (13.50%)
Kaur (2018)	India	<i>N</i> = 600 (300 males and 300 females)	Male adolescents were likelier than female adolescents to cyberbully others
Sandhu (2017)	India	<i>N</i> = 28 school students, aged 13–15 years	In most cases of bullying, male peers were the bullies, and in the majority of these cases, it was either a rejected lover or an ex-boyfriend

In context of cyberbullying perpetration, Kaur (2018) discovered that male adolescents were likelier than female adolescents to cyberbully others. Sandhu (2017) also reported similar findings in her study that in most cases of bullying, male peers were the bullies, and in the majority of these cases, it was either a rejected lover or an ex-boyfriend.

Such findings can be explained by the fact that Indian males utilize information and communication technologies more frequently and more skilfully than Indian females. Another explanation that might account for such gender differences in cyberbullying perpetration is gender socialization. The socialization processes of males and females occur in different ways because societies expect each gender to conform to their specific norms, behaviours, values, and beliefs. Thus, it can be said that Indian males consider cyberbullying behaviours more acceptable than Indian females (Sandhu et al., 2021).

Common Ways in Which Both Genders Are Cyber Victimized

Kaur et al. (2014) identified hacking of online accounts, receiving vulgar text messages, posting obscene photographs of someone online and making them public as common ways in which both the genders were almost equally victimized online. Receiving messages on mobile phones and Facebook regarding one's body shape, size and looks also qualified as the common ways of experiencing cybervictimization.

Likewise, in a later study, Sandhu and Kaur (2017) outlined cyberbullying as constituting of certain behaviours as experienced by a significant male and female

sample of the study. These behaviours included publishing spiteful or wounding comments/photographs/videos concerning the victim online, rumour spreading, threatening to harm the victim online or via a text message, impersonation and acting in a mean or hurtful way, being victimized in a chat room, through email, through computer instant messages, through mobile phone, on social media platforms, being in an online argument, receiving unpleasant text messages from someone, receiving online messages that made the victim concerned about his/her safety and sharing the victim's personal information and personal media online without the victim's permission.

Furthermore, Sandhu (2017) identified the most common ways of cyberbullying and abuse described by the study participants as qualifying to be eve-teasing incidents, for example, participants reported experiencing cyberbullying acts such as digitally making blank calls, sending friend requests and objectionable messages through fake profiles, tagging the victim in obscene pictures, creating fake profiles of victims, forwarding their personal messages or texts without permission, uploading objectionable morphed photographs of victims, posting hurtful comments against victims, adding victims' phone numbers and saying that she is seeking friends and is open to relationships, sending derogatory messages to common friends through fake profiles, posting offensive messages about wardrobe choices, and hurting or insulting them in open forums. This research highlighted the gendered aspect of bullying. The duration of such acts as described by participants lasted from a few days to up to two years in school (Sandhu, 2017).

Cyberbullying as a Continuation of Conventional Bullying

Kaur (2018) conducted a seminal study on cyberbullying perpetration among North Indian adolescents, surveying 600 adolescents from various cities in Punjab and finding that cyberbullying perpetration is positively correlated with various dimensions of face-to-face bullying victimization in the sample, such as physical victimization, attacks on property, verbal victimization and social manipulation. Conventional bullying emerged to be an indicator of cyberbullying perpetration in the same analysis. These results suggest that cyberbullying is merely a continuation of conventional bullying in classrooms, rather than a separate or unique phenomenon. These findings can be made clearly the idea that children who are picked out at school by the bullies may try to fight back using technology because this kind of bullying; i.e. cyberbullying would be less anxiety-provoking than face-to-face encounters, so the victims of face-to-face bullying may utilize cyberbullying as a means of protecting themselves or self-defence (Beran & Li, 2007).

Psychosocial Consequences of Cyberbullying Involvement

Research on cyberbullying perpetration by Sandhu and Kaur (2019) investigated various social and emotional difficulties (see Table 8.3) as experienced in adolescence by both male and female cyberbullying perpetrators. Self-management, relationship management and peer trust contributed negatively towards cyberbullying perpetration in males, whereas emotional problems, peer alienation, peer problems and conduct problems contributed positively. For females, self-management contributed negatively towards cyberbullying perpetration, whereas peer problems, mother alienation, verbal victimization, social manipulation and emotional problems contributed positively. These findings indicate that those adolescents with greater emotional difficulties like anxiety, depression, higher levels of stress and poor peer relations along with conduct problems like substance abuse, and other anti-social behaviours violating major age-appropriate norms are more likely to victimize others online.

Kaur and Sandhu (2015a) identified low parental (mother and father) and peer attachment in cyberbullying victims relative to uninvolved adolescents in a pioneering research investigating cyberbullying victimization in association with parent and peer attachment. Low parental and peer trust, lower parental and peer communication, and higher parental and peer alienation among adolescents have all been shown to be associated with cyberbullying perpetration in the sample (Kaur, 2018).

In the same line, Sandhu and Kaur (2019) reported cyberbullying perpetration as negatively associated with parent and peer attachment for both male and female adolescents. The results also showed that peer alienation and peer problems positively contributed in the cyberbullying perpetration of male adolescents, whereas peer problems emerged as a significant contributor of cyberbullying perpetration among female adolescents.

Further studies by Kaur and Sandhu (2016), and Sandhu et al. (2017) on cyberbullying also linked poor mental and emotional health with cyberbullying victimization. The effect of bully victimization on decreased pupil well-being was highlighted by Sandhu et al. (2015). Kaur and Sandhu (2015b) found major disparities in depressed affect and loneliness of 450 cyberbullying victims, compared to adolescents who were uninvolved in cyberbullying.

The essence of cyberbullying among secondary school students was investigated by Sandhu and Kaur (2017), and the victims registered significantly higher anxiety and depression rates, as well as lower positive health, diminished control over themselves, overall poor health and reduced vitality as opposed to non-cyber-victims. Many of the victims said that emotionally and socially they had difficulties adjusting.

Kaur (2017) investigated the psychosocial wellbeing of 560 North Indian young pupils (aged 13–17 years) who were tested for potential cybervictimization. The researchers discovered a correlation between cybervictimization, anxiety and depression. The cybervictims also displayed signs of impaired self-control and general wellbeing.

Table 8.3 Psychosocial consequences of cyberbullying involvement

Study (year of publication)	Country	Participants	Psychosocial consequences
Sandhu and Kaur (2019)	India	<i>N</i> = 600 adolescents (300 males and 300 females)	Adolescents with greater emotional difficulties like anxiety, depression, higher levels of stress and poor peer relations along with conduct problems like substance abuse, and other anti-social behaviours violating major age-appropriate norms are more likely to victimize others online
Kaur and Sandhu (2015a)	India	<i>N</i> = 489 adolescents, aged 13–17 years	Low parental (mother and father) and peer attachment in cyberbullying victims relative to uninvolved adolescents
Kaur, (2018)	India	<i>N</i> = 600 (300 males and 300 females)	Low parental and peer trust, lower parental and peer communication, and higher parental and peer alienation among adolescents have all been shown to be associated with cyberbullying perpetration in the sample
Sandhu and Kaur (2019)	India	<i>N</i> = 600 (300 males and 300 females)	Cyberbullying perpetration negatively associated with parent and peer attachment for both male and female adolescents. Peer alienation and peer problems positively contributed in the cyberbullying perpetration of male adolescents whereas peer problems emerged as a significant contributor of cyberbullying perpetration among female adolescents
Kaur and Sandhu (2016)	India	<i>N</i> = 144 adolescents, aged 15–17 years	Poor mental and emotional health was associated with cyberbullying victimization
Sandhu et al. (2017)	India	<i>N</i> = 355 pupils, aged 14–16 years	Linked poor mental and emotional health with cyberbullying victimization

(continued)

Table 8.3 (continued)

Study (year of publication)	Country	Participants	Psychosocial consequences
Sandhu et al. (2015)	India	<i>N</i> = 200 school-going adolescent males and females aged 15–17 years	Bully victimization is positively linked with internalizing problem behaviour, and it is negatively associated with happiness, joviality, sociability, self-esteem/self-confidence and emotional stability
Kaur and Sandhu (2015b)	India	<i>N</i> = 450 adolescents, aged 12–14 years	Cyberbullying victimization had deleterious effect on the socio-emotional health of adolescents
Sandhu and Kaur (2017)	India	<i>N</i> = 357, 11th and 12th grade students	The cybervictims exhibited significantly higher anxiety and depression rates, as well as lower positive health, diminished control over themselves, overall poor health and reduced vitality as opposed to non-cyber-victims
Kaur (2017)	India	<i>N</i> = 560 North Indian young pupils aged 13–17 years	A significant correlation existed between cybervictimization, anxiety, and depression. The cybervictims also displayed signs of impaired self-control and general wellbeing

(continued)

Table 8.3 (continued)

Study (year of publication)	Country	Participants	Psychosocial consequences
Sandhu (2017)	India	<i>N</i> = 28 females aged 13–15 years	Main effects of bullying victimization, according to the female participants, were feelings of guilt and remorse, poor focus, and reduced educational achievement, depression, sadness, helplessness, high levels of anxiety, emotional distress, reduced self-esteem, elevated levels of tension, anger, feeling frustrated and rejected, somatic symptoms such as headaches and stomach aches, school failure and school avoidance, alienation from the peer group, feelings of vulnerability, loneliness and suicidal ideation
Kaur et al. (2014)	India	<i>N</i> = 410 adolescents of 13–16 years of age	Victims of cyberbullying expressed feelings of remorse and regret, sadness and helplessness, depression, elevated levels of anxiety, weak focus, poor academic success, high levels of tension, emotional discomfort, anger, feeling excluded and frustrated, poor self-esteem, and physiological problems, school avoidance, dismissal from the peer group, feelings of insecurity and isolation, and even suicidal ideation as the main effects of victimization in the focus group discussions
Skrzypiec et al. (2015)	India	<i>N</i> = 33 students aged 12–15 years	Feeling miserable, humiliated, depressed, and helpless as a result of eye-teasing masked as bullying and cyberbullying

Additionally, Sandhu (2017) studied 28 females aged 13–15 years old from four co-educational schools in Punjab each catering to children belonging to different socio-economic status and hailing from different geographical areas. She discovered that the main effects of bullying victimization, according to the female participants, were feelings of guilt and remorse, poor focus, and reduced educational achievement, depression, sadness, helplessness, high levels of anxiety, emotional distress, reduced self-esteem, elevated levels of tension, anger, feeling frustrated and rejected, somatic symptoms such as headaches and stomach aches, school failure and school avoidance, alienation from the peer group, feelings of vulnerability, loneliness, and suicidal ideation.

According to Kaur et al. (2014), female respondents who had been victims of cyberbullying expressed feelings of remorse and regret, sadness and helplessness, depression, elevated levels of anxiety, weak focus, poor academic success, high levels of tension, emotional discomfort, anger, feeling excluded and frustrated, poor self-esteem, and physiological problems, school avoidance, dismissal from the peer group, feelings of insecurity and isolation, and even suicidal ideation as the main effects of victimization in the focus group discussions. Furthermore, females described feeling miserable, humiliated, depressed, and helpless as a result of eve-teasing masked as bullying and cyberbullying, according to an analysis of youth victimization among Punjabi students (Skrzypiec et al., 2015).

Sandhu (2017) found duration of bullying is an important aspect to consider while gauging the impact of bullying. She found that bullying with a long duration proved to be the most stressful for students, leading to psychosocial and emotional difficulties.

In brief, cyberbullying involvement among adolescents has been linked with a myriad of psychosocial difficulties.

Reporting of Cyberbullying Victimization and Knowledge About the Identity of the Perpetrator

According to Sandhu and Kaur (2017), just 12% of cybervictimized youth were aware of the identity of the cyberbully, and nearly forty-two per cent said they did not talk to anyone about the incident. The majority of such incidents are unreported because the victims do not feel that they will be acknowledged or obtain any support from their parents or other responsible adults. The findings also shed light on the participation of parents in the sample which was also found to be very limited in the study.

Likewise, Sandhu (2017) found that most of the participants did not report the bullying incidents to any responsible adult. The reasons were cited as the fear of their freedom being limited, and even being blamed themselves for being targeted by the male perpetrators, and in some cases, it was attributed to being threatened by the bullies themselves regarding the disclosure of such acts to anyone.

Response of Parents and School Authorities While Handling the Cyberbullying Related Complaints

Despite the frequent occurrences of cyberbullying, there are not yet any proper interventions or policies to address this issue in India. It is of particular concern that mostly the matter is completely ignored by the school or college authorities. At most the teachers try to resolve most of the bullying cases using their own initiative. They generally employ minor non-physical punishments (such as time out) and warnings to the bullies. In cases of severe bullying, the matter is brought to the notice of the school principal and the bully's parents, and from there it is the parents' responsibility to stop their child's bullying behaviour (Sandhu, 2017). This strategy runs counter to Western suggestions that all members of the school system, including teachers, parents and pupils, work together to fight bullying and cyberbullying (Smith & Steffgen, 2013). The event is largely unreported in India, as if is the female victim she receives no justice from her own parents or teachers. The girl is often criticized, and bringing it to the attention of her elders may cause her even more trouble. As a result, many victims are unable to speak out about the physical and emotional violence they face outside of their homes and at school (Sandhu, 2017). As opposed to Western nations, where school-based anti-bullying prevention systems have been in operation since 1983, India is in a poor position (Smith, 2013).

Preventive Efforts and Research

About the fact that there are currently no clear anti-cyberbullying interventions or legislation in India (IFF Lab, 2019), some isolated studies has looked into the efficacy of specific intervention approaches and frameworks in controlling or minimizing incidents of cyberbullying. Sandhu and Kaur (2016), for example, found that parental group therapy was successful in alleviating behavioural issues in youngsters who had encountered cyberbullying, as well as in controlling cyberbullying events in the school. The research was broken down into three stages. An Anti-Bullying Committee was formed with 600 students from an urban school during the first phase, and it supported a large number of students sharing their cyberbullying encounters during the first round, with 600 students from an urban school, indicating its success in helping students expose these experiences "never-disclosed" before. The second step contrasted 30 adolescents who had experienced cyberbullying to 30 adolescents who had not. Adolescents who had experienced some form of cyberbullying showed more behavioural issues. The third step involved 30 adolescents who had witnessed cyberbullying and their parents. Parental Group Therapy was shown to be a successful tool in alleviating behavioural issues of these adolescents, still six months after its completion, and in the long run, in preventing cyberbullying in the school.

Kaur and Sandhu (2016) studied how cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) could help 144 cyberbullying victims aged 15–17 years improve their mental and

emotional health. In contrast to their fellow classmates, they were found to have low behavioural and emotional health. They underwent several cognitive behavioural therapy sessions, each lasting 35–40 min, which emerged to be very successful in improving their mental and emotional health, particularly with regard to the feelings of apprehension, depressed mood, positive health, control over oneself, overall health and vitality. These sessions were mainly focused on skill acquisition.

A Suggested Policy Framework to Prevent Bullying: A Whole-School Approach

Due to the systemic and complicated nature of bullying, reviews of school-based bullying interventions imply that single-level initiatives are unlikely to provide an effective solution (Smith et al., 2004; Vreeman & Carroll, 2007). Instead, statistics show that interdisciplinary whole-school interventions are the most effective, non-stigmatizing way to prevent and treat bullying. (Cross et al., 2011; Rigby & Slee, 2008; Smith et al., 2003; Stevens et al., 2001; Vreeman & Carroll, 2007). Consistent with an ecological framework (Bronfenbrenner, 1977), a whole-school approach to reduce bullying typically targets the school level (policy, classroom and school climate, behaviour support, peer support and schoolyard improvements) as well as the classroom level (curriculum), the home level (engaging and involving parents) and the individual level (working with higher risk students; Cross et al., 2011). A universal intervention has the capacity to reach people who are bullied, those who bully others, and bystanders, and over time, develops policy, practice, and a positive ethos at the whole-school level, fostering sustainability (Michaud, 2009).

Overall, this chapter contributes valuable findings in the field of cyberbullying and victimization in India. It places previous research on cyberbullying and other online negative experiences in a new context in order to serve as a springboard for new research that will bridge knowledge gaps. It contributes to the existing literature on cyberbullying and other negative online experiences by filling salient gaps such as it provides much-needed information about the various ways Indian adolescents use digital media and involves in online risk-taking and experience negative phenomenon like cyberbullying. It also throws light on the social–emotional impact of cyberbullying involvement on the youngsters along with other dynamics of cyberbullying. This chapter synthesizes various studies conducted by the Indian investigators using mixed methods attempting to expand the scope and generalizability of theories.

Conclusion

This chapter synthesizes the previous research carried out on the issue of cyberbullying involving Indian school and college students. It indicates that although research

on cyberbullying is now gathering pace in India but it remains to be the neglected health concern. This chapter discusses the growing awareness of cyberbullying as being a prevalent phenomenon in Indian schools, colleges and universities, along with its detrimental and far-reaching impact. The findings of various studies emphasize the importance of rethinking young people's online protection, particularly effective anti-bullying intervention and prevention efforts in the country, since victimization statistics indicate that youngsters are still vulnerable to cyberbullying. Eventually, this chapter warrants the need for policy makers and public health professionals in India to formulate policies or guidelines for universal implementation of cyberbullying prevention programmes in various educational institutions in India to ensure online safety and wellbeing of the youth.

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Chapter 9

Sociocultural Context of Individuals with Substance Use Disorders in India: A Qualitative Study



Sandeepa Kaur, Gitanjali Narayanan, and Arun Kandasamy

Abstract Social context can play a significant role in initiation and maintenance of substance use disorders. The aim of the study was to understand the social context of individuals diagnosed with substance use disorders (SUDs). A qualitative in-depth interview was developed focusing on themes including neighbourhood, religion, peer groups, settings, childhood experiences and close relationships. Expert consensus was obtained. The interviews were conducted on 45 men, aged between 20 and 44 years ($30.58 \text{ years} \pm 6.37$) who were screened for substance use disorder (DSM-5 criteria of harmful use or dependence), recruited from a tertiary care mental health centre in Bengaluru, India, using the alcohol, smoking and other substances screening test (ASSIST; World Health Organization, 1997). Grounded theory approach was used for thematic analysis. The main themes that emerged were the use of substance due to close friendships, open spaces or privacy, neighbourhood awareness associated with indifference, reduced support within the family and ambivalence in integrating their religious beliefs. These findings highlight the importance of studying the socio-cultural context among individuals with substance use disorders and incorporating these into mainstream assessment and interventions.

Keywords Substance use disorders · Sociocultural context · Qualitative · India

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Introduction

According to the National Mental Health Survey (2015–16), substance use disorders (SUDs) have shown a significant rise in India (Gururaj et al., 2016). According to this survey, the highest prevalence is tobacco use disorder (20.9%), followed by alcohol use disorder (4.7%) of the population, and other substance use disorder (0.6%). The National Survey on Extent and Pattern of Substance Use in India found that prevalence of alcohol use in terms of harmful use and dependence was 5.2% followed by cannabis (2.8%) and opioids (0.55%). Inhalants were most common among the young population (1.17%). The survey showed that among opioids, heroin and pharmaceutical opioids were more common, and ganja and charas were the most commonly used form of cannabis (Ambekar et al., 2019).

While several theories have been put forward to help explain the etiological mechanisms of SUD from different orientations such as cognitive behavioural theory (Brotchie et al., 2004; McCusker, 2001; Shorey et al., 2013), there has been limited research in sociocultural context. While these provide useful information on individual vulnerabilities, to get a more nuanced approach, it would be important to study the larger cultural and social determinants of SUDs.

The social context of individuals is typically understood as sociocultural forces that shape people's day-to-day experiences and that directly and indirectly affect health and behavior (Burke et al., 2009). Various factors such as influences of peers and the community, the different types of substances used in specific culture, the settings, knowledge and perceptions of the larger group regarding substance use and the impact of religious beliefs on substance use have been studied (Gupta et al., 2013; Haug et al., 2014). These studies reveal the role of factors such as academic and peer pressure, family dynamics and social settings in shaping addictive behaviours (Padhy et al., 2014). There have been several conceptual researches that have also looked at the social context of SUD in India. While some studies have pointed to the use of alcohol in the home environment, other substances have been associated with settings including social gatherings, parties, at school (Hussong, 2000). Contrary to intuitive beliefs regarding influence of peers on substance use, some researchers have found that poor peer acceptance could also be associated with higher use of substances (Telzer et al., 2015).

Conventionally, India has been looked upon as a dry culture. However, there is a rich historical narrative of using plant products like cannabis, opioids and home-brewed alcohol products. Certain social groups, particular caste, religion played a role in choice and use of substance (Jiloha, 2009). Furthermore, perceptions of substance use among urban Indian populations seem to show a rapid shift towards greater acceptability (Murthy, 2015).

Various sociocultural factors play a role in substance use. In Western culture, it has been found that alcohol is consumed at home and with friends (Hussong, 2000). Neighbourhood characterized by low education is associated with heroin use (Crawford et al., 2013). In the Indian context, positive family history of substance use is associated with substance use (Kumar et al., 2013). Another study found that

staying in a hostel and poor family relations was associated with substance use (Padhy et al., 2014).

Locally derived knowledge of SUD in India would, therefore, provide a culturally sensitive perspective, particularly when one considers the wide distribution of different populations, family and group beliefs, collectivistic society and immersion of ideologies borrowed from the West into the urban Indian landscape. With this aim, the present study examines the sociocultural factors of individuals with SUDs in India.

Methods

Purposive sampling was used, and the participants were all males ($N = 45$; range 20–44 years) with a primary diagnosis of substance use disorder [DSM-5 criteria of harmful use or dependence; ASSIST (Alcohol, Smoking and other Substances Screening Test, World Health Organization, 1997)]. The decision to include only males was taken on an apriori basis after examining the low prevalence of women substance users through the medical records of the hospital. The study data were collected over 6 months from a tertiary care mental health centre in Bengaluru. Appropriate ethical clearances were taken from the ethical board of the institute, and assessments were done by the primary author who was pursuing an advanced degree in Clinical Psychology.

Qualitative Interview

We developed a semi-structured interview after an extensive literature search. The items were generated using search engines such as PubMed, Taylor Francis and Google Scholar. Words entered in these included “qualitative”, “community”, “peer influence addiction”, “social theories India”, “addiction India”. The interview was constructed based on guidelines provided by the grounded theory approach given by Charmaz (2008). The focus was kept on the exploration of patients’ knowledge and lived experiences through open-ended items developed to evoke reflective meanings. The initial draft version of the interview comprised 15 items. This had social context as the major theme within which there were six subthemes (neighbourhood, religion, peer groups, settings, childhood experiences, close relationships). All themes were generated in connection to SUD. Expert validation was carried out, and the initial interview draft was provided to an expert with over 10 years of experience in qualitative research and cultural studies. The rating of the initial interview was done on a five-point Likert scale, across four categories (content, ease of language, usefulness and keep/delete the items). Based on the feedback obtained, some of the items were reworded and the final version of the semi-structured interview was developed.

The interviews were recorded verbatim, memos and notes regarding methods of communication of the participants such as pauses, and gestures were noted. Each interview lasted for a period of one and a half to two hours.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was done concurrently to interviewing and using the process of inductive reasoning. The study used a grounded theory approach to analyse the emergent themes (Charmaz, 2008). Grounded theory (GT) is a systematic methodology in social sciences which involves the construction of theory through data gathering and analysis (Faggiolani, 2011; Martin & Turner, 1986; Strauss & Corbin, 1994). It begins with inductive data where we need to go back and forth between data and analysis. After data collection, coding is done, following multiple iterations to arrive at a culturally relevant explanatory framework of SUD. The data analysis occurred concurrently with the data collection. It was conducted at two levels. First, analysing the personal accounts of the participants—what was said, how it was said, and why it was said. Second, by applying psychological constructs and concepts to the personal accounts—to analyse the context in which they started using substances and what led to its continuation in the light of relevant studies, theories, assumptions and premises. Interviews were coded. These codes were eventually combined and related to one another. This process was repeated till data saturation occurred. Final themes that emerged were on participants' social setting, circumstances when they started using substances, family view, peers, neighbourhood and religion/spirituality.

Results

The study group consisted of male participants (Table 9.1). Majority of them were high school educated (46%; 30.58 years \pm 6.37), and one-fifth of them were unemployed. More than half the participants were single, staying with family, and from an urban background. In accordance with the census data, the majority participants were Hindus and came from a nuclear family set-up. A small percentage reported family history of alcohol and tobacco dependence in their father. Most common substances used were tobacco, alcohol and cannabis (Table 9.2). The prevalence of all the other substances found among the participants ranged from 2% for amphetamines to 8% for benzodiazepines.

The social context of individuals with substance use disorder was elicited using semi-structured interviews following open-ended statements. Qualitative analysis was carried out for 45 patients. The interview was based on the themes social context. Open codes were used, and narratives from each interview were incorporated into the codes to derive subthemes. The recurrent emergent patterns among these formed the final themes. Using grounded theory approach, the themes and subthemes

Table 9.1 Sample characteristics of the study

Sample characteristics		N	%
Age	Range (20–44)	30.58 ± 6.37 years	NA
Age range	20–25	23	46
	26–44	27	54
Education	Illiterate	2	4
	Primary	1	2
	High school educated	23	46
	Graduate	19	38
	Postgraduate	5	10
Occupation	Business	9	18
	Government service	5	10
	Private service	13	26
	Unemployed	13	26
	Student	8	16
	Drivers	2	4
Marital status	Unmarried	30	60
	Married	18	36
	Separated	1	2
	Divorced	1	2
Place of residence	Home	46	92
	Other	3	6
	Shared accommodation	1	2
Setting	Urban	41	82
	Semi-urban	7	14
	Rural	2	4
Region	Hindu	37	74
	Non-Hindu	13	26
Type of family	Nuclear	35	70
	Joint	8	16
	Extended	7	14

N—no. of cases, %—percent of cases

that emerged were circumstances/influences (individual factors: curiosity, relaxation and interpersonal factors: sense of belongingness, to be cool), social settings (open and home environment), neighbourhood/community (indifference by the neighbours expressed), peers (support, modelling for substance use), family view (negative view towards substance) and religion/spirituality (belief in higher power, altruistic value).

Table 9.2 Frequencies and percentages of dependent and non-dependent patterns of use in the group

Types of substances	Intervention	N	%
Tobacco	ND	5	10
	D	45	90
Alcohol	ND	23	46
	D	27	54
Cannabis	ND	31	62
	D	19	38
Cocaine	ND	47	94
	D	3	6
Amphetamine	ND	49	98
	D	1	2
Inhalant	ND	47	94
	D	3	6
Sedatives	ND	46	92
	D	4	8
Hallucinogens	ND	47	94
	D	3	6
Opioids	ND	47	94
	D	3	6

N—no. of cases, %—percent of cases

D—dependent pattern of use

ND—non-dependent pattern of use

It was seen that intrapersonal variables such as emotional regulation, pain management, relaxation, boredom and coping with negative emotions were relevant; however, they played out in the larger interpersonal context. Participant 16 reported, “*I use alcohol to deal with stress*”. Participant 20 reported, “*I drink more when I am hurt*”.

Looking at the self in relation to others (interpersonal), various subthemes emerged. One was being part of a trance culture, which is defined as “seeing oneself in the other”. It is a desire to be a part of the group and a desire to look cool. Participant 33 said, “*I am easily influenced by fashion. Cannabis is in fashion now and hence I started taking it*”. A sense of being betrayed, or having rejections and breakups in heterosexual relationships, particularly with spouse were also important initiating factors. Participant 14 reported, “*I started taking substances in college. I used to take more after fighting with my friends and when I broke up with my girlfriend*”. The final subtheme that emerged was individual and social level exposures to substances. Participant 35 reported, “*When I was in 8th standard, I was offered kheni by my family members as they themselves used to have*”.

With regard to settings two subthemes emerged from the data. The first highlighted narratives of individuals with preferences for both open spaces (roads, railway tracks,

parking areas, beaches, shops, tea stalls and bakeries) and enclosed spaces (cinema hall toilets, offices and gym). The final narratives were of those who preferred solitary settings and “safe” spaces (home, friend’s home and hostel).

With regard to neighbourhood, the majority participants reported that neighbours did not interact much with each other; however, they were aware about the participants’ substance use. Majority of participants ($N = 31$) reported that certain substances were commonly used by their neighbours as well. The commonly used substances by their neighbours are alcohol, followed by tobacco and cannabis. One participant reported, “*Cannabis is available in nearby shops. They roll it on cigarette paper and sell it at Rs. 10*”. Also, they felt that the neighbours were not concerned about them taking substance indicating their indifference to substance use.

The fourth theme that emerged was of a “substance use culture”, with participants reporting having buddies with whom they were deeply attached, who were a source of support for them, and over and above this, with whom they consumed substances together. Participant 15 reported, “*I took alcohol and cigarettes to enjoy with friends. I want to be with them*”.

The fifth theme that emerged was regarding family and their view about substance use. Family members were found to have a negative view towards substances. Participant 22 reported, “*My family members are unhappy with me consuming alcohol. They say that I am ruining my health. What will my kids learn from me*”. Participant 26 reported, “*After taking alcohol I lose control. I start shouting and screaming. My mother feels very embarrassed as my neighbours start talking about me. She tells me that I shouldn’t drink*”. However, some participants also reported that certain substances were available in their home environment. Participant 35 said, “*Kheini was available at home. My parents used to give it to me after meals. It was commonly used at home*”.

The final theme that emerged was the relation between religion and substance use. Majority participants reported that they believe in God or some higher power but not rituals. They also felt that substances were unacceptable in their religion. However, they tried to make sense of their taking some substances like alcohol and cannabis as still seen as acceptable in Hinduism. One participant reported that “*Bhang is offered in Shivratri to Lord Shiva*”. Two participants reported wine being acceptable in their culture (Hinduism and Christianity).

Discussion

The current study explored the relationship between sociocultural context and substance use disorders in India. Findings suggest that both intrapersonal and interpersonal factors play a role in substance use disorders. Majority participants used substances in order to regulate their emotion. Similar findings were seen in other studies (Bonn-Miller et al., 2008; Gratz & Tull, 2010). Another study found boredom to be positively correlated with substance use (LePera, 2011). This finding is in line with our study which also showed that many participants used substance as a result

of boredom. Parental use of substances also played a significant role. Substances like kheini were seen as acceptable by family members. This gave exposure of the substance to the participants which resulted in the initial use. This hints towards acceptability of tobacco products in Indian context and poor knowledge in the family regarding substances and their impacts. Getting influenced by new trends and choosing peers who take substance to socialize with also influences an individual's substance use (Mulder et al., 2010; Ter Bogt et al., 2006). In the current study as well participants reported being influenced by trance culture and using substances with their peers. Dissolution of romantic relationships can also result in an increase in substance use. A study found breakups to be associated with an increase in substance use in males (Larson & Sweeten, 2012).

With regard to the setting where substances are consumed, it was found that many participants consumed substances in the open settings as well as home environment where they were offered substances by their own family members. Some studies have pointed to the use of substances like alcohol in the home environment (Hussong, 2000).

Findings also show that self in relation to others also play a role in initiation and maintenance of substance use disorders. The current study found that parental acceptance of substance use, conflict in family resulting in stress, etc., results in individuals' substance use. A similar study found that family factors (poverty, lack of trust, family conflict) play an important role in an individual's drug abuse habits (Foo et al., 2012; Thompson et al., 2013; Yen et al., 2007).

A study found that people are more likely to take substances if they are easily available in their neighbourhood or are offered by their neighbours (Crum et al., 1996). This study also highlighted neighbourhood use of substances which might have influenced an individual's substance use. This study also showed that neighbours were indifferent to their substance use. This might be because of changes in family pattern in terms of both structure and interaction. Informal cultural grouping has reduced significantly over a period of time which may be a result of urbanization.

Many studies have shown that curiosity about the substance, academic and peer pressure, family problems were the major initiating factors (Padhy et al., 2014). Research with university students has also suggested that rather than exposure to substance consuming peers, and it is actual meaningful interactions with friends that are important. In the current study, the participants reported that a majority of the friends also used substances, with alcohol, tobacco and cannabis being the most common. This indicates that individuals use substances in order to approach and sustain friendship, to deal with stress as suggested by their friends and also due to peer pressure.

Culture plays a significant role in initiation and maintenance of substance use. Majority participants believed in the existence of higher power. Though multiple studies have found that religion acts as a protective factor for substance use (Hodge et al., 2001; Kulis et al., 2012; Wallace & Bachman, 1991), the narratives of the participants from the current study also reveal how participants try to make sense of their religious values on the one hand, while having substances on the other. Cannabis use has been seen in Hindu culture (Snyder, 1971), and the same has been

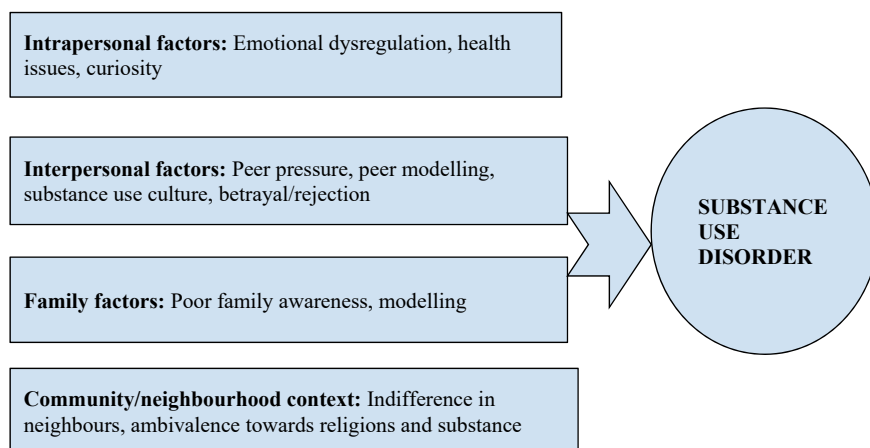


Fig. 9.1 Theoretical model of social context in SUD

revealed by the participants. This indicates that certain substance use like cannabis is acceptable among people with certain religious orientation. On the other hand, those participants whose religion discourage substance use showed ambivalence and difficulties in integrating their religious beliefs with substance use. A study has also found that the decision of taking substance is not influenced by their religiosity (De La Rosa & White, 2001).

Based on the themes (as mentioned above), the following conceptual model has been developed (Fig. 9.1).

Conclusion

The present study highlights the relationship between SUDs and social context. The study has various strengths. It explored the social context of patients with SUDs with special reference to the Indian context. The use of a qualitative method provided a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the variables. The finding from the study has helped in generating a model to explain various factors contributing to substance use disorder, thereby bringing some new perspectives.

The study has some limitations. The sample consisted of only male participants. Hence, it is difficult to generalize. Another limitation was lack of transcripts as audio recording was not done.

The study highlights the need for creating awareness in these groups. Also, in younger groups, peer groups and close friends in schools and college settings play an important role to try out and experiment with substances as seen in the present study. Large-scale college psychoeducational programmes, teacher training and group parent training would be beneficial to reduce the impact. It also assists

mental health professionals to know regarding neighbourhoods and communities that are higher in substance use such as cannabis and opiates, and with the help of larger samples in future, such a study could be used for geocoding and mapping of areas where substances are prevalent to derive local information.

The study highlighted that the majority of participants started using substances because of peer influence and prefer both personal and private space for substance usage. It also highlights the important role that community plays in initiation, maintenance and treatment of substance use. Hence, enhancing community participation would further enrich interventions which are socioculturally sensitive in this group.

Appendix

Table 9.3.

Table 9.3 Semi-structured interview questions

Sample Interview items	Probes
I would like to know a little bit about the type of substances you generally consume	Probe: any local substances
Can you elaborate under what circumstance/s did you start consuming substance/s?	
What memories do you have from your early childhood that you think may be relevant to your substance use?	
In what way these early experiences have shaped you as a person you are now? Can you give examples of your main qualities, especially in context of close relationships?	
Could you describe the settings where you take substances	Probes: Bars/pubs/home/indoors/forest area
Can you describe your friend circle or group/s you have?	Probe: while taking a substance as well as not taking any substance
In what way are these people (friends/peers) with whom you consume substance associated with your substance use?	
Can you elaborate typical social setting or places where you consume substances?	
Can you describe your family's view with regards to substance use?	

(continued)

Table 9.3 (continued)

Sample Interview items	Probes
Can you describe your neighbourhood? Do your neighbours know about your substance use? How do you think that people in your neighbourhood perceive your taking substance/s?	
Could you share with me some of your religious beliefs? Can you tell us about how your religion views your substance use?	
Are there any close relationships that have played a role in your taking substances?	
In what way the kind of person you are plays a role in these peer groups	Probes: How do you select your peers
Tell me about yourself. Give some examples to explain it	Probes: How would you describe yourself as a person
What are your views of yourself that may be relevant to your substance use?	Probes: yourself in different situations, your behaviours, your thinking patterns, your characteristics, qualities)

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Chapter 10

Risk Factors for Smartphone Overuse Among University Students in Malaysia



Vanlal Thanzami

Abstract Smartphones are valuable and have become a necessity because of their multifunctionality. However, their usefulness has increasingly led to the pervasive dependence on them, raising several concerns regarding their negative impact. As smartphone usage continues to rise across the globe, Malaysia too has seen a rapid increase, with 30.41 million users in 2018, and an estimated 33.46 million users by 2025 (Statistica in Smartphone users in Malaysia 2015–2025, 2021). Because of the negative psychological impacts, identifying the risk factors among youths especially is crucial, as smartphone usage is the highest among this demographic (HPUS Malaysia, 2017). The current study seeks to examine a causal model of smartphone overuse grounded in the reluctance to miss important information, and its mediating effect in the relationships between social connectedness and loneliness with smartphone overuse. Three hundred and eighty-eight university students in Malaysia (mean age = 20.14; SD = 1.55) were assessed on their smartphone usage, loneliness, social connectedness and fear of missing out. Screening for low- and high-risk smartphone usage, 23.7% fell into the high-risk group. The high-risk group scored significantly higher than the low-risk group on loneliness and fear of missing out, and significantly lower on social connectedness. All three constructs predicted smartphone use, and fear of missing out fully mediated the relationships between loneliness and social connectedness, with smartphone use. These findings shed light on the complex relationship between the need to persistently stay connected with others, which has severe implications for relationships, feelings of connectedness, loneliness and overall feelings of satisfaction.

Keywords Smartphone overuse · Loneliness · Social connectedness · Fear of missing out · Anxiety · Gender

Worldwide usage of smartphones has increased exponentially in the last decade. Malaysia too has evidenced this surge, with smartphone users rising significantly

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from 19.72 million in 2015 to 30.41 million in 2018, and an estimated 33.46 million users by 2025 (Statistica, 2021). While technological advancements are a requisite for a developing society, the impact of such advances may have negative consequences. Today the smartphone has become a necessity because of its multifunctionality and has many benefits, such as its convenience, portability, internet connectivity, application content and use as a medium of interaction and communication. However, like any gadget that provides gratification to the user, there is a danger of overusing the gadget.

Even when smartphones had only begun penetrating the market, a pattern of excessive use and dependence was already emerging, where an American survey (Mobile Mindset Study, 2012) found that 58% of American smartphone users were unable to go 1 h without checking their smartphones, 54% reported they checked their smartphones while lying in bed, 39% while using the bathroom and 30% during a meal with others. Similarly, and more recently, a Handphone Users Survey carried out by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC, 2017) found a high dependence on smartphones, especially among younger respondents. More specifically, 80% of respondents reported they felt anxious if they left their phone at home and would return for it, woke up in the middle of the night to check their phone and were unable to last an hour after waking up to check their phone. These statistics are revealing in that they demonstrate the extent to which people have become attached to and dependent on their smartphones, that it infiltrates almost all areas of their lives. Hence, it should come as no surprise that the overuse of smartphones may lead to unwanted negative effects, psychological and physical in nature (Billieux et al., 2015; Shan et al., 2013; Wang et al., 2020; Im et al., 2013; Elhai et al., 2016).

Being a twenty-first-century problem, the research background on smartphone overuse, defined as the “excessive use of smartphones leading to tolerance, withdrawal symptoms and disability in everyday life” (Lee et al., 2017, p. 352), is limited. The limited research to date has, however, highlighted smartphone overuse to be a growing and concerning problem. In their meta-analysis, Sohn et al. (2019) found among children and young people (age range 10–24 years) the median prevalence rate of problematic smartphone use was 23%, and it was associated with negative psychological outcomes, such as depression, self-reported anxiety and stress.

While there may be a tendency to use the terms “overuse” and “addiction” interchangeably, they are strictly not the same. The traditional definition of addiction describes it as “...a repetitive habit pattern that increases the risk of disease and/or associated personal and social problems ... and are often experienced subjectively as ‘loss of control’ ...” (Marlatt et al, 1988, p. 224). With the evolution of technology, non-substance addiction in the form of technological addictions (e.g. Internet addiction, gaming addiction, online gambling addiction) has gained substantial attention. As the core symptoms of substance addiction, such as tolerance, withdrawal and functional impairment, are also present in technological addictions, researchers have suggested that they should be considered as psychiatric disorders too (Oulasvirta et al., 2012). Thus far only Internet Gaming Disorder has been acknowledged in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5:

American Psychiatric Association, 2013), not as a disorder but as a “condition for further study” (pp. 795–798). Hence technological addictions, while they may be a source of various difficulties, are still not recognized “officially” as a diagnostic category, which highlights the importance of continuous research and the need for mounting evidence to demonstrate its profound psychological and physical impact.

In light of the complexities surrounding the use in terminology of “addiction”, Lee et al. (2017) developed the Smartphone Overuse Screening Questionnaire, which distinguishes people at risk of smartphone overuse from casual users. A fundamental reason for the development of this measure was to correct for past usage of smartphone overuse measures, which were originally assessing internet or gaming behaviours, and the terms “Internet” or “gaming” were substituted for “smartphones”. Considering smartphones have unique characteristics not involved in gaming or the internet, it was deemed necessary to devise a measure that solely addressed the unique features of the smartphone. Furthermore, this measure is a first step towards identifying people who may be at risk of smartphone overuse, in an attempt to address prevention and intervention measures relevant to this problem.

Causal theories of smartphone overuse tend to draw models of relationships from internet addiction. All these pathways involve behaviours that relieve negative emotions and generally focus on negative reinforcement models, such as habitual use and checking behaviours (Oulasvirta et al., 2012), and seeking excessive reassurance (Billieux et al., 2015). This pathway corresponds to individuals whose excessive smartphone use is driven by the need to maintain relationships and obtain reassurance from others. Another theoretical model borrowed from the explanation of excessive internet use is the Compensatory Internet Use Theory (Kardefelt-Winther, 2014), which explains engagement in excessive behaviour as a maladaptive avoidant coping strategy to alleviate negative affect and emotion. Research findings have supported this theory as an explanation for smartphone overuse (Elhai et al., 2018; Long et al., 2016; Wolniewicz et al., 2020), whereby its excessive use is driven by the need to relieve negative affect.

Yet another model focuses on reluctance to miss important information or content (Przybylski et al., 2013). In relation to this pathway, the concept of fear of missing out (FoMO) was first discussed by Morford (2010) within the context of social media use. FoMO refers to “experiencing a pervasive apprehension that others might be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent” (Przybylski et al., 2013, p. 1841). Theoretical underpinnings explaining FoMO have referred to Deci and Ryan’s (1985) Self-determination Theory (SDT), whereby deficits in psychological needs motivate individuals to actively seek out resources to satisfy their needs. Social media engagement is seen as a way of restoring that deficit, as it facilitates the formation of social connections. To that effect, FoMO may mediate the relationship between deficits in psychological needs and social media use (Przybylski et al., 2013). In a similar vein, FoMO has been found to predict smartphone overuse, as people with FoMO are driven by the need to persistently stay connected with others (Clayton et al., 2015).

Smartphone overuse has also been found to be associated with loneliness and lack of social connectedness (Gao et al., 2016). Peper and Harvey (2018) have indicated

that this is especially so among university students. The usage of smartphones is predominantly an individual activity, whereby the user interacts with the gadget. While they may be using it to connect with other people, the very essence of it being an individual activity without any direct physical contact with other people demonstrates its isolationist feature. The desire to interact with the gadget coupled with the rewarding sensation they experience when on their smartphones can exacerbate their reliance and dependence on the gadget. This has severe implications for social relationships, feelings of connectedness and overall feelings of satisfaction.

The association between individuals who feel socially disconnected, loneliness and their excessive use of smartphones may be further explained by FoMO. This can be understood from the perspective of the need-to-belong theory (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), whereby the uncertainty of social belonging may intensify the need to seek out resources to stay continually connected in order to feel a sense of belonging (Lai et al., 2016). Those with a higher need to belong would be more anxious about missing out, hence more likely to experience FoMO, which in turn would impact their smartphone use. Similarly, the SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985) would suggest that deficits in the need for relatedness and lack of closeness or connectedness will evince a desire to be socially involved as a way of fulfilling their need and thus indirectly impact their smartphone use. Similarly, FoMO may be a motivating factor in enhancing social connections, and this is achieved through social media use (Roberts & David, 2020), via their smartphones.

Gender has also been found to influence smartphone overuse, and its prevalence is higher among females than males (Demirci et al., 2015; De-Sola Gutiérrez et al., 2016; Tavakolizadeh et al., 2014; Lee et al., 2016). This is expected as smartphone use behaviour for males and females is different, with males more likely to use it for playing games, watching mobile phone videos, and listening to music, while females are more likely to use it to communicate, including engagement on social networking sites (Chen et al., 2017). If these different reasons for smartphone use by males and females are a risk factor for overuse, then this would suggest that social connection and communication features of the smartphone are more likely to be responsible for its overuse. However, due to the dearth in research exploring gender differences on smartphone use behaviour, a clear explanation is lacking, and hence, further enquiry is required.

The problem of smartphone overuse is expected to continue as more advanced technologies permeate our daily lives. As the use of digital technology continues to grow, particularly in Malaysia, it is likely that more people will face the risk of smartphone overuse. To explore the smartphone, use behaviour and its risk factors in Malaysia, a country that ranks high on digital use (HPUS Malaysia, 2017), the present study set out to first examine the prevalence of smartphone overuse among university students. This demographic was chosen for the study as smartphone use is high in this age group in Malaysia (MCMC, 2017). This would be a first step in identifying the extent to which young people may be at risk of overusing their gadgets. The second aim was to examine whether individuals considered high risk for smartphone overuse would differ significantly from low-risk individuals on FoMO, loneliness and social connectedness. It was predicted that high-risk individuals would score significantly

higher on FoMO and loneliness, and lower on social connectedness. The third aim was to assess sex difference in smartphone overuse, and it was predicted that prevalence of smartphone overuse would be significantly higher among females compared to males. And finally, to examine the contributing effect of FoMO in the relationships between loneliness and social connectedness with smartphone overuse, it was predicted that FoMO would be a significant mediator, driving these relationships.

Method

Participants

A convenience sample of 388 students (females = 317) from public and private universities in the state of Selangor, Malaysia, took part in the study (mean age = 20.4; $SD = 1.55$). The majority of the sample were of Chinese ethnicity (57.2%) followed by Malay (19.8%), Indian (9.5%) and other ethnicities. And most of the participants (95%) were in either their first or second year of their undergraduate degree course.

Materials

The Smartphone Overuse Screening Questionnaire (SOS-Q; Lee et al., 2017) is a 28-item scale devised to screen smartphone users at high risk of smartphone overuse. The items describe behaviours relating to smartphone usage and are rated along a 4-point Likert scale ranging from “not at all” to “always” (e.g. I stay up all night using my smartphone; I like using my smartphone more than spending time with family). These items were added to provide the smartphone usage scores ($\alpha = 0.93$), with higher scores indicating higher risk of overuse. The SOS-Q has good internal consistency, test–retest reliability and concurrent validity (Lee et al., 2017).

The UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell et al., 1978) is a 20-item scale that assesses subjective feelings of loneliness and social isolation. The statements are rated along a 4-point Likert scale ranging from “I often feel this way” to “I never feel this way” (e.g. I have nobody to talk to; My interests and ideas are not shared by those around me). Scores were computed by adding the item scores ($\alpha = 0.94$) with higher scores indicating greater feelings of loneliness. This scale has been found to have sound psychometric properties across diverse samples (e.g. Russell, 1996; Zarei et al., 2016; Durak & Senol-Durak, 2010).

The Social Connectedness Scale (Lee & Robbins, 1995) is an 8-item scale that measures the degree to which people feel connected to others in their social environment. The statements are rated along a 6-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” (e.g. I feel disconnected from the world around me).

Connectedness scores were computed averaging the item scores with higher scores indicating higher social connectedness ($\alpha = 0.93$). Evidence in support of its sound psychometric properties has been found (Cordier et al., 2017).

The Fear of Missing out Scale (FOMO; Przybylski et al., 2013) assesses the extent to which people feel others are facing rewarding experiences from which they are absent. It consists of 10 items rated along a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly applies to me” to “does not apply to me at all” (e.g. I get anxious when I don’t know what my friends are up to). Scores were computed averaging the item scores with higher scores indicating higher fear of missing out ($\alpha = 0.87$). This measure has sound psychometric properties (Przybylski et al., 2013) and has been validated in various countries (Can & Satici, 2019; Casale & Fioravanti, 2020; Dogan, 2019).

Procedure

Ethics approval was obtained from Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee. Participants were presented with an explanatory statement indicating implied consent with the submission of the questionnaire pack. Demographic information was obtained first, after which they filled out the Smartphone Overuse Screening Questionnaire, followed by the UCLA Loneliness Scale, the Social Connectedness Scale and finally the Fear of Missing out Scale. After completion, they were thanked and provided with the debrief information.

Results

IBM’s Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 26 was used to analyse the data. To screen for risk of smartphone overuse, Lee et al. (2017) suggested a cut-off score of 41 on the smartphone overuse questionnaire to maximize sensitivity. Based on this cut-off score, 92 participants (23.7%) were identified as high risk for smartphone overuse. Independent samples *t*-tests comparing the high- and low-risk groups on fear of missing out, loneliness and social connectedness were significant, with the high-risk group scoring significantly higher on loneliness and fear of missing out and significantly lower on social connectedness. Table 10.1 provides the descriptive and inferential statistics.

An independent samples *t*-test comparing males and females on their smartphone use behaviour was not significant, even though the mean for females ($M = 32.46$, $SD = 13.93$) was higher than for males ($M = 31.07$, $SD = 16.81$).

Smartphone overuse was significantly and positively correlated with fear of missing out, loneliness and social connectedness (see Table 10.2).

To examine how fear of missing out, loneliness and social connectedness predicted smartphone use, a linear regression was run. Table 10.3 provides a summary of the regression analysis. All three variables significantly predicted smartphone use.

Table 10.1 Means and SDs for FoMO, loneliness and social connectedness in the two risk groups, along with the inferential statistics for the independent samples T-tests

Variables	High risk		Low risk		<i>t</i> (df)	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>n</i> = 92		<i>n</i> = 296				
	M	SD	M	SD			
Fear of missing out (FoMo)	32.05	5.89	23.92	7.38	-10.86 (187.54) ^a	<.001	1.22
Loneliness	29.36	13.60	21.66	13.75	-4.71 (386)	<.001	0.56
Social connectedness	29.92	9.90	35.75	8.46	5.54 (386)	<.001	0.63

^aEqual variances not assumed

Table 10.2 Pearson's correlations between smartphone use, FoMO, loneliness and social connectedness

	Variables	Pearson's correlations			
		1	2	3	4
1	Smartphone use	-			
2	FoMo	0.51	-		
3	Loneliness	0.22	0.32	-	
4	Social connectedness	-0.22	-0.35	-0.60	-

All correlations significant at the 0.01 level

Table 10.3 Regression analysis summary for variables predicting smartphone overuse

Variable	<i>B</i>	95% CI	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Fear of missing out	0.94	[0.79, 1.10]	0.51	11.70	<.001
Loneliness	0.23	[0.13, 0.33]	0.22	4.46	<.001
Social connectedness	-0.35	[-0.50, -0.19]	-0.22	-4.42	<.001

To examine whether FoMO mediated the relationship between loneliness, social connectedness and smartphone overuse, two mediation models were run using Model 4 from the PROCESS 3.5 add-on for SPSS (Hayes, 2018), with 10,000 bootstrapped re-samples accelerated at 95% confidence interval. As shown in Fig. 10.1, the relationship between loneliness and smartphone overuse was completely mediated by FoMO.

Figure 10.2 also demonstrates a similar pattern of mediation, with FoMO completely mediating the relationship between social connectedness and smartphone overuse. These indirect effects indicate that those scoring high on loneliness are more anxious about missing out, and this in turn predicts smartphone overuse. Similarly,

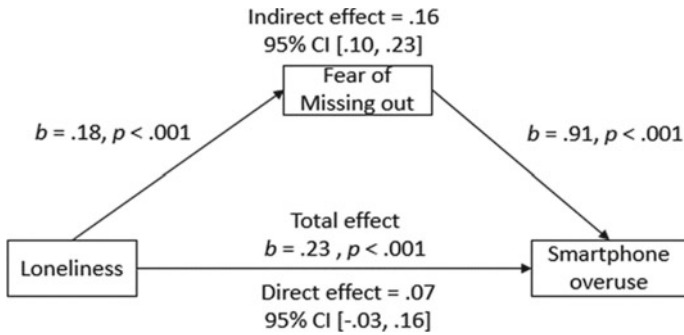


Fig. 10.1 Indirect effect of fear of missing out on the relationship between loneliness and smartphone overuse

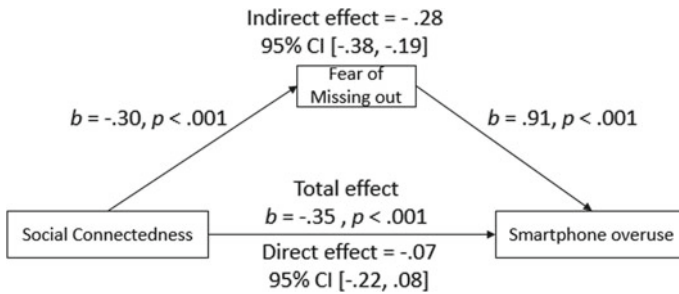


Fig. 10.2 Indirect effect of fear of missing out on the relationship between social connectedness and smartphone overuse. *Note* CI—confidence interval

those who feel less socially connected tend to be more anxious about missing out, which in turn predicts smartphone overuse.

Discussion

The aim of the study was to first examine the prevalence of smartphone overuse among university students in Malaysia, by using the smartphone overuse screening questionnaire (Lee et al., 2017) to screen for those at risk of overuse. A prevalence rate of 23.7% was found, which is similar to that found by Sohn et al. (2019) among a roughly similar age group. This prevalence rate is not surprising considering the extent to which young people are dependent on their smartphones, as revealed by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission survey (MCMC, 2017). While the scale had good internal consistency, its validity and reliability require scrutiny. As this is a first step towards understanding smartphone use behaviour in

this sample, continuing research on the validity of the screening tool is required before conclusions can be drawn.

The second aim was to examine the relationship between smartphone overuse and FoMO, loneliness and social connectedness. Higher FoMO and higher loneliness scores significantly predicted smartphone overuse, while lower social connectedness significantly predicted smartphone overuse. These findings are also further supported by the significant correlations between these variables, as well as the significantly higher scores on FoMO and loneliness, and lower scores on social connectedness by the “high risk” group compared to the “low-risk” group. These findings also support the hypotheses, highlighting the significance of these risk factors for smartphone overuse among university students in Malaysia.

These patterns of significant associations are also in line with the general findings in this area (e.g. Gao et al., 2016; Peper & Harvey, 2018; Wolniewicz et al., 2020; Elhai et al., 2018; Long et al., 2016) and lend support to the theoretical models of SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985), the need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) and Compensatory Internet Use Theory (Kardefelt-Winther, 2014), in explaining how FoMO facilitates the relationships between loneliness and social connectedness with smartphone overuse. Individuals who are lacking in social connections and those who are high on loneliness are more likely to feel anxious about missing out and seek to alleviate their negative affect and emotion by engaging with a gadget that integrates features and resources that would enable them to do just that. However, the critical matter in these relationships is the significant impact of FoMO, which completely mediates the direct relationship between both loneliness and social connectedness with smartphone overuse. It is no surprise that in their attempt at relieving their lack of social connectedness and feelings of loneliness, their desire to stay connected with others, which can be achieved conveniently through the use of smartphones, is a significant contributor to their smartphone use behaviour. This explanation supports previous findings that FoMO may enhance social connections through intensive social media use (Roberts & David, 2020).

While this finding contributes to the mounting evidence on the relationship between FoMO and smartphone overuse, within the context of social connectedness and loneliness it highlights a possible concerning negative impact of FoMO on well-being and general satisfaction with life. That FoMO characterized by the need to consistently stay connected and feelings of anxiety about missing out on the “rewarding experiences” (Przybylski et al., 2013) other people are having, has negative consequences on mood, self-esteem and well-being has been well-documented (Burke et al., 2010; Przybylski et al., 2013; Błachnio & Przepiórka, 2018; Buglass et al., 2017). To this effect, if individuals, who may already be vulnerable due to their lack of social connection and sense of loneliness, are also vexed with apprehension about missing out on what they consider to be essential experiences, this could heighten their anxiety and thereby further exacerbate their existing sense of isolation and disconnection. Even though the excessive use of their smartphone may be a coping mechanism, it can, in the long run, have far-reaching consequences for their physical health (Shan et al., 2013; Wang et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2017) and mental health (Billieux et al., 2015; Im et al., 2013). Exploring the long-term effects of this

relationship will have implications for interventions aimed at relieving excessive gadget use and should be further examined.

As FoMO is a significant contributor to smartphone overuse, further explorations into the components of FoMO would refine and clarify the relationship. While this study did not explore the components of FoMO, past efforts have focused on its two domains of fear and control, where fear encapsulates the anxiety individuals high on FoMO feel when they think they are missing out on experiences, and control indicates the cognitive and behavioural component, such as thoughts and approaches to combat their fear (Casale & Fioravanti, 2020; Coco et al., 2020). FoMO control is of particular importance within the context of the present study, as it suggests maladaptive cognitions may maintain FoMO and in turn excessive smartphone use. This would be a significant future direction for researchers interested in unravelling the intricacies of FoMO.

Contrary to the prediction, there was no gender difference in smartphone overuse, which does not corroborate the existing literature (Demirci et al., 2015; De-Sola Gutiérrez et al., 2016; Tavakolizadeh et al., 2014; Lee et al., 2016), although the pattern of means was in the expected direction. One explanation for why previous studies have found that females use their smartphones more is because they use it for communicating and social networking, while males use it for gaming and watching online videos. This explanation suggests that communicating and social networking seem to be more “engaging” behaviours, hence why people using their phones for this reason feel a sense of dependence and reliance on their gadget. And the literature suggests that females more so than males place greater importance on relationships and maintaining them (Cross & Madson, 1997; Yang & Girgus, 2019), which can be achieved through communication. However, this does not necessarily mean that using smartphones to play games and watch videos indicates that there is less dependence and use of the phone because of these reasons. Lonely and socially disconnected individuals (regardless of their gender) are at a higher risk for excessive smartphone use, so it is not surprising that males and females in this sample did not differ significantly in their smartphone overuse. To further extend this area, it would be beneficial to explore the components of the smartphone overuse screening questionnaire. Like the present findings, Lee et al. (2017) found no significant gender difference in the overall score; however, they did find a significant gender effect in the female direction for the subfactor of prevalence. Exploring whether males and females differ on the domains of this screening measure would provide greater clarity in the motivations for smartphone behaviour and endorse existing theories on these differences.

Overall, these findings shed light on the risk factors for smartphone overuse on a previously unexplored sample. Understanding smartphone use behaviour is a first step at unravelling the complexities surrounding how the behaviour is acknowledged—either as excessive use or as maladaptive behaviour that should be recognized as a diagnostic category. Findings such as this augment the argument for its severity and significant negative impacts, which warrants scrutiny into its diagnostic status. That high-risk individuals for smartphone overuse are demonstrating more negative

outcomes, coupled with the contributions of FoMO, loneliness and social connectedness to excessive smartphone use, acknowledges the gravity of these risk factors. This is particularly critical for the present sample, as evidence suggests university students are generally more vulnerable to mental health problems globally (Brown, 2018) and in Malaysia (Kotera et al., 2021; Mey & Yin, 2015), which reinforces the need to realize how to reduce or eliminate these risks. Besides mental and physical health impacts of excessive smartphone use, among university students it has also been found to be associated with maladjustment to university life (Alt, 2018), and negatively associated with educational achievement (Lepp et al., 2015; Siew et al., 2017), adding to the mounting evidence of the negative consequences of smartphone overuse for this demographic.

Besides smartphone overuse being negatively associated with psychological well-being, it is imperative to note that those who overuse their gadget are also more vulnerable to other addictive behaviours such as internet and gaming addiction and alcohol and nicotine dependency (Jo et al., 2021). This further highlights the role of emotion dysregulation, impulse control and distress intolerance and their far-reaching effects; hence, it is recommended that future research should address these associations to shed light on preventative and intervention efforts.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-2019) experienced globally has unwittingly increased dependence on gadgets such as the smartphone, not just for necessary communication and seeking information, but also for social use, entertainment, stimulation and alleviation of boredom during lockdowns. For instance, an Italian study found children and adolescents used their smartphones more frequently during the pandemic compared to pre-pandemic times (Serra et al., 2021). The consequences of a global public health emergency can also further exacerbate problematic smartphone use. Among university students during the pandemic, perceived stress was a risk factor for problematic smartphone use (Peng et al., 2022). As the pandemic has significantly changed the landscape in terms of gadget reliance, it would be of urgency to further examine pandemic-related risk factors for smartphone overuse and address the role of self-control (Peng et al., 2022) as well as adaptive facets such as mindfulness that have been found to negatively impact smartphone overuse (Wang et al., 2021).

The limitations of using self-report measures must be acknowledged, especially if it is going to be used as a screening tool. There is also a possibility that feelings of FoMO can vary across time and context (Przybylski et al., 2013), and while this study assessed FoMO at one-time point only, it is recommended for variability to be considered in future research. In this study, participants were not asked about the purpose of smartphone use. It should be noted that smartphone use can be distinguished into social and non-social use (Song et al., 2004). The risk factors and consequences of smartphone use depending on the purpose of use are likely to vary; for example, lower depression severity is associated with increased social smartphone use, while increased anxiety is associated with non-social smartphone use (Elhai et al., 2017). In a time when most university students are faced with online learning and smartphones provide the platform to access their learning, it is imperative to scrutinize how exactly the purpose of use impacts their general well-being and adjustment to university life.

This would provide directions for intervention and a preventative framework for this sample.

With an estimated 33.46 million smartphone users in Malaysia by 2025 (Statistica, 2021), and the ever-growing advances in digital technology accessible through this gadget, it is likely the risk of smartphone overuse will increase. At the same time, it is possible to use smartphones non-excessively, and understanding one's own smartphone use behaviour would be particularly helpful in spreading awareness about the concept of smartphone overuse, as it is a possibility that young people may not be aware that they are problematic users until it may be too late. As more evidence comes to light about the motivations and effects of excessive smartphone use, steps should be taken to examine its diagnostic relevance; this will inform the development of significant preventative and intervention frameworks.

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Part III
Psychology for Positive Work-Environment

Chapter 11

The Meaning of Distributed Leadership Practices in Indian Organizations Role of Trust in Employer and Fulfilment of Psychological Contract



Ajay K. Jain and Anishya Obhrai Madan

Abstract This study explores *attitude to distributed leadership (DL)* and *implementation of distributed leadership (DL)* in the context of *trust in employer* and *psychological contract fulfilment of employee*. It is based on a confirmatory study of 179 middle-level managers belonging to manufacturing and service industries located in National Capital Region of Delhi, India. It brings out the mediating role of psychological contract between trust and DL in this relationship. The study validates the measure of attitude to DL and implementation of DL developed by Jain, A. K., & Jeppesen, H. J. (2014).

Keywords Attitude to distributed leadership (DL) · Implementation of distributed leadership (DL) · Psychological contract fulfilment of employee · Trust in employer · India

Introduction

In the complex world of today, as the leadership function moves from a traditionally hierarchical one to a more inclusive one, leadership theory is going through a transition as well. The underlying assumption behind the development of distributed leadership (DL) in organizations is to promote employees' participation in leadership functions to improve organizational efficiency and effectiveness (Bolden, 2011). The concept of DL involves interaction of multiple actors to achieve organizational goals (Uhl-Bien, 2006) and has been conceived as a good substitute to person-centric approaches in traditional leadership theories (Avolio et al., 2009).

The purpose of this study is to validate the measures of the meaning and implementation of distributed leadership practices (DL) in Indian organizations developed by

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Jain and Jeppesen (2014) and exploring the role of trust in employer and psychological contract in its prediction. This study attempts to achieve the following objectives (1) to validate the measure of attitude to DL developed by Jain and Jeppesen (2014); (2) to validate the measure of DL implementation developed by Jain and Jeppesen (2014); (3) to explore the role of trust in employer in predicting attitude to DL and implementation of DL in Indian organizations and (4) to explore if fulfilment of psychological contract by employees mediates this relationship.

Theoretical Background

Distributed Leadership (DL)

The concept of distributed leadership came into mainstream literature after being propounded by Gronn (2000) as a reconceptualization in the study of leadership. It is based on the notion that leadership is an activity that can be distributed among members of a group or organization depending on the situation and context (Pearce & Conger, 2002). Thus, leadership is being redefined “in terms of processes and practices organized by people in interaction, and the *study of that interaction without becoming preoccupied with what formal leaders do and think*” (Crevani et al., 2010) is emerging as the modern way to study leadership. Thus, leadership is not viewed solely as a vertical process but involves influence distributed among various actors (Bolden, 2011; Gronn, 2000; Woods et al., 2004). Based on the theory of distributed cognition and activity theory (Gronn, 2000; Spillane, 2004), the concept of DL involves the belief that the role of leaders and followers is not fixed but transient and task dependent for example, in the game of football, although the captain is a formal leader but leadership is distributed across all the players for achieving team’s goal. From this perspective, leadership becomes a process rather than being assigned to a person or vested in a position. DL researchers have extensively focused on educational sector and health sector to study the concept of DL. Hence, it can be explored in other sectors, e.g. manufacturing or services. The current study attempts to expand this scope to these sectors.

The term “shared leadership” is also used to refer to DL configurations in literature (Burke, 2010; Mendez, 2010). While very similar, these approaches have minor conceptual differences in their usage in literature (Fitzsimons et al., 2011; Goksoy, 2016). “Shared leadership involves maximizing all of the human resources in an organization by empowering individuals and giving them an opportunity to take leadership positions in their areas of expertise” (Goldsmith, 2010). Leadership is enacted by giving “power away” to the person most qualified in the team and to create an environment that strengthens each team members’ capabilities (Goldsmith, 2010). Table 11.1 depicts the key characteristics of distributed leadership and shared leadership. It attempts to bring out the similarities and differences between these

Table 11.1 Key characteristics of distributed leadership and shared leadership

Distributed leadership	Shared leadership
Leadership is not only held by those with designated, formal leadership roles but is enacted by multiple individuals in the organization	Leadership often emanates from the designated leader plus other group members who share leadership roles
Leadership practice is constituted and shaped by the interactions between leaders and followers and the organizational context	Leadership involves several individuals leading themselves and allowing others to lead them through a reciprocal influence process
Cognition is “stretched over” both human actors and aspects of the context they are in	Cognition is shared by members of the group
Advantage is offered by developing a capacity to act by means of “concertive action”, “co-performance” or “conjoint agency”	Advantage is offered through the aggregate of attributed influence in a group (collective influence)

Source Fitzsimons et al. (2011)

terms for greater conceptual clarity since these terms are used interchangeably in literature by many authors.

While the study of DL gains traction as this approach has shown positive relationship to team outcomes across multiple studies (Jambo & Hongde, 2020; Wu et al., 2020), less is known about its antecedents (Jonsson et al., 2021). Exploring these relationships should help build a more nuanced understanding of the concept (Bolden, 2011). The current study attempts to fill this gap. For purposes of the current study, “attitude to DL” and “implementing DL” are taken as two separate constructs for building a clearer understanding of this concept.

Attitude to DL

Attitude is recognized as a key driver of behaviour (Duignan & Bezzina, 2006) as has been demonstrated by social psychologists over multiple studies. As articulated in the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), attitude is considered a precursor to intention which determines the performance of behaviour (Ajzen, 2005). As described by Woods (2004), DL is “subject to the dominant rationalities in network governance. For distributed leadership, boundaries of participation tend to be circumscribed by organizational needs and the instrumental values of people’s attributes (skills, attitudes, etc.)”. Attitude and motivation of individuals are thus an important consideration for the success of DL and its outcomes (Duignan & Bezzina, 2006; Jain, 2021; Jain & Jeppessen, 2014). Further, India has a collectivistic culture which means that there is a propensity for Indians to want to belong to a “socially supportive environment” (Verma, 2020). DL practices need a pluralistic orientation for successful

implementation (Jain & Jeppessen, 2014), thus indicating the presence of “interpersonal trust between peers..... as a fundamental form of social capital” (Lizzio et al., 2011). Trust is also said to play an important role in the planning of behaviour by rational agents (Frost-Arnold, 2014) and is the basis of socially supportive environments. Further, leadership behaviour and practices form the basis of *trust in employer* and *psychological contract fulfilment* between employer and employee (Jain, 2021).

Based on this cognizance, for purposes of the current study, the development of a positive attitude to DL has been conceptualized as being a consequence to the presence of trust in the employment relationship and psychological contract of employees.

Implementation of DL

DL needs to be supported by the right kind of environment to be effective (Woods, 2004). A variety of conditions are seen as a precursor to DL being successfully implemented (Jain, 2021; Jain & Jeppessen, 2014; Muijs & Harris, 2006). Organizational structure and processes need to create an environment that fosters autonomy and avenues for participation (Jain, 2021; Jain & Jeppessen, 2014; Woods, 2004) and helps create a collaborative atmosphere (Huxham & Vangen, 2000) for successful implementation of DL. One of the ways of achieving this is by fostering trust in the organization. Various studies have indicated that trust (among other factors) may be a precursor for the successful implementation of DL (Harris, 2012; Jain, 2021; Jain & Jeppessen, 2014; Jonsson et al., 2020).

Thus, it is relevant to study what employees think of DL (attitude to DL) and the challenges of its implementation across industry sectors (Jain & Jeppessen, 2014). The current study is an attempt to extend this cognizance further.

Trust in Employer

While the success of DL depends on how leadership functions are performed by individuals, it is also a sum of the new patterns of interactions and influence among the individuals involved (Scribner et al., 2007). Trust has been identified as an antecedent to how leadership is distributed (Louis et al., 2009). This stems from the fact that for any collective action to be successful, trust among members is an important predictor of success. “Trust is an expectation that another party will not act opportunistically, will be honest and will make a good faith effort in accordance with previous commitments” (Louis et al., 2009).

Trust is a dynamic phenomenon and works across levels (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Trust makes collective action more feasible (Uphoff, 2000). It has a direct effect on a variety of outcomes (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001). Trust establishes “safety” which then supports communication and critique, question assumptions

and fosters risk taking (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). The relationship between trust and DL is thus dynamic and mutually reinforcing (Smylie et al., 2007). Trust has also been demonstrated to be a facilitator for DL practices (Jain, 2016, 2021). Overall, an environment that fosters trust and autonomy stimulates employees to undertake leadership tasks (Jonsson et al., 2020; Jain, 2021) and thus promotes DL. This leads us to the first hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Trust in employer is positively related to both attitude and implementation of DL.

Psychological Contract

A contract is an exchange agreement between two parties. With individualization of employee–employer relationships, psychological contract is proving to be a good analytic framework (Guest, 2016). A term attributed to Argyris (1960) “psychological work contract” describes the power of perception and values to the employment relationship as held by both the organization and the employee. Levinson et al., (1962) define it as “a series of expectations of which the parties to the relationship may not themselves be dimly aware but which nonetheless govern their relationship to each other”. Psychological contract thus encompasses the “less tangible expectations of both parties: for example the employer’s expectation of loyalty ... the employees’ expectation of fair pay, interesting work, autonomy and fulfillment” (Arthur et al., 1999: 14). It is thus defined as an individual’s beliefs or perceptions, based on organizational cues, on his/her implicit agreement with the organization (Rousseau, 1995). A study demonstrated that psychological contract is positively related to LMX and servant leadership as an antecedent to it (Megheirkouni, 2020). It has also been posited in literature that “fulfillment of psychological contract will promote an employees’ participation in DL practices” (Jain, 2021). The current study attempts to extend this cognizance further.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Fulfillment of psychological contract is positively related to both attitude and implementation of DL.

“Trust is present in all psychological contracts” (Atkinson, 2007). Trust is seen as central to the psychological contract in literature (Guest, 2016). Trust has a direct effect on a variety of outcomes including psychological contract (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001; Jain, 2021). Literature reveals that trust has a demonstrated effect on perceived psychological contract (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001; Jain, 2021; Robinson, 1996) and fulfillment of psychological contract (Hassan et al., 2017). In the context of tourism industries, Sobaih et al. (2019) have found the mediating impact of psychological contract fulfillment on the relationship of human resource management practices and job outcomes.

Researchers have used social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) to explain the mediating role of fulfillment of psychological contract (Katou & Budhwar, 2012). When employees perceive their employer to be trustworthy, they are more likely to increase

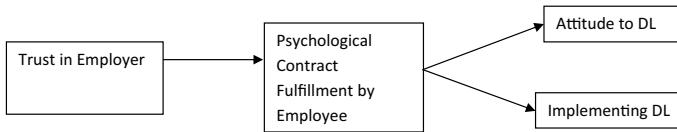


Fig. 11.1 Conceptual model

the level of their involvement and participation in organizational affairs to improve their contribution. Attitude to DL and implementation of DL are voluntary forms of organizational behaviour. Hence, employees are motivated to participate in DL practices (Jain, 2021). In contrast, employees withdraw from making efforts when they do not trust their employer (e.g. Liu et al., 2013). And they may reduce their voluntary contributions in the form of citizenship behaviour.

Drawn from the literature, fulfilment of psychological contract is conceptualized as the mediator variable that explains the causal mechanism through trust in employer motivates employees' involvement in DL practices. Hence, it is hypothesized that

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Fulfilment of psychological contract mediates the relationship between trust in employer and both attitude and implementation of DL.

Based on social exchange theory, all of the above may be conceptualized pictorially as in Fig. 11.1. All relationships should be in the positive direction.

Method

Sample

Data were collected from 179 middle-level managers belonging to manufacturing and service industries located in National Capital Region of Delhi, India. These managers are pursuing their executive graduate programme in business administration at Management Development Institute, Gurgaon. The average age of the group was 31.45 years. The number of male respondents was 158 and 21 were female. One hundred and six of them had an average tenure of more than 7 years. Of the total 179 respondents, 157 respondents had studied engineering and science at the graduation level, 16 had studied business, two had studied humanities, and four had studied other subjects.

Measures

In this study, we measured four constructs, namely attitude towards DL, implementation of DL, trust in employer and fulfilment of psychological contract by

employee. The employee was the unit of analysis. Self-reported questionnaires were administered.

Attitude to DL and *implementation of DL* were measured by using the questionnaire developed by Jain and Jeppesen (2014). *Attitude to DL* had five dimensions, and DL implementation had four dimensions. Attitude to DL was measured using 16 items while DL implementation was measured using 13 items. Jain and Jeppesen (2014) had developed a 16 items questionnaire to measure the attitude to DL. It has five dimensions, namely (1) self-initiative (four items) (e.g. DL can promote an independent thinking among employees); (2) improved functioning (four items) (e.g. DL can mitigate the conflicts between departments); (3) achieving organizational goals (three items) (e.g. DL can add value to organizational products and services); (4) accountability (three items) (e.g. DL can make employee accountable to their functional responsibilities) and (5) mutual respect (two items) (e.g. DL can make employees to be treated in a dignified manner). The questionnaire is provided in Appendix 1.

Jain and Jeppesen (2014) had developed a 13 items questionnaire to measure the *implementation of DL*. It has four dimensions, namely (1) horizontal structure (three items) (e.g. the implementation of DL requires low power distance in boss–subordinate relationship); (2) professionalism (three items) (e.g. the implementation of DL needs a culture of mutual respect among organizational members); (3) work commitment (four items) (e.g. the implementation of DL needs a strong work commitment among employees) and (4) power sharing (three items) (e.g. the implementation of DL needs a strong faith in developing long-term relationship with employees). The questionnaire is provided in Appendix 1.

Trust in employer was measured through a questionnaire consisting of seven items that was adopted from the work of Gabarro and Athos (1976). The questionnaire measures employee's trust in the employer, and it indicates the employee's positive faith and belief in employer's intentions and good will. Examples of trust in employer are I believe my employer has a high integrity and I can expect my employer to treat me in a consistent and predictable manner. The questionnaire is provided in Appendix 1.

The *fulfilment of psychological contract by employee* was measured by using Rousseau's (2008) four items questionnaire. Two items of this were measuring the dimension of employees' fulfilment of psychological contract, while other two items were measuring the dimension of employer's fulfilment of psychological contract. The two items measuring employees' fulfilment of psychological contract were used for purposes of the current study. An example of the items is overall, how well have you fulfilled your commitment to your employer. The questionnaire is provided in Appendix 1.

Procedure

The questionnaires were circulated among the 210 participants, and responses were collected in a face-to-face situation. Completed response forms were received from 179 respondents, thus response rate was 85%. Respondents have rated all survey items on a five-point scale where “1” stands for “strongly disagree” and “5” stands for “strongly agree”. Age, gender and tenure were used as control variables. Reverse coded items in the questionnaire were tested for assigned weights accordingly.

Results

Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Before using correlation and regression analysis, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed on the data set. Results of CFA are presented in Table 11.2.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to validate the measurement model for attitude to DL and DL implementation. Results showed a good model fit with data. All the model fit statistics was satisfactory. A CFA was performed to cross-validate the five-factor (16 items questionnaire) model of attitude to DL and the four-factor model of implementation of DL that was drawn from the study of Jain and Jeppesen (2014). AMOS was used to evaluate the fit of the proposed model. The covariance matrix was used as input for the CFA. Bollen’s (1989) recommendation to interpret multiple indices of fit was followed. The CFA results showed a good model fit for both the models. The parameter estimates for all the indicators were found to be significant, and it met acceptable levels of model fit statistics. (Chi square = 178.54; $p < 0.01$, GFI = 0.937, AGFI = 0.904, CFI = 0.923, TLI = 0.917 and RMSEA = 0.053). Thus, the results of the CFA largely uphold the findings of the EFA as reported in Jain and Jeppesen (2014). The questionnaires are provided in Appendix 1. Further, Table 11.3 presents the descriptive statistics, correlations among all variables and reliabilities being studied.

Table 11.2 Results of confirmatory factor analysis for attitude to DL and implementation of DL

Models	CMIN/DF	GFI	TLI	NFI	CFI	IFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Model fit statistics for attitude to DL	2.25. < 0.000	0.911	0.917	0.932	0.924	0.925	0.084	0.040
Model fit statistics for implementation of DL	1.878 < 0.000	0.922	0.930	0.909	0.954	0.955	0.070	0.051

Note GFI-Goodness of fit index; TLI-Tucker–Lewis fit index; CFI-Comparative fit index; RMSEA-Root mean square error of approximation; SRMR-Standardized root mean square residual

Table 11.3 Descriptive statistics, correlation among the variables and reliabilities (in parentheses)

Variables	1	2	3	4	Mean	SD
1. Trust in employer	(0.73)				3.51	0.657
2. Fulfilment of psychological contract by employees	0.483**	(0.73)			4.03	0.665
3. Attitude to distributed leadership	0.283**	0.469**	(0.93)		3.88	0.616
4. Implementation of distributed leadership	0.280**	0.413**	0.657**	(0.94)	3.73	0.625

Table 11.3 indicates a positive relationship of trust in employer and fulfilment of psychological contract by employees with attitude to DL and implementation of DL. Thus, trust and fulfilment of contract act as useful preconditions to motivate employees to develop a positive attitude to DL and implementing DL at their workplaces.

Meditational Analysis

The study adopted macro-PROCESS Hayes (2017), Model 4 to run the meditational analysis to see whether the indirect effect (a * b) of trust in employer through fulfilment of psychological contract by employees and employer on attitude to DL and implementation of DL was significantly different from zero. The indirect effect was tested using a percentile bootstrap estimation approach with 10,000 samples (Shrout & Bolger, 2002), implemented with the PROCESS macro-version 3 (Hayes, 2017).

As shown in Table 11.4, the indirect effect of trust in employer on attitude to DL through fulfilment of psychological contract by employees was statistically significant (0.196; $p = 0.000$), the 95% C.I. is [0.109, 0.298]. Similarly, the indirect effect of trust in employer on implementation of DL through fulfilment of psychological contract by employee was also statistically significant (0.166; $p = 0.000$), the 95%

Table 11.4 Hypotheses testing

Mediation paths	(In)direct effect	LLCI	ULCI	p value
H1: Trust in Employer → PC Employees	0.488	0.357	0.619	0.000
H2: Trust → PC Employees → Attitude to DL	0.196	0.109	0.298	0.000
H3: Trust → PC Employees → Implementing DL	0.166	0.065	0.282	0.000

Source Author’s survey, ** $p < 0.01$;

Note Trust = Trust in employer; PC employees = Fulfilment of psychological contract by employees; attitude to DL = Attitude to distributed leadership; implementing DL = Implementation of distributed leadership

C.I. is [0.065, 0.282]. Based on the results supported in Table 11.3, we can see that H1, H2 and H3 were supported.

Discussion

The current study attempts to demonstrate that *trust in employer* is positively related to *attitude to DL* and *implementation of DL* and the relationship is mediated by *psychological contract of employees*. As can be seen from the preceding section, these hypotheses were supported since all relationships showed a significant positive relationship. Thus, the conceptual model depicted in Fig. 11.1 is validated.

This confirms previous studies that articulated that trust in employer helps foster DL practices (Jain, 2016, 2021; Jonsson et al., 2020) and hence has a positive relationship on both attitude to DL (Duignan & Bezzina, 2006; Jain, 2021; Jain and Jeppesen, 2014) and implementation of DL (Harris, 2012; Jain, 2021; Jain and Jeppesen, 2014). This study has demonstrated the mediating role of fulfilment of psychological contract by employees which is an addition to the existing literature to the best of the authors' knowledge.

Thus, this study confirms the importance of trust in employer as an antecedent and fulfilment of psychological contract by employees as a mediator in predicting the attitude to DL and implementation of DL. Hence, this study empirically supports the idea of motivation to engage in DL practices (Jain, 2021). DL practices are discretionary in nature; therefore, they require motivation for any such engagement; else employees do not show their willingness to participate in DL practices until they are motivated enough. DL practices thus directly contribute to their job performance.

This study was based on self-reported survey responses from 179 middle-level managers belonging to manufacturing and service industries located in National Capital Region of Delhi, India. Since most reported studies on DL are in health care or education in U.S.A., UK and Australia, the current study extends the understanding of this concept to new industry domains and geography. Further, the conceptualization of the antecedents to DL is a novel addition to literature to the best of the author's knowledge.

Additionally, the validation of the scale developed by Jain and Jeppesen (2014) on a new sample confirms that the scale is robust in measuring both attitude to and implementation of DL across sectors.

Since the study is limited in the sample coverage to executives from National Capital Region of Delhi, India; it may need further validation in other geographical contexts. The study is based on survey responses at a single point in time and may be said to suffer from common method bias, but this was controlled for by including executives from a cross section of industry sectors.

Conclusion

Thus, this study extends the current understanding of DL in a more nuanced manner from an employees' perspective. It demonstrates how *trust in employer* would nurture a positive *attitude to DL* and motivate employees in the *implementation of DL*. The study also reveals the mediating role of *psychological contract of employees* in this relationship. This study hence opens up new avenues to explore the bases of DL while validating the scale developed by Jain and Jeppessen (2014) to measure attitude to and implementation of DL.

Thus, practitioners of management should focus on creating a culture of trust in employer in order to drive the employees' performance through their involvement in DL practices. The concept of DL not only promotes positive organizational behaviour, voice, innovation and citizenship behaviour, but also prevents employees from getting involved in negative organizational behaviour including theft, turnover, silence, etc. Future researchers can explore the impact of DL leadership practices as a mediator between various antecedents and consequences of DL.

Appendix 1

Attitude to DL: The following questions deal with your views about concept of distributed leadership in an organization.

Factor 1: Self-initiatives

1. DL can promote an independent thinking among employees
2. DL can make employees to adapt with the risky situations more effectively
3. DL can improve the firefighting ability of employees
4. DL can make employee to be more responsive in conditions of urgency

Factor 2: Improved functioning

5. DL can mitigate the conflicts between departments
6. DL can improve the functioning of the organization
7. DL can make employee more creative and innovative at the workplace
8. DL can help in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization

Factor 3: Achieving organizational goals

9. DL can add value to organizational products and services
10. DL can help in achieving the organizational goals
11. DL is important to create an atmosphere of teamwork

Factor 4: Accountability

12. DL can create a flatter organizational structure
 13. DL can make employees accountable to their functional responsibilities
 14. DL can reduce the level of formalization in the organization
-

(continued)

(continued)

Factor 5: Mutual respect

- 15. DL can help in grooming of employees in organization
 - 16. DL can make employees to be treated in a dignified manner
-

Implementation of DL : In addition, we would like to take your views on the implementation of the concept of distributed leadership in an organization.

Factor 1: Horizontal structure

- 1. The implementation of DL needs a system of appointment of the CEO on a rotational basis
 - 2. The implementation of DL needs an informal organizational structure
 - 3. The implementation of DL requires low power distance in boss–subordinate relationship
-

Factor 2: Professionalism

- 4. The implementation of DL needs employees to be more entrepreneurial in their functioning
 - 5. The implementation of DL needs a system to differentiate between personal and professional life
 - 6. The implementation of DL needs a culture of mutual respect among organizational members
-

Factor 3: Work commitment

- 7. The implementation of DL needs fear-free atmosphere in the organization
 - 8. The implementation of DL needs a trait of lead by example in top leadership
 - 9. The implementation of DL needs an attitude of simplicity at every level in the organization
 - 10. The implementation of DL needs a strong work commitment among people
-

Factor 4: Power sharing

- 11. The implementation of DL needs a system of empowering subunits head at every level of organization
 - 12. The implementation of DL needs to implement a flatter organizational structure
 - 13. The implementation of DL needs a strong faith in developing long-term relationship with employees
-

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Chapter 12

Positive Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness: Developing a Comprehensive Conceptual Framework for Indian Organizations



Priyashree Roy and Rabindra Kumar Pradhan

Abstract Contemporary business world is characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity and is popularly known as VUCA world. This uncontrollable negative spiral in today's workplace requires organizational leaders to instil stability, safety, hope and meaning. Organizational experts believe that positive leadership of an organization can guide and show the right directions to its people for achieving organizational goals even in the face of trouble and adversity. Keeping this in view, the present paper purports to develop a comprehensive conceptual framework for examining the relationship between positive leadership and organizational effectiveness. This paper also attempts to establish the intervening role of organizational citizenship behaviour and emotional intelligence on the relationship between positive leadership and organizational effectiveness. Researchers undertook an in-depth and extensive literature survey in order to critically examine the impact of positive leadership on organizational effectiveness. The review provides a comprehensive framework to develop a conceptual model of positive leadership in the organizational context. The proposed conceptual framework would enable researchers and management experts gain a deeper and nuanced understanding of the role of positive leadership in producing improved organizational functioning and effectiveness. The paper offers multiple practical implications for HR practitioners and management experts which if properly utilized would prove to be useful in fostering positive leadership skills in the organizations through effective leadership development interventions and executive coaching programmes, leading to better performance of the employees. The study contributes to deeper and nuanced understanding of the construct of Positive Leadership and proposes a new conceptual model suited to the Indian context.

Keywords Positive leadership · Organizational effectiveness · Organizational citizenship behaviour · Emotional intelligence

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Introduction

The current business world is characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity, commonly known as a VUCA world (Rodriguez & Rodriguez, 2015). Leading others during such stressful time is indeed a daunting task that requires leaders to restore hope, trust, optimism, safety and stability, and that is why positive leadership (PL) is the need of the hour. A leader must be able to guide their subordinates during stressful times, encourage and inspire them to take risks without fear of failure. A leader needs to be optimistic, hopeful, resilient and confident in order to lead people in trying times. Competition in global business environment has increased considerably with the advent of globalization, liberalization and privatization, as a consequence of which organizations nowadays are witnessing enormous complexity and unpredictability. Hence, contemporary organizations require leaders who can lead efficiently under stress/pressure and effectively deal with multiple challenges created by global business.

Leadership is essentially a collective organizational enterprise (rather than an individual level control and command phenomenon) that influences the human relations and human capital, internal operations, innovation and major change in the organization. Leaders are at the helm of organizational affairs. For smooth and effective functioning of the organization, it is imperative for leaders in an organization to coordinate and integrate their activities in a productive manner in order to arrive at effective problem solving and decision-making.

In the recent years, OB experts have started showing considerable interest in unravelling the close association between culture, behaviour and attitudes of the employees, and the overall functioning and effectiveness of organizations. A large body of research findings shed light on the significant role that culture plays on the success and failure of organizations. Culture can be defined as “the [predominant] beliefs, values, attitudes, behaviours and practices that are characteristic of a group of people” (Warrick, 2015, p. 4). Leaders play a crucial role in shaping the culture of the organization. Lou Gerstner, the former chairman of IBM recognized the immense importance of organizational culture and stated, “Culture isn’t just one aspect of the game—it is the game. In the end the organization is no more than the collective capacity of its people to create value” (Gerstner, 2002, p. 182). Positive leadership practices create a culture of growth and abundance and offer a sustainable way to bring out the best in people in a consistent manner.

The very essence of leadership is embedded in the interpersonal context. A successful leader must understand and connect with his followers. A leader may have the best strategic plan and organizational goals and objectives in place, but it is the quality of the relationships and the patterns of communication and interaction that act as the real game-changer and eventually create the desired results and drive the success of the organization. Strong and effective leaders provide a compelling vision, a sense of purpose and meaning, mentorship and inspiration to their followers. By adopting a strengths-based approach wherein the leaders focus on the signature

strengths and tap into the full potential of the individuals, positive leadership tends to create and sustain positive identities for the members as well as for the organization.

Roberts (2014) opine that positive leadership serves to unleash valuable psychological and social resources through the process of shaping, building and sustaining positive identities. This “positive identity construction” creates a thriving work culture and boosts the self-efficacy of the workers, leading to better performance. Research findings show that people’s creativity augments, and they become more adept at solving complex problems, dealing with multiple challenges and generating novel ideas and solutions when they integrate different parts of their identities. This is precisely the reason as to why a big multinational company like IBM has engaged its Employee Resource groups to utilize the cultural insights of diverse groups in the workplace ranging from working mothers, and workers who have visual impairment to employees belonging to the LGBT groups, with a view to generating novel and effective business strategies and better work processes and outcomes in the long run (Roberts, 2014).

Nowadays, there is a growing emphasis on the positive dimensions of human experience in organizational research. The field of positive organizational behaviour (POB) is gaining momentum and popularity, as more and more researchers are working on positive experiences in the workplace. In this context, it should be noted that despite the crucial role that formal organizational leaders play in the overall growth and development of organizations, with few exceptions, research on positive experiences at work has not adequately focused on organizational leaders and positivity (Weigand, 2017).

Cameron (2008) introduced the concept of positive leadership in organization studies. Positive leadership (PL) originated from the theory and research of positive organizational scholarship (POS) and offers a new perspective on developing leaders who nurture performance and growth in themselves, in their teams and in their organizations. PL stands as a stark contrast to the traditional approaches to leadership which are more focused on retaining the status quo and fixing the day-to-day problems. Positive leaders adopt a strength-based approach to leadership and engage employees by emphasizing what elevates them, what they do well and how they can be inspired to deliver extraordinary results (Cameron, 2008). The core tenets of positive leadership are adoption of strengths-based approach, expression of gratitude, and using positive recognition in order to boost positive workplace behaviours and effective employee performance.

Kelloway and colleagues (2013) defined positive leadership as “those behaviours that are enacted by leaders and result in increasing followers’ experience of positive emotions”. Behaviours exhibited by a leader can significantly affect employees’ stress level and well-being (Skakon et al., 2010). Skakon et al. (2010) systematically reviewed thirty years of research pertaining to leadership behaviour and well-being of employees and concluded that positive leadership behaviours result in employee well-being. On the contrary negative leadership behaviour causes stress on the part of employees. Leaders who display positive behaviours like acknowledging, showing concern for employees’ welfare, and encouraging the ability to make decisions independently, pave way for increased psychological well-being of employees

(Gilbreath & Benson, 2004). On the other hand, abusive leaders who indulge in “prolonged emotional and psychological mistreatment of subordinates” (Harvey et al., 2007) cause employee distress, conflict between work and family, lower affective and normative commitment and intention to quit (Tepper, 2000). Thus, we find that a growing body of research points to the fact that positive approach to leadership contributes to employee well-being, employee engagement, performance and overall organizational effectiveness.

For achieving and sustaining organizational effectiveness, it is crucial for organizations to understand the importance of employees’ discretionary efforts at the workplace. Organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) fosters conducive social and psychological environment that facilitates task performance and promotes organizational effectiveness. Previous studies have demonstrated that OCB paves way for organizational effectiveness through its association with efficiency of operation, growth in revenues, financial performance, and customer satisfaction (Organ et al., 2006). Yang and Konrad (2011) showed that employees displaying organizational citizenship behaviour are innovative, committed, bold, and work hard to achieve organizational objectives. Organizational citizenship behaviour has been found to be associated with organizational innovation and creativity and thus constitutes a major source of competitive advantage for organizations. Previous researches have demonstrated that OCB is largely influenced by organizational leadership style and practices (Babcock-Roberson & Strickland, 2010). Thus, it is expected that positive leadership practices like gratitude, compassion, forgiveness, appreciation, encouragement and positive feedback, and communication can go a long way in facilitating and nurturing the citizenship behaviours of employees. Thus, one may assume that a positive association between positive leadership and OCB would likely to impact organizational effectiveness.

Over the last few decades, emotional intelligence (EI) is gaining unprecedented recognition in organizational settings. Emotional intelligence enables us to negotiate organizational challenges in a productive and adaptive manner (Matthews et al., 2004). Goleman (1998) opines that individuals possessing high emotional quotient (EQ) tend to have a higher ability to self-regulate and are intrinsically motivated, which in turn help in reducing their tendency to procrastinate, improve their self-confidence, and allow them to achieve long-term goals. Thus, employees’ emotional intelligence appears to play a significant role in predicting the impact of positive leadership on organizational effectiveness. The following sections will examine literatures concerning positive leadership and its possible influence on organizational effectiveness. It will also explore the possible roles of OCB and emotional intelligence on the relationship between positive leadership and organizational effectiveness.

Literature Review

Positive Leadership

Positivity is an essential requirement for leaders in challenging times (Youssef-Morgan & Luthans, 2013). Greenberg and Arakawa (2007) assert that positive leaders increase their followers' well-being and engagement because they influence their followers positively. According to them positive leadership essentially consists of strength-based approach, positive perspective and giving recognition. Recent research by Nel et al. (2015) reveals that positive leadership is associated with employees' empowerment, work engagement as well as satisfaction with life.

According to Cameron (2008) positive leadership is based on rigorous scientific evidence and theoretically grounded principles that seek to facilitate positive outcomes like thriving at work, interpersonal flourishing, virtuous behaviours, positive emotions and “energizing networks”. Positive leaders facilitate “positively deviant” performance by harnessing employees' strengths and placing emphasis on virtue and eudemonism (Cameron, 2008).

The three salient features of positive leadership are as follows:

- (i) Positive leadership enables “positively deviant” performance. Positive leaders strive to promote remarkable and extraordinary performance that dramatically surpasses the usual or expected performance.
- (ii) Positive leadership is based on affirmative orientation. It aims at enabling thriving and interpersonal flourishing at the workplace.
- (iii) Positive leadership seeks to facilitate the best of human condition, or virtuousness. It is grounded in eudaemonic principle—that is, all individuals possess an inherent proclivity to achieve the very best of the human condition—so positive leader strives to unlock the true potential of individuals and develop virtuousness (Cameron, 2008).

Positive leaders always focus on increasing the “positive capacity” of the organization for which they use specific strategies like developing positive climate, building positive relationships, getting involved in positive communication and creating positive meaning (Cameron, 2008). He further asserts that these four strategies adopted by a positive leader have “amplifying effects” on one another.

- (i) **Positive Climate:** Positive organizational climate is characterized by “pre-dominance of positive emotions over negative emotions in the workplace” (Cameron, 2008, p. 17). Positive leader models and encourages compassionate behaviour, forgiveness and gratitude among the members of the organization. These positive emotions and virtuous practices create a congenial work environment where people feel genuinely cared for, supported and encouraged to thrive.
- (ii) **Positive Relationships:** According to Cameron (2008) positive relationships help to build trust, create a sense of safety and enhance the social capital of the

organization and team. Leaders can build positive relationship at the workplace with the help of various techniques like building positive energy networks, capitalizing on employees' signature strengths as well as reinforcing best-self attributes. Positive workplace relationship is a "source of growth, vitality, learning, and collective flourishing". When there is a prevalence of positive workplace relationships people show concern for fellow human beings and work for the benefit of others.

- (iii) **Positive Communication:** Positive communication in an organization is characterized by "language of affirmation and support" that replaces "negative critical language" (Cameron, 2008, p. 51). Positive communication, which includes expression of appreciation, recognition, support, validation, helpfulness, approval, and compliments strengthens relationships. By placing emphasis on the event rather than on the person while delivering critical feedback or rectifying errors can help to nurture the relationship. Leaders can also use supportive communication strategies like "active constructive communication" and "best self-feedback" to reinforce the positive. Leaders can frame communication patterns in organizations in a positive direction by expressing genuine enthusiasm and interest in what a team member is saying, and keeping a strong focus on finding viable solutions in every conversation.
- (iv) **Positive Meaning:** Connecting people to meaning and purpose at work enhance their performance and wellbeing. In order to create meaningful work, the leader must clearly articulate the purpose, vision and values of the organization and align personal values of employees with those of the organization, and connect them to the bigger picture to make them realize how their work is contributing to overall social betterment. In a positive organization, people are usually driven by some higher purpose and meaning. The feeling of contributing to a greater positive purpose is indeed gratifying.

Thus, we find that the creation of a positive organizational culture often begins with effective positive leadership practices. When leaders create a congenial organizational climate that induces psychological safety and boosts employees' self-esteem, thereby making them feel good about themselves, and the positive role they play in organization's long-term objectives and larger mission, they usually derive immense job satisfaction and feel good at work. Satisfied, happy and motivated employees tend to perform better leading to organizational effectiveness. Employees can safely as well as effectively express opinions, voice their dissent, challenge ideas, request support and suggest viable and innovative solutions without the fear of being unduly criticized or humiliated, within a conducive climate at work, that mitigates conflict and fear, empowers employees and promotes individual growth, vitality and mastery, and a sense of contributing to a higher positive purpose. In today's complex business environment, positive leadership is essential for sustained productivity and the long-term well-being of the organization.

Organizational Effectiveness

Organizational effectiveness refers to how effectively an organization achieves its predefined objectives with the given amount of resources and means without unnecessarily taxing its employees. Leaders play an instrumental role in the successful accomplishment of organizational goals and objectives because leadership influences all aspects of a business, ranging from selection, engagement, retention of talent to customer loyalty, overall brand perception and influence. Organizational effectiveness refers to “a company’s long-term ability to achieve consistently its strategic and operational goals” (Fallon & Brinkerhoff, 1996). Organizational effectiveness is not only limited to profitability or productivity of the organization but it also pertains to how effectively the employees are managed in the organization. Researchers have used multiple criteria for measuring organizational effectiveness. Khurana (2013) gave three important criteria for measuring organizational effectiveness, namely fairness in competition, organizational culture and job satisfaction. Mott (1972) contended that effectiveness of an organization can be assessed with the help of (a) productivity (b) adaptability and (c) efficiency. Organizational effectiveness can be measured in terms of three important criteria such as employee performance, operational performance and financial performance (Ketkar & Sett, 2009). Employee performance is a significant determinant of organizational effectiveness. Organization’s long-term success largely depends upon how efficiently and diligently its employees are performing. Employee performance is assessed with respect to organizational commitment, the ability to effectively deal with multiple types of tasks, openness to change, eagerness as well as the readiness to learn new skills, ability to solve complex problems, customer orientation, and the extent to which they can work collaboratively as a team. Financial performance of an organization can be assessed through the effects of profitability, productivity, as well as cost-effectiveness upon the organization (Kumari & Pradhan, 2014).

Interaction of Positive Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness

Previous researches have demonstrated that implementation of positive workplace practices like fostering compassion for colleagues, building an atmosphere of forgiveness, respect, integrity in the workplace, and placing importance on meaningful work can significantly influence organizational level effectiveness (Cameron et al., 2003). Cameron et al. (2011) showed that positive practices at the workplace are associated with a multitude of positive organizational outcomes like reduction in turnover, increase in organizational effectiveness, and improvement in environment of the workplace as well as marked improvement in relationships with management. Engaged employees are a source of competitive advantage for an organization and contribute to overall organizational effectiveness. The role of leaders

is crucial in fostering employee engagement. The 2015 Strengths at Work Survey (McQuaid & VIA Institute, 2015) revealed that 78% of the employees felt “engaged and energized”, while 65% of the employees admitted that they experience “flourishing” at work, when their supervisors focused on their strengths rather than on their weaknesses. However, the results of the survey also showed that nearly 68% of managers fail to provide any positive feedback about employees’ strengths. Most of the managers either provide minimal positive feedback, or focus only on employee’s drawbacks and shortcomings and do not offer any proper guidance for further improvements. Nel and colleagues (2015) conducted an empirical study aimed at investigating whether perceived positive leadership behaviour significantly predicts psychological empowerment, engagement at work, and employees’ satisfaction with life in a chemical organization in South Africa. Additionally, the study also attempted to examine indirect effect of positive leadership on employees work engagement and satisfaction with life through psychological empowerment. The findings revealed indirect effect of positive leadership on employees’ work engagement, and satisfaction with life through the mediating effects of psychological empowerment.

Leaders can have immense positive influence on their subordinates by capitalizing on the strengths of their subordinates. A great deal of research has demonstrated how a culture of positivity can enhance employee performance and productivity, ultimately leading to increased organizational effectiveness. Losada and Heaphy (2004) studied the patterns of communication displayed by business unit management teams and concluded that the ratio of positive comments to negative comments among team members was the most significant determinant of profitability and customer satisfaction. Positive comments reflect emotional support and appreciation while on the other hand negative comments show disapproval, cynicism and criticism. Recent researches have underscored the beneficial effects of positive and supportive workplace relationships on individual’s functioning and their performance, leading to increased organizational effectiveness. Positive work relationships meet members’ relational needs and encourage them to be authentic, as well as intellectually and emotionally available at work (Kahn, 2007). According to Roberts (2007), positive work relationships foster a sense of relatedness and reciprocity which paves way for self-discovery and a sense of increased self-efficacy. Pratt and Dirks (2007) showed how positive relationships pave way for creativity, trust and openness to new ideas. Previous research by Ancona and Isaacs (2007) revealed positive association between positive relationships and healthier team functioning. Positive relationships resulted in increased energy, learning, cooperation, greater utilization of resources, time savings, reduction in cost and development of human capital in organizations (Baker & Dutton, 2007) and produced increased levels of project performance in organizations (Cross et al., 2010) which is crucial for effective functioning of organizations. Organizational effectiveness, to a large extent depends on whether the leader is skilled enough to harness positive emotions among the members of the teams. Prior research has demonstrated that leaders can significantly influence how workers feel at work (Sy et al., 2005). Emotions displayed by senior managers can go a long way in affecting the overall organizational climate, which in turn influences

organizational effectiveness (Langton et al., 2008). Fredrickson's (2001) research demonstrated that positive emotions "broaden" an individual's thought-action repertoire that fosters creativity, interpersonal bonds and help in building individual's reservoir of personal resources. This in turn improves coping skills and ensures survival during hardships and difficult times. An abundance of positive emotions in the work environment pave way for positive organizational climate which in turn fosters "upward spirals towards optimal functioning and enhanced performance" (Fredrickson, 2001). Research findings demonstrate a positive association between positive work climate and improved decision-making, creativity, productivity, social cohesion and prosocial behaviours (Bolino et al., 2002; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) which are crucial for achieving organizational effectiveness. In the context of present work life, which places excessive demands on productivity, leadership is perceived as an essential tool to augment motivation and well-being of employees which eventually paves way for increased productivity and results in long-term sustainability of the organization. Research shows that higher levels of employee wellbeing are significantly correlated with increased productivity and improved firm performance (Krekel et al., 2019). Several studies have documented a strong association between leader's behaviours and employee well-being. Leaders who are supportive, considerate and strive to empower their subordinates foster employee well-being (Donaldson-Feilder et al., 2013). Abusive supervision on the other hand causes employee exhaustion and depression, diminished well-being and negative affect (Schyns & Schilling, 2013). Research conducted in the field of nursing demonstrated that positive forms of leadership such as authentic leadership are responsible for low burnout symptoms (Laschinger & Fida, 2014; Laschinger et al., 2013) and elevated employee engagement (Bamford et al., 2013). Kelloway and colleagues (2013) found that positive leadership is associated with context-specific as well as context-free well-being of employees.

Positive leadership has a positive influence on creativity and innovation crucial for organizational effectiveness. Recent research by Weigand (2017) revealed that positive leadership is positively correlated with follower positivity and innovation, and negatively associated with burnout. Positive leadership, organizational culture based on strengths, and appropriate change management practices like "appreciative inquiry" are crucial for organizations to achieve their long-term goals and objectives (Tombaugh, 2005). Thus, we find that in a dynamic, complex and competitive business environment, Positive leadership with its exclusive emphasis on positive climate, positive relationships, positive communication and positive meaning may be viewed as a strategic asset that provides sustainable competitive advantage to the organization. Thus, based on the findings of prior studies, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H1—Positive leadership will positively influence organizational effectiveness.

Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

Organizational citizenship behaviour has been studied extensively as it contributes to effective functioning in organizations (Podsakoff et al., 2000). Previous research by Podsakoff et al. (2009) showed that organizational citizenship behaviour significantly contributes to quality of performance as well as financial performance of an organization. Organizational citizenship behaviour positively impacts organizational performance and effectiveness by increasing employee retention, lowering absenteeism and enhancing job satisfaction (Chughtai & Zafar, 2006). Employees exhibiting organizational citizenship behaviour are driven by strong morale which in turn lowers turnover rate (Jackson et al., 2012). For surviving in an increasingly competitive market, organizations require employees who are intrinsically motivated, display willingness to go beyond formal role requirements and are always ready to walk the extra mile in order to contribute to effective organizational functioning.

Different scholars expressed different viewpoints pertaining to dimensions of OCB. Organ (1988) classified OCB into five dimensions: (i) altruism-selfless behaviour such as sharing the work burden of fellow workers, helping a colleague on a particular task and the like, (ii) courtesy-treating others with respect and dignity, (iii) conscientiousness-performing duties beyond their formal job requirements, (iv) sportsmanship-high distress tolerance, behaving in a responsible manner so as to avoid unnecessary tension in the workplace and the ability to refrain from complaining about petty issues and (v) civic virtue. Expressing high level of interest and loyalty to the organization often manifested in the form of willing participation in the governance of the organization.

Dyne et al. (1994) proposed three dimensions of OCB, namely organizational obedience, participation with respect to involvement and cooperation, and organizational loyalty. Podsakoff and colleagues (2000) provided seven different dimensions of organizational citizenship behaviour, namely (i) Helping Behaviour, (ii) Sportsmanship, (iii) Organizational Loyalty, (iv) Organizational Compliance, (v) Individual Initiative, (vi) Civic Virtue and (vii) Self-Development. They systematically reviewed theoretical and empirical research pertaining to organizational citizenship behaviour and came to the conclusion that OCB is strongly determined by positive attitudes towards work, characteristics of the tasks assigned to employees, and behaviours of leaders. Previous studies reveal that employees are most likely to display citizenship behaviours when they experience jobs satisfaction, when tasks which are assigned to them are intrinsically satisfying, and when their leaders are supportive or inspirational (Bolino et al., 2002). Leaders, who are compassionate and committed to the welfare and growth of their coworkers, are better able to connect with their coworkers and generate high levels of personal commitment which in turn promotes citizenship behaviour, creativity, and greater organizational wealth creation (Pfeffer & Jeffrey, 1998). In the light of existing literature, we contend that Positive leadership is likely to have a positive impact on organizational citizenship behaviour, and organizational citizenship behaviour will in turn pave way for employee well-being, employee

engagement, employee performance and greater organizational effectiveness. Based on this, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H2: Organizational citizenship behavior will mediate the relationship between Positive Leadership and organizational effectiveness.

H2a: Altruism will mediate the relationship between positive leadership and organizational effectiveness.

H2b: Courtesy will mediate the relationship between positive leadership and organizational effectiveness.

H2c: Conscientiousness will mediate the relationship between positive leadership and organizational effectiveness.

H2d: Sportsmanship will mediate the relationship between positive leadership and organizational effectiveness.

H2e: Civic virtue will mediate the relationship between positive leadership and organizational effectiveness.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotions are no longer considered as disruptive, damaging and indicative of maladjustment. In fact, contemporary researchers and business practitioners widely recognize the value of emotions in organizing, motivating and directing human activity. With respect to modern organization theory, emotional intelligence (EI) is viewed as the index of competencies that facilitate organizations to develop a compelling vision for competitiveness, and encourage organizational leaders to strongly commit to that vision as well as motivate members of the organization to achieve that vision. Ugoani (2016) observed that emotional intelligence is positively correlated with organizational competitiveness. In today's world, business has become increasingly complex owing to the effects of globalization and the accelerating pace of technological advancement and innovation, which is why the importance of emotionally intelligent leaders is gradually increasing. Murugan (2017) found that emotional intelligence of employees has a positive impact on organizational effectiveness in IT industry in Chennai. High levels of EI help in identification of proper talent, delegation of roles and responsibilities accordingly and resolving organizational conflict amicably (Srivastava, 2013). In this VUCA business environment, organizations have to deal with multiple challenges and unpredictable changes. Coping with change entails the skill to accurately perceive and fathom the emotional impact of change on ourselves as well as on others. Leaders and other members of the organizations should be able to monitor and regulate their own feelings of anxiety and uncertainty as well as the emotional reactions of others, in order to effectively cope with change (Bunker, 1997). Goleman in his book "Working with Emotional Intelligence" (1998) argued that the EQ (Emotional Quotient) is twice as important as IQ (Intelligence Quotient) in determining professional success. Prior research has found that emotionally intelligent people tend to display higher levels of commitment, cooperation and creativity, which are crucial for organizational effectiveness (Cherniss &

Goleman, 2001). Organizations need to hone the creative potential and innovative spirit of their employees for surviving in the fiercely competitive market. Additionally, they should also focus on increasing customer loyalty in order to provide better service and retain their customers. The success of an organization largely depends on employees' level of motivation, commitment as well as the ability to collaborate and work together effectively as a team (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001). For all these reasons, EI plays a key role in determining business success, and emotionally intelligent employees have a competitive edge over others.

Emotional intelligence (EI) positively influences organizational effectiveness in a number of ways (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001). He states that EI is very useful in recruitment of employees, teamwork and collaboration, employee commitment, employee morale and health, innovation and productivity, enhancing employee efficiency, sales, revenues, service quality as well as customer loyalty. Carmeli (2003) conducted a study to decipher whether senior managers, employed in public sector organizations and possessing high emotional intelligence, developed positive attitudes towards work, altruistic behaviours and work outcomes. The findings of the study revealed that EI plays an instrumental role in enhancing positive attitude towards work, altruistic behaviour and work outcomes. Additionally, EI also moderated the effects of work–family conflict on career-related commitment. Thus, we find that emotionally intelligent workforce can take an organization to greater heights of success as they are capable of handling unexpected challenges or threats to the business. They are also better equipped to deal with the complexities of emotion in crisis management and hence serve as an indispensable asset to the organization.

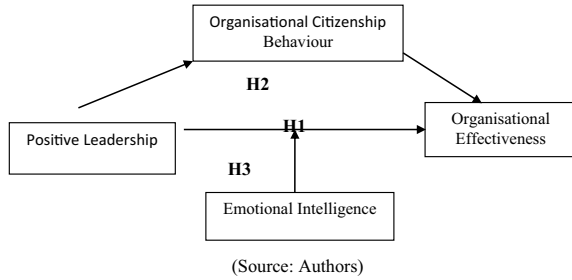
Hence, it is presumed that employees' emotional intelligence (EI) is likely to moderate the relationship of positive leadership with organizational effectiveness. Based on this premise, the following hypothesis is proposed accordingly.

H3: Emotional intelligence will moderate the relationship between positive leadership and organizational effectiveness, such that the association is high when the EI is high, and low when EI is low.

Research Gaps

Organizations require a positive, strength-based approach to leadership which would be helpful in combating the economic and psychological uncertainty commonly seen in today's business environment. Although, in the recent years, researchers have attempted to examine the impact of Positive leadership in organizational affairs, there still exist a lot of research gaps that need to be addressed. It is observed that despite a substantial body of literature on positive leadership specifically pertaining to its practical aspects, the construct is not properly delimited and delineated (Antino et al., 2014). There is a gap of literature related to the impact positive leadership has, both direct and indirect, on organizational effectiveness. Most importantly, the underlying mechanism governing the influence of PL on organizational effectiveness is not properly delineated in previous studies. Moreover, there is conspicuous

Fig. 12.1 A conceptual framework for exploring the impact of positive leadership on organizational effectiveness. *Source* Authors



dearth of research pertaining to positive organizational leadership in Indian context. Therefore, this study aims at examining the relationship between positive leadership and organizational effectiveness through the mediating effects of organizational citizenship behaviour. The relationship between positive leadership and organizational citizenship needs to be empirically investigated. Additionally, on the basis of our above discussion, the probable moderating role of emotional intelligence also needs to be examined in this context. Hence, an imperative need is felt for developing a holistic and comprehensive model which will adequately address the identified gaps and will be suited to the Indian context. Thus, on the basis of the above literature and discussion, we propose the following conceptual model to examine the impact of positive leadership on organizational effectiveness through the mediating effect of OCB and the moderating effect of emotional intelligence (Fig. 12.1).

Objectives

Based on the literature review, the following objectives are developed:

- (1) To examine the impact of positive leadership on organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) and organizational effectiveness.
- (2) To examine the impact of organizational citizenship behaviour on organizational effectiveness.
- (3) To examine the mediating effects of organizational citizenship behaviour and the moderating role of emotional intelligence in the relationship of positive leadership and organizational effectiveness.

Implications

Managerial Implications

The business world in twenty-first century is characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. This uncontrollable downward negative spiral in today's

workplace calls for a paradigm shift in leadership approach. Leaders need to restore hope, trust, a sense of safety and stability and positive leadership seems to be the only way forward in this era of economic and psychological uncertainty. Positive leaders tend to perceive problems as opportunities, persevere relentlessly to reach their goals, and focus on the inherent positive aspects embedded in difficult or adverse situations. Thus, PL creates resilient and energetic workforce who can perform and sustain in the face of adversity and trying times. Thus, strength-based, positive leadership practices are extremely relevant in the dynamic and complex business environment. Today's organizations require leaders who possess positive leadership skills that help to bring out the best in people and accelerate business performance. Organizations need to invest in the positive leadership development training programmes in order to ensure their survival in the face of multiple challenges created by global business.

Keeping this in view, it is felt that there is an imperative need to critically examine the impact of positive leadership on organizational effectiveness. Additionally, the researchers will also attempt to investigate the effects of some relevant intervening variables (organizational citizenship behaviour and emotional intelligence) on the relationship between positive leadership and organizational effectiveness.

Research Implications

The chapter will help researchers to gain a deeper and nuanced understanding of how positive leadership contributes to organizational effectiveness. Moreover, this would aid researchers to critically investigate the interrelationship among a number of relevant variables within the framework of positive leadership and organizational effectiveness. Additionally, the present study also provides a holistic framework for future researchers to empirically examine the intervening influence of organizational citizenship behaviour, and emotional intelligence on the relationship between positive leadership and organizational effectiveness. This will enable HR professionals and OB researchers gain deeper insights into the nature, dynamics and role of positive leadership in organizational functioning.

Summary and Conclusion

Existing literature suggests that positive leadership practices in organizations can help to create resilient, energetic and highly motivated and inspired workforce, open to learning, self-growth and development, as well as positive change which can go a long way in combating the staggering economic and psychological uncertainty prevalent in today's VUCA world. Positive leadership mitigates work-related stress and burnout and enhances job satisfaction and subjective well-being of employees. Positive leadership therefore may be given adequate importance in organizational settings in achieving positive work-related outcomes like interpersonal flourishing

and thriving at work in the face of fierce global competition leading to organizational effectiveness. We suggest that positive leadership may act as a strategic asset in today's dynamic and complex business environment for long-term sustainability of organizations. The empirical validation of the proposed conceptual framework in this chapter would provide a number of practical applications for practitioners in the field of leadership and organization development.

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Chapter 13

Psychological Undercurrents in the Struggles Faced by Women Employees in Fulfilling Their Career Aspirations: An Image Theatre-Based Exploration



Rajani Ramachandran and Deepak Dhayanithy

Abstract This article reports the findings from a theatre workshop held at a private limited company that explored the struggles faced by women employees in fulfilling their career aspirations. 34 women employees participated in the two-day workshop which used image theatre of the Boalian Theatre of the Oppressed tradition. The workshop revealed that a major struggle faced by women was not so much to do with having to juggle multiple roles as much as it was to do with one responsibility, namely the home maker role, taking a non-negotiable and strong precedence. An unsupportive socio-cultural background within which the gender roles were entrenched took toll on the women employees perceived control and affected her self-confidence in general and at work. The need for any programme on gender within an organization to not just provide a systemic view of gender as a sociological construct but also focus on the underlying psychological effect of “doing gender” is discussed. The psychological use of image theatre as a relatively low budget process with the potential to elicit attitudes and perceptions in an impromptu manner that is free from managerial influence is also discussed.

Keywords Image theatre · Theatre of the Oppressed · Gender · Career · Agentic-communal dichotomy · Stereotype

Introduction

Of late organizations in India are showing genuine concern regarding gender-based issues, from discrimination to harassment. Apart from constitution of Internal Complaints Committee and other organizational policies which foster inclusivity,

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workshops to sensitize employees have also become relatively more common. However, workshops need to take account of the fact that gender prejudice and bias is an extension of the stereotype that the broader cultural milieu to which the employees and the organization belong unwittingly propagates. We begin this article by discussing how gender-based differentiation on what is referred to as the agentic-communal dimension creates a discriminatory situation for women both at the home and at work. This is followed by a brief introduction to image theatre as an effective and democratic means of exploring the issue. Finally, we discuss our findings from a gender workshop conducted at a private limited company producing software solutions to argue that any programme on gender within an organization needs to try and move beyond simple technical details concerning human rights and legal recourses available to providing a systemic view of gender as a sociological construct with significant psychological implications.

The Sex-Gender Divide

The traditional theories of gender, work and family reflects sex-based segregation of roles with man's place being in the outside world of work and woman's at home. Theorists who prescribed to the functional perspective of gender propose that this differentiation, apart from offering stability and efficiency to the family structure, is natural or the result of inborn differences in the psychological makeup of man and woman. Man and woman are by virtue of their natural temperament suited for the instrumental role of bread winner and the expressive role of providing care, respectively.

Theorists belonging to the feminist tradition differentiate between sex and gender in order to emphasize the role of social and cultural interventions in the making of a woman. The distinction between sex and gender is as recent as 1970s and 1980s (Allen, 1997) with sex referring to the differences between male and female as a result of biology and gender referring to differences between man and woman that is socially constructed. Gender includes culturally prescribed norms of behaviour and roles. This distinction is necessary as it clarifies that not all gender-based differences that are observed is innate. It also helps bring to fore the presence of gender-based stereotyping and the resulting propagation of biases and inequalities.

A commonly reported gender difference involves what is referred to as agentic and communal value, terms coined by Bakan in 1966, which allows for distinguishing and organizing human values, motives, traits and behaviours into two broad aspects that is most clearly espoused by Hogan's label "getting ahead" and "getting along" (Trapnell & Paulhus, 2012). There is substantial research evidence for women being perceived to have stronger communal traits like affectionate, helpful, kind, sympathetic, interpersonally sensitive, nurturing and gentle while men being perceived to be more agentic and stronger on traits like aggressive, ambitious, dominant, forceful, independent, self-sufficient, self-confident and prone to act as a leader (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Identified that across 25 countries, men were characterized as having

higher need for dominance, autonomy, aggression and exhibition while women were characterized as having higher need for deference, succorance, abasement and nurturance (Williams and Best, 1982 as cited in Williams et al., 1999). There are also researches that have reported gender-based differences among various personality dimensions that are consistent with the perceived characterization of men and women as agentic and communal, respectively (e.g. Costa et al., 2001). However, not all explanations for these differences consider them to be biologically inherent. One such explanation for this difference was put forth by Eagly and colleagues.

The Double Jeopardy of Gender for Women

According to the social role theory (Eagly, 2013; Eagly & Wood, 1999; Eagly et al., 2000), the gender differences in agentic and communal traits that is present are a result of the traditional division of labour and social roles that males and females have been performing—as the provider and home maker, respectively. These roles require different set of skills and behaviours with domestic role fostering affiliation centred and friendly behaviours and employment role fostering assertive and independent behaviours (Eagly et al., 2000). These sex differentiated behaviours were passed on down generations through the process of socialization and became part and parcel of the socially accepted gender role and identity (Ecles et al., 1990; Bigler et al., 2013) with deviation resulting in stigma (Coyle et al., 2016). As a result, men and women go to great extent to conform to the gender congruent ways of being and thus further the stereotypical perception of male and female as being naturally agentic and communal, respectively.

The agentic versus communal gender-based dichotomy propagates a hierarchy where women take on a more submissive and dependent role. Fuelled by the feminist movement, a key aim of which was to ensure equal access to workplace irrespective of gender, women and men have taken strides in breaking the traditional gender moulds. But, a discrepancy in the changing pattern of roles has been observed (Diekman & Goodfriend, 2006). There have been large shifts in roles related to agency, with more and more women entering every sphere of work life. However, the change has been much slower in the case of roles that are related to communion. Women continue to be the primary care giver for children as well as elderly parents even in the case of dual earner couples (Buddhapriya, 2009; Munn & Chaudhuri, 2016; Valk & Srinivasan, 2011). The resulting discrimination plays out within the home environment in the form of “second shift” or “double burden” (Hochschild, 1989). This refers to the phenomenon where the women in dual career marriage continue to take on the major share of responsibilities (both household chores and child rearing and caring) at home (Bharat, 1995; Bhatnagar & Rajadhyaksha, 2001; Gupta & Sharma, 2002; Ramu, 1989).

While discrimination in the form of second shift is the result of adhering to gender consistent roles, Rudman (1998, as cited in Rudman & Fairchild, 2004) termed the

“social and economic sanctions for counter stereotypical behaviour” in the workplace as the backlash effect. It is a thin line between stereotype and prejudice and the agentic versus communal gender-based dichotomy can percolate into the work environment as explored by the role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002) which explains the prejudice existing towards female leaders. This theory explains gender role in terms of descriptive and injunctive norms. The former refers to expectations about what members of a group *actually do* while the later refers to what members of the group *ought to do*. The differentiation is not in terms of the specific behaviour comprised in the two norms (both may talk of women as nurturing) but refers to differences in the how they manifest as discrimination (Burgess & Borgida, 1999) and demonstrates how the two together presents a no-win situation for women employees. From the descriptive perspective, the stereotypical image of a woman as communal is at discrepancy with the prototype of a leader, which is agentic (Scott & Brown, 2006). In this case discrimination, according to Burgess and Borgida (1999), will take the form of a perceived “lack of fit” between women and traditionally male occupations. But even if a woman and her male counterpart are equally efficient in a leader or manager role, they may still be unfavourably evaluated because they are then perceived to be violating the injunctive perspective by displaying agentic characteristics rather than the communal characteristics that is equated to femininity (Heilman, 2001; Rudman & Glick, 2001). Burgess and Borgida (1999) report how women employees who are seen as violating the “prescriptive” component of the gender stereotype are subjected to disparate treatment in the form of hostile environmental harassment, devaluation of performance or denial of well-deserved positions and promotions.

Contrary to the biological determinism of the functionalist perspective which suggest that taking on gender inconsistent roles would lead to negative psychological consequences, the expansionist theory (Barnett & Hyde, 2001) suggests that taking on multiple roles in fact contributes to psychological wellbeing of both women and men albeit with conditions like number and quality of roles having an influence. Barnett and Hyde (2001) pointed out that whether one held a traditional or non-traditional attitude about the social roles of women and men moderated the effects of multiple roles. Thus, in a patriarchal system like India where traditional gender roles are propagated and enforced, gender equality in the true sense would be even harder to achieve (Dubeck & Borman, 1996).

The Current Study: Why Image Theatre?

The gender workshop described here used image theatre of the Boalian Theatre of the Oppressed tradition to provide a space for the female employees of the organization to explore their struggles in fulfilling their career aspirations. In image theatre, participants are guided in using their body and their fellow participants bodies to sculpt images (like a tableau) on a given issue. The images can further be “animated” so that the characters in the image speak. By inviting participants to depict

personal moments, the images created and statements spoken can be analysed to obtain insight into their individual lived experience as well as collective experience of the group with respect to the issue of interest. Image theatre also offers an excellent means of identifying employee concerns or get a picture regarding employee's perception of organization policies, procedures, or changes without prior boundaries being set by management. Image theatre was thought to be a fitting medium, as apart from the above said advantages, gender has been conceived of as something we *do* as opposed to something we *are*. Goffman (1976) talked about gender as "culturally established correlates of sex" and gender displays as conventional portrayal of gender as expressive behaviour—an interactive performance. West and Zimmerman (1987) used the concept of "doing gender" to emphasize gender as an emergent feature of social situations which need not involve others. Gender is not merely a set of traits, a role or a performance that shows up when the occasion demands but a continuous activity that is part and parcel of everyday interactions. According to Butler (1988), gender is not a stable identity from which various acts emerge but rather is "an identity instituted through a *stylized repetition of acts*" over time. Gender is a performative act—corporeal and embodied to conform to an idea of woman that is culturally and historically endorsed. Thus, a suitable means of discerning the idea of gender as assimilated through one's lived experiences is through one's body itself. And theatre provides a process for using one's body to express ideas.

Method

The Organization

The organization was founded in 2007 and at the time of the workshop was 68 employees, 35 women and 34 men, strong. The organization, a private limited company, is based in Cochin Special Economic Zone in Kerala, India. Its focus is producing software solutions and services geared towards the employee benefit management industry. In 2014, the organization surpassed 1 million claims processed with 99.9% accuracy and in 2016 close to 2 million claims were processed.

The Workshop

The request for this workshop was put forth by the participants through their management following a one day workshop (conducted six months prior to this one) that explored gender at an experiential as well as conceptual level through theatre-based games and activities and lecture. The first workshop was attended by all the employees, including the general manager. It was decided to limit this workshop to the women employees as theatre-based workshop is most effective with smaller

number of participants. Furthermore, the request for a workshop was predominantly from women employees. The theme for the workshop, “struggles with fulfilling ones career aspirations”, was suggested by the participants. Thus, the objective of the workshop and the aim of the present study was to use image theatre to explore the struggles that the women employees of the organization see as hindering them from fulfilling their career aspirations.

Participants

All but one of the 35 women employees in the organization participated in the workshop (the non-participant employee was on sick leave). Participant details are given in Table 13.1.

All the participants were young adults between 24 and 36 years of age and their experience ranged between 7 months and 5 years 1 month in this particular organization. Twenty-six (74.28%) of the participants were graduates and eight (22.85%) were postgraduates. Twelve (34.28%) worked as software engineers, thirteen (37.14%) as claims administrator, six (17.14%) as quality assurance engineer and three ((0.08%) as technical writer. One among them had the designation of project manager (0.03%), two were team leaders ((0.06%) and the rest, 31 (91.18%) were team members.

Table 13.1 Participant details

Factor	<i>n</i> (Percentage)
<i>Gender</i>	
Female	34 (100%)
Age	24–36 years
Experience in this organization	7 months–5 years; 1 month
<i>Educational qualification</i>	
Under-graduation	26 (74.28%)
Post-graduation	8 (22.85%)
<i>Role</i>	
Software engineers	12 (34.28%)
Claims administrator	13 (37.14%)
Quality assurance engineer	6 (17.14%)
Technical writer	3 (0.08%)
<i>Designation</i>	
Project manager	1 (0.03%)
Team leads	2 (0.06%)
Team members	31 (91.18%)

Procedure

The workshop was conducted over two consecutive days (six hours on both days, excluding lunch and tea breaks). The procedure followed for this workshop was based on David Diamond's *Theatre for Living* (2007) which has grown out of Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed* (1985). The first author has received training in both forms of theatre. The workshop began with a circle time where the participants stated their expectations from the workshop followed by the facilitator providing a brief outline of the workshop as well as the code of ethical conduct which was based on Fisher and Smith (2010). The outline about the workshop and ethical code of conduct was an elaboration of a briefer workshop note that was emailed to the participants two weeks prior to the workshop which also mentioned that audio recording and still photography will be used and an observer (female) would be present throughout the workshop. The theatre-based games and activities began after verbal consent regarding the stated code of conduct was obtained from all the participants.

The workshop can be broadly conceived as having three parts—games, individual images and group images. The games and exercises involve simple movements and/or sounds that participants carry out by themselves, in pairs, or groups. Though from a broad perspective the games and exercises are energizers, trust builders, means of getting participants to “demechanize” (Boal, 1992) and be comfortable in their bodies, etc., their primary aim was to get the participants to reflect on their struggles as career women. Thus, following each game or exercise, participants were asked to reflect on “What are the symbolisms you see with respect to your struggles with fulfilling your career aspirations?” a procedure developed by Diamond (2007)

In individual images, participants were divided into groups and each participant made an image (like a tableau) using themselves and others in their group (a process they were familiarized with earlier using activities) to depict a moment from their life when they were struggling with fulfilling their career aspirations.

With respect to group images too, participants were divided into groups. However, here the group collaborated and created an image that was not a personal story but a collective representation of what the group identified as their struggle with respect to fulfilling career aspirations.

Analysis

Two types of data were obtained—spoken and image. In most cases, the spoken was closely inter-linked with the activities/images and situated in the discussions that followed. Hence, the standard procedure for content analysis involving independent coding and interrater reliability was not a possibility especially since only photographs and audio recording were available. On both days, post workshop, the data (consisting of audio recording, photographs and observer and facilitator notes)

were compiled by the volunteer observer and the first author in consultation with one another. This compilation was further verified by the second author for validity.

Result

The results are presented in terms of the workshop expectations stated by the participants, individual images presented and group images created.








Workshop Expectations

At the beginning of the workshop participants were requested to share their expectations regarding the workshop—what they thought the workshop would be about and what they hoped to gain from the workshop. Their response indicated that all participants agreed that they have struggles as a working woman. Four participants expected the workshop to provide a space for them to reflect on and understand their struggles in general. For example, one participant said, “I am here to experience the workshop and see how it reflects on my life”. Five participants expected the workshop to provide skills that would be helpful professionally. According to one participant, “I feel a lot of pressure at time of meetings. I hope to find a way of overcoming such a situation”. Majority of the participants, twenty three of them, hoped to discuss ways of balancing work and family responsibilities. For example, “I know struggles are there in my life [...] to balance family and work life. I want to know how I can control things, how I can balance”.

Individual Images


For creating individual images, participants were randomly divided into six groups. Four of the groups had six participants and two had five participants each. Individual participants were required to depict an image that reflected a moment from their life when they were struggling with fulfilling their career aspirations. Every group would have as many images as there are group members. Since each group was given just 12 min in total for all the group members to create their image, participants had to work quickly and without consultation with one another. Though the individual images created were personal, some themes were repeated with child care dilemma and marriage being the most frequent theme. See Table 13.2 for the other themes.

Table 13.2 Themes observed in the images made by individual participants

	Theme	Example	Number of images with this theme
1	Child care dilemma	 <p>Parents leave for work on two wheeler as grandparents look on and child cries</p>	9
2	Marriage	 <p>Traditional marriage ceremony</p>	7
3	Feeling inadequate and lacking confidence	 <p>Presentation at work</p>	5
4	On the run	 <p>Employee getting up to leave as it is getting late but meeting continues</p>	5
5	Home responsibility, a given	 <p>Mother works in the kitchen after returning from work while others relax</p>	3
6	Harassment	 <p>Generic scene showing oppression of women</p>	2
7	On call anytime	 <p>Call from home as child unwell when at work</p>	3


(continued)

Table 13.2 (continued)

	Theme	Example	Number of images with this theme
8	Public transport woes	 *Crowded bus	3

(continued)

Table 13.2 (continued)

	Theme	Example	Number of images with this theme
9	Abstract	 Abstract depiction of struggle. Cricket match, batting from both sides	4

*Some of the images were coded under two themes. For example, this image was coded under “On the run” too

Group Images

The process called “magnetic images” described in Diamond (2007) was used to form groups for this activity. Participants were asked to think about an incident when they were struggling with fulfilling their career aspiration. They were then asked to offer that moment to the group by making a shape using their body to depict the strongest emotion they felt at that moment. After the first volunteer presented her shape, the facilitator asked for more volunteers to present their shapes, provided it is different from the one shown. In this manner, four volunteers came up and the rest of the group was asked to join the shape that is most like the shape they had in their mind or the shape that they best related with. Thus, four groups were formed. The groups were given half an hour to come up with an image that would not be a personal story but a collective representation of what the group identified as their struggle with respect to fulfilling career aspirations.

Two of the group images was a compilation of the individual images but arranged to show how the day unfolds for a working woman. Two new themes that were seen are responsibility towards ageing parents and husband’s detached approach to wife’s distress. The other two group images were more figurative and incorporated the unsupportive and even accusatory stand taken by the family and society to the woman’s struggle. See Fig. 13.1.



Fig. 13.1 Collectively made images depicting the participant's struggles with fulfilling their career aspirations

Discussion

Majority of the participants hoped to discuss balancing work and family at the workshop suggestive of it being a major struggle with respect to fulfilling their career aspirations. The personal and collective images gave a glimpse of the nature of the imbalance as experienced by the participants. Table 1 shows that for majority of the participants' child care dilemma and marriage were seen as hindering them from fulfilling their career aspirations. The images depicting child care dilemma rarely showed the father. When he was shown, he was shown as uninvolved in the happenings, driving away or looking at his mobile. Animating the images bought out the guilt the working mothers were dealing with. In animating the image, the people in the image were asked to say a sentence, as the character in the image, which begins with "I want..." Or "I fear..." or to tell the secret thought of the character, what the character is thinking now but would never tell out aloud. Some of the statements were, "Am I an irresponsible mother?", "Should I quit my job and take care of my child?", "I want to spend more time with my child". This guilt may have its roots in the socio-cultural indoctrination of the traditional gender role stereotype that would make child care the mother's primary responsibility (Bharath, 1995; Rajadhyaksha & Bhatnagar, 2000) as well as experiencing what is referred to as the superwoman syndrome. Superwoman syndrome refers to the high level of guilt that is experienced by women as a result of a feeling of failure to complete domestic tasks, such as cooking, cleaning and childcare that is seen as their expected role. Two of the individual images and three of the collective images depicted the woman cooking, cleaning and serving while others in the family relax. Thus, the

women employees aspired to be the “superwoman” who does all as reflected in the character statements like, “Somehow I am responsible for this. I can plan my work accordingly”, “I fear I am not working efficiently”, “I need good management skills to fulfil all my responsibilities”. An aspiration that is tough, especially in the case of women belonging to lower middle economic class, who may not have the resources to afford the luxury of extra help—paid or mechanical (one character’s secret thought as she hand washes the cloths was “I wish I had a washing machine”). The mental load (“What should I make for dinner” wonders a woman on her way back home) of managing the many responsibilities and the daily physical (overcrowded public transport) and mental strain (sexual harassment) of travelling in the public transport were added disadvantages. Many images showed the woman looking at her watch as she rushed to office (“I hope I am able to hand over status report on time” thinks one participant as she hangs on to the rail of a crowded bus) or home (wondering “Would my child have had anything to eat?”).

Marriage was also a common theme. The images, however, did not show the dynamics of the relationship between husband and wife but depicted ceremonies related to wedding. During the discussion, it was evident that many of the unmarried women were working under the constant threat that they might have to quit the job if the prospective groom and in-laws were not keen to have a working daughter-in-law (the general trend is of “arranged marriage”) or if the prospective groom was based in a place far from the participant’s workplace. Those who were married too were often facing pressure to quit this job and take more traditionally accepted nine to five type jobs—teaching or clerical, even if that pays less and has nothing to do with the technical/professional training the women had received. Having a child further increased the pressure. It was reported that this organization has had to deal with turnover as a result of female employees quitting to relocate to spouse’s location of work or after birth of a child. Both these decisions, turn over as a result of relocating or as result of birth of child, have been identified as factors related to sex as espoused by social role theory that influences work domain decisions (Bielby & Bielby, 1992; Gupta et al., 2012; Powell & Greenhaus, 2010).

The prescriptive aspect of the gender stereotype was portrayed in some of the images by one or more people pointing their finger at the protagonist accusatorily. During image activation and discussions, they were identified as family members or members of the society in general. Thus, pressure to conform to the many gender norms came from different sources. As mentioned, participants were asked about the symbolism they saw with respect to their struggles with fulfilling their career aspirations in the games and activities. The symbolism that came up again and again in almost every game and activity was the need for support (e.g. “If our colleagues and project manager would understand our weakness and support us, we can balance things”. “We will not feel as much difficulty with even some support. When both are working and both are supportive, the pressure would not be felt”). This need was expressed as character statements during the image activation too, both in terms of practical help (“I want my husband to take care of my baby while I cook”) as well as emotional support (“I want some encouraging words from them”, “I want him to console me”). Though a majority of the images were related to experiences

outside office, the few that showed the work space depicted feelings of lack of confidence and inadequacy. Eighteen per cent of the 102 women managers in Mallon and Cassell's (1999) study noted personal lack of self-confidence as a barrier to their career advancement. They identified that the lack of confidence was tied with problems of balancing home and work in an unsupportive environment, experience of everyday humiliation and the feeling of being unsuccessful in both arenas. A similar kind of interaction between women's experience at home—both in their birth family and the family they were married into, motherhood, and aspirations was reported among women managers in India (Naqvi, 2011). It is hence possible that the lack of confidence depicted in the workplace images were in fact a product of the discriminatory socio-cultural norms as well as macho-culture experienced by the women through the day making it an unending cycle as shown in images c and d of Fig. 13.1.

The personal as well as collective images suggest that the struggle is not so much to do with having to juggle multiple roles as much as it is to do with one responsibility, namely the home maker role, taking a non-negotiable and strong precedence. Multiple role engagement per se does not contribute to higher stress levels or lower life satisfaction (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Sinha, 2017; Sumra & Schillaci, 2015) even in superwomen juggling the roles of wife, mother, worker and homemaker (Sumra & Schillaci, 2015). However, role satisfaction was one of the contributing factors to life satisfaction as well as level of stress. Another factor, perceived control has also been identified as having the potential to reduce distress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Miller, 1979). Across the images, from the pressure to marry to manoeuvring the public space and managing the home responsibilities, the women employees seem to lack perceived control over their life events. According to Cassidy (1997), the feeling of lack of control experienced by women is a result of the structural inequalities that render women less powerful at home and at work. These findings suggest that the structural inequalities result in strong psychological under currents.

Conclusion

On the surface, for this group of women employees, responsibilities as a homemaker may be identified as the main barrier to fulfilling their career aspirations. However, it is a barrier not just because of the additional workload. Rather, the stereotypical gender role entrenched in the socio-cultural backdrop stifles the women into a submissive stance at home, feeling grateful when "allowed" to work and guilty for not meeting the societies expected standard of wife and mother. This cycle that plays out every day in every sphere (including the public space) in an unsupportive environment takes a toll on ones perceived control as well as self-confidence.

One cannot club all women employees into a single homogenous group. The experiences of women employees in India would be coloured not just by gender but also by class, caste, region, disability so on and so forth. Notwithstanding, even if the stories of women employees in relatively more cosmopolitan environment might

tell a different story, the chances are that the difference might lie only in content and not the social structure or the psychological effect as suggested by the glass ceiling effect and backlash effect.

Theatre of the Oppressed attempts to create safe and democratic spaces for participants to practice taking action towards liberating themselves from conflicts they are experiencing. The motivation to take action that is created within the theatrical space is cathartic (Meisiek, 2004). Image theatre offers this option in the form of providing opportunity to participants to create images of felt conflicts and then dynamizing them (bringing about changes to the image step by step) towards an *ideal image*. Due to the time factor, the workshop was unable to go into this very important aspect of Theatre of the Oppressed.

Men need to be as much a part of the discussion on gender equality as women. Reshaping the traditional roles need to happen for both genders. Tackling the socio-cultural systems that endorse gender-based stereotype too requires collective action. Hence, exclusion of men (for the practical reason of keeping the group size manageable) was another drawback of this study.

The unscripted images are strong indication that the gender-based discrimination and harassment within organization cannot be discussed without taking into account the larger social context to which the individual employees belong. The need to address the fundamental psychosocial aspects is pertinent and image theatre provides a relatively cost effective and democratic means of gaining insight into the social context as well as to uncover the underlying psychological processes. Notwithstanding, one might want to invest in time to ensure that subsequently organization specific dynamics are also addressed albeit within a similar democratic space.

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Part IV
Culturally Embedded Psychology

Chapter 14

Role Fulfilment and Self-Expression: Culturally Meaningful Messages Conveyed Implicitly in Indian and U.S. High School Classrooms



Lauren S. Crane

Abstract This chapter compares high school students' classroom experiences in Uttar Pradesh, India and Ohio, U.S.A., based on videotaped observations of regular class sessions. In a multilayered content analysis, we coded classroom interactions from five different angles, ranging from classroom decor to the questions teachers asked of students. Overall, we found that U.S. classrooms tended to create a shared environment that focused relatively more on personal self-expression, whereas Indian classrooms tended to create one that focused relatively more on efficient knowledge transfer and properly fulfilling one's institutional role. These tendencies align with broader trends in the two countries, suggesting that high school classrooms play an important role in reflecting and implicitly encouraging somewhat divergent interpersonal orientations in these societies.

Keywords School socialization · Language socialization · Enculturation · Adolescence · Individualism

Introduction

India and the U.S. are important global players, ranking among the world's top five economies. Recognizing that well-educated populations tend to rely less on governmental support, participate more in their communities, commit fewer crimes, and live longer, healthier lives (Organization for Economic Co-operation & Development, 2022), both countries have codified the importance of an educated populace into law. Indian state and local governments are obligated to ensure that a free education is available to all youth between the ages of 6 and 14, and U.S. states require parents to send children to school between the ages of 5–7 and 16–19, with the precise ages varying by state (and with a few exceptions) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017).

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Around the world, continuing on with formal education beyond primary school is associated with an improved ability to find employment (Organization for Economic Co-operation & Development, 2019), putting high school students on track to lead more stable, comfortable lives. Although secondary school attendance in some countries may be a luxury reserved for wealthier individuals already headed towards economic security, high school attendance is associated with higher employment in rich and poor countries alike. At first glance, one might assume that this advantage must derive from the extra academic content knowledge gained from additional years of formal study. But another possibility is that attending high school enculturates young people on the cusp of maturity into normative patterns of socially appropriate behaviour, helping them fit better into society as adults.

Enculturation Through Schooling

Schools teach “more than they claim to teach” through a “hidden curriculum” that conveys societal values via conscious and unconscious channels (Vallance, 1973–1974, p. 5). Being a competent student requires more than just mastering academic content (Mehan, 1980). Students also must acquire the skills and knowledge needed to participate effectively in the classroom and the school community and display what they know by behaving appropriately. What is considered proper behaviour at school reflects the values and assumptions of the surrounding society. Thus, as students participate in everyday classroom activities, they are drawn into patterns of thinking and behaving that are culturally shared. These patterns are not merely imposed on students by the teacher. Rather, students play an active role in the process, bringing their own cultural expectations to bear (Rogoff, 1998). As teachers and students coordinate their behaviour in relation to one another, they move towards a shared consensus about how the school day should proceed, which they instantiate through their actions.

School-based enculturation has been studied primarily among young children. For instance, an observational study comparing preschools in China, Japan and the U.S. found that U.S. preschool children are asked to put their thoughts into words multiple times throughout the day, reflecting a broader U.S. cultural belief that individual self-expression is desirable and important (Tobin, Wu, & Davidson, 1989). Some school socialization research also has included adolescents. For example, a linguistic analysis of a north Indian school serving boys aged 5–14 years old found that the morning assembly that began each school day emphasized teachers’ position of authority over students, both explicitly, through assertions of *gurus*’ inherent high status, and implicitly, through an expectation of unconditional student obedience during the assembly itself. This underscoring of the teacher–student hierarchy invoked the traditional roles of *guru* and *shishya* (master and disciple), which has long been an idealized relationship in Indian culture more broadly (Bhattacharya & Sterponi, 2020).

As illustrated by these examples, culturally meaningful messages are communicated at school not only through statements asserted by school personnel, but also in less obvious ways. The goal of the present study was to identify implicit patterns of classroom behaviour that convey cultural norms to high school students in India and the U.S., helping to enculturate them into the larger society. Because adolescents who attend high school spend a large portion of their waking hours there, even subtle patterns are likely to have an impact, as they accumulate over time. Of particular interest were cultural norms that differed somewhat across the two societies.

Divergent Cultural Tendencies in India and the U.S.

There is a strong body of evidence showing that Indians tend to place greater value on living up to other people's expectations than U.S. Americans do. For instance, when faced with a moral dilemma in which it is impossible to avoid transgressing on some moral value, Indians are more likely to prioritize fulfilling one's obligation to a friend (Miller & Bersoff, 1992). Similarly, when asked to accommodate to the expectations and demands of others, Indians are more likely to experience doing so as freely chosen and personally satisfying (Miller et al., 2011; Savani et al., 2011). U.S. Americans, on the other hand, tend to resist complying with such demands, feeling that they impinge on personal freedom. The importance of performing prescribed roles and duties (*dharma*) in a righteous manner is a core tenet of Hinduism (Mishra, 2012), a religion whose values permeate Indian society even though 20% of Indians are not Hindu (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2021).

There also is much evidence indicating that U.S. Americans tend to value individuality and personal self-expression more highly than Indians do. On surveys, Indians tend to show a combination of individualism and collectivism, but U.S. Americans tend to score as highly individualistic (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Sinha et al., 2001). When faced with a moral dilemma, people in the U.S. are more likely to prioritize the rights of an individual, even when the individual is a stranger (Miller & Bersoff, 1992). Going along with this, U.S. Americans are more likely to focus on individuals' personal attributes, describing themselves in terms of personal qualities and blaming other people's bad behaviour on personal qualities as well, rather than attributing it to the situation (Mascolo et al., 2004; Miller, 1984). Indians, in contrast, more often describe themselves in relational terms. For most U.S. Americans, self-expression through speech, artistic display, and personal choice are important ways of demonstrating one's individuality and projecting it onto the world (Kim & Chu, 2011).

Given this body of work on cross-cultural asymmetries, we expected Indian classrooms to include more behaviour patterns that emphasized the proper performance of one's societal role as "a teacher" or "a student", and we expected U.S. classrooms to include more behaviour patterns emphasizing individual self-expression. It is important to acknowledge, however, that because both nations are highly diverse

both regionally and demographically, any broad generalizations made about India or the U.S. are likely to be at least somewhat misleading.

The Present Study

The Indian and U.S. school systems are structured somewhat differently. In the U.S., grades 9–12 typically are set apart from grades K–8, whereas schools in India have followed a 10 + 2 model. Consequently, we focused on collecting data in Indian classrooms designed for 14-year-old to 18-year-old students, rather than focusing strictly on grades 9–12. This meant that some of the Indian classrooms we observed were Class VIII (eighth grade). However, we will continue to refer to “high school” in order to emphasize our focus on adolescent education.

To investigate enculturation in Indian and U.S. high school classrooms, we observed social studies and values-oriented classes, reasoning that courses addressing human behaviour would bring ideas about self and other closer to the surface. For social studies, we visited world history courses when possible, since they covered similar content in both countries. Because world history was taught less often in India, we also visited a few other classes there (civics, geography and economics). As for values-oriented classes, in India we visited a commonly taught secular values course usually entitled “Values Education” or “Moral Science”. Even the religious Indian schools that we visited did not offer religious values courses to the student body, presumably because pressuring others to convert to one’s faith is against the law in India. In the U.S.A., none of the schools we visited offered secular values courses, and none of the non-religious schools offered courses on religious values, presumably due to the U.S. Constitution’s separation of church and state. However, in Christian schools we observed religious values courses. (Some U.S. schools did offer Socio-Emotional Learning lessons, but we considered them too different to be included.)

Participants

In both countries, we contacted the principal or director of all eligible high schools located within a reasonable travel distance. In India, only English-medium schools were included in the present analysis. The director of a local English-medium school who had considerable influence in the community facilitated many introductions.

In India, the participating schools included 15 privately funded English-immersion high schools in a medium-sized city in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh. Eight schools were affiliated with a particular religion (six Christian-run, one Muslim-run and one Sikh-run) and seven were not. Overall, we observed 31 class sessions, including 21 social studies classes and ten secular values education classes. They were taught by 27 different instructors, including 20 females and seven males. Based

on the demographic forms returned by students, the classrooms ranged from 96% male to 100% female ($M = 54.5\%$ male, $SD = 20.9\%$). The number of students per classroom ranged from 13 to 64 ($M = 35.41$, $SD = 14.37$). In terms of grade level, there were five sessions aimed at Class VIII, 12 for Class IX, seven for Class X, and six for Class XI; there also was one mixed-level class that included students from Class VI through Class X. On average, the mean age in a classroom was 14.63 years old ($SD = 0.94$). The youngest student was 11, and the oldest was 18.

In the U.S., the participating schools included six high schools in small cities and towns in the Midwestern state of Ohio. Three schools were privately funded Christian schools, and three were publicly funded non-religious schools. Overall, we observed eight class sessions, including five history classes and three religious values classes. They were taught by eight different instructors, including one female and seven males. Based again on the demographic forms turned in by students, the classrooms ranged from 59% male to 77% female ($M = 56.5\%$ female, $SD = 11.2\%$). The number of students per classroom ranged from 13 to 28 ($M = 19.75$, $SD = 5.34$). As for grade level, there were three sessions aimed at ninth grade and one apiece for tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades, as well as one class with a mix of ninth and tenth graders, and another with a mix of eleventh and twelfth graders. On average, the mean age in a classroom was 15.91 years old ($SD = 1.15$). The youngest student was 14, and the oldest was 20.

Data Collection and Reduction

The data presented here were collected by the author, sometimes accompanied by a local assistant, using English-language study materials. The researcher(s) met with the school principal or director in advance to secure consent for data collection and to provide consent forms for parents. On data collection day, the researcher(s) described the study for the class in English, collected parental consent forms, then asked the teacher and students to sign consent forms and complete a demographics sheet. (Technically, students under the age of 18 signed a non-binding “informed assent” document, while students over 18 were instructed to sign the parental consent form instead.) No one declined to participate. After all documents were collected, the teacher and students were asked to ignore the researcher(s) and behave normally, insofar as possible. The teacher was given an audio-recording device to wear, and the researcher(s) moved to the edge of the room for video recording. The goal was to observe unobtrusively, but in some crowded Indian classrooms it was difficult to maintain distance from the proceedings.

Each classroom recording was transcribed, then independently double-checked. Three Indian recordings were transcribed in part by Indian personnel, but all other recordings were transcribed entirely by U.S. personnel, due to logistical constraints.

Five U.S. research teams analysed five different aspects of the classroom experience. For Analyses 1, 2, 4, and 5, the teams coded all eight U.S. classrooms; however, no team worked with the entire Indian data set. Rather, each team used a random

number generator to select a subset of Indian classrooms from the available corpus to analyse and reliability code. (The sample composition was somewhat different for Analysis 3, as described below.) No two teams analysed the exact same portion of the classroom sessions (e.g. minutes 12:00–17:00). This varied sampling approach allowed for matched sample sizes, while also providing an overview of patterns that might exist across the full Indian data set.

Analyzing Classroom Behaviour from Five Different Angles

We conducted five analyses comparing Indian and U.S. classrooms. The first two focused on non-verbal behaviour: decorating classrooms and teacher body orientation. The last three focused on linguistic behaviour: classroom discourse, teacher questions, and classroom pronoun usage. The goal of all analyses was to identify concrete behaviours through which high schoolers might be oriented towards culturally favoured ways of thinking and behaving.

Analysis 1: Classroom Visual Displays

We began with an analysis of the physical classroom environment. Visual displays in the classroom can distract students' attention away from the lesson (Hanley et al., 2017), but personalized displays also can enhance self-esteem, since they project one's identity onto the surroundings in a concrete manner (Maxwell & Chmielewski, 2008). Given the importance in India of properly performing one's role, we predicted that Indian classrooms would contain fewer visual displays, so as not to distract from the business of transferring knowledge from teacher to student. In contrast, given the importance of self-expression in the U.S., we predicted that U.S. classrooms would contain more personalized visual displays for teachers and students alike.¹

Method. This analysis compared eight randomly selected Indian classrooms (four social studies and four moral values) with the eight U.S. classrooms. We analysed everything displayed on the four classroom walls, excluding objects like clocks and whiteboards that were not subject to teachers' discretion. In total, 86 objects were coded in U.S. classrooms, including zero bare walls. In India, 26 objects were coded, including 11 bare walls. Two judges coded independently from the videos.

The five mutually exclusive coding categories are described in Table 14.1, with Figs. 14.1, 14.2, 14.3 and 14.4 as examples. The categories relevant to our India prediction about avoiding visual displays were *bare walls* and [absent] *decorations*. The categories relevant to our U.S. prediction about self-expression were teacher

¹ Analysis 1 was carried out in collaboration with Alyssa Stout and Alex Sheppard.

Table 14.1 Visual displays on the walls of Indian and U.S. high school classrooms

Object category	Definition	India (%)	U.S (%)
Bare walls	Walls that have no objects displayed upon them	42.3	0.0
Personal items	Objects that display a feature of the teacher’s personality or life experience	0.0	22.1
Handmade items	Art, writings, assignments and other materials created by the teacher or students	23.1	27.9
Decorations	Objects displayed that are neither handmade nor personally revealing of the teacher	30.8	44.2
Other/unclear	Objects that cannot clearly be seen or do not fit any category above	3.8	5.8

Note Percentages indicate the proportion of coded objects (including bare walls) that fell into a given category

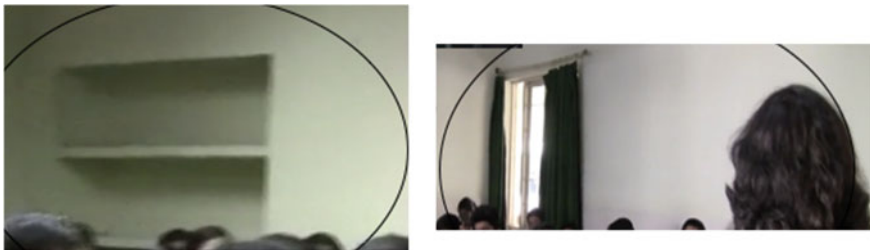


Fig. 14.1 Examples of bare walls. *Note* Both images are from Indian classrooms



Fig. 14.2 Examples of personal items. *Note* The left-hand image conveys a fondness for the Sheltie dog breed. The right-hand image is a high school graduation party invitation. Both objects are from U.S. classrooms

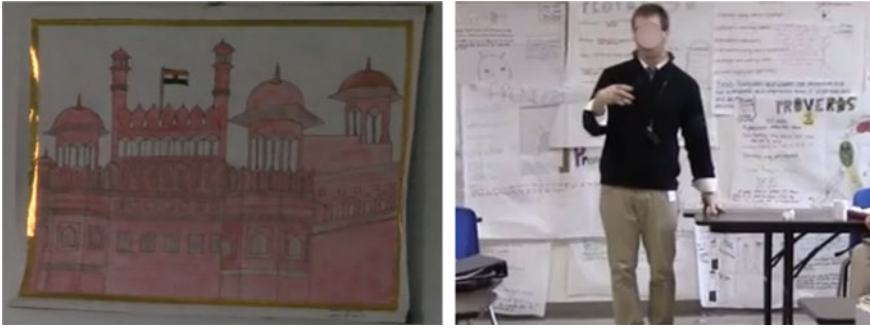


Fig. 14.3 Examples of handmade items. *Note* The left-hand image, from India, is a drawing of Delhi's Red Fort. The right-hand image, from the U.S., shows student work related to Christian religious writings



Fig. 14.4 Examples of classroom decorations. *Note* The left-hand image, from India, depicts a scene from the Mahabharata. The right-hand image, from the U.S., provides information about the Declaration of Independence

personal items and teacher and student *handmade items*. For completeness, we also included an *other/unclear* category.

Findings. The collected data appear in Table 14.1. A chi-square test comparing the overall pattern of classroom decor in India versus the U.S. appeared highly significant ($\chi^2[5, N = 112] = 48.00, p < 0.0001$, Cramer's $V = 0.66$), but should be viewed only as suggestive, since two cells in the analysis had zero instances. Nevertheless, we found that many Indian classrooms had bare walls, whereas no U.S. classrooms did, strongly in line with our predictions. As for decorations, a 2×2 chi-square test found only a non-significant trend for Indian classrooms to include fewer decorations than U.S. classrooms ($p = 0.19$). In contrast, many U.S. classrooms displayed teacher personal items, whereas no Indian classrooms did, again strongly in line with our prediction. However, Indian and U.S. classrooms displayed similar amounts of handmade teacher and student items in a 2×2 chi-square test ($p = 0.63$), contrary to our predictions.

Overall, this analysis indicated that although Indian and U.S. classrooms resembled one another somewhat, Indian high schoolers more often spent time in bare classrooms that presumably kept them more focused on the lesson, whereas U.S. high schoolers spent more time amid materials that expressed their teachers' personalities. Of note, the U.S. teachers typically remained in the same classroom all day, while groups of students came and went. In India, it generally was the students who remained, as their instructors came and went. This structural difference gave U.S. teachers more opportunities to model personal self-expression in the classroom for their students.

Analysis 2: Teacher Body Orientation

Our second non-verbal analysis focused on how teachers interacted with students during class. A teacher's body orientation communicates their focus of attention to students (Paulus et al., 2016) and physically orienting towards students signals the teacher's psychological involvement with them (Andersen & Andersen, 2005). Based once again on the importance of proper role fulfilment in India and of individual self-expression in the U.S.A., we predicted that Indian teachers would more often orient towards students as part of the full class unit, whereas U.S. teachers would more often orient towards them individually, separate from the larger group.²

Method. This analysis compared eight randomly selected Indian classrooms (five social studies and three moral values) with the eight U.S. classrooms. We coded minutes 12:00–17:00 of each class session, assuming that teachers' body orientation mid-session, with instruction well underway, would be more typical of their overall behaviour than the transition periods at the start and end of class. The unit of analysis was a 15 s time window, resulting in 160 units coded per country. Two judges coded independently from the videos.

The four coding categories are described in Table 14.2. They were not mutually exclusive, since more than one orientation could occur within a single time window. The category relevant to our India prediction about orienting towards the full class was *frontward* orientation, and the category relevant to our U.S. prediction about orienting towards individuals was *face-to-face* orientation. For completeness, we also coded *angled* and *indeterminate* body orientation.

Findings. The collected data are displayed in Table 14.2. Since the categories were not mutually exclusive, each category was analysed separately using a 2×2 chi-square test. In both countries, frontward orientation was most common and angled orientation was second-most common. At the same time, Indian teachers were more likely than U.S. teachers to face frontward, as predicted, $\chi^2(1, N = 320) = 17.80, p < 0.0001, \phi = 0.24$. Conversely, U.S. teachers were more likely than Indian teachers

² Analysis 2 was carried out in collaboration with Seneca Neal and Grace Runyon.

Table 14.2 Teacher body orientation towards students in Indian and U.S. high school classrooms

Body orientation	Definition	India (%)	U.S. (%)
Frontward ***	Front of teacher's body faces the students, without being face-to-face with any specific student	76.3	53.8
Angled	Teacher's shoulder is nearer to the students than the front of the teacher's body	33.1	33.1
Face-to-face ***	Teacher faces a specific student and looks the student fully in the face	8.1	27.5
Indeterminate *	Teacher is off-camera or teacher's orientation is not clearly visible	16.9	28.1

Note. The percentages sum to greater than 100% in each country because more than one body orientation could occur within the same 15 s time window that served as the unit of analysis

* $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.0001$

to engage individuals face to face, also as predicted, $\chi^2(1, N = 320) = 20.51, p < 0.0001, \phi = 0.25$. Finally, indeterminate body orientation was coded more often for U.S. teachers ($\chi^2[1, N = 320] = 5.81, p < 0.05, \phi = 0.14$), which probably was an artefact of where the video camera was located in the classroom during data collection.

Overall, this analysis revealed that during class time, students in both countries typically experienced teachers' physically engaging with them as a member of the group, but Indian students experienced this more often. In the U.S., students were relatively more likely to experience teachers physically engaging with them one-on-one. This finding does not imply that Indian high school teachers never engage their students individually, only that during classroom instruction, they tend to downplay students' individual identity in favour of foregrounding their role as a class member.

Analysis 3: Classroom Talk

Our remaining analyses all focused on classroom speech, the central modality through which high school instruction takes place. The first of these was a broad analysis of the communicative functions of teacher and student talk during class. We predicted that Indian teachers would tend to verbally organize the session around the teacher–student role hierarchy, focusing more strictly on efficient knowledge transfer. In the U.S., we expected teachers to downplay this hierarchy and encourage more student self-expression.³

Method. Unlike our other four analyses, for Analysis 3 the Indian sample included 14 classrooms (ten social studies and four moral values) and the U.S. sample included

³ Analysis 3 was carried out in collaboration with Odysse Davis (largest contribution), Gabriel Cox, Michael Dureska, Mercedes Harris, Amy Knauer, Melissa Latto, Morgan Malanca, Lizzie McNeill and Olivia Roberson.

Table 14.3 Utterances produced in Indian and U.S. high school classrooms

Utterance type	India (%)	U.S (%)
Overall teacher talk ***	75.4	68.7
Lecturing	48.6	48.0
Asking questions **	13.9	9.4
Accepting/using student ideas	5.4	4.6
Giving directions	4.1	4.4
Praising/encouraging	2.2	1.9
Self-directed talk	0.6	0.3
Criticizing/justifying authority	0.5	0.0
Accepting student feelings	0.1	0.1
Overall student talk ***	20.9	30.3
Responding	13.3	12.6
Initiating ***	5.8	15.7
Unclear	1.8	2.0
Audio-visual presentation	2.3	1.0
Confusion/commotion	1.4	0.1

** $p < 0.001$; *** $p < 0.0001$

six Christian school classrooms (two social studies and four religious values). Nine judges independently coded 20 min segments that they selected from two or three classrooms, working from the videos in combination with transcripts. The unit of analysis was an utterance. In total, 280 min of Indian discourse (comprising 3762 utterances) and 120 min of U.S. discourse (1364 utterances) were coded.

The coding categories followed the Flanders Interaction Analysis System (FIAS), which has been used by educators in the U.S. and India for decades (Flanders, 1963; Vasishtha, 1979). As shown in Table 14.3, the FIAS has seven categories for teacher talk, including three for authority-based engagement with students (i.e. *lecturing*, *giving directions*, and *criticizing/justifying authority*) and four for more student-centred engagement (i.e. *asking questions*, *accepting/using student ideas*, *praising/encouraging*, and *accepting student feelings*). It also has two categories for student talk (i.e. *responding* to the teacher and *initiating* talk on their own) and a tenth category for *silence or confusion/commotion* in the classroom. We added two more categories, in order to capture teacher *self-directed* talk (e.g. “Let’s see, where was I?”) and speech in *audio-visual presentations*.

The 12 coding categories were mutually exclusive. The categories relevant to our India prediction about role-based knowledge transfer were teacher *lecturing* and *asking questions* and student *responding*. The category relevant to our U.S. prediction about student self-expression was students *initiating* talk on their own.

Findings. The collected data are displayed in Table 14.3. In both countries, almost half of teachers’ utterances were lecture, their second-most common speech type was

questions, and they used other categories no more than 5% of the time, at strikingly similar rates. Chi-square tests were carried out on all categories that captured 6% or more of the data in at least one country. We did not find that Indian teachers lectured more than U.S. teachers, as we had predicted. However, we did find that they spoke more than U.S. teachers overall, $\chi^2(1, N = 5050) = 22.78, p < 0.0001, \phi = 0.07$. This was partly, but not entirely, due to their asking more questions, as predicted, $\chi^2(1, N = 5050) = 18.27, p = 0.001, \phi = 0.06$.

Student speech across the two countries also was somewhat similar. We did not find that students in India responded to questions more often than U.S. students, as we had predicted. However, we did find that U.S. students spoke up on their own initiative more often than Indian students, as expected, $\chi^2(1, N = 5050) = 125.37, p < 0.0001, \phi = 0.16$. Indeed, U.S. students spoke up on their own initiative even more than they responded to the teacher. This cross-cultural contrast was the strongest effect in Analysis 3, and it drove the finding that U.S. students talked more overall than Indian students, $\chi^2(1, N = 5050) = 48.92, p < 0.0001, \phi = 0.10$.

Overall, the speech patterns observed in U.S. classrooms and English-medium Indian classrooms resembled one another to a remarkable degree. Nevertheless, Indian students experienced more adherence to the teacher–student role hierarchy during class: teachers talked more, and students spoke up mainly just to answer teacher questions. In contrast, U.S. students experienced more student self-expression during class. These highly significant differences were mostly subtle, but given the number of hours that high schoolers spend in class, small differences may accumulate to have a substantial impact.

Analysis 4: Teacher Questions

Our second linguistic analysis zoomed in to focus specifically on teacher questions, an important form of classroom speech that can be used to evaluate student learning or to invite students to share ideas (Morgan & Saxton, 1991). We expected the findings of this analysis to align with those of Analysis 3. That is, we predicted that Indian teachers would ask more questions designed to efficiently transfer knowledge from teacher to student, underscoring their distinct roles, and that U.S. teachers would ask more questions encouraging student self-expression.⁴

Method. This analysis compared seven randomly selected Indian classrooms (three social studies and four moral values) with the eight U.S. classrooms. The first 49 teacher questions in each classroom were coded, since the beginning of class is when teachers greet students and orient them to the day’s agenda. Unclear speech was subsequently excluded from analysis, resulting in 306 questions coded for India (37 having been excluded) and 366 for the U.S. (26 excluded). Two judges coded independently from the written transcripts.

⁴ Analysis 4 was carried out in collaboration with Jubileen Kombe and Antonia Turner.

Table 14.4 Coding categories used to analyse the function of high school teachers' questions

Question category	Definition	Examples
Agreement bids	Seeks to confirm agreement with teacher statement	How many of you agree with it? ...right? ...isn't it?
Knowledge checks	Probes for knowledge or understanding of course content	What's capitalism? Can you tell me who this is? Japan surrendered in the year...___?
Personal information	Requests information about student personal experience or outlook	Did you go somewhere over the break? Has it happened to you? How did you do on that?
Elaboration requests	Requests that students broaden or expand on their answers	(In response to student speech): And can you tell me the reason? Why do you think so?
Other	Not included in any category above	Is everyone done? Are there any questions? Where was I...?

The five mutually exclusive coding categories are described in Table 14.4, with examples. The categories relevant to our India prediction about role-based knowledge transfer were *agreement bids*, which teachers could use to try to keep students on the same page with them, and *knowledge check* questions, which assessed whether content had been learned. The categories relevant to our U.S. prediction about student self-expression were *personal information* questions, which encouraged students to reveal themselves, and *elaboration requests*, which encouraged them to speak at greater length. For completeness, we included an *other* category, which mostly included questions about in-class procedures.

Findings. The collected data are displayed in Table 14.5. A chi-square test found a highly significant difference in the overall pattern of questions asked by Indian versus U.S. teachers, $\chi^2(5, N = 672) = 82.49, p < 0.0001$, Cramer's $V = 0.35$. This effect appeared to be driven by the predicted pattern, with Indian teachers asking more agreement bid and knowledge check questions, and U.S. teachers asking more personal information and elaboration request questions.

U.S. teachers also appeared to ask more "other" questions. Since questions in this category are mostly related to in-class procedures, this difference may reflect

Table 14.5 Questions asked at the beginning of class by Indian and U.S. high school teachers

Question function ***	India usage (%)	U.S. usage (%)
Agreement bid	35.9	22.7
Knowledge check	36.3	18.1
Personal information	3.9	16.9
Elaboration request	5.2	9.0
Other	18.6	33.3

*** $p < 0.0001$

U.S. teachers' needing to verbally scaffold activities more than Indian teachers. This explanation fits with our informal observation that U.S. teachers more often assigned in-class activities for students to complete on their own, while the teacher walked around monitoring progress and offering help.

Overall, students in India were more often called upon to agree with teachers' assertions and to show the teacher what they had learned, in accordance with the traditional roles of teacher and student. Students in the U.S., by contrast, were more often called upon to share information about themselves and to explain their thinking, in other words, to express themselves.

Analysis 5: Classroom Pronoun Usage

Our final verbal analysis shifted from speech function to linguistic form, focusing on the pronouns used by teachers and students during class. Pronouns mark whether an utterance relates to oneself or others and can reveal large-scale trends in cultural values (Hamamura & Xu, 2015). Since we expected classroom discourse in India to centre on efficient knowledge transfer, we predicted that it would include relatively more references to course content (e.g. famous world leaders, notable inventions), reflected in greater use of third-person pronouns like "they" and "it". Since we expected U.S. classroom discourse to incorporate more personal self-expression, we predicted that both teachers and students in the U.S. would talk about themselves more, reflected in greater use of first-person pronouns like "I" and "us".⁵

Method. This analysis compared eight randomly sampled Indian classrooms (four social studies and four moral values) with the eight U.S. classrooms. We focused on the beginning of class for reasons noted above (see Analysis 5). The first 40 pronouns uttered clearly by a teacher or student in each classroom were coded, including those contained within contractions. Thus, 320 pronouns were coded for each country. Two judges coded independently from the written transcripts.

There were two levels of analysis. The first level, pronoun point of view, captured *first-*, *second-* and *third-person* pronouns and thus was relevant to our predictions. The second level, pronoun type, did not relate to our predictions but was included for completeness. It captured whether pronouns were *singular* or *plural*, and *personal* or *possessive*. The categories are displayed in Table 14.6, with examples. They were mutually exclusive at each level of analysis.

Findings. The collected data are displayed in Table 14.6. At each level of analysis, one chi-square test was conducted. For pronoun point of view, Indian and U.S. classrooms showed a highly significant difference that was driven by greater third-person pronoun use in India and greater first-person pronoun use in the U.S., as predicted, $\chi^2(2, N = 640) = 21.76, p < 0.0001, \text{Cramer's } V = 0.18$. The rate of

⁵ Analysis 5 was carried out in collaboration with Sara Sullivan and Cassidy Taylor.

Table 14.6 Pronouns used at the beginning of class by high school teachers and students in India and the U.S.A.

Coding category	Examples	India usage (%)	U.S. usage (%)
Pronoun point of view ***			
First person	I, we're, my, ours	36.3	50.6
Second person	You've, your, yours	40.6	38.4
Third person	Hers, they'll, someone	23.1	10.9
Pronoun type†			
Singular personal	I'm, you [alone], she	41.3	46.3
Plural personal	You [all], they'd, everyone	41.9	43.1
Singular possessive	His, its	11.6	8.8
Plural possessive	Our, theirs	5.3	1.9

† $p < 0.10$; *** $p < 0.0001$

second-person pronoun use was similar across the two countries. For pronoun type, it appeared that possessive pronouns might have been used more in India and personal pronouns used more in the U.S., but this trend did not achieve statistical significance ($p = 0.06$).

Overall, despite similarities between the two groups, the discourse that Indian students participated in at the beginning of class appeared to be somewhat more focused on efficiently transmitting course content from teacher to student. In the U.S., on the other hand, teachers and students talked about themselves relatively more often. Indeed, fully half of U.S. pronouns were self-referential, normalizing the idea that it is appropriate to incorporate ample self-expression into the educational endeavour.

Synthesis: Contrasting Cultural Patterns in High School Classrooms

The high school classrooms we observed in India and the U.S. had much in common. In both countries, teachers mainly lectured and asked questions of the class as a whole, in classrooms that displayed decorations and student work. However, our findings also paint a remarkably consistent picture of diverging cultural orientations across five distinct levels of analysis. Indian teachers and students tended to cocreate a learning environment that centred more on the traditional hierarchical roles of teacher and student, according to which teachers convey knowledge to a class and hold class members accountable for learning the material without distraction, while students listen attentively and respond to the teacher when called upon. In the U.S., teachers and students tended to cocreate a learning environment that brought personal self-expression more to the fore for teachers and students alike, de-emphasizing hierarchy

Table 14.7 Summary of similarities and differences in Indian and U.S. classrooms across five analyses

More in Indian classrooms	More in U.S. classrooms	Commonalities
Bare classroom walls	Teacher personalized displays	Similar displays of handmade items and decorations
Teacher body orientation towards the full class	Teacher body orientation towards individual students	Full class body orientation most common for both; angled is second-most common
Overall teacher talk	Overall student talk	Similar use of most FIAS speech categories
Teacher questioning	Student-initiated talk	Same amount of lecturing
Asking students to demonstrate knowledge	Asking students to elaborate further	
Asking students to agree with the teacher	Asking students for personal information	
Third-person pronoun use	First-person pronoun use	Similar second-person pronoun use, and most pronoun types

and treating individuality as an integral part of the educational endeavour. Table 14.7 summarizes the collection of findings that support these conclusions.

That India and the U.S. tend to emphasize hierarchical role fulfilment and individual self-expression, respectively, is already well established. What the present work contributes to the literature is not just further evidence supporting this asymmetry, but the identification of five socialization channels through which these abstract orientations may be made concrete in Indian and U.S. high schools. As students attend school and are drawn into culturally preferred ways of participating in the classroom over months and years, divergent orientations are likely to become incorporated into how they view themselves and relate to others (Matusov et al., 2002). Thus, this work shines a light on specific mechanisms through which high school-based enculturation and language socialization may play out in India and the U.S.

Limitations and Caveats

This work rests on a foundation that was mixed and poured by a large team of people, including 13 scholars and assistants in India and 23 researchers and assistants in the U.S., including those named above in footnotes. Thus, researcher bias on the part of a few individuals is unlikely to have influenced the overall pattern of results. On the other hand, these findings reflect a U.S. American perspective on the data. Due to logistical constraints, the analyses reported here were conducted only by U.S. researchers, and Indians participated in transcribing only three classroom recordings. Thus, no firm conclusions can be drawn until Indian researchers have carried out

work that clarifies the extent to which our findings may have been contingent on U.S. cultural bias.

There are several other caveats to the findings reported here. For one thing, the Indian data came from private English-medium high schools which, although widespread across India, are attended primarily by students from wealthier, more Westernized families. Thus, our Indian sample probably resembled the U.S. sample more than other types of Indian schools (e.g. government-funded Hindi-medium) would have. Additional research with less Westernized Indian schools is therefore necessary. On a related note, the behaviours we observed in Ohio and Uttar Pradesh state may not be typical of high schools in other parts of the country, given the considerable cultural variation that exists regionally in both countries (Dheer et al., 2015; Plaut et al., 2002). Another caveat is that most Indian teachers were female, whereas most U.S. teachers were male. Had we observed more male teachers in India and more female teachers in the U.S., our outcomes may have looked somewhat different. Additionally, the Indian students were a year younger than the U.S. students, on average, and the Indian classes had many more students per teacher. It is possible that the differences we observed may have flowed from these factors, rather than cultural orientations. However, given the recognized centrality of role fulfilment and self-expression in the two countries, we believe these alternate explanations are unlikely to fully explain the between-group differences observed.

There are two apparent limitations that we believe do not threaten our conclusions. First, classroom behaviour probably was influenced by the presence of an observer, especially in India, where the visitor was foreign. Individuals are likely to have behaved somewhat unnaturally, in order to present themselves as an especially good teacher or student. Yet because the features of “good” behaviour depend on cultural norms, self-consciousness on the part of students and teachers would serve to highlight culturally valued behaviours and thus clarify rather than obscure dimensions relevant to enculturation. Secondly, in terms of the number of classrooms included in each analysis, the sample sizes were small. However, these classrooms comprised the experiences of 158 U.S. students and 1046 Indian students. In other words, if we had surveyed the students about their classroom experiences rather than observing them directly, the sample sizes would have appeared much larger. Yet we considered direct observation to be the most appropriate methodology for studying language socialization and classroom enculturation. Overall, just as a rope is strengthened by being constructed out of multiple small strands, we maintain that our conclusions are strengthened by their reliance on five separate small-scale analyses that all point in the same direction.

Conclusion

In sum, we observed Westernized Indian and U.S. high school classes, comparing their classroom decor, teacher body orientation, classroom speech, teacher questions and classroom pronoun usage. Although the two samples had much in common,

Indian classrooms more often emphasized the traditional roles of teacher and student, whereas U.S. classrooms more often emphasized self-expression and individuality. These orientations were consistent across all five levels of analysis, shedding light on possible mechanisms of high school-based enculturation and language socialization. This work reflects a solidly U.S. American perspective, however, and thus should be considered in tandem with related work conducted by Indian scholars.

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Chapter 15

Bhagavad Gita and Psychotherapy: A Cure for Soul?



Vineet Gairola and Prabhat Kumar Mishra

Abstract Elucidations in the Bhagavad Gita are deciphered by the plethora of thinkers in terms of it being a distilled essence of teachings inherent in Vedas and Upanishads. Psychic work inherent in Bhagavad Gita has engaged thinkers and seekers for generations. Hence, especially in the field of psychology, the Bhagavad Gita becomes a ground zero to understand the innermost core of human nature and dynamics of psychotherapy—to understand crisis, anxiety, guilt, cognitive distortions and depression. In this present world, which is full of Arjunas, an attempt is made to make sense of the Bhagavad Gita as a tool to arrive one step closer to Self. A correspondence between the Bhagavad Gita and psychotherapy will allow to open up creative spaces to understand behavioural and existential perspectives. This research is about understanding what the first instance of psychotherapy—between Krishna (therapist) and Arjuna (patient) has to offer to psychotherapy the way it is today. Deconstruction of the Bhagavad Gita as a text is carried out in this research. It will assist us in understanding underlying psychological concepts and dynamics present in the Bhagavad Gita, which will open new doors to rethink therapy in a clinical setting.

Keywords Bhagavad Gita · Psychotherapy · Psychoanalysis · Psychodynamic psychotherapy

Introduction

The Bhagavad Gita, known as “the song of the lord”, is the eternal message of spiritual, experiential wisdom from ancient India composed of 700 Sanskrit verses contained within 18 chapters which are actually a part of original 200K verse longest epic poem in the world—the Mahabharata. The Bhagavad Gita is set in a narrative

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framework of a dialogue between Pandava prince Arjuna and his Charioteer Lord Krishna at the battlefield of Kurukshetra. During the war, Arjuna was befuddled. He was not ready to decide what is right and what is wrong. Arjuna, the best archer in the world, who is battling against injustice, is suddenly overcome by sorrow. He had to fight a war against everyone he cared for—his cousins, teachers, uncles and classmates. Overwhelmed by emotions, he endeavours to surrender the war. He sought the guidance of Lord Krishna. The Bhagavad Gita captures the guidance and teachings provided to Arjuna by Lord Krishna. As sage Ved Vyasa is known for writing Mahabharata, Gita being part of it is also ascribed to him.

The Bhagavad Gita packs an intense analysis of life, emotions and ambitions. People are suffering from tensions as much as they are enjoying their tensions. Tension keeps one very busy, doing nothing. It asks one to be in touch with the experiential reality—to take great pleasure in one's work, to manage one's emotions, to never imitate another's life, to never lose sight of your goals because of imitation, to treat everyone and everything the same. Lastly, to never run away from one's duty. It is a recipe to avoid emotional rollercoaster. Inward experiential reality remains valid then and now. Krishna, Buddha and Mahavira cannot give answers to the cutting-edge technological advancements but can give answers to inward experiential reality about feelings, thoughts, sensations, cognitions, relations, perspectives, outlooks and way of being. Krishna's message is valid today as it was centuries ago. His message will continue tomorrow, for it describes the eternal truth of life regarding the fiercest battle we must wage against all that is selfish, I-willed and distant in us. Truth related to self remains the same. It is about inner science of being which no matter was conceptualized ages ago, is relevant till this date.

People have managed through their creativity to render similarities between the Bhagavad Gita, counselling, CBT and various other therapeutic techniques (Balodhi & Keshavan, 2011; Bhatia et al., 2013; Jeste & Vahia, 2008; Pandurangi et al., 2014; Reddy, 2012; Sharma, 2014). However, the psychodynamic psychotherapeutic understanding that this paper elucidates is rarely touched by them. This paper looks at the British psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion's concept of O. Interestingly, he was born in India and talked about O as being without memory and without desire (Bion, 1991; Gairola, 2022). This paper brings O and Sthitpragya into a correspondence. Here, psychodynamic psychotherapy is understood in tandem with the Gita in dealing with neurotic patients. This paper traces the complimentary experiential nuances in the Gita and psychodynamic psychotherapeutic encounter by referring to the literature on psychoanalysis and psychodynamic psychotherapy through the works of Yalom (1980), Winnicott (1958), and Bion (1984, 1991) amid others.

Instead of embarking the journey of intellectual narcissism, which is to play with abstractions and metaphors, this research focuses on understanding the soul and ethos of the Bhagavad Gita and psychotherapy. This paper is as much about exploring the relational aspect in the Bhagavad Gita and psychotherapy as it is about how to make an original contribution worthy enough in the field of psychology. This asks to be rebellious enough as Rajneesh says, "creativity is the biggest rebellion in existence" (Osho, 1999). Perhaps love affair with the unknown can open the doors for theorizations hitherto unseen. The task of this paper is not to answer the questions

related one's personal struggles in the Bhagavad Gita quickly but to understand what lies behind those questions. From "song of the Lord" to soundless, from perplexity to clearness, from form to formless, from denial to acceptance, from agreement-disagreement to understanding, from belief to seeking, from doubt to trust, from discontent to empathy, from illness to stillness, from process of cure to love and from inaction to action. The greatest quality of the Bhagavad Gita is that it prompts an individual to think, to take fair decisions, to look at life differently and refreshingly without surrendering one's identity.

Belief as a system is inadequate to get to the truth as believing means one has settled for something without an earnest enquiry. People who believe in the Bhagavad Gita are not some great souls. One ought to live Gita rather than merely reading what is written in it. Karma Yoga is not about believing but conscious action. Living should exemplify understanding (Osho, 2011b). There is no reason for perusing and discussing sacred writings. Just reading these texts superficially would nullify the very purpose for which they were spoken or composed. The clash between the Pandavas and the Kauravas can be deciphered as a clash we experience in our everyday life—in our minds. Kurukshetra lies between our memory, apprehension, cognitive distortions and actions. The Bhagavad Gita is the unrecognized textbook of counselling to most psychological problems (Osho, 2011a, b; Sharma, 2014).

The Bhagavad Gita asks us to read it the way it is meant to be read—in relation to our mind and body. To look inside. The metaphor that introjected Gita vicariously has become in the minds of people has condensed in itself values that pervade daily personal lives of people. In other words, people talk about the Gita without reading it and some people have remembered it word-to-word and still have no experience of what it is. It also addresses the deep-seated desire to be boundless, to be in touch with the infinite, to be related to something even after death. Just as the insights and entry towards relating with oneself and the other, within and without in the psychotherapeutic setting is extended from the analytic setting to the outside world.

Thomas Babington Macaulay was a British historian and a politician who is one of the most significant persons who introduced Western education system in India. His ambition of dissociating people of rich cultural heritage like that of ancient India is thriving successfully till this date. It is now time to look at the native weltanschauung "worldview" and to reach from routes to roots. Till there is no resolution of conflict between the "colonial preconscious" (Rao, 2010) shadows and our focus is not established on indigenous concerns, worthwhile contributions by India in the field of psychology would be like measures to cope with Delhi's weather, all in vain. In this time of crisis where people feel isolated at maximum strength and are facing chronic psychosocial turmoil that impinges their overall health (Goyal et al., 2020), it is crucial to understand what the nature of spiritual path in these lines is. It comes as a necessity to explore whether spiritual path established in the Bhagavad Gita has qualities to offer contemporary life and to psychotherapy in the analytic setting.

What can be measured best is not necessarily the most significant. Experiences rendered in the Bhagavad Gita and patients in psychotherapy are not measurable but are they not valuable to alleviate sufferings of the basic human condition? A person who has bridged one's instincts and intuition with intelligence will highly doubt this

preposition. Eysenck (1952) referred to psychotherapy as having no fundamental value inherent in it. He stated that a person is cured through time irrespective of psychotherapy. To say this is to say that thoughts and love do not exist as no dissection can directly point at a particular “thought point” and the seed of love. Yet everybody has experienced thoughts and has empirical experience of love—even if it is only brief, but what a moment.

The Bhagavad Gita and psychotherapy intuitively tell us that the hidden hides in the hyper-presence of perceived absence. It comes as a good enough psychology to come up with creative and adequate solutions for human problems. A person is not merely an enormously complex assemblage of reflexes or merely an information processing machine. Much more happens through the human body that Broca’s area and Wernicke’s area could not express and still that expression of ineffable stays with the mind of an individual.

The two words that eloquently describe the affective state of the Bhagavad Gita and psychotherapy as praxis are insight and illumination. Our ancients have already said *atmanamprathamavidhya* (know and analyse yourself first) (Sinha, 1999). A tradition of self-analysis and an urge to know our inner self and personality pervades the history of India. The texts emanating from the Indian terroir are post-modernist even before the word was coined. Arjuna was presented different paths and options to deal with his despair and the choice to select any path absolutely relied on him. A failure to look in the mirror and to truly examine who we are results in suffering projected onto destiny and fate. Psychotherapy is an attempt to bring back these projections from that distorted source from which they originated.

Psychology: The Study of Soul?

Psychology from the Greek *psyche-logos* “the study of the soul” (Leahey, 2007) has almost come to a point where even replacing the word “soul” to a less religious term “mind” has resulted in safeguarding from perceived threat to rational, scientific “mind” of modern thinker. That is the case. Let alone use of the word *psyche*. It has settled itself into deep depths of “rational” mind. This split subject unconsciously uses its potential energy in maintaining coherence in academic and scientific community. However, situations and experience of excess, i.e. moments of getting a glimpse that there is something beyond what a person defines as “me” never ceases to arrest one’s *psyche*. One finds ambivalence within oneself about experiencing it but not being able to define it and continues to explore, decipher and access the excess secretly, silently. The word “soul” in the title is not threatening our identity as a scientific, rational thinker. It is asking us to be rebellious enough to reclaim psychology’s endeavour—to see what everybody sees and to notice what people fail to notice. The term “psychotherapy” refers to the healing of the mind or soul—the endeavour to fix that which animates and energizes our consciousness (Mistlberger, 2010).

Science predominantly draws our attention to the world that is outside. If the gaze of science only focuses on that which is outside, then we would be devoid of

exploring the depths of that which is inside. As a result of this, one loses out on self-knowledge (Pranjpe, 2010). Intellectuals strived to be in touch with rose petals but what they actually settle for are rose petals made of ink, sheet and paper. Our ancients have already told us that to understand self and to dwell in self is what one should strive for (Osborne, 2014).

Bhagavad Gita and Psychotherapy

Task of this paper is not to pluck fruits of the Bhagavad Gita and sow its seeds in Western psychotherapeutic concepts but to see how psychotherapy was functioning in intuitive ways in the land of Yoga. In Western psychotherapy, healing begins through words and in the land of Yoga, healing begins from body to the beyond and there is a movement from words to silence. Psychotherapy now too is capable of addressing silence in the analytic hour (Yalom, 1980).

Throughout academic, spiritual and scholastic theorizations, Arjuna has been rendered as a timeless metaphor. Between the Bhagavad Gita and psychotherapy, there is no need to invent any link, no need to invent a world that is not there. No need to even build a bridge—for it already exists. The science of intuition is beyond the science we see today and that's the hidden mystery. This mystery pervades all the grounds of experiential reality. The Bhagavad Gita is not pointing at something mysterious far away; it is asking to retrace the original source of one's being. It is not about gaining something new but about giving up distortions and false theorizations. Analytical psychotherapy also asks to trace the source of misery and suffering as originating from within—to look inside at that which is available but is difficult to access. It is that which colours the reality of one's existence (Jung, 1989).

Modern day Arjuna upon facing stagnation in life asks, "what am I really doing?", "how am I part of the problem?" Analysandby using Mahabharata as a mirror while having an intense dialogue with the therapist may find within the elements of the Pandava heroes. Analysand much like Arjuna embarks on a journey to seek. There is identification of patient's heroic propensities, dealing with the shadow self, unleashing hidden potentials, being aware of the social structures that profoundly impact the human condition, recovering towards striving for a meaning, and finds within oneself an eternal spring of energy. Like the bow is drawn deeply to shoot a powerful arrow, patient emerges with new reservoirs of strength "connected to the wisdom that lies within him anchored in an expanded capacity to meet challenges and play effective roles" (Hooper, 2018).

Krishna's experience in the Bhagavad Gita has similarities from Vedas and Upanishads. The life of Jesus is living embodiment of some of the principles stated by Buddha (Osho, 2011a). Kalidas and Tulsidas have spoken of that which is relevant throughout the ages; we need to understand that many things in life go in complementary fashion and not in contrast. Similarity of Krishna's discourses from Vedas and Upanishads does not make him a thief—for what emanates from within surpasses all that lies without. In the same way, the Bhagavad Gita and psychotherapy together

come as a mirror which reflects in itself the dynamics of, to take Christopher Bollas' term, "unthought known", which represents those experiences which are known to a person (Bollas, 2007).

The Bhagavad Gita and psychotherapy both have sonic quality attached to them. Both channelize in them the aspects of listening, communicating and relating. Aim of psychotherapy is insight and awareness—to be able to zoom out and see the larger picture. Same is the task given to Arjuna. Even Ramana Maharshi experientially, intuitively grasps it. He says, "whose fault is it if the traveller instead of putting his luggage in the cart which bears the load any way carries it on his head, to his own inconvenience?" (Osborne, 2014).

What happens between Krishna and Arjuna is, cyclical in nature. Arjuna in terror of existential isolation relates deeply and meaningfully to Krishna and then gains courage and clarity from this interaction and is led back again to a confrontation with the Kauravas in the battlefield (seen as existential isolation). Irwin Yalom brilliantly puts the process of psychotherapy as

a cyclical process from isolation into relationship. It is cyclical because the patient, in terror of existential isolation, relates deeply and meaningfully to the therapist and then, strengthened by this encounter, is led back again to a confrontation with existential isolation (Yalom, 1980).

Only Krishna can understand Gita. *Vyakhya* (commentaries/elaborations) belong to the writers not Krishna. Authors and thinkers feel mesmerized by ascribing their interpretations to Krishna, but they only belong to them. Only at the level of Krishna, one can understand Gita. Only when one is psychoanalysed, one can understand psychoanalysis. That is the essence. That is why psychoanalysts before becoming analysts must be analysed. Only then they can reach the authentic experiential core of things the way they are. Krishna knew what he was saying. People projecting their interpretation to the object (Krishna) seems satisfying to many. One cannot understand the Bhagavad Gita even if one becomes Arjuna. They will have to be Krishna to understand Krishna. Similarly, psychotherapy is not about imitating lives of others but about clarifying the lens of perceiving the world and oneself. Valuable aphorisms will lose their glitter on the face of one original experiential insight, which means that which comes from experience needs to be trusted.

The resolution of the conflict is central to the Bhagavad Gita and Psychotherapy. In the Gita, Arjuna's conflicts are resolved and in psychotherapy, that of a client. Gaining insight is central to analytical therapy. Freudian psychoanalysis, the Bhagavad Gita, and Upanishads are in tune when one would say that the true knowledge of self does not lead to liberation, it is the liberation. Although, achieving such synthesis is a rare feat. Krishna engages in the style of conversation like a psychotherapist and creates a holding environment for Arjuna. There are always two parts of the scriptures—the timeless and the contemporary. One can vary in the elucidation of the contemporary text; to look at the old from today's lens. Regardless, to the extent truth is concerned, it continues as before.

The "and" between the Bhagavad Gita *and* psychotherapy is not to be underestimated. Aim of this research is to theorize "and" in the Bhagavad Gita *and*

psychotherapy. This “and” is a contemplative thread which balances itself on catharsis. Catharsis inherent in the Bhagavad Gita and psychotherapy is also as much about going on a fearless quest into the uncharted depths of the human psyche as it is about understanding the social and political sufferings.

The Bhagavad Gita comes as one of the first documentation on the dynamics of motivation and emotion which are also the central aspect of psychotherapeutic techniques—understanding profundities of feelings. (Osho, 2011a). As Michael Eigen says regarding feelings, “They *do* exist and permeate experience” (Eigen, 2007, p. 2, author’s emphasis). The domain of psychotherapy is not hypothetical; it is existential in nature dealing with vicissitudes of sensation, perception, cognizance and emotions. Something which is hidden is always hyper-present, presenting itself by showing what it shows. The underlying factor in the Bhagavad Gita is not about foreclosing the collective reality and societal preoccupations. The very way to see things the way they are is to look within rather than without, to awake rather than dreaming the dream.

The central task that elusively pervades Gita and psychotherapy is reaching to experience, emotions, silence and stillness. Beginning with words, perhaps the sound of the words where melodic inflections, intonations expressed as feelings and emotions are able to express formless in a manner that helps Arjuna-patient to ascend from the beta state towards alpha-function (Bion, 1984). It is about giving structure and articulation to that pulpy, thick zone of internal affective state. The Bhagavad Gita mentions that the tree will remain (eternal) (Radhakrishnan, 1948) and in similar fashion challenges faced by one’s being also remain—be it Arjuna or a contemporary individual. Dilemma and war with one’s own heart come out as a central theme in human existence.

Psychotherapy generates understanding through words. Between Krishna and Arjuna as well, words are exchanged. Words have tremendous energy. Because words emerge from amazing nebulous psychic currents into a structure, they have tremendous transformative capabilities. Freud says,

Words have a magical power. They can bring either the greatest happiness or deepest despair; they can transfer knowledge from teacher to student; words enable the orator to sway his audience and dictate its decisions. Words are capable of arousing the strongest emotions and prompting all men’s actions (Freud et al., 1991).

What is it that the Bhagavad Gita has to teach the world the way it is today? It is about exploring its intuitive contribution to psychotherapy as ancient in the modern mind survives effortlessly. Crises are not always negative; they can create a ground for further opening. Arjuna was not able to pick his bow and arrow and in contemporary setting a patient unable to partake and perform her/his duty in everyday life due to being dissociated from the self. The feeling of conflict and ambivalence is not dead in modern man.

Psychotherapy attempts to strike a balance within a person in relation to society, norms, ethics, people, family and to oneself. The unconscious is interested in outside, consciousness centres around within. For the first time, a person in psychotherapy relates to oneself, capacities of oneself to remain alone, being true to oneself, to

rethink all the habits of the mind, and the link with attachments. The Bhagavad Gita explains that an individual is a reality. Society is only a name. At the beginning of the war in Kurukshetra, there is *shank naad* (conch sound) and in the end, there is no sound. Psychotherapy too begins with words and ends with expanding a person's capacity to be alone (Winnicott, 1958). As one discovers bliss in oneself, at exactly that point meaningful relations begin, where relating is not coming out of fear, anger, jealousy and insecurity but out of love, understanding, blissfulness, joy and compassion.

To be able to remain like a dewdrop on a leaf; attached and detached both at the same time is a sensibility that Krishna talks about and lives by. This is also something that the therapist imbibes and opens the door even for the client-Arjuna. As detachment is not that you own nothing, it means that nothing owns you. Both are asking one to engage in contact with the depths. Mind, consciousness, being and body are discussed in both Bhagavad Gita and psychodynamic psychotherapy. To understand the Bhagavad Gita, one need not strive to be a Hindu. It is not about Hinduism at all. There was nothing "Hindu" when the Bhagavad Gita was written. The word "Hindu" is a geographical identity, not a religious one although it is used as a religious identity for the political gains. Only Krishna can comprehend the Bhagavad Gita and there is a possibility that one can be Krishna. Only when one is Krishna, one can understand the Bhagavad Gita. Even Arjuna was not able to understand it. The paradox is when one is authentic from one's own being, there is no need to become Krishna, and the aim is attained. It is not about agreeing, disagreeing, or believing on a particular matter. Only when one understands, the whole need to agree, disagree, or to believe in something dissipates, evaporates and fades away.

The Bhagavad Gita is not a philosophy. It is not about love for wisdom or knowledge. Philosophy from thousands of years has attempted to reach towards truth and has failed with grace, since Socrates. It is love for truth—be it palatable or unpalatable. Before reading the Gita, one must see the song that plays within, after exploring that, Gita would come out only as a reflection of moon in calm waters of one's mind. Psychotherapy too asks patient to seek truth. Sometimes what we think is real is not reality at all. Your cell phone is in your pocket and you are anxiously, helplessly looking for it, searching it everywhere.

When one deconditions one's mind, identifies patterns and comes out as a creative individual who has made peace with the introjected parental voice within and all the clutter that society has given, when beliefs, convictions are eroded, birth of an individual takes place, who for the first time has her/his own voice and is centred in one's being. Here comes the paradox for an outsider. One who is grounded to one's centrality is already in touch with Krishna, Jesus, Buddha and Mahavira. There is no need to become. From there, an understanding arises. A person in psychotherapy also sheds off borrowed skins. As Freud says, psychoanalysis is like chipping off to bring about a sculpture and not adding something from the outside (Freud, 1905). No wonder Lacan thought of pure subjectivity as absolute universality. Vedas have mentioned it already, *Ekam sat viprahabahudhavadanti* "Truth is one; the wise call it by different names" (Griffith, 1973).

Concept of *Sthitpragya*, *Anāsakti* and Bion's "O"

With the concept of "O", Bion talks about a transient, dynamic state of being in which there is an easy, smooth, unmediated contact with reality. This can be the reason why Bion suggests the analyst to enter the clinic without memory or desire—the prerequisites for the emergence of "O". This "O" is a psychic space where mystical and religious states also find their places (Reiner, 2012). Bion's concept of "O" can be traced in *sthitpragya* as a way of being, where one has to build within oneself a capacity to zoom out and to be like a dew drop on a leaf—attached and detached both at the same time (Gairola, 2022).

Anāsakti means detachment which is a path towards self-realization, and it is "also an end state because a realized soul is spontaneously *anāsakt* or detached" (Naidu & Pande, 1999). *Anāsakti*, *sthitpragya*, and Bion's concept of "O" have striking resemblance. He is one "...whose mind is untroubled in the midst of sorrows and is free from eager desire amid pleasures..." (Radhakrishnan, 1948). *Prapya-subhasubham-nabhinadatinadvesti* (2:57), he has his senses under his control and therefore he indulges into sense experiences and withdraws himself away at his own will "*visayanindriyaiscaranaatmavasyair...*" (2:64). He leads a life of intense activity in the interest of society but at the same time remains ever contented ("*nityatrpto*" 4:20) only to enjoy a state of profound peace (Radhakrishnan, 1948).

One whose mind remains stable in all situations is called "*sthitpragya*" by the Bhagavad Gita (2:55). Wilfred Bion's concept of "O" inherently and effortlessly fits in *sthitpragya* state of mind as "O" is without memory and without desire (Reiner, 2012). Awareness building in psychotherapy asks us to be *sakshi* "witness". The Bhagavad Gita says, "He unto whom all desires enter as waters into the sea, which though ever being filled is ever motionless, attains to peace and not he who hugs his desires" (2:71) (Radhakrishnan, 1948).

As per the Bhagavad Gita, the most dominant value which a *sthitpragya* holds is duty. He believes that one should perform his duties without being concerned about the consequences "*karmanyevadhikaraste ma phalesukadhacana*" (2:47) (Radhakrishnan, 1948). There is slight difference between doing irrational, impulsive behaviour and doing actions through the intuitive knowledge of supreme wholeness that permeates the entire core of one's being.

A therapist's stance to a patient in psychoanalysis not to turn them into a happy being but to be able to develop in them a capacity to maintain equanimity in moments of suffering and in moments of bliss. Bhagavad Gita states that

desire and lust (*kama*) is of two kinds, joyous events appear to be pleasurable and one may have lust for them, whereas unhappiness generates anger and fear giving rise to a desire to retaliate, both lead to eventual unhappiness. One must endeavor to remain calm and maintain equanimity under both circumstances, eventually becoming *Sthitpragya* (Agarwal, 2010, author's emphasis).

The Art of Cure in Gita and Psychotherapy

Freud was not the first one to theorize ambivalence. Krishna looked at the mind in conflict prior to Freud. Arjuna's faith in himself attained through Krishna is like a protective armour in his journey, probably like the transference phenomena in psychoanalytic treatment. Being full of words and empty with experience will take one nowhere. Aim of psychotherapy is not to turn patient into a therapist, but to be more of who you do not know you already are. There is no need to borrow anything. Everything borrowed is ugly. Beliefs are also borrowed. The Bhagavad Gita and psychotherapy both are asking to have your own experience from your inner flowering, fragrance, being. When one is authentic to oneself, aim is attained. Krishna is not asking you to be Krishnaite. When you are yourself from innermost core, Krishna is achieved automatically.

Freud remarks that "Psychoanalysis is, in essence, a cure through love" (McGuire, 1974). Krishna and Arjuna are also friends who share love with each other. Without love, Arjuna would not have understood Krishna. Spirituality is increasingly permeating both our culture and the consciousness of our patients and can offer a new vision for psychotherapy theory and practice. Is psychotherapy spiritual or is in essence seeking spirituality has psychotherapeutic elements inherent in it? Spirituality is having your own experience rather than believing in somebody else's experience.

The Bhagavad Gita is a diagnostic as well as a therapeutic, restorative conversation between Lord Krishna and Arjuna. There lies an obscure aspect of Krishna's multifaceted individuality. Very few thinkers have brought to light Krishna's virtuoso as a psychologist. One of the first thinkers who theorized ambivalence, the Western mind would proclaim was Freud. We despise unconsciously those who we love because they are capable of overpowering, overwhelming our whole existence. Krishna could be called a "father of psychology" (Osho, 2011a). He is the first individual who has understood the wavering, faltering mind, the mind which is in conflict. "He has seen the mind full of sorrow, the will power being fragmented—and has tried to bring integrity, unity and wholeness to the mind. He is the first individual who has introduced psychoanalysis and has explored the human mind" (Osho, 2011a).

No matter Arjuna is in the middle of a war and has attained insight, choice to take action is absolutely in the hands of Arjuna. A psychotherapist may facilitate insight to the patient, but the patient will have to travel the road on its own. Gita and psychotherapy both are insight based. Something which is available does not mean it is accessible as well. One has to understand that guidance is like a path, which may sound pathless at first but the one seeking guidance will have to travel the terrains. Krishna did not fight the war, he guided Arjuna, and the terrain was travelled by Arjuna himself.

Psychic Work Inherent in the Bhagavad Gita and Psychotherapy

What the Bhagavad Gita elucidates is to reach one step closer to the experience that one is not the doer and relinquish the sense that one has accomplished any task. This is the paradox that one is not anxious. This is what people ascribe to themselves, that they are the doer. They are being a “part” in the process of “producing” anxiety. However, if one really looks closely, one will come to know that one is not anxious—one is aware of the anxiety one is experiencing. This in itself brings a profound change, a change that even the Bhagavad Gita proposes—to be a witness. Like if people are stuck in a traffic jam, it really gets on nerves of people and if that same traffic is seen from a hot air balloon from above, it seems blissful—a piece of art. This is what it means to be a witness—being a “doer” results in being depressed about past or being anxious about the future. While doing something, there is no doer, there is only action—absolute involvement. This absolute involvement eliminates both counterfactuals related to past and apprehensions related to future.

The Bhagavad Gita is not asking to sharpen our observational skills for the outside world first. It attempts to first understanding human nature by observing and understanding self. Not that which comes and goes but that which remains. What the Bhagavad Gita expresses is that the human subject, which can be looked as a stream of consciousness, conditioned by existential context by myriad of forces acting upon her/him through the mind becomes the instrument of individualized thought, passion and action. From this, individuation emanates both subjectivity and rationality—the relativity of truth and values. It asks for both—to explore multifaceted manifestations of consciousness and to decipher its true nature in one’s being.

That which originates in the mind and is expressed through the body is difficult to cure with medicine. Many of the ills of human life cannot be alleviated by drugs and other physical means. There are many dimensions of knowledge that are as yet unexplored by the vast majority of people. Medicines are crucial in physical and mental health care. However, rather than giving benzodiazepine to Arjuna, a dialogue with Krishna-therapist is what was required to regain insight and clarity—to move away from clouding of consciousness.

It comes as a valuable insight to understand the etymology of the word “Arjuna”. Meaning of the word “Arjuna” has a great deal to offer the modern mind. *Riju*, a Hindi word alludes to “straightforward”. The opposite of the word *riju* is *ariju*, which means “wavering”, “not straightforward”. The word “Arjuna” means “wavering” (Osho, 2011b). Deep down within, we all are like Arjuna. The mind is always afraid, wavering and lives in uncertainty. Our minds have a deep resonance with Arjuna’s mind—it keeps on working and is still caught up in the dilemma of what is the right thing to do. The mind finds itself in the shackles of counterfactuals.

The body is a chariot. The horses making the chariot move are five senses. The reigns of the horses are the mind. The driver controlling the reigns is the intelligence and one finds oneself as a witness sitting behind and observing everything but untouched by anything. The Bhagavad Gita like any other book is dead. It is a dead

text. Truth in words is far away from the silence it tries to convey. There is nothing to remember from the Bhagavad Gita. The aim of book is not remembering as it is not about words to be remembered—it is about experiences to be realized.

Alan Watts has mentioned that Eastern methods of liberation resemble Western psychotherapy and that both are concerned with the changing people's feeling about themselves. Western parallel to the Eastern spiritual traditions is not Western religion but rather Western psychotherapy. He says,

If we look deeply into such ways as Buddhism and Taoism, Vedanta and Yoga, we do not find either philosophy or religion as these are understood in the West. We find something more nearly resembling psychotherapy. . . the main resemblance between these Eastern ways of life and Western psychotherapy is in the concern of both to bring about changes in consciousness (Watts, 1963).

We must also note that for Freud, in psychodynamic understanding, chaos is first and then there is formulation of ego to bring a sense of coherence in the psyche of an individual. In a sense, senses are superior and above everything else. The Bhagavad Gita mentions that self is above all this chaos. What is highest for Freud (Id; chaos) is in lowest hierarchy of three gunas—*Sattvik*, *Rajasik* and *Tamsik*. From an indigenous perspective, these “irrational” impulses are only storms and clouds which cover the field of vision due to which the mountains and sun are not seen.

Gita explains neither negation nor addition to be the way of life. Rather than that, it teaches taking action and remaining a witness. In both Gita and psychotherapy, something happens beyond the games and gymnastics of intellect and language. Lord Krishna is answering questions propounded by Arjuna in a manner that he is not answering them in terms of only the battlefield of Kurukshetra. He is also pointing towards something else and psychology is always about something else.

Bhagavad Gita and Its Parallels with Contemporary Concepts

Psychological detachment is not just about materialism. It does not mean that you own nothing—it means that nothing owns you. The Bhagavad Gita shows path to the lost, truth to seeker, answer to the confused and wisdom to all. Arjuna is the mind and Krishna is consciousness (Osho, 2011a). In pure consciousness, there is union of opposites. Tranquility is achieved. Equanimity is attained. Even in the depths of collective unconscious the opposites dissolve (Jung, 1983).

Three gunas (qualities) are inherent in all nature: Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. These have been integrated with modern psychological theory, reconceived and redefined as inertia, activation and stability. Even frustration aggression hypothesis can be located in the Bhagavad Gita (Kuppuswamy, 1985). Foucauldian *askesis* (McGushin, 2006), “care of the self” is not at all antagonistic to teachings inherent in the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads. The body is described as Lord's *kshetra* (abode) or temple,

hence making it pertinent for an individual to take care of it and thereby providing the Lord the best place to reside in.

Discussion

What we see as occurring outside in human affairs has a single, common source—it originates from within ourselves (Osborne, 2014). In life, one becomes a witness to the dynamics of existence—feelings that we cannot deal with, states that are absurdly hard for us, torments that we do not have the foggiest idea how to manage. We can navigate a lifetime shutting those parts of our psyche yet despite everything it has its consequences on the environment, on our families and on groups we interact with.

The Bhagavad Gita and psychotherapy ask us to locate ourselves in the interiority of existence as outside comes as a mirror. Verbally expressing your emotions is like creating a symphony you did not know will satisfy you even if you heard it every day, unconsciously. This is what the Bhagavad Gita and psychotherapy are intuitively telling us. The mind focuses on ripples, the finger pointing towards the moon (Osho, 2010) but the essence resides in being-with the source. It is not about the outside ornaments. It is about touching the unseen that touches us (Eigen, 2014, p. xviii). Instead of thinking that sins will vanish after bathing in Ganga, it is about getting in touch with the Ganga that flows within. Witnessing action without being preoccupied with attaining the fruits of action asks us to not engage in counterfactuals, “what if”, but to remain diligent with what we ought to create.

Gita’s intense mode of truth is scarcely scratched in this paper. This answer is akin to describing the beach as something with a lot of sand and blue waters. The actual beach experience is so much more wonderful that it cannot be described. In making sense of the two, we might miss the opportunity to experience an oneness inherent in the Bhagavad Gita and psychotherapy. It asks us to be aware of the points of similarity and uniqueness without which this oneness would not have been possible.

Conclusion

Not only psychotherapy, but birth of a true human will also lead to birth of a new kind of psychology where intelligence will be able to bridge instinct and intuition. This paper endeavoured to enter into the space of some of the most profound human issues of feelings, thoughts and emotions—even if the path seemed pathless at first. Regardless, it is hoped that at least a few original thinkers would take up the challenge of delving into the nature and attributes of the psyche systematically and scientifically. Science also works in intuitive ways. The structure of Benzene was arranged in the dreams of a German organic chemist named Friedrich August Kekulé. On the off chance that in the wake of perusing this paper other thinkers get a little more interested in lived spiritual concepts which are psychologically significant and feel

inclined to work on them and thus contribute to the creation of a psychology with an eloquent flavour of the Indian terroir, we would have been plentifully remunerated.

No Bhagavad Gita would have been possible without Arjuna's wavering thought patterns and questioning mind. Krishna has no interest in giving any doctrine, he simply responds to Arjuna's questions. In this way finished Arjuna's voyage of the mind as recorded in the expressions of the Bhagavad Gita. The voyage that had begun with the warrior-prince's despondency and self-doubt caused him to throw his arms, heading his God-Charioteer to shake him out of his impassive stupor by the ringing reprimand. It was essentially a psychic odyssey to transcendental shrewdness, outperforming entanglements and hindrances that were all in the mind. This paper is concluded, seeking is just begun.

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Chapter 16

Developing a Global Context for Ethical Reflection



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Having a global perspective is becoming a vital characteristic of informed citizens, productive employees, and members of diverse communities. (Gross et al., 2016, p. 3).

Abstract Psychology, as a science and professional practice, contributes to the well-being of a society, including in areas of ethical reflection and behaviour. Ethical values are not universal. Cultural norms and social realities result in differences in ethical beliefs and thinking. To examine such differences, we have created a virtual context that provides college students with opportunities for developing shared views on stakeholders, cultural differences and interdisciplinary solutions and reflection on ethical solutions involving technological and economic dilemmas. The Ethical Engineer website (www.ethicalengineer.ttu.edu) has drawn users from nearly one-hundred countries and has accumulated thousands of website visits. The present chapter focuses on (i) a psychological foundation for the development of ethical action, (ii) the virtual context and tools that we are developing on the website to promote ethical reflection in students, (iii) analyses of cognitive and affective similarities and differences in U.S. and Indian students in their website responses to

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ethical dilemmas, using Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC2015) software, and iv) a pedagogical model for providing ethical exchange and opportunities for reflection to students worldwide. These findings are considered in terms of their implications for college training and professional practice in the U.S.A. and India with the goal of promoting human values, social understanding and cooperation.

Keywords Society · Culture · Ethics · Reflection

Introduction

Globalization is a process of interdependence among populations involving economic, technological, political and ecological relationships. Globalization brings with it an interdependence among people of different countries, cultures and beliefs (Bhullar, 2019). Having a global perspective is becoming increasingly important as a means of cooperation and collaboration among individuals and groups. Developing this global perspective depends, in part, on educating students for participation in a globalized world, as citizens and professionals. In higher education, there is a need to build and connect communities of faculty “who understand that the future’s complex challenges require collaboration beyond geographical borders and explore how to bring such challenges into focus in the classroom” (Centre for Global Communication, 2021). The development of students includes being “able to recognize, understand and respect the complexity of sociological and international diversity”, developing “ethical and social responsibility in a diverse world” and “adopting values that build on community at local, national and global levels” (American Psychological Association, 2007, 2013). Further, internationalization of curriculum and training students to become global partners of development can be achieved through nurturing them to appreciate diverse (and often contrary) views, opinions and perspectives.

How can education develop global perspectives? Psychology provides some guidance, primarily through socio-cultural theories, which explain individual cognitive development in terms of participation in social interactions in culture-specific settings. These theories provide deliverables to society in the form of reflective practices, metacognitive strategies and scaffolded learning. The present work describes a shared internet platform, formulated within a social-interactive framework. College student comments on this website, titled Ethical Engineer (www.ethicalengineer.ttu.edu), are analysed with a goal of better understanding cultural differences in social, cognitive and affective responses to ethical dilemmas posted on the website.

The goals for this book chapter are to (i) present a psychological foundation for the development of ethical knowledge and action, (ii) describe the virtual context and tools that we are developing to promote ethical reflection in students, (iii) summarize analyses of cognitive and affective similarities and differences in U.S. and Indian students in their responses to ethical dilemmas, using text analytics, and (iv) considering how the Ethical Engineer website might serve as a model for providing ethical exchange and opportunities for reflection to students worldwide.

Socio-Cultural Theory: A Psychological Foundation for Ethical Knowledge and Action

Socio-cultural theory explains cognitive and affective development through individuals' participation in social and cultural activities (Scott & Palincsar, 2013). Lev Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist, developed much of the framework for socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), with extensions and elaborations of his work in subsequent research (Clark et al., 2020; Cole, 1996; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Palincsar, 2005). According to socio-cultural theories, development of higher-order mental functions has its origins in social sources (Wertsch, 1991). Individuals acquire strategies and knowledge of the world through interacting and working together with others in joint activities. These interactions occur at many levels and in a variety of contexts, and could be between peers, parents and children, teachers and students, and experts and novices.

When learners interact with peers, whether it is a classroom or a coffee house, many new ideas emerge, and there is scope for “cognitive conflict” (Dreyfus et al., 1990; Limón, 2001). Piaget (1975) appreciated cognitive conflict as a process of conceptual change, emphasizing the role of scaffolding in assimilation of information and knowledge building. Students across geographical locations who have been brought up in different socio-economic settings, and exposed to a myriad of cultural beliefs, differ in values and attitudes, and prior knowledge across subject domains and motivations. Discussion and working with peers in a collaborative environment provide opportunities for students to gain a broader outlook towards their communities and others' cultures and to develop positive attitudes and appreciation of their respective achievements.

Ethical Development

The present project is concerned with ethical development in college students. Ethical norms are ubiquitous: “No society and no religious faith can live without moral rules” (Wehner, 2020). Ethical values and guidelines provide behavioural boundaries that empower individuals and communities to make the right choices. As one example, Jobin et al. (2019) reviewed standards of artificial intelligence (AI) ethics principles within private companies, research institutions and public sector organizations. They found differences in adaptation, governance and justification of ethical policies. However, there was general acceptance of ethical principles of “transparency, justice and fairness, non-maleficence, responsibility and privacy” (p. 389).

With advances and expansion of science, engineering and technology across geographical boundaries, it is important to prepare students to understand and empathize with people having different cultures than their own. Moreover, students receive very little information on practising ethics in a global context (Zhu & Jesiek, 2017). Without systematic training in knowledge and application of ethics in global

settings, it may be difficult for young professionals to adapt to different cultures while maintaining professional standards. The current study explores students' understanding of ethical responsibility from multicultural perspectives. Delving into the understanding students' gain through pedagogical training of ethics in different socio-cultural contexts, the study aims to explore similarities and differences in ethical thinking of undergraduates at a university in the southwest United States of America (U.S.A.) and their peers at two universities in India.

An effective way to develop ethics knowledge and action is through discourse, by giving students a chance "to make ethical judgements, explain them and compare them with those other students make" (Harris et al., 1996, p. 94). Loui (2005), for instance, found that the two most influential activities in the ethics course he taught were the analysis of everyday scenarios and cases like the Challenger disaster, and the exposure to diverse perspectives about moral questions and problems. In considering objectives for ethics instruction, Pfatteicher (2001) discourages giving students "firm answers" to ethical questions but rather advocates developing students' analytical skills by encouraging them to explore, define and defend what it means to be ethical. The web platform described next provides a virtual space for students to interact regarding ethical issues.

A Virtual Context for Ethical Reflection

The Ethical Engineer website (www.ethicalengineer.ttu.edu) is a virtual context for ethical reflection. The website provides an interactive platform for college students to present their comments to ethical dilemmas. The featured case studies on the website are "Which Is More Important—Environmental Concern or Economic Growth?" by Dr. Sudipta Majumdar (then Amity University Kolkata, India; currently, Faculty of Management Studies, ICFAI University, Jharkhand, India), "Outsourcing Manufacturing to Developing Countries" by Dr. William Marcy (Texas Tech University, U.S.A.), and "Bhopal Gas Tragedy" by Dr. Rhyddhi Chakraborty (London Churchill College, UK). These case studies incorporate the expectations listed in the USA ABET Criterion 3.4 for student outcomes¹: "An ability to recognize ethical and professional responsibilities in engineering situations and make informed judgements, which must consider the impact of engineering solutions in global, economic, environmental and societal contexts." Learners use the platform for ethical discourse by posting comments to the case study, following "instructor generated guidelines" available on the website. They interact with peers from their university or global peers from participating universities by posting reactions to their comments.

The website is incorporated into course curricula in a similar manner across classrooms. Instructors at Texas Tech University in the U.S.A., Amity University Kolkata, and National Institute of Technology, Rourkela, in India introduce the website to the

¹ <https://www.abet.org/accreditation/accreditation-criteria/criteria-for-accrediting-engineering-programs-2019-2020/#GC3>.

students. In order to post comments to the website, students must register on the website, using a pseudonym to protect their privacy. Learners are informed that the website maintains digital privacy and has a disciplinary policy for maintaining social etiquette. They are encouraged to explore the reading materials and case studies available at the site. The purpose of the case studies is to build an understanding of ethical misconduct in the past and its long-lasting impact in current times. These interactions motivate students to think critically, reflect on past events and analyse their tragic outcomes. It widens their learning horizons by extending the scope of learning to an international level. It is progressive in nature and integrates ethical dilemmas as an activity within a course curriculum. Blending classroom instruction with web-based activities provides new challenges for students and makes learning engaging.

Indian and U.S. Comments Posted to the Website

Data for the present study consist of the corpus of comments submitted by students from the U.S.A. and India to the Ethical Engineer website during the 2020 academic year in response to the case study “Which Is More Important—Environmental Concern or Economic Growth?” by Dr. Sudipta Majumdar. The case study is accessible at www.EthicalEngineer.ttu.edu.

Participants and Procedures

The U.S. participants were 264 undergraduate engineering majors who were enrolled in an engineering ethics course. Indian participants were 251 undergraduate students who were enrolled in an engineering degree course (B.TECH). Students submitted responses to the case study on a volunteer basis. They received course credit equivalent to one homework assignment.

Consistent with learning according to socio-cultural theory, students were provided with guiding questions on the website as a means of scaffolding their response. The instructions on the website for responding are as follows:

As you read and analyse case studies your reflective comments are invited on some or all of the following.

1. Who are the stakeholders and how are they impacted both positively and negatively?
2. What knowledge and skills are needed to implement sophisticated, appropriate and workable solutions to the complex global problems facing the world today?
3. What interdisciplinary perspectives would help identify innovative and non-obvious solutions?

4. What insights can you articulate, based on your culture and other cultures with which you are familiar, to help understand your worldview and enable greater civic engagement?
5. What is your position on the right thing(s) to do?

A Preliminary Analysis

The main goal in analysing students' comments is to gain insight into their thinking and especially to look for signs of cultural differences in thinking between students from India and the U.S.A. In this preliminary analysis, we considered word frequencies, probabilities and correlations.

A simple way to start this analysis is to look at words that are used at particularly similar or different rates. Looking at words used at similar rates between countries gives a sense of the common task. To get at these, we calculated the probability that each word would be used in comments from each country (average document frequency within each subset), then calculated normalized absolute differences between probabilities and used them to select the most similar words, which we then sorted by overall frequency. The most frequent words used at most similar rates between countries were function words like *and*, *the* and *of*. The more contentful of these are words like *environmental* (used in 69% of comments), *problems* (47%), *work* (29%) and *safety* (25%).

To get at the most differing words between countries, we correlated each word's document frequency vector with an indicator of country and considered the words most positively correlated with each country. One interesting difference in word use was between first-person pronouns, with *I* (Pearson's $r = 0.41$) and *my* (0.27) being used in more comments from the U.S.A., and *we* (0.35) and *our* (0.31) being used in more comments from India. Differences in first-person pronoun use is often interpreted as a difference in self-focus, or an individualistic or collectivist style of thinking (Lee et al., 2000; Lehman et al., 2004). Looking more deeply, we see that a major driver of the difference in use of *I* between countries is the much higher usage of opinion constructions (I think/feel/believe) in the U.S. comments (appearing in 52% U.S. comments, and only 15% in Indian comments). An example of cultural differences can also be found in *we* use, where imperative constructions (we should/need to/must/ought/can't) appear more in Indian comments (37%, vs. 19% in U.S. comments). As a further example, one U.S. comment prioritizes the environment by saying, "I think environmental protection is the most important thing.", whereas an Indian comment says, "We need to be more caring about our environment".

Another difference in word use between countries highlights a difference in approach to the task given to students. Comments from the U.S.A. were more likely to explicitly list stakeholders and talk about how each might be affected. This resulted in particularly large correlations with *stakeholders* ($r = 0.57$), *companies* (0.51) and *oil* (0.45), as well as *negatively* (0.38) and *positively* (0.36). Some of these words are

interesting in terms of other meanings that might be assigned to them, which is relevant when looking at dictionary scores. For example, *negatively* and *positively* are likely to be included in sentiment dictionaries, which might make the U.S. comments appear more sentimental or more focused on emotion.

Analyses Using Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC2015)

The words that people use can be analysed to identify “beliefs, fears, thinking patterns, social relationships and personalities” (Pennebaker et al., 2015, p. 1). Text analytics are methods for identifying topics and patterns of interest in written communications. In one example, Chung and Pennebaker (2008) analysed college students’ open-ended self-descriptions using automated meaning-extraction methods and identified psychologically meaningful dimensions, like negativity and sociability. Regional differences in personal concerns have also been shown to be discoverable using text-analytic tools, showing variation along dimensions of health, community, religion and emotion (Chung et al., 2014).

In order to gain further insight into differences between Indian and U.S. respondents, we applied a well-known method for text analysis, Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC2015) (Pennebaker et al., 2015). LIWC2015 is a software program that was developed over the course of decades using extensive samples of texts (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2010). LIWC2015 consists of over 90 “dictionaries”—i.e. word lists—that represent broad categories—like *emotion*, *cognition*, and *perception*—and specific categories—like *anger*, *sadness*, *family and health*—as well as linguistic categories (e.g., pronouns, verbs, adjectives) and punctuation (e.g. period, colon) (Pennebaker et al., 2015). For any given document (e.g. student essay), LIWC2015 calculates the percent of the total words in the document that match the words in specific dictionary categories, thereby normalizing LIWC2015 classifications to the word length of individual documents.

LIWC classifications have been shown to identify informative distinctions in groups and behaviours. Slatcher et al. (2007), for example, found that first-person singular pronouns, such as *I*, were related to self-focus, whereas use of *we* was associated with detachment. Taraban and Abusal (2019) analysed college students’ essays and showed that LIWC2015 could distinguish among essay topics, distinguish between high and low writing quality, and identify differences due to changes in rhetorical context across writing assignments. Carroll (2007) applied LIWC to students’ essays in a sophomore-level critical thinking course and found differences in affect in students’ essays at the beginning compared to end of semester. Ramírez-Esparza et al. (2012) used LIWC2015 to identify cross-cultural (values, sociability, emotionality) and culture-specific (Fun, Existentialism, Simpatia) factors in American and Mexican college students’ self-description essays.

Table 16.1 Mean percentages (standard deviations) of use of LIWC2015 *I* and *We* pronouns for Indian and U.S. students (higher means are bolded) and significance tests

		Source		Mann–Whitney U test
		Indian <i>n</i> = 251	U.S. <i>n</i> = 264	
Pronouns	Example terms	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	<i>p</i> -value
1st person singular	I, me, my, mine, myself	0.37 (0.62)	0.90 (0.70)	0.001
1st person plural	We, us, our, ourselves	1.19 (1.36)	0.43 (0.74)	0.001

Statistical analyses were conducted using a generalized linear model (GLM) and independent *t*- and *z*-tests (IBM, 2020). Prior to conducting statistical analyses, data were tested for normality. Application of *t*-tests requires that data are normally distributed. Non-parametric tests, like the Mann–Whitney U test, do not require normal distributions. When the present data violated normality assumptions, statistical corrections were applied or non-parametric methods were used.

Word Count in LIWC2015 showed that Indian students posted significantly longer comments to the website (Mean = 416 words, $SD^2 = 236$) compared to U.S. students (Mean = 360 words, $SD = 116$), indicating that Indian students were somewhat more verbal in their comments. In order to initiate the analysis of differences in expression, students' responses were analysed using the *I* pronouns (e.g., *I, me, mine*) and *We* pronouns (e.g., *we, us, our*), and seven overarching topics in LIWC2015: Positive emotion, negative emotion, social processes, cognitive processes, perceptual processes, biological processes and drives. The pronouns and categories were selected because they were relevant to the theoretical and psychological issues of interest in this research—i.e., cognitive and affective differences by culture. There was a significant difference between countries [$F(9, 505) = 36.11, p < 0.001$]. The *I* and *We* pronouns showed significant differences, as shown in Table 16.1, with U.S. students exceeding Indian students in use of *I* pronouns and Indian students exceeding U.S. students in use of *We* pronouns. Six of the seven LIWC topics showed significant differences, as summarized in Table 16.2, with mean percentages for U.S. students exceeding Indian students for positive emotion, social processes, cognitive processes and perceptual processes. Indian students exceeded U.S. students in negative emotion and drives. Biological processes were similar for the two countries and will not be considered further. Major topics in Table 16.2 were further analysed using subtopic dictionaries in LIWC2015. The subtopics that were significantly different between Indian and U.S. students are shown in Table 16.3.

² SD = standard deviation.

Table 16.2 Mean percentages (standard deviations) of use of LIWC2015 topics for Indian and U.S. students (higher means are bolded) and significance tests

		Source		
		Indian <i>n</i> = 251	U.S. <i>n</i> = 264	<i>t</i> -test
Major topics	Example terms	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	<i>p</i> -value
Positive emotion	Care, better, safety, certain	2.71 (1.13)	3.07 (1.14)	0.001
Negative emotion	Alarm, trouble, lies, unfair	1.99 (0.93)	1.64 (0.81)	0.001
Social processes	Confide, message, outsider	5.22 (2.15)	5.89 (2.03)	0.001
Cognitive processes	Create, obey, solve, doubt	12.57 (2.82)	13.33 (2.65)	0.002
Perceptual processes	Appear, skin, blind, pain	1.45 (0.98)	2.21 (0.94)	0.001
Biological processes	Hungry, inhale, physical, fatigue	1.76 (1.19)	1.74 (1.00)	<i>ns</i>
Drives	Cheat, honour, community	9.20 (2.40)	8.81 (2.09)	0.05

I and We Pronouns

Self-construal refers to the extent to which a person thinks of self as independent of others or interdependent with others. (Lee et al., 2000). The goal of a person with an individualistic self-construal is to distinguish oneself as separate and independent of others. A person with an interdependent sense of self seeks harmony with others in social settings. Independent self-construal is associated with Western cultures. In Asian cultures, individuals focus on group memberships and an identity within larger social contexts. Use of *we* pronouns is tied to strong connections to a community and to close relationships (Pennebaker & Lay, 2002). Research shows an increased use of *we*-words in the context of shared crises, or instances when communities or groups of people have been affected by the same traumatic event (e.g., 9/11 terrorist attacks, Mehl & Pennebaker, 2003; COVID-19, Ashokkumar & Pennebaker, 2020). Research has shown an increase in *I*-words used in popular U.S. song lyrics from 1980 to 2007 (DeWall et al., 2011), which may reflect how individuals living in the U.S.A. have become increasingly individualistic in recent years (Amato, 2009). Other research has shown that politicians who use higher rates of *I* pronouns are thought to be grandiose (Ahmadian et al., 2017). Self-construal in terms of *I* or *We* is not immutable. Shifts in a high use of *we* pronouns to *I* pronouns, or conversely from *I* to *We*, can be linked to changes in an individual's life circumstances (Pennebaker & Lay, 2002), for instance. Examples of high use of *I* and *We* pronouns in students' comments are shown here, with LIWC2015 terms highlighted:

(Indian student: LIWC *I* Pronouns 0.0, *We* Pronouns 7.74)

Day by day, we are progressing and we are embracing modern values but we must not forget to follow what our ancient culture has taught. We must plant trees and take proper care of our environment. We must start to treat environment as our family member. We must place both Economic and Environment issues at the top of priority list. We must plant more

Table 16.3 Mean percentages (standard deviations) of use of LIWC2015 subtopics for Indian and U.S. students (higher means are bolded) and significance tests

			Source		
			Indian <i>n</i> = 251	U.S. <i>n</i> = 264	Mann–Whitney U test
Topics	Subtopics	Example terms	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	<i>z</i> -value
Negative emotion	Anger	Cruel, violent, protest	0.22 (0.29)	0.17 (0.29)	0.016
	Sadness	Doom, grief, lose	0.26 (0.32)	0.23 (0.32)	0.036
Social processes	Friends	Fellow, friend, neighbour	0.08 (0.18)	0.03 (0.10)	0.001
	Female references	Mother, woman, lady	0.03 (0.18)	0.01 (0.05)	0.003
	Male references	Brother, father, man	0.07 (0.19)	0.14 (0.33)	0.035
Cognitive processes	Insight	Admit, believe, question	2.32 (1.32)	3.03 (1.24)	0.001
	Causation	Affect, change, control	3.19 (1.25)	3.42 (1.20)	0.018
	Tentative	Chance, depend, guess	1.73 (0.95)	1.95 (0.99)	0.011
Perceptual processes	See	Appear, look, show	0.41 (0.43)	0.33 (0.37)	0.036
	Feel	Feeling, hurt, sharp	0.31 (0.42)	0.21 (0.29)	0.041
Drives	Affiliation	Accomplice, association, member	1.88 (1.55)	1.38 (1.00)	0.001
	Achievement	Ambition, attain, work	2.25 (1.14)	2.48 (1.12)	0.004
	Power	Authority, big, weak	3.24 (1.27)	2.75 (1.23)	0.001
	Reward	Acquire, benefit, gain	1.40 (0.75)	1.88 (0.89)	0.001

trees, preserve and protect our environment, use better technology and specialized labor to increase our economic output.

(USA student: LIWC *I* Pronouns 3.92, *We* Pronouns 0.0)

Based on my insights and culture growing up in Texas and North Dakota I can see how the oil industry has benefited people. It has given jobs and economic security to the community and to the resources around them. I find myself benefiting from the oil industry

since I have received an internship working in the industry. While I do support oil companies, I believe the right thing to do is to put sanctions on these corporations so they do not misuse communities and destroy their environment.

Positive Emotion and Negative Emotion

The ways people express emotion in language tell us a lot about how they are experiencing the world (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2010). Reactions to positive and negative events, to trauma, to close relationships, and to the past and future, are communicated in the words people use. The analyses showed that one of the major differences between Indian and U.S. students concerned emotion, with Indian students writing using more negative terms and U.S. students using positive terms. Portions of two example comments capture the difference:

(Indian student: LIWC Positive Emotion 2.18, Negative Emotion 1.64, Anger 0.18, Sadness 0.18) *There are numerous serious issues this world is facing due to extreme industrialization, hazardous careless waste disposal management and deforestation. These issues have created an unbalanced atmospheric cycle and backfired negatively into humankind health and wildlife. In 20 years, the wilderness has reduced from 80% to nearly 35%, and this loss in wildlife will eventually affect the human-dominated world, since we all are a part of the ecosystem.*

(USA student: LIWC Positive Emotion 3.17, Negative Emotion 1.06, Anger .00, Sadness .00) *Natural scientists would help people develop new technology which can reduce the pollution, while social scientists are the ones who promote companies to replace their devices to the newer ones, one way to do that is to give tax reduction on companies who use environment-friendly devices. My culture educated me that people should seek for sustainable development so that our offspring can enjoy a better environment in the future.*

This contrast in emotional content and valence is consistent with cross-cultural research that has shown cross-cultural similarities but also significant differences, across Korean, Chinese, Canadian and American students (An et al., 2017). An et al. concluded that basic positive and negative emotions are universally recognized, but they are experienced differently depending on culture. Further, Asian cultures seek a “middle way” compared to European-American cultures that strive to find a correct position (Peng & Nisbett, 1999). An et al. suggest that “Easterners tend to be dialectical when thinking about a situation in a manner that balances the positives and negatives” (p. 11). Following up on this suggestion, we compared the mean differences between LIWC2015 positive and negative emotion percentages. The difference was nearly twofold for U.S. students (Mean = 1.43, SD = 1.45) compared to Indian students (Mean = 0.72, SD = 1.56) [$z = -5.59, p < 0.001$], consistent with the suggestion of a dialectical approach in Eastern cultures.

Social Processes

A primary function of language is to communicate. We couch our intentions and beliefs regarding social processes in the language we use (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2010). Language reveals information about status, dominance, social hierarchy, social coordination and group processes—generally, how individuals view those with whom they interact. Overall, U.S. students were more expressive regarding social processes (Table 16.2); however, Indian students exceeded U.S. students in references to subcategories friends and females, but not males (Table 16.3). Indian students were high in friends and female due to use of words related to friend, like *eco-friendly*, and female, like *mother*. U.S. students were high in social processes because of the use of generic social words, like *people*. High-frequency terms, across Indian and U.S. comments, are bolded in these examples:

(Indian student: LIWC Social Processes 5.62, Friends 0.88, Female References 0.18, Male References .18) *Adopt better efficient **eco-friendly** technologies of drilling by the oil companies is very effective in controlling pollution caused by oil drilling activities, in Trombay. The management and other workers who all are involved in the oil drilling businesses should have better knowledge of efficient **eco-friendly** methods of drilling oil. Implementation of safe efficient **eco-friendly** oil drilling processes by the oil companies would reduce pollution drastically. Environmentalists, Government, researchers, environmental economists and the management of oil companies should come together and form and implement efficient **eco-friendly** oil drilling solutions. In our culture we regard nature as ‘**Mother Nature**’. So we should not neglect nature at the expense of economic growth.*

(USA student: LIWC Social Processes 10.24, Friends 0.39, Female References 0.0, Male References 0.0) *To implement a solution to such a problem, **people** not only need to improve manufacturing technology to address the pollution issue, but also need to face the issue that **people** may not agree to spend money on new instruments. Therefore, **people** need knowledge in both nature and social science in order to find a workable solution to the global environmental problem. Interdisciplinary perspective on both nature and social science are required to find the innovative solution. Natural scientists would help **people** develop new technology which can reduce the pollution, while social scientists are the ones who promote companies to replace their devices to the newer ones, one way to do that is to give tax reduction on companies who use environment-friendly devices. My culture educated me that **people** should seek for sustainable development so that our offspring can enjoy a better environment in the future.*

At a cultural level, social relationships relate to group interactions and cooperation. Culture has several potential effects on social relations. It can build social cohesion, contribute to community development, foster civic participation and shape values for individualistic or collective choice and action (Jeannotte & Stanley, 2002). The contrast in phrasing between Indian and U.S. students emphasizes these cultural differences: (e.g. Indian: *In **our** culture **we** regard nature as “**Mother Nature**”*. U.S.A.: ***My** culture educated **me** that **people** ...*). The Indian comment expresses the collectivist *our* and *we*, whereas the U.S. comment uses the individualistic *my* and *me*. The Indian comment personifies nature as *mother*. The U.S. comment uses a detached reference to *people*.

Cognitive Processes

At the heart of the work of Vygotsky (1978) is the idea that cognitive processes emerge as a result of practical activities within cultural and social contexts, such as speaking, playing and working (Nisbett & Norenzayan, 2002). Culture shapes cognition. Americans and Indians differ in how they assign causation to events. Miller (1984), for instance, showed that Americans attributed the outcome of events to the activities of individual actors. Indians explained the same events by referring to situational factors. Further, East Asians reason holistically whereas Westerners think analytically, detaching objects from their context and focusing on the attributes of objects to explain behaviours (Peng & Nisbett, 1999). These distinctions apply to conceptual and perceptual processing and to the belief systems that support thinking and reasoning.

The contrasts in reasoning about situations and causation are evident in these two excerpts from Indian and U.S. students who differ in cognitive processes and the related LIWC2015 subcategories of insight, causation and tentativeness.

(Indian student: LIWC Cognitive Processes 8.07, Insight 1.55, Causation 1.24, Tentativeness 1.86) *The industry and the higher authority should take some necessary steps in order to protect the environment as well as the natural resources to give a better future to our young ones. The government should educate the people in order to give the knowledge that how important is the nature for us and incorporate some concern towards the environment. As a student, I want to incorporate some environmental concern in the people so that they have some time on weekends to plant some trees and make our planet more green, protect nature and have love towards the environment so that we can have a better future.*

(USA student: LIWC Cognitive Processes 14.56, Insight 3.74, Causation 6.83, Tentativeness 1.98) *Some interdisciplinary perspectives that will help with the forming of solutions may be the environmentalist's ideas on how a compromise may be addressed to allow for each stakeholder to benefit and overall the people surrounding oil reserves to remain healthy. My insights based on the following ideas are based mostly on my family's background economically. I grew up in Houston, Texas one of the most productive oil and gas cities in the United States, where environmental guidelines and economic growth have developed a certain amount of compromises to mutually benefit. My father is in the oil field and we have seen the positive and negative impacts of the industry and how a large "boom" in production can affect a community and how a "bust" can also.*

Drives

Indian students were significantly higher than U.S. students in LIWC2015 drives and the specific drives of affiliation and power (Table 16.3). Murray (1938) coined the term *need for affiliation* to distinguish between two types of individuals. Those with a high need for affiliation are friendly, outgoing, try to make others happy and build relationships with individuals and groups. Individuals with a high need for affiliation feel more empathy for others. Those low in affiliation are independent, reserved and content to work alone. Murray's original work was subsequently extended in several directions, for example, by Hill (1987) to consider gender differences and

preferences for engagement with others, e.g., in conversation. Two examples from student comments are used here to exemplify the contrast between Indian students high in drives, affiliation and power, and U.S. students low on these factors:

(Indian student: LIWC Drives 18.32, Affiliation 6.74, Achievement 6.53, Power 2.74, Reward 2.74) *We must try to bring a change in the society where we live and initiate other people to come forward and strive to create a better society. It is very important to influence people in a good way. We must try to use the 3Rs in every aspect of our life. Changing our mindset is also important. Looking at the current scenario of the world, it would be really selfish to just look into our needs. We must take initiative to provide better life to the less privileged and this would be possible by promoting economic growth. Everyone should learn some skill or the other by which they can contribute to the society. At the end it is a team work therefore one and all should maintain a balance between the economy and environment, giving environment a bit more importance.*

(USA student: LIWC Drives 1.47, Affiliation 0.0, Achievement 0.74, Power 0.74, Reward 0.74) *The case study shows the effect of oil drilling mishandled. While both the people of Trombay and the oil companies benefited from drilling in the short term the people of Trombay were ultimately devastated in the long term. Much of the negative effect could have been mitigated with proper waste disposal procedures. Furthermore, surveying the soil in the areas for drilling and moving operations to areas that wouldn't affect underground water supplies could have mitigated the effect of the drilling. While the oil drilling in the area of Trombay lead to economic growth the long-term effect on the health of the people of Trombay and the surrounding area like counteracted the short term benefits. In addition, the mishandling of procedures by the oil companies drilling in the area exacerbated the negative effect of the drilling.*

As pointed out earlier, in Asian cultures, individuals focus on group memberships and an identity within larger social contexts. Drawing on Murray (1938), we would expect that student high in affiliation would also be high on use of *we*. This was confirmed in a correlation test that showed a strong positive correlation between affiliation and *we*: [$\rho(513) = 0.69, p < 0.001$ (two-tailed)] across all participants.

General Discussion

The case study “Which Is More Important—Environmental Concern or Economic Growth?” provides a platform for an ethical discourse among students from different cultures, social, political and economic backgrounds. The case study provides a narrative with a context that is more regional to Indian students. Linguistic analysis of students’ comments allows us to analyse cross-cultural similarities and differences. The students’ comments reflected their experiences and information about their cultures and other communities and provided a glimpse of students’ belief systems, thought patterns and developing professional identities. Use of social reference reflects differences between independent cultures (U.S.A., Western) as well as interdependent cultures (Indian, Eastern). Indians presented higher references to friends compared to Americans, higher frequency of first-person plural pronouns “*we*” and “*our*”, and a higher need for affiliation. Both social references and affiliation-seeking attitudes reflect harmony and the tendency to work in groups. The social and cognitive

processes also provide information on locus of control. Indians seem to have a greater orientation towards external control than American peers. A higher LIWC2015 score for power, among Indian students, indicates a belief in someone else who is more powerful to take the right decision for the general well-being of others, possibly government, multinational corporations and industrialists.

Integrated social and educational learning affects the course of students' narratives in STEM education. Higher education focuses on "self-development, knowledge, skill training, employability, larger earnings or social status" in terms of expected learning outcomes (Marginson & Yang, 2021). American students' high need for achievement clearly shows that the training of engineering students in Western societies is more outcome-centric and encourages independent thinking, indicated by high LIWC2015 scores in achievement and reward. The sample comments of students indicate a developed sense of responsibility and confidence in determining "what is the right thing to do" and figuring out plausible solutions that could work in their "own cultural" setting (Indians) and for "other cultures" (U.S.A.).

Differences in aspirations and drives of students have cultural implications in thinking styles, locus of control and self-focus among communities. Causal attribution and problem-solving styles may contribute towards differences in insight, causation and tentativeness (LIWC2015 indicators of cognitive processes) among the two groups of students. U.S. students could separate "self-orientation" from the context and the ethical dilemma in the case study. This approach is more pragmatic and solution-focused problem solving, recognizing the complexities of multicultural workplaces. The LIWC2015 results must be studied from a situational perspective also. The case study provides a relatable context that concerns Indian students at local, economic, social, and environmental levels. This situation creates a mental representation, stimulating associative memory of both past and current events, which is reflected in the emotional content of their narratives. Emotions influence cognitive processes and perceptual reasoning resulting in specific frames of reference.

The Ethical Engineer Model

The present project is a collaborative endeavour across international boundaries between faculty who have a goal of connecting students from different countries in a shared discourse on ethical issues. In a world in which money, materials, technology and products freely flow between nations, it is imperative that students have a clear sense of shared values, as well as knowledge and appreciation of cultural and societal diversity. Individuals and groups within and between cultures differ in interests, skills, orientations and needs. Education has a role in preparing students for participation in a globalized world as citizens and professionals, who acknowledge, respect and value differences in beliefs, biases, contributions and behaviours.

Socio-cultural theories (Palincsar, 2005) and applications of socio-cultural principles (Cole, 1996; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wertsch, 1991) provide models of individual cognitive, affective and motor development through participation in social

and cultural activities. One method of engaging students is through discourse. The Ethical Engineer website provides a context that affords structured interaction with peers on issues of corporate accountability, social responsibility, justice and fairness. By posting their comments to ethical dilemmas and commenting on peers' comments, students have opportunities to make ethical judgements, motivate and support their positions, and compare their own views to their peers' positions on similar situations and topics.

A General Pedagogical Framework

The concept of values cuts across all human institutions and activities. A value "is an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state existence" (Rokeach, 1973, p. 5). One can attempt to measure values directly, or one can infer these from behaviour or oral or written expression. Boyd et al. (2015) suggest that the latter method provides a clearer picture of individuals' cognitive processes and behaviours than do self-report surveys. Further, the availability of text-analytic tools in conjunction with ready access to diverse forms of natural language data allows for the discovery of more of the dynamic structure of the composition and expression of thought than that imposed by closed, forced-choice questionnaires. The Ethical Engineer takes a step in the direction suggested by Boyd et al. and others (Loui, 2005), allowing students some latitude in expression and the application of text-analytic tools to identify emergence of the topics and themes in students' written expressions. LIWC creates a novel opportunity to analyse discourses and reflections submitted by students as classroom assignments. In-depth analysis of affective and cognitive processes can help instructors, psychologists, and cognitive scientists in understanding learners' thinking style, reasoning and valence in a course. It also facilitates both micro- and macro-level understanding of cultural similarities and differences among students enrolled in public and private institutions across nations.

The Ethical Engineer suggests a general pedagogical model that may be of benefit to instructors in ethics instruction, as implemented here, but also across a variety of topics and levels, as in chemical engineering instruction (Khatib et al., 2020) and hybrid courses incorporating the arts with engineering instruction (Campbell et al., 2021; Taraban et al., 2021). Especially in courses where open-ended responses and class sharing are important, a shared platform could contribute to a broader range of instruction and learning.

Conclusions

Culture plays a key role in the stability and cohesion of society. Cultures differ in beliefs, organization, institutions, inclusiveness, opportunities and outcomes (Jeannotte & Stanley, 2002). Psychology has a dual obligation to society. One obligation is to provide a theoretical understanding of the cognitive and affective mechanisms within cultural institutions “that promote trust, social capital, democratic inclusiveness, participation and innovation” (Jeannotte & Stanley, 2002, p. 138). The second obligation is to research and seek out the means to foster the development of individuals and groups for cooperative and civic participation in society. The Ethical Engineer draws on socio-cultural theory and provides students with an open platform for constructive discourse, as a small step to fulfil both obligations.

The digitization of information, shared discussion platforms and AI are moving society forward, in some cases in widely available channels open to a broad public audience. Recent research by AshiqurKhudaBukhsh of Carnegie Mellon University (U.S.A.) (Pandey, 2021) has shown that verbal exchanges between historic adversaries—Indians and Pakistanis—can include messages of hope and mutual support in times of crisis. In the midst of the COVID-19 crisis in 2021, among the biggest trending Twitter hashtags were #IndiaNeedsOxygen and #PakistanStandsWithIndia, and messages like “Our prayers and Our sympathies are with you. We are Neighbours not Enemies”. In KhudaBukhsh’s research, he and colleagues used text analytics to search for “hostility-diffusing positive hope speech, or words like prayer, empathy, distress and solidarity” (Pandey, 2021), providing an example of how technology can aid in bringing down cultural barriers to create shared understanding.

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Part V
Methodological Alternatives to Maximize
Psychology

Chapter 17

Bringing Research Close to Reality: A Case for Grounded Theory Methodology



Samya Baghel and Madhurima Pradhan

Abstract Most of the researches in psychology are theory driven and deductive in nature even today. However, reducing some phenomenon to just a few preconceived variables can be misleading. While deductive researches have their own advantages, sometimes it happens that there is a novel phenomenon or experience, the process of which is totally unknown to us; for conclusions from such researches to be realistic and readily applicable, it is necessary that the findings are close to the ground. Studying a phenomenon deductively breaks it into fragments ignoring the complex interplay of different forces upon it. Often the psychological processes take place within a context and a sound method of research should take this into account to tap a phenomenon in its entirety. One such method is the method of grounded theory which is an inductive method. The present paper outlines the basic premises of grounded theory. The origin and evolution of the method has been traced in the light of its inherent nature of bridging the gap between theory and research. The detailed procedure of the most recent turn in grounded theory, i.e. the constructivist grounded theory and the potential of the method for reality-oriented research in social sciences has been discussed.

Keywords Symbolic interactionism · Inductive method · Constructivist grounded theory

Introduction

Traditionally, quantitative methods use some standardized measure to take the responses of a large number of people onto predetermined categories which are assigned some numbers then (Patton, 2002). However, Black (1994) argued that the quantitative methods can only be used to measure “the measurable” rather than “the

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relevant". In a similar vein, Toomela (2010) is very sceptical about the indiscriminate use of quantitative or statistical methods in psychology without deliberation over the nature of question the researcher seeks to answer. She also pointed towards the precedence of statistical tools over theory as to how instead of being elaborated with the help of statistical tools, theories began to be determined by statistical tools itself. During the 1940s through 1960s, there was a surge of hypothesis testing with the help of statistical analysis (Gigerenzer, 1991) and in its pursuit to become more objective like the physical sciences and biological sciences, the field of psychology increasingly moved away from the reality of human psyche. However, in the 1980s and 1990s, a wave of qualitative methods began to emerge in psychology. Rather than understanding a phenomenon in fragments, psychologists now have been moving towards understanding the contexts and analyses of individual as a whole. By qualitative research we mean such research that relies more upon textual, visual, verbal, audio and spatial data and the analysis is also in the textual form instead of transforming it into numbers (Carrera-Fernandez et al., 2014).

Although there has been a surge in the publication of qualitative research, the volume is much lower than that of quantitative researches (Madill & Gough, 2008). This is partly due to the scepticism about the validity of qualitative researches and partly because of the less number of qualitative researches undertaken in the first place (Kidd, 2002). The underlying notion was the fact that qualitative research did not meet the criteria for reliability, validity, and replication (Charmaz, 2014a, 2014b). However, grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) came across as a method that offered systematic guidelines for conducting qualitative research and method for theory construction. Inherently, the method integrates research and theory hence keeping the outcome close to its empirical roots (Charmaz, 2014a, b).

In view of the above discussion, we present here an account of grounded theory, its brief historical background, the procedure for the most recent turn in grounded theory methodology, i.e. constructivist grounded theory and the ease with which it lends itself to the rigours of psychological inquiry that is close to reality.

Grounded Theory

Grounded theory was conceptualized as an analytical tool to discover social realities and thus become highly applicable in dealing with them (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Charmaz (1995) defines grounded theory methods as:

.. logically consistent set of data collection and analytic procedures aimed to develop a theory. Grounded theory methods consist of a set of inductive strategies for analyzing data. That means you start with individual cases, incidents or experiences and develop progressively more abstract conceptual categories to synthesize, to explain and to understand your data and to identify patterned relationship within it. (pp. 27–28)

The keyword in the above definition is **“inductive strategies”**. Induction is the outstanding feature of grounded theory. By induction we mean, moving from “particular” to “general”. Rather than starting off with a theoretical assumption and

collecting data to test it (deduction), grounded theory starts with the data itself and in this way, reduces the gap between theory and data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Starting with the data from the lived experiences of the research participants, the researcher can focus on how they construct their worlds from the very beginning (Charmaz, 1990). Also, grounded theory refers to both, the method of research and the end product of such research. Theories thus produced are middle range theories (Charmaz, 2005) which can be expanded even further but which, nonetheless, are able to explain the phenomenon studied. Some **important characteristics of the grounded theory** are outlined below (Charmaz, 2014a, b):

- Data collection and analysis progresses simultaneously in an iterative process.
- Actions and processes are analysed rather than themes and structure.
- Comparative methods are used.
- Data are drawn (e.g. narratives and descriptions) for developing new conceptual categories.
- Inductive abstract analytic categories are developed through systematic data analysis.
- Theory construction is emphasized rather than description or application of current theories.
- Theoretical sampling is done.
- Search for variation in the studied categories or process is given importance.
- The focus is on developing a category rather than attempt to cover a specific empirical topic.

Historical Background

The method of grounded theory originated in the discipline of Sociology in 1967 with the publication of *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* by Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss. Grounded Theory (GT) came as a response to the growing influence of quantitative analyses and with it, widening gap between theory and research (Charmaz, 2000). It was the time when qualitative analyses were considered unsystematic and biased. Although qualitative researches were being undertaken prior to that, there were no clear guidelines for such an inquiry. In that sense, grounded theory was the first systematic set of guidelines for managing and analysing qualitative data (Charmaz & Henwood, 2008).

However, since its inception, the method has been evolving continuously in the hands of different researchers and its approach towards inquiry has shifted from objectivism to constructivism (Mills et al., 2006). Objectivism adheres to the positivist notions of the objective nature of reality and systematic observations, the goal of which is to establish generalizations. On the other hand, constructivism sees reality as constructed by individuals through social interaction. It construes subjectivity as part of the reality as opposed to objective reality out there (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In contrast to the notion of a definite truth for a phenomenon, constructivists accept multiple realities and seek to study and interpret the same.

Charmaz (2014a, b) identifies three approaches to grounded theory. The **first** is the **classic grounded theory** (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Glaser had his training in quantitative methods while the background of Strauss was that of qualitative research tradition (Strauss & Corbin, 1998a, b). Their joint endeavour brought the rigour of quantitative methods to the qualitative method they named grounded theory. Glaser and Strauss (1967) proposed the method of comparative analysis for generating a theory which directly comes from data. In his later writings, Glaser has emphasized the emergence of theory by remaining as objective as possible (Charmaz, 2014a, b). Glaser denounces the review of earlier studies unless a substantive theory has emerged from data in order to keep oneself objective and unbiased. He severely criticized the other versions of grounded theory. For him and the exponents of classic grounded theory, the so called versions of grounded theory are not grounded theory but some other methods altogether (Glaser, 2011, 2012; Simmons, 2011). The first departure from the classic grounded theory was that of Strauss himself. The **second** major approach to grounded theory is **Straussian grounded theory** (Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Strauss and Corbin (1990) have provided elaborate guidelines for coding and they also give due consideration to the interactionist nature of social phenomenon. Along with induction, Strauss (1987) also focused on verification and talked about narratives, description and social structure. Unlike Glaser, he recognized the inevitability of at least some preconception and was open to the idea of the use of previous researches in the early stage of analysis. Straussian grounded theory became precursor to the constructivist turn in GT methodology. It had reflexive underpinnings which emerged as the prominent feature of constructivist grounded theory. “Reflexivity includes examining how the researcher’s interests, positions and assumptions influence his or her inquiry” (Charmaz, 2014a, b, p. 344). The **third** approach to grounded theory is the constructivist grounded theory which grew out of the writings of Charmaz (1990, 2000, 2008, 2014). Charmaz (2014a, b) does not separate or contradict her approach from the earlier positions on GT; rather, she resists the rigidity and highlights the flexibility of the method. She says:

“Researchers can use grounded theory strategies without endorsing mid-century assumptions of an objective external reality, a passive neutral observer, or a detached narrow empiricism. If, instead, we start with the assumption that social reality is multiple, processual, and constructed, then we must take the researcher’s position, privileges, perspective, and interactions into account as an inherent part of the research reality. It, too, is a construction.” (p. 13)

The constructivist approach also provides an answer to the often raised philosophical questions about the paradigmatic schema underlying the method which were neither addressed by Glaser nor Strauss (Mills et al., 2006). Being the most recent approach to grounded theory, this chapter will focus on the discussion of the basic procedures of constructivist grounded theory only. However, Charmaz (2014a, b, p. 15) sees all variants of grounded theory as providing “helpful strategies for collecting, managing and analysing qualitative data”.

Philosophical Undercurrents of Constructivist GT

Constructivist grounded theory is informed by the related philosophical positions of “constructivism” and “symbolic interactionism” (Charmaz, 2014a, b). **Constructivism** sees reality as consisting of a number of mental constructions shaped by the social and personal experiences of an individual or a group of people. These constructions are not absolute and can be altered or enriched in sophistication as the perceived reality modifies. The findings are the result of the unique interaction between researcher and the researched, cocreated by both (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This view of research as “constructed” lets the researchers attend to the reflexivity of their actions and decisions (Charmaz, 2014a, b). **Symbolic interactionism** is a closely related theoretical perspective guiding grounded theory inquiry. As Charmaz puts it:

A theoretical perspective derived from pragmatism which assumes that people construct selves, society, and reality through interaction. Because this perspective focuses on dynamic relationships between meaning and actions, it addresses the active processes through which people create and mediate meanings. Meanings arise out of actions, and in turn influence actions. This perspective assumes that individuals are active, creative, and that social life consists of processes. (pp. 344-345).

As will be evident further in this chapter, because of being influenced by the above philosophical paradigms, grounded theory method identifies processes or “action” in the data instead of descriptive themes which are popular in other qualitative methods like interpretive phenomenological analysis and thematic analysis etc.

General Procedure

The procedure of grounded theory starts with the motivation to take up a research and determine if grounded theory is the most appropriate method to study the problem in hand. This motivation shapes the initial broad research questions about the area of study. The researcher enters the field with these questions and stays open to the direction the initial inquiry provides.

Literature is reviewed only to find gaps in research or to identify an area “where a theory may be needed to explain how people are experiencing a phenomenon, and where grounded theory developed by the researcher will provide such a general framework” (Creswell, 2007, p. 66). No literature review is needed to draw hypotheses as grounded theory is an open ended inquiry system and preconceptions are consciously avoided.

Data collection comes very early in the process. The coding of the data starts as early as the first instance of data. Coding provides early analytic directions for collecting further data. As the researcher codes the data and develops the substantial categories or concepts that capture the phenomenon under study, the process of memo writing captures the thought process of the researcher that guides the inquiry. Priya

(2013) considers memo writing the twin process of coding. Coding, memo writing and data collection seldom proceed in a linear fashion (Charmaz, 2014a, b) which is also a primary advantage of grounded theory research.

As the analysis progresses, new insights may occur and the researcher may switch from one process to another in accordance with the analytic requirement. As the categories develop and the “analysis of codes in memo writing” leads to “questions or a research direction for which more data from the same or a new set of participants may be required” (Priya, 2013), the researcher indulges in theoretical sampling. Data collection is led by theoretical sampling until theoretical saturation is achieved. Theoretical saturation is the stage where the categories seem to answer all the research questions raised throughout the process and where all the insights of the researcher have been satisfactorily incorporated into them. After theoretical saturation, the researcher is ready to share her findings which are in the form of a theoretical structure. As the data collected for a grounded theory study from one perspective are rich and deep, it is also open to “a future re-analysis to gain insight into the phenomenon from a different meta theoretical perspective” (Priya, 2013). Readers can refer to Priya (2010) for an example of such re-analysis of an original study.

Initial Sampling and Data Collection

Patton (2002), in his discussion on designing qualitative studies, has pointed out that approach to sampling distinguishes quantitative from qualitative very well. Qualitative inquiry is characterized by relatively small samples selected “purposefully” for in-depth study in contrast to the random sampling of quantitative research which seeks generalization of findings to the population. Patton uses the term “purposeful sampling” to refer to the selection of “information-rich cases” for qualitative research.

For a grounded theory study, initial sample may include the people whose experiences are important to gain a conceptual understanding of the topic under study, for example, some phenomenon in a particular culture. However, the data collection is not restricted to observation of or interviews with people only. In grounded theory studies, several types of data gathering and varied data collection strategies are encouraged (Charmaz, 2014a, b; Glaser, 2011; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987). Hence, data collection may include field notes, interviews, information from records and reports or even respondents’ written personal accounts (Charmaz, 2014a, b). Initial sampling, through the processes of coding and constant comparison leads to theoretical sampling which will be discussed in the upcoming sections of this chapter.

Coding

Analysis in grounded theory begins with the coding of the data. Glaser and Strauss, separately, have elaborated upon substantive and theoretical coding and axial and selective coding, respectively (Glaser, 1978; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1998a, b). However, in her discussion on coding, Charmaz (2014a, b) talks about initial coding and focused coding in detail and concludes that for most analyses, these two levels of coding are enough.

In coding, names are given to the breakable parts of data (most conveniently each line initially) in order to categorize and summarize it. Charmaz has recommended coding in “gerunds” rather than “nouns”. For example, if one has to code the following statement:

My family supported me when I needed it the most.

The noun code can be “family’s support” while the gerund code would be “receiving family’s support”. Coding in nouns tends to keep the analysis descriptive while gerund codes allow us to reach deeper and tap the unfolding of a significant category. The categories that emerge are in the form of actions and the researcher looks for “phases, contributing conditions and consequences of those actions” (Charmaz, 1990, p. 1168). These “actions” represent the social phenomenon best which are seen as processes (e.g. culture, Greenfield, 1997).

In *initial coding*, each line of the data is coded, either it contains a complete sentence or not or whether it seems to be relevant or not. Such rigour keeps the researcher close to the data and saves her from adopting some preconceived codes that may occur if she takes an overall thematic picture of the data. Each instance of data contains some incidents. In initial coding, such incidents are also identified and compared with similar incident in the other instance of data. Charmaz (2014a, b) calls it “coding incident with incident”. Such coding helps in identifying the context of a particular incident and underlining the development and consequences of it. The relevance of initial coding is best summarized in the following lines by Charmaz (2014a, b):

“Initial codes help you to separate data into categories and to see the processes. Line-by-line coding frees you from becoming so immersed in your research participants’ world-views that you accept them without question...Line-by-line coding prompts you to look at the data anew...Entire narratives may net several major themes. Word-by-word, line-by-line, segment-by-segment, and incident-with-incident coding may generate a range of ideas and information. Therefore, you ‘discover’ ideas on which you can build.” (p. 127)

It is noteworthy that the researcher does not have to wait for all the data to be collected before initial coding begins. The coding starts with the first instance of data itself and initial coding gives analytic direction to further data collection. Anytime during the analysis, the researcher can go back to the earlier codes or even to the field for collecting data from the previous sources to pursue an emergent category reflected in coding.

The next analytic step is *focused coding*. By giving direction to the analysis, initial coding prepares the background for focused coding. According to Charmaz, focused coding further analyses, synthesizes and conceptualizes larger portions of data. In focused coding, initial codes are compared and evaluated or even coded for having more explanatory relevance than other codes. Such codes constitute the focused codes. Focused coding can also involve coding the initial codes. For a detailed discussion of coding with examples, readers can refer to Charmaz (2014a, b).

Memo Writing

Memo is any note or document to record some event or observation. In grounded theory, memos have a particular relevance. Strauss and Corbin (1998a, b) define memos as, “Written records of analysis that may vary in type and form” (p. 218). Strauss & Corbin further add that “memos serve the dual purpose of keeping the research grounded and maintaining that awareness for the researcher” and “memos remain important documents because they record the progress, thoughts, feelings and directions of the research and the researcher-in fact the entire gestalt of the research process” (p. 218).

Like coding, memos also appear very early in the process and are maintained throughout the analysis until theoretical saturation (discussed in later section) is achieved. There is no best method of writing memos (Charmaz, 2014a, b; Strauss & Corbin, 1998a, b). Researchers develop their own styles keeping in view the aim of memos. Handling qualitative data can be a cumbersome task. As the researcher arrives on categories and sifts through the codes, it becomes necessary to keep the analytic ideas organized and clear. Basically, memos are written to keep a record of the development and modifications of the thoughts of the researcher. They provide the basis for the categories developed and help in linking the categories and in other comparisons. Charmaz (1995) calls memo writing an “intermediate step between coding and the first draft” of the “completed analysis” (p. 42).

Constant Comparison

Grounded theory relies heavily on constant comparisons. Constant comparisons between incidents are essential to develop the theoretical properties of a category (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998a, b). Constant comparisons along with memo writing help raise the categories to the conceptual level where they can be seen as explaining phenomenon. It facilitates “thinking in terms of the full range of types or continua of the category, its dimensions, the conditions under which it is pronounced or minimized, its major consequences, its relation to other categories, and its other properties” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Charmaz (2000, p. 515) has outlined the kinds of comparisons applied in grounded theory as, “(a) comparing

different people (such as their views, situations, actions, accounts, and experiences), (b) comparing data from the same individuals with themselves at different points in time, (c) comparing incident with incident, (d) comparing data with category, and (e) comparing a category with other categories”.

Theoretical Sampling and Theoretical Saturation

The process of grounded theory is seldom linear. Often the researcher has to go back to the field to collect more data to follow leads that emerge. When through the rigorous and iterative processes of constant comparison and focused coding, the researcher has arrived at some tentative categories; she may indulge in *theoretical sampling*. It may include seeking “statements, events, or cases” (Charmaz, 2014a, b, p. 200) that would help in providing a full picture of the categories. The researcher can again interview the earlier participants with a fresh set of questions to delve deeper into the experiences or issues which the researcher had not foreseen at the beginning of data collection but which emerge as the analysis progresses. Theoretical sampling should not be confused with sampling for answering initial research questions or to reflect upon population distribution as is the common practice in research. It is also different from sampling to find negative cases or interviewing new participants until no new data emerges (Charmaz, 2014a, b). Theoretical sampling eventually leads to “theoretical saturation”. The dotted arrow in figure given by Priya (2013) about grounded theory indicates that it can even lead to new research questions.

Data collection in grounded theory continues until *theoretical saturation* is reached. Theoretical saturation occurs when theoretical sampling brings no new information about a category and the data collected fits into the existing structure (Charmaz, 2014a, b).

Findings in grounded theory are in the terms of concepts and categories and their relations with each other. At the stage of theoretical saturation, memos are sorted to give shape to the final conceptual structure. The conceptual structure can be depicted with the help of a diagram. In fact diagrams not just facilitate the understanding of a final theoretical structure; it is useful for any analytic stage as it is easier to grasp the structural elements and directions of categories in visual representation (Charmaz, 2014a, b). Strauss and Corbin (1998a, b) consider diagrammatic representation as an essential part of the analysis.

Criteria for a Good GT

The quality of a qualitative research cannot be judged on the criteria set for quantitative researches. Patton (2002) recommends evaluating the approaches to qualitative inquiry differently than quantitative approaches. Charmaz (2014a, b) has also acknowledged the variability in criteria for a good research depending upon its

purpose and form. Keeping that in view, for constructivist grounded theory studies she puts forth the criteria of “credibility”, “originality”, “resonance” and “usefulness”.

Credibility is directly concerned with the rigour in a grounded theory study. The researcher must ensure that the study has been sufficiently deep so as to claim familiarity with the phenomenon. The logical links among the conceptual categories should be supported by evidence collected on the basis of enough observations which have been analysed and compared. Such evidence should be verifiable to an independent assessment.

Originality of the research refers to the novelty of findings. The analysis should bring forth new insights which were previously not known. The researcher should consciously avoid imposing preconceived categories and stick close to what the data tells, only then the originality can be achieved. The researcher must ensure that her work has the potential to “challenge, extend, or refine current ideas, concepts and practices” (Charmaz, 2014a, b, p. 337).

The findings of a grounded theory study should resonate with the lived experiences of the participants studied. A grounded theory study is said to have **resonance** when it makes sense to the people studied and enhances the understanding of their own lives. Resonance is also reflected when it explains the different aspects of meanings attributed with processes. It is important to explore such meanings which are often taken for granted.

Usefulness of a grounded theory study is reflected in the contributions the study has made to the domain of knowledge that may be used by researchers as well as laypersons” (Priya, 2013, p. 4). For laypersons it should offer some interpretations that they can use in their everyday lives. In the area of research, it must have contributed substantially to the domain of knowledge and should have the potential to foster further research.

Reflecting upon the criteria for a good grounded theory study, Charmaz (2014a, b, p. 338) has said, “A strong combination of originality and credibility increases resonance, usefulness, and the subsequent value of the contribution...when born from reasoned reflections and principled convictions, a grounded theory that conceptualizes and conveys what is meaningful about a substantive area can make a valuable contribution. Add aesthetic merit and analytic impact, and then its influence may spread to larger audience”.

Grounded Theory in Psychology, Interdisciplinary and Cross-Cultural Researches

Although the method of grounded theory originated in sociology, its flexible yet scientific and successive rigorous analytic strategies have made it a useful method transcending the boundaries of a particular discipline (Charmaz & Henwood, 2008). The method has been used fruitfully in the fields as diverse as engineering mathematics (Khat, 2010). The quality of grounded theory to be used in conjunction with

other methods renders it even more useful for research in the area of culture. Clarke (2006) has discussed the use of grounded theory within feminist research and situational analysis. A number of researchers, in their writings, have endorsed the method as particularly relevant to interdisciplinary and intercultural researches (O'Connor et al., 2003; O'Neil Green et al, 2007; Sheridan & Storch, 2009). In a very informative volume on qualitative research in psychology, Charmaz & Henwood have underlined five qualities of the method that make it a pertinent method to be adopted by psychologists—(i) It is a rigorous approach; (ii) can be effectively used along with other qualitative approaches (iii) views behaviour in the context of the individual; (iv) suitable for both constructionist (interpretive) or post-positivist (quantitative) epistemologies; and (v) can integrate both qualitative and quantitative traditions (p. 241).

Starting from the 1980s, a number of researchers within the subfields of psychology have taken up the method for their studies exploring diverse areas (e.g. see Bolger, 1999; Holt & Tamminen, 2010; Priya, 2005; Rennie et al., 1988; Sque & Payne, 1996; Tweed & Salter, 2000; Willott & Griffin, 1999 etc.). In a study conducted by Hussein and Cochrane (2003), coping strategies used by depressed South Asian Women, who were living in UK were studied. The study was unique in the fact that along with some general coping strategies, it revealed aspects of coping which were culture specific. More recently, Priya (2005, 2010, 2012) has used the grounded theory approach for his ethnographic studies on cultural patterns to deal with trauma. His researches have thrown light upon the culture-bound aspects of post-traumatic stress disorder. Tandon (2015), on the other hand, used grounded theory methodology to trace the journey of women towards empowerment through education in the Indian context.

Conclusion

Grounded theory in its originality came as a method to study social realities. As we saw in the description and discussion above, the method calls for rigorously gathering empirical data, refining the initially ill structured data through the processes of coding and constant comparisons and then arriving at a theoretical abstraction that remains close to the data (Charmaz & Henwood, 2017). Hence, because of its inherent qualities, the method of grounded theory holds a great potential as a flexible yet rigorous research tool that is more encompassing the scattered strands of human behaviour with respect to culture, society and psychological build-up than the other methods available.

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Chapter 18

Exploring Biophilic Design and Its Implications for Mental Health



Harshita Jha and Sudarsan Behera

Abstract The rising pace of urbanization has led to an unprecedented demand for buildings and other construction activities. The modern urban environment is often characterized by its concrete buildings, tall skyscrapers and uniformity in physical features and appearance. It has symbolized the almost violent expunge of the natural world not only from our physical environment, but also our psyche. Biophilic design as a trend incorporates the use of natural or nature-inspired systems and processes in the design of the built environment, thereby initiating an integration or re-integration of nature into our daily lives. The present paper aims to review the concept of biophilic design, its attributes and theoretical perspectives as well as its implications for human mental health. The probable challenges of its implementation in the Indian context have also been discussed. The review follows a narrative approach, and an effort was made to review researches conducted in the last fifteen years. Secondary data were taken from PubMed, Google Scholar and JSTORE using relevant keywords. The concept of biophilic design is gradually gaining momentum as part of the rising environmental consciousness. While it has found a footing in the realm of architecture, social sciences are yet to take it up in any considerable manner. The review found enough scientific evidence supporting positive effects of biophilic design architecture on human mental health. However, the extent and duration of these positive effects is not clear. In addition, the interaction of biophilic design elements with individual characteristics and contextual factors such as culture and class requires more exploration. In India, even though biophilic design practice are available, there is a lack of academic literature exploring the same. Further multidisciplinary research is required in order to establish biophilic design as a viable design alternative. In current times, it has become pertinent to explore alternatives that promote environmental protection and rejuvenation of “human–nature” relationship, biophilic design offers one such opportunity.

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Keywords Biophilia · Biophilic design · Human health · Nature and well-being

Introduction

“Biophilic design is not about greening our buildings or simply increasing their aesthetic appeal through inserting trees and shrubs. Much more, it is about humanity’s place in nature and the natural world’s place in human society” (Salin-garos, 2015). The rising pace of urbanization has led to an unprecedented demand for buildings and other construction activities. The modern urban environment is often characterized by its concrete buildings, tall skyscrapers and uniformity in physical features and appearance. Our buildings in a way have come to symbolize the almost violent expunge of the natural world not only from our physical environments, but also our psyche. Conventional urban building practices often eliminate the natural aspects as well as considerations to human health and well-being.

This elimination occurs at different levels, including in terms of the construction materials used as well as the lack of protection of the surrounding fauna and flora (Kellert, 2005; Hidalgo, 2014; Ryan et al., 2014). This alienation from the natural world is reflected in our human lifestyles and cultural practices that are harming the natural environment and creating ecological imbalances (Oskamp, 2000a, 2000b). Biophilic design is an attempt to integrate or re-integrate the natural world in our physical environment and in turn our daily lives. Biophilic design principles attempt to incorporate nature into human built artificial structures, in ways that are methodical and thoughtful. These principles are inspired by or based on the deep and ethereal connection between human psyche and the natural world.

The concept biophilic design has germinated from the biophilia hypothesis. The biophilia hypothesis was propounded by American biologist Edward O. Wilson in the 1980s, and it emphasizes on an innate evolutionary tendency of human beings to affiliate to other life forms or life-like processes. The biophilia hypothesis has been used to explain our general preference for natural places, the attraction, the feeling of wonderment and the pull of natural beauty as experienced by human beings (Ryan et al., 2014). The concept of biophilic urban design has gained prominence over the years, owing to its potential applicability and positive effects on human health as well as the environment.

This paper aims to review the concept of biophilic urban design, its attributes, and its implications for human mental health and well-being. The probable challenges of its implementation in the Indian context have also been discussed.

Method

The review examines biophilic design through the lens of environmental psychology. The field of environmental psychology studies the relationship between human

beings and their natural as well as artificial surroundings. The literature review examines prevalent conceptualization of biophilic design, as provided by different researchers, its elements as well as the various theoretical perspectives that aim to explain its effect on human health and well-being. On the basis of the literature review, the author has attempted to discuss its applicability in the Indian context. The review follows a narrative approach, and an effort was made to review researches conducted in the last fifteen years. Relevant publications were taken from PubMed, Google Scholar and JSTOR using the following keywords: biophilia, biophilic design, biophilic design and human health, nature and well-being.

Biophilic Design and Its Attributes

Biophilic design is a design philosophy that incorporates the use of natural or nature-inspired systems and processes in the design of the built environment (Kellert as quoted in Gillis & Gatersleben, 2015). Biophilic design as a practice is not new and can be observed in different cultures across time periods. Since ancient times, people have discovered ways to include nature in their homes and shared spaces (Ryan et. al, 2014). When these varied practices are analysed, certain common universal patterns can be unearthed. The following section highlights the prevalent conceptualization of biophilic design and its elements or attributes.

Kellert (2005) has outlined two types of alternate design and development approaches, namely “*low environmental impact design*” and the “*biophilic design*”. Each of these two types comprises the larger category of “*restorative environmental design*”. The restorative environmental design can be defined as that which encompasses the twin goals of harm and damage reduction to nature and its systems as well as a design that enhances or promotes positive human–nature experiences, thereby enriching the human mental, emotional and physical health. While, low environmental impact design would include strategies and practices (e.g. reducing resource consumption, reusing and recycling products and materials, waste management, pollution control, promoting energy efficiency and use of alternate renewable energy sources) that minimize or mitigate the environmental degradation caused to natural systems and human health by modern construction practices. Biophilic design, on the other hand, emphasizes on the affective component in human–nature relationships and focuses on the need to restore and nourish the beneficial contact between and nature, in their built environment. He further distinguishes between two dimensions of biophilic design, i.e. *organic (or naturalistic) design* and *vernacular (or place-based) design*. In organic design, the idea is to elicit people’s inherent biophilia or affinity for the natural world. This can be done directly, indirectly, or symbolically, for instance, building windows that allow direct sunlight and ventilation, including potted plants or fountains as décor. It also includes building patterns that mimic natural shapes or processes. Vernacular design refers to buildings and landscapes that emphasize on place attachment and connectedness by including elements of shared past, culture and common ecological practices within a geographical context,

into the built environment. Thus, it enables to establish a personal connection to the places where people live and in the process create a sense of familiarity, comfort and well being for the human being. Most design approaches focused on sustainability and environmental protection tend to reduce the negative impact of construction on natural environment, often neglecting the equally important need to build positive “human–nature inbuilt environment” relationship which can be seen as prerequisite to adopting restorative design approaches in the first place.

Kellert (2008) further expanded the definition of biophilic design to include human contextual factors. He defines *six elements and attributes* that go from natural features to social relationships in cities. These elements consist of *environmental features, natural shapes and forms, natural patterns and processes, light and space, place-based relationships and evolved human–nature relationships*. While the first four elements describe characteristics that can be incorporated physically in the built environment as biophilic design features, the last two elements emphasize on the components that affect individual’s perceptions of the space and therefore the relationship of people with their affiliation to nature. The element of place-based relationships would focus on the geographic, historical and cultural connections in a particular context (e.g. using indigenous materials, local culture-inspired practices in construction) and the element of evolved human–nature relationships would take into account the inherent as well as evolved patterns of connecting to nature and adapting these patterns into construction (e.g. ensuring variety, privacy, security, etc., in the built environment). Thus, his proposal also incorporates a comprehensive study of the spatial background in its entirety (Fig. 18.1).

Kellert and Calabrese (2015) have described a “*biophilic design framework*” that represents three basic ways or categories of experiencing nature. The first category includes *direct experience of nature*. It refers to a tangible contact with natural elements in the built space. In other words, it means a literal inclusion of natural elements in the built environment, for example, introducing natural lighting, ventilation, water areas, plants, to name a few. The second category includes *indirect experience of nature*. It refers to contact with a transformed version of nature from its

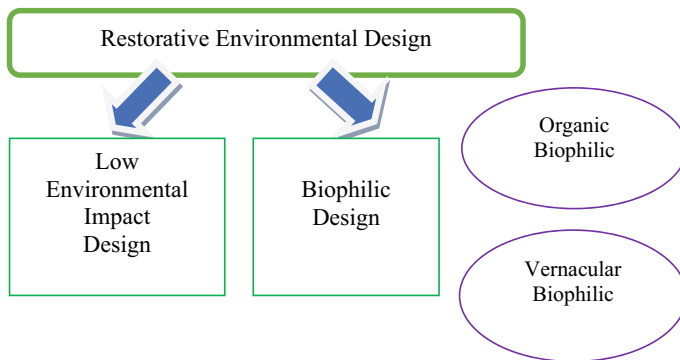


Fig. 18.1 Classification of restorative environmental design (Kellert, 2005)

original condition or exposure to nature like patterns and processes through representations or abstractions, and these may include pictures, pieces of art and other items of home décor that are designed to emulate natural symmetries. The third and final category refers to the *experience of space and place*. Over the course of human evolution, there have been certain spatial characteristics of natural environment that have aided human health and development, and this category refers to utilization of these very features in designing the built environment. Examples include prospect and refuge, ease of mobility, organized complexity, sensual variety and more. Within these three categories of experience, 24 attributes of biophilic design have been identified. In addition to these three categories, Kellert and Calabrese (2015) have identified *five fundamental conditions for the effective practice of biophilic design*. These include (1) repeated and sustained engagement with nature, (2) a focus on evolutionary human adaptations to the natural world that over the course of time have positively impacted people’s health, fitness and wellbeing, (3) a sense of emotional attachment to particular places and settings, (4) biophilic design should foster positive interactions between people and the natural world that in turn promote better relationships and responsibility for individuals and communities, and (5) it should encourage inter-dependability, interconnectedness and architectural strategies are mutually beneficial (Fig. 18.2).

Cramer and Browning (2008) have also described three categories for defining buildings based on human–nature relationships. They have defined these categories along similar lines as that of Kellert and Calabrese’s (2015) three kinds of nature

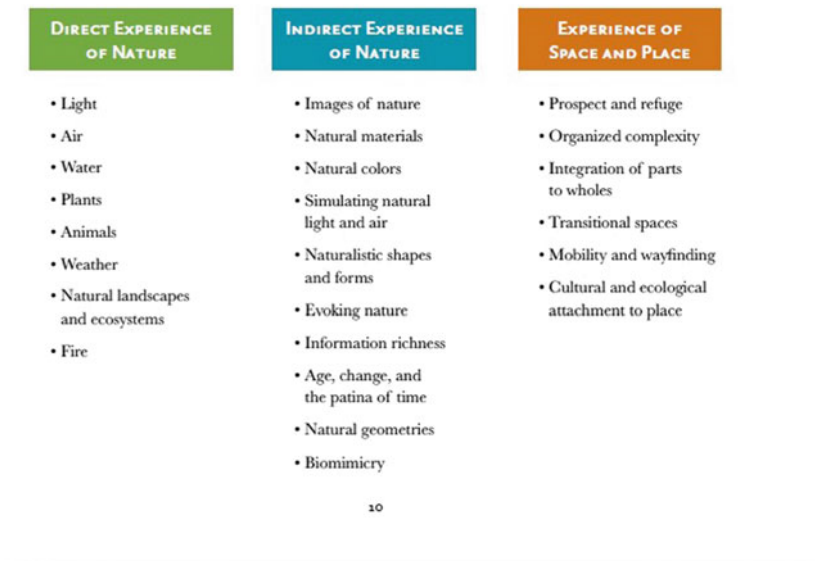


Fig. 18.2 Attributes of biophilic design (Kellert & Calabrese, 2015)

Context	14 Patterns
NATURE IN THE SPACE	1 Visual Connection with Nature
	2 Non-Visual Connection with nature
	3 Non-Rhythmic Sensory Stimuli
	4 Thermal and Airflow Variability
	5 Presence of Water
	6 Dynamic and Diffuse Light
	7 Connection with Natural Systems
NATURAL ANALOGUES	8 Biomorphic Forms and Patterns
	9 Material Connection with Nature
	10 Complexity and Order
NATURE OF THE SPACE	11 Prospect
	12 Refuge
	13 Mystery
	14 Risk / Peril

Fig. 18.3 14 Patterns of biophilic design (Browning et al., 2014)

experiences. According to Cramer and Browning, human–nature relationships can be divided into three broad experience categories: *nature in the space*, *natural analogues*, or *nature of the space*. Nature in the space describes the presence and diversity of natural elements within the built environment such as plant life, animal species, water bodies and other elements from nature. Natural analogues are representations or abstractions that evoke nature. These can be objects, forms, patterns, materials or colours. Lastly, nature of the space refers to the characteristics of spatial arrangements and their associated physiological and psychological impacts. In other words, buildings can be considered to be biophilic if it contains these 14 patterns, organized into three categories, i.e. nature in the space, natural analogues or nature of the space (Fig. 18.3).

Salingeros (2015) have also outlined *eight major factors: light, colour, gravity, fractals, curves, detail, water and life*. These factors have been found to contribute to the biophilic effect experienced by human beings. While some of these factors may overlap with other categorizations (as discussed above), Salingeros and Ryan’s classification proposes simplified focus areas that can be employed as part of biophilic architecture (Fig. 18.4).

These various definitions and categorizations offer a roadmap or guidelines for adopting biophilic design practices depending on the context and suitability, and it is possible to include one or more biophilic design features in the built environment. In the next section, the origin and probable evolution of biophilic design is discussed.

Theoretical Perspectives: Biophilic Design

The biophilic instinct is often linked to our evolutionary history as inhabitants of ancient savanna. The *savanna hypothesis* suggests that one source of the biophilic

Kellert (2005)	Two types of Restorative Environmental Design: <i>Low environmental Impact Design</i> and <i>Biophilic Design</i> (Organic Biophilic Design and Vernacular Biophilic Design)
Kellert (2008)	Six elements of Biophilic Design: <i>environmental features, natural shapes and</i>
Kellert and Calabrese (2015)	Biophilic Design Framework: <i>direct experience of nature, indirect experience of nature, and experience of space and place forms, natural patterns and processes, light and space, place-based relationships, and evolved human-nature relationships</i>
Cramer and Browning (2008)	Three Categories for defining buildings: <i>nature in the space, natural analogues, or nature of the space</i>
Salingaros and Ryan (2015)	Eight Major Factors of Biophilic Effect: <i>light, color, gravity, fractals, curves, detail, water and life</i>

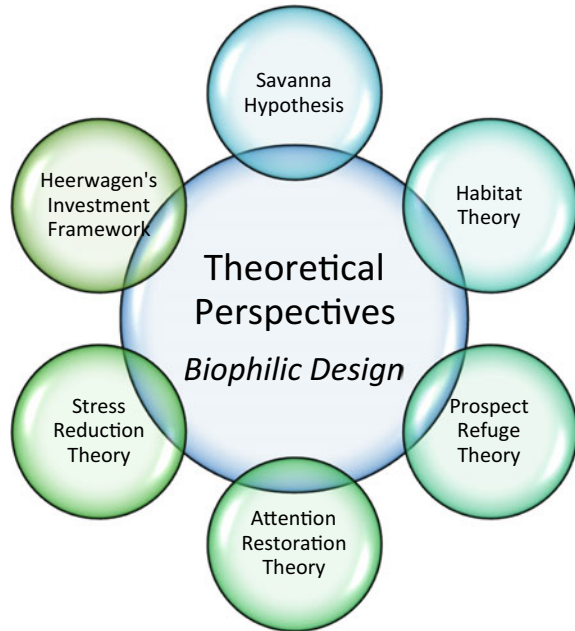
Fig. 18.4 Biophilic design at a glance

instinct comes from our collective inherited memory derived from our evolutionary development in the savanna environment long time ago. It is in these natural settings of savanna that we first evolved into human beings. The natural characteristic features of savanna environment such as open grassland, bundled bushes, scattered trees, lot of sunlight and water bodies aided us in our survival, thus these natural features and their qualities became ingrained in our memory systems and instincts and passed on from one generation to the next as survival mechanisms (Salingaros, 2015) (Fig. 18.5).

This might be reflected in our preference for open spaces and sunlight, among others, in general.

Darwin’s *habitat theory* perceived built environment as akin to a creature’s habitat (1958). In other words, just as a species’ habitat serves to meet its biological needs that aid in its survival as well as growth, an individual’s built environment also has the ability to satisfy his/her biological needs. Appleton (1984) added an aesthetic dimension to the habitat theory by emphasizing on not just the ability of a place to meet an individual’s biological needs, but also its ability to offer opportunity for contemplation and perception of environmental landscape. The landscape features (spatial configurations, shapes, colours,) act as stimuli that indicate whether the present environmental conditions are favourable or unfavourable to survival. Thus, this theory identifies environmental perception as primary to all adaptive behaviour. The *prospect-refuge theory* (Appleton 1984) that is based on habitat theory states that the ability to see (prospect) but not be seen (refuge) is basic to many biological needs. In the ancient environment, such ability must have aided in survival for human beings, while at the same time increasing their perceived safety, privacy and comfort. These feelings of safety are a prerequisite for feelings of enjoyment and relaxation in an urban space. From humankind’s primitive dwellings, to our present-day modern

Fig. 18.5 Theoretical perspectives in biophilic design



architecture, our design practices encourage protection from the natural world and its dangers. The idea of “home” is often synonymous with feelings of physical as well as psychological security. Thus, this theory suggests that our built environment should take into account these survival instincts and seek to include the natural elements in a way that is restorative and non-threatening for the human beings. This offers us an opportunity to form mutually beneficial linkages between the natural and the built environments (Gillis & Gatersleben, 2015).

There are two other theories that share an evolutionary approach rooted in biophilia hypothesis, namely the *Attention Restoration Theory (ART)* and the *Stress Reduction Theory (SRT)*. These two theories outline two mechanisms that enable individuals to experience health benefits on contact with green spaces (Sullivan, 2014). ART (by Kaplan and Kaplan, 1989; Kaplan et al. 1993) builds on the concept of “fascination” and “restoration” from mental exhaustion. In our everyday life, we tend to be bombarded with a range of stimuli that demand our mental energy in the form of attention or focus. This continued exposure to stimuli can often result in a state of mental exhaustion. However, the natural world with its plethora of attractive flora and fauna tends to capture our attention almost involuntarily. Since involuntary attention does not place a burden on our otherwise fatigued attention system, it not only energizes the system but also offers a sense of enjoyment. In addition, the ART also hypothesizes that nature’s quality to engage us and restore our cognitive capacities results in better abilities of focus and concentration.

SRT (Ulrich and colleagues, 1991), on the other hand, describes our emotional and physiological responses in the presence of natural elements. This theory states that

exposure to natural elements such as greenery, water and mountains tends to generate positive emotions and feelings of interest, curiosity, serenity, wonderment, pleasure, beauty and the like. These positive emotions are beneficial for the one experiencing, bringing about mental restoration and calm and thereby easing the negative effects associated with stressful situations.

More recently, *Heerwagen's investment framework* has elaborated on six characteristics supporting a “good building habitat”. These include connectedness to nature, including a sense of community, relatedness and belonging. A good habitat should also provide space for exercising choice and control over behaviour. In addition, it should include opportunities for mobility and regular exercise and support engagement and curiosity through sensory diversity and variability in a way that is meaningful. Lastly, a good habitat ensures privacy as considered appropriate by the inhabitant. She identified features and attributes of buildings that support human needs and experiences, thus reflecting design and architecture in human-centric terms. An understanding of biophilic design and its attributes as well as their possible origin takes us to the next stage of discussion. A look at the various elements of biophilic design and its different categorizations provides an amenable structure to researchers for conducting further scientific investigations. At the same time, since biophilic design has emerged from our evolutionary experiences with nature and has aided in our survival, the next interesting question that arises is about its impact on human mental health.

Biophilic Design and Implications for Human Mental Health

Human beings reflect a general preference for natural environments; this vague inclination may be traced to our evolutionary history (Grinde & Patil, 2009). It is often represented in our choices, for example: vacations, home or office settings, love of parks or other green spaces. Barbiero (2011) has emphasized on the impact of experiences of nature on our physiological and psychological patterns and functioning, modes of responses and subjective evaluation of these responses. These patterns of response have developed over the course of time and have thus left indelible influence on the human body and psyche. He further adds that this knowledge, that has been refined and adapted over millions of years, as well as our affinity for nature can be utilized for generating positive experiences of mental and physical well-being for individuals and societies (Barbiero, 2014).

Across studies, biophilic design has been evidenced to show positive effects on human mental health and well-being. A possible connection between human biology and psychology with biophilic designs is provided by Salingaros (2015), and they explain that our perceptual systems have evolved to develop fine-tuned responses to natural symmetries and geometries (e.g. colours, scaling, complex structures) prevalent in the natural world. In other words, our sensory systems have the ability to distinguish favourable and pleasant aspects of the environment (such as availability of food, mates and other useful resources) from unfavourable and unpleasant aspects

(such as threat to life or property, scarcity of resources). Thus, our sensory organs have the capacity to generate positive experiences from exposure to natural surroundings that are perceived as safe, non-threatening and that promote biophilia. Abbas and Jawaid (2017) explain that the natural environment played a major role in the development of problem-solving, decision-making, critical thinking, emotional, social and constructive abilities. The critical environmental features of the natural world like air, presence of sunlight and water, climate, vegetation, odour, animals and type of landscape, guided humans in their overall development and helped them adapt, even dominate in a world where their advanced cognitive abilities coupled with an efficient sensory system provided an advantage for survival. These skills were acquired in close association with the natural world and its systems and processes and till date remain significant to human health, growth and efficiency.

While the presence of biophilic elements in design can have likely positive implications for human mental health and well-being, an absence of these elements can have possible negative consequences. This phenomenon can be described as the inverse effect of biophilia, whereby an absence of natural elements or nature like forms and geometries may create a sense of structural imbalance in built environment and result in illness. Salingaros (2015) has pointed out that surroundings that are bereft of the order and balance created by natural elements, geometries, and sensory variety can possibly lead to a decline in mental and social functioning. Richard Louv (2005) has used the term “nature-deficit” to suggest that the modern lifestyle detached from natural world has partly led to an increase in prevalence of conditions such as obesity, depression, anxiety and attention disorders. In another study, Kellert and Calabrese (2015) have emphasized on the sensory system as the primary basis of contact with nature. According to them, experience of biophilic design features is a multisensory experience involving our abilities of seeing, hearing, olfaction, taste, touch and movement. However, the visual sense can be considered as the dominant mode of perception and response to the natural world. Visual contact whether direct (e.g. seeing landscapes, plants, animals) or indirect (e.g. natural scenery paintings, organic materials) can trigger a range of psychological, emotional and physical responses. While an aesthetic appreciation of nature and its elements can arouse feelings of enjoyment, wonder, interest, creativity and curiosity, a lack of visual contact with the natural world (such as dimly lit spaces, no ventilation) by contrast frequently results in mental fatigue, boredom and inertia and may contribute to mental or physical abnormalities. There is a possibility that an absence of biophilic elements in built environment is perceived as a stress factor unconsciously. In other words, the presence of greenery can impact the human mind (Grinde & Patil, 2009). Furthermore, Kellert and Calabrese (2015) have highlighted the importance of multisensory encounters with nature in the built environment. According to them, these encounters can greatly contribute not only towards feelings of enjoyment, satisfaction, comfort but also increased performance on cognitive activities, and therefore should be encouraged to the extent possible. Thus, the concept of biophilic design goes beyond aesthetics and directly impacts our physiological and psychological systems as well.

Ryan et al. (2014) collected significant evidence which have contributed towards establishing a scientific basis for biophilic design. This evidence has been collected

from numerous fields including neurosciences and endocrinology, and it highlights the various positive impacts of a good biophilic design. Some of these positive impacts include increased cognitive functioning resulting in better performance and productivity, restoration of attention system, relaxation from mental fatigue, relaxed optical muscles, decrease in diastolic blood pressure and reduction in levels of stress hormones (cortisol) in the blood stream. In addition, their findings also suggest an increase in experience of positive emotions and reduced experience of negative emotions. However, their review of evidence shows that the biophilic built environment may not only impact an individual positively, but can also have negative or even neutral impacts, depending on the individual's current health profile and medical history, his/her past experiences, his/her perception and response patterns, duration and frequency of exposure, as well as prevalent social and cultural norms and expectations. The findings of Ryan and colleagues are significant as they tell us that mere exposure or absence of natural elements in design alone may not result in positive or negative implications, a host of other psychosocial factors combine to produce effects. Grinde and Patil (2009) have also emphasized on the positive impacts of natural settings on human mental health, with its absence potentially resulting in discord. But at the same time, they have also noted the importance of individual and sociocultural factors in shaping an individual's relationship with the natural environment. According to them, individual learning can determine whether or not biophilia as a trait finds reinforcement or discouragement. On the hand, Heerwagen has found consistent benefits of contacts with nature across research designs, cultural settings and age span. These benefits have been found regardless of whether the nature contact is only visual or multisensory, whether it involves an active involvement with nature (gardening, walking, painting scenery) or passive engagement (sightseeing).

Berto et al. (2015) used Attention Restoration Theory's concept of "fascination", i.e. effortless involuntary attention that often marks our experience with the natural world, to explain why the restoration of an otherwise fatigued attention system results in increased performance and productivity, mood enhancement as well as a sense of well-being. Although nature tends to evoke fascination quite spontaneously, it is possible to create similar experience in context of built environments by including biophilic design elements that possess similar nature like qualities that people find pleasant, engaging and aesthetically appealing. Hidalgo (2014) has also made a case for creating built environments within nature with tangible elements to provide psychological restoration that releases stress and mental fatigue. According to him, the built environment can promote psychological health and well-being by creating spaces for social interactions and connections that can facilitate stress reduction and restoration from mental fatigue (Refer Fig. 18.4). Mental exhaustion can affect other forms of mental illness such as depression and anxiety, which in turn may contribute towards aggressive and violent incidences. (Sullivan & Chang, 2011 as quoted in Hidalgo, 2014). He further argues that social support and sense of community need to be addressed by design and designers can promote social interaction within urban spaces and protect people from crowding that may cause stress and depression.

Gray and Birrell's (2014) ongoing longitudinal study in Australia aims to explore the relationship between specific types of biophilic design as built for workers in

office building site and its associated health benefits. Their office biophilic design includes characteristics such as open and well-ventilated planned work spaces, presence of plants, sunlight, views and use of recycled and non-synthetic materials. Their preliminary data analysis has suggested a significant increase in workplace productivity as a result of incorporating biophilic design practices. The positive effects include better productivity, reduction in stress levels and enhanced sense of well-being and thus fostered workplace satisfaction. It also helped create a collaborative workplace environment. Grinde and Patil (2009) indicate that certain efforts such as outdoor engagement with nature, including potted plants in indoor environments, ensuring natural scenic views (actual or in pictures) and using nature for therapeutic purposes, can offer benefits for human health and well-being. Another important component of biophilic design is its ability to provide opportunities for daily interactions with natural elements. This can help restore the beneficial contact between human beings and nature, generating values of affection, care and respect, which in turn are the keys to building sustainable societies (Fig. 18.6).

On the basis of reviewed evidence, it can be said that biophilic design does offer well-established positive effects on human health and well-being. Although these benefits may not be universal or too obvious and depend on individual peculiarities as well as sociocultural factors, biophilic design as a building practice merits consideration. It seems that in the long run, an absence of natural elements from our daily environments, rather than inclusion of nature, has had more detrimental effects attached to it. In other words, “while the demonstrated effects may not be overwhelming, the costs of making nature available are neither prohibiting” (Grinde & Patil, 2009).

FAVORABLE SETTINGS TO MENTAL HEALTH		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - legible places - attractive, well-maintained, safe places - contact with green space - with privacy - appropriate contact with other people 	Can produce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - well-being - life satisfaction - quality of life - social support - ability to concentrate - creative play in children - less mental fatigue
UNFAVORABLE SETTINGS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - crowded places - noisy places - dangerous places 	Can produce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - social withdrawal - reduced social ties among neighbors - smaller social networks - diminished social and motor skills in children - distress - anxiety - irritability

Fig. 18.6 Favourable and unfavourable settings to mental health (Hidalgo, 2014)

Biophilic Design in Practice: Promoting Mental Health Through Architecture and Design

The attributes of biophilic design are varied and range from minor actions such as decorating spaces with potted plants, to major actions like buildings designed based on complex natural symmetries, allowing versatile scope of application in a manner that can be either simple or large scale or both.

Adopting Biophilic Practices

The primary objective of biophilic design is to create an ecologically healthy and productive space for people, wherein they get the opportunity to recognize and internalize their bond with nature and function as part of a whole rather than disconnected flesh and body.

Architects and designers can take inputs from prevalent research evidence and biophilic frameworks and accordingly create spaces that are customized as per: the inhabitants, the context and the primary purpose of building space. Biophilic design practice can have tangible benefits beginning within public buildings such as offices, hospitals, educational institutions and gradually expanding to private accommodations—the list of spaces where it can be adopted is endless. Some specific examples are as follows:

Hospital settings: Back in 1980s, Ulrich (1984) conducted one of the earliest studies highlighting benefits of nature exposure in surgical patients. The patients exposed to natural landscapes showed better recovery in post-operation hospitalization, lower use of analgesics and reduction in hospitalization time. More recently, Totaforti (2018) has suggested that introducing natural elements and nature connect in hospitals' design “offers a therapeutic support that can positively impact on the patients' psychological and physical well-being”. In addition to patients' health and recovery, she also reiterates its benefits for hospital staff, ensuring better productivity and organizational efficiency.

Workplace: As employees, we spend a considerable amount of time of our daily lives in office spaces, thus it only makes sense that we utilize biophilic principles to reinvent our workplace in a manner that enhances worker well-being and productivity and helps in reduction of work stress. A practical example is available in Yin et al. (2018)'s study examining physiological and cognitive responses to natural elements in an office building. Interestingly, the researchers found multiple benefits of biophilic environment such as reduction in blood pressure levels and skin conductance levels, improvement in short-term memory, increase in positive emotions and decrease in negative emotions.

Educational Institutions: Promoting biophilic design in schools, colleges and universities is a necessity in current times. Shrinking green spaces and increased urbanization has led to a general disconnect between children/adolescents and nature.

Yang et al. (2019) pioneered a research study investigating impacts of urban green space on stress among Chinese students. They found that students residing in cities with more green space appeared to suffer less uncertainty stress and life stress (to an extent). Peters and D’Penna (2020) have also argued for a need to systematically examine benefits of biophilic design specific to urban university campus settings.

Thus, biophilic design approach can be used to create a positive experience, better sense of health and well-being for its inhabitants as well as visitors.

Biophilic Design and Green Architecture: Movement Towards Sustainability

Biophilic Design and Green Architecture: Green architecture involves adoption of green technologies in the field of construction for ensuring sustainable development in the modern era. As an architectural concept, it seeks to mitigate the negative impact of buildings on the environment by employing design strategies that emphasize on energy efficiency and judicious use of materials, resources and space for construction activities. The vast objective of green architecture is achieved by making use of green technologies such as “Green Roof”, “Passive Solar Systems”, “Passive Cooling” to name a few (Sirija, 2014). The primary goal of green technology is to make the building more energy efficient and sustainable. In other words, it seeks to lower the carbon footprint that may be generated in construction activities by ensuring that each and every aspect of design and implementation (from materials to operations) has a reduced harmful impact on the environment.

Are Green Buildings also biophilic? If we compare biophilic design and green architecture, we can observe certain commonalities, for instance, both recognize the invaluable relationship between architecture and human well-being. In addition, both biophilic design and green architecture are environmentally conscious trends that carry the potential to redefine our existing relationship with environment. However, it is equally important to note that while biophilic design ties human well-being to natural components integrated in building design, green architecture adopts a more salutogenic approach, focusing on factors that promote human health and well-being and avoid disease. Biophilic design assumes that each individual has an innate affinity for nature. It uses architecture as a means of restoration and regeneration, thereby promoting a qualitative experience that enhances psychological well-being. Green architecture tends to perceive health in more physical and quantitative terms, relying heavily on green certification tools (e.g. LEED, GRIHA) to measure outcomes such as energy efficiency. It provides for environment conscious technologies that aim for better safety, comfort and occupant health (Kishnani, 2016).

Sustainable architecture can certainly benefit from an integration of both the approaches. An integrative architectural framework that includes biophilic as well as green technology components is likely to result in both psychological and physical health of its building occupants.

Green Certification Tools: A Lesson in Practice—Green certification tools or green building rating tools are set of rating systems used to evaluate and recognize buildings or construction project’s performance which meet certain green requirements or standards from the perspective of sustainability and environment. There are a variety of green certification tools, and each tool assesses the building against a certain combination of parameters such as energy efficiency, waste reduction, water efficiency and indoor environmental quality enhancement.

Nirmal Kishnani (2016) reviewed fourteen Asian green certification tools and ranked the tools from most biophilic (Lotus—Vietnam) to least biophilic—GRIHA (India), LEED India (India), TREES (Thailand) and GreenSL (Sri Lanka). Most green rating tools do not directly include biophilic principles for evaluation. In Kishnani’s words, “biophilic principles are undervalued, either missing or (mis)placed in a category other than well-being”. Since green rating tools have come to form a standard benchmark for promoting green architecture, it can be employed as an efficient tool to assess buildings on their biophilic quotient as well.

Biophilic Elements in Design: Some Pioneers in the Field

Famous architect Frank Lloyd Wright is considered as pioneer of green design. His masterpiece “Fallingwater” (1935) is a house designed in Pennsylvania’s Laurel Highlands and is a testimony to his advocacy for organic architecture. He believed in creating structures that appeared to be harmoniously in sync with their natural surroundings. Laurence Wilfred Baker or Laurie Baker is another phenomenal personality in the field of environmentally conscious architecture. Laurie Baker proposed a return to traditional building methods that used locally sourced and cost-effective construction materials and energy-efficient techniques (e.g. rain water harvesting). Natural ventilation (one of the features of biophilic design) is an important element in Baker’s architecture. For natural airflow, he positioned internal courtyard wherever possible while relying extensively on perforated external brick walls (*jail* in north India). He is also known as the “Gandhi of Indian Architecture” as he actively worked towards housing needs of poor (Burte, 2019). Closer home, Nari Gandhi, a pioneer of Indian Organic Architecture, is renowned for designing building that reflect a deep sense of respect for surroundings. Nari Gandhi’s buildings were embedded as part of natural surroundings rather than the other way around. More recently, modern architects like Ken Yeang and Amanda Surgeon have created a niche for themselves by combining elements of biophilic design, green architecture and sustainability.

Biophilic Design in Indian Context: Implementation and Challenges

Biophilic design as a concept is gaining popularity in the field of Indian architecture as well; however, the examples are scattered and there is a dearth of systematic knowledge base regarding this concept. For instance, in India we have green certification systems such as Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment (GRIHA), Leadership in Energy and Environment Design (LEED) and IGBC rating systems. These green rating tools aim to quantify the environmental, socio-economic and economic benefits of green building design with an emphasis on sustainable site planning, enhanced energy performance, resourceful materials, indoor environmental quality and building practices, water and waste management approaches. Recently, there have been some architectural examples like Altana's Elantans Beck India Ltd.'s headquarters in India (Pune), Jetavan Centre, the Buddhist Learning and Skill Development Centre at Mumbai, TITAN Headquarters in Bengaluru that have incorporated biophilic design in practice (Radhakrishnan, 2019). Each building has added its own unique set of biophilic features that encourage human–nature connect, are eco-friendly and sustainable. Spaces such as these depict an increasing trend towards biophilic design practices across settings such as home and workplaces.

As a concept, biophilic design continues to be discussed in the domain of architecture and engineering, and the social sciences are yet to contribute in any significant manner. Apart from building on a multidisciplinary research structure for its foundation, there are some other possible challenges in the implementation of biophilic design in India, on any considerable scale. A few of these include overpopulation and crowding, lack of space/land resources, unregulated construction, existent socio-economic inequalities, and lack of systematic urban planning.

With these possible challenges, it is obvious that the implementation of this concept would require an innovative approach, so that people voluntarily take interest in this idea and explore ways of its implementation. One of the foremost ways of encouraging its practice is through spreading information and awareness of the possible benefits that might result from biophilic architecture. It can even be included as a component in government campaigns targeting resource consumption, energy efficiency and public health as well as construction schemes. Moreover, it needs to be promoted as a “customized approach” wherein biophilic elements need to be inspired from the local culture and context. Inputs can be taken from people, and traditional biophilic practices from rural areas can be incorporated as well. The application can further be extended to shared, public spaces in a structured and scientific manner. The linkages to human mental health and well-being can also be highlighted.

Conclusion

In current times, it has become pertinent to explore alternatives that promote environmental protection and at the same time can rejuvenate the “human–nature” relationship. Biophilic design offers one such opportunity. Studies indicate that our buildings impact us on a psychological level, whether or not we are consciously aware of it. The idea behind biophilic design is to consciously integrate nature into our architecture. As a design philosophy, it requires a multidisciplinary and integrative approach wherein multiple stakeholders are involved and consulted to arrive at possible design practices that can be implemented on a large scale. It is a realm full of potential, waiting to be tapped; therefore, we must encourage further research in this area.

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