CHAPTER 46

PSYCHOLOGY

Doctoral Theses

01. AGGARWAL (Aanchal)
Understanding 'Voice-Hearing' as Divine Explanation of Experiences: A Qualitative Study.
Supervisor: Prof. (Dr.) Salma Seth
Th 29325

Abstract

Voice-hearing has become an increasingly reported phenomenon in the healthy population. The experiences of voice-hearing in such populations may be understood by examining how hearers ascribe meaning to their experiences, how sociocultural context affects this meaning-making, and how these experiences are perceived by the experiencers. However, there is a dearth of literature investigating first-hand experiences of voice-hearing in non-clinical groups. The present study, therefore, was aimed at understanding the lived experiences of non-clinical voice-hearing among religious/spiritual hearers. Semi-structured interviews were used to obtain meaningful information and IPA (Smith et al., 2009, Smith & Nizza, 2022) was used for analyzing the interview data of eight self-identified Christian voice-hearers. The analysis revealed eight group experiential themes, viz., 1) Beyond rationality: Divine explanations of experiences; 2) 'Hearing the unheard': Descriptions of voice-hearing experiences; 3) Growth and transformation: Positive impact of experiences; 4) Social shaping of Spiritual understanding; 5) Experiences rooted in meaningful life events; 6) God as Companion: The relational core of experience; 7) Beyond hearing: Encounters of other sensory experiences; and 8) The Social Mirror: Reactions and Responses. The findings of the present study indicate that hearing the voice of God is a normative experience within religious communities such as the one the participants belong to. The experience is not an expression of pathology, rather is a sign of positive spiritual growth for a devotee. The findings highlight the active role of the hearer in receiving God's communication, suggesting a relational aspect to voice-hearing among religious/spiritual participants. The voices are also perceived as sources of guidance, direction, emotional upliftment, overall self and community transformation. Further research exploring voice-hearing in such non-clinical populations is required to address gaps in the existing literature and expand our current understanding beyond the dominant pathological frameworks. Keywords: voice-hearing experiences; phenomenology; divine; religion; non-clinical population.

Contents

1. Introduction 2. Review of related literature 3. Method 4. Findings 5. Discussion. References & Appendix.

02. AMIT PRAKASH

Cultural Construction of psychological Resilience: Implications for Subjective Well-Being.

Supervisor: Prof. Meetu Khosla

Th 29326

Abstract

Psychological resilience is widely recognized as a key element in improving health and well-being, yet its meaning and expression are deeply shaped by cultural context. Research increasingly shows resilience varies with socio-cultural contexts shaping individual responses to adversity; however, empirical knowledge about how resilience is conceptualized in Indian cultural context remains limited. Taking a socio-cultural perspective to explore resilience, this thesis develops a substantive theory intended to enrich the understanding of the concept as a culturally embedded phenomenon in Indian contexts. Employing a constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2006), the study draws on data generated through in-depth interviews conducted with 48 participants involving young and middle-aged adults, selected through theoretical sampling from the member states of North Central Zone Cultural Centre, India. Through constant comparative analysis, five interconnected core categories were identified: perception of life adversities, collective cultural matrix including expectations, values, beliefs, and norms, cultural shaping of self, conceptualization of psychological resilience, and resilience-supported subjective well-being. The results contribute to existing knowledge by demonstrating that resilience in the Indian context extends beyond an individual trait, emerging instead as a complex and dynamic process shaped by the synergistic interaction of these core categories. This perspective highlights the integrated functioning of Indian culture, self, and psychological resilience in maintaining subjective well-being. These findings emphasize the need to reconsider universal assumptions about resilience and stress the importance of adapting theoretical models to reflect cultural diversity. The study offers a more contextually grounded understanding of resilience as a dynamic phenomenon shaped by socio-cultural influences. More broadly, the findings hold implications for the development of culturally sensitive resilience interventions and the formulation of social policies that resonate with Indian cultural systems, ultimately contributing to more effective strategies for promoting subjective well-being across diverse Indian populations. Keywords: Culture, Indian culture, self, psychological resilience, subjective well-being.

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1. An overview 2. Review of literature 3. Research design 4. Present study 5. Data and interpretation 6. General discussion 7. Thesis denouement. References & Appendices.

03. CHETNA

CoREM-H: Pass-Based Intervention for Learners at Risk of Reading Disability.

Supervisor: Prof. Meetu Khosla

Th 29230

Abstract

Specific Learning Disability remains a significant concern in the Indian context due to its high prevalence, challenges in timely diagnosis, and limited access to appropriate intervention. These challenges are further compounded by the limited

availability of screening and diagnostic tools in regional languages, as well as inadequate teacher preparedness, leading to the continued neglect of these children within schools. Since early identification and contextually relevant remediation are crucial for addressing the needs of these children, the present study aimed to develop and evaluate the efficacy of CoREM-H, an intervention based on the PASS Theory of Intelligence for learners at risk of reading disability studying in MCD Primary schools. An exploratory sequential mixed-methods design was employed. Phase I involved a qualitative needs assessment conducted in two stages: the first stage included primary data collection through teacher interviews, and the second stage involved secondary data synthesis through a review of intervention programs implemented in government schools. This phase provided insights into key barriers and facilitators within the school context, thereby informing the development of CoREM-H. Phase II comprised the development of CoREM-H in Part A and its empirical evaluation in Part B. The findings indicated that CoREM-H led to significant improvements in PASS cognitive processes and a reduction in reading errors among children at risk of reading disability. Additionally, significant negative correlations were observed between certain cognitive processes and reading errors, indicating that higher levels of cognitive functioning were associated with fewer reading errors. Overall, the findings highlight the effectiveness of cognitive-based interventions grounded in the learner's linguistic context in addressing reading difficulties.

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1. Introduction 2. Review of literature 3. The present study 4. Qualitative phase, Stage-1 and Stage-2 5. Quantitative Phase, Part A: Development and validation of CoREM-H, Part B: Testing of CoREM-H 6. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations. References. Appendices.

04. KAUR (Jasleen)
Effectiveness of cognitive-behavioural training for enhancing cognitive and behavioural skills in school children with ADHD.
Supervisor: Dr. Manoj Kumar and Prof. S. P. K. Jena
Th 29231

Abstract

Non-pharmacological interventions have emerged as an efficacious approach for the treatment of cognitive, social, emotional, academic, and behavioural impairments for children with ADHD. A 4-week evidence-based cognitive-behavioural training (CoBeT) was developed, comprising 20 sessions of 40 minutes held consecutively for five days to enhance cognitive and behavioural skills in school children with ADHD. The research was conducted in three phases: development of the treatment manual, pilot, and the main study. 20 participants aged between 6 and 12 years were evaluated on several cognitive and behavioural outcome measures using a pre-post quasi-experimental research design. The outcome measures included the Woodcock-Johnson Test of Cognitive Abilities, NIMHANS Index of Specific Learning Disabilities, Structured Observation Recording Form, Test Observation Form, and Conner's Teacher Rating Scale. Significant pre- to post-changes were observed on several cognitive and behavioural outcome measures with robust effect sizes. Additionally, the treatment feasibility, fidelity, and content validity were reported. The findings support promising results for CoBeT. Implications have been discussed. Keywords: Cognitive Behaviour Training, Non-Pharmacological Interventions, ADHD, School Children.

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1. Introduction 2. Review of literature 3. Method 4. Results 5. Discussion 6. Strengths and limitations. References.

05. KOTHARI (Arushi)
Narrative Study of Indian Couples Experiencing Childlessness Due to Infertility.
Supervisor: Prof. Parul Bansal
Th 29232

Abstract

Marriage and parenthood are considered to be significant psychosocial milestones in the lives of Indian adults. The desire for parenthood has been constructed and experienced as a deep longing, a burning passion, a taken-for-granted natural next step by many couples. The study aims to explore the narratives of twelve Indian couples belonging to the lower socio-economic income group in New Delhi using a narrative qualitative approach. Using narrative analysis and reflexive thematic analysis, the study visibilises key milestones in couples' journey of childlessness due to infertility and how couples negotiated their relationship in the midst of infertility and its treatment. Couples shared stories of how the idea of a child became important for them as well as their experience of being childless characterised by dominant ideas of feeling empty, trying to be parents and feeling that life had stalled. The 'problem' of childlessness due to infertility is deeply explored through couples` experience of childlessness due to infertility. Couples described key territories of synchrony and tension in their relationship in terms of communication, boundaries with family, adoption, second marriage and ways in which the 'problem' impacted their relationship and ways in which they resisted the impact of the problem. Finally, the study explores the supportive and pressurising role played by families and how treatment from infertility creates unique tensions around being diagnosed, financial and physical health concerns as well as serving as a beacon of hope in their relationship. The study has implications for reproductive health policy, psychotherapy with couples and research in reproductive health.

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1. Grounding the study: an introduction 2. Conceptual and review of literature 3. Methodology 4. Narratives of childlessness 5. Themes of childlessness: reflexive thematic analysis 6. Discussion 7. Implications and future directions. References and Appendix: Interview guide.

06. NGAN (Le Thi Kim)
Exploring a Community-Based Healing Through Cooperative Inquiry: A Longitudinal Retreat Study in Vietnam.
Supervisor: Dr. Ishita U. Bharadwaj and Dr. Nirja Sharma
Th 29327

Abstract

In this research, over the course of five healing retreat cycles between 2022 and 2024, eight core participants were involved in CI research processes. First-time participants joined in subsequent retreat cycles to allow comparison of engagement in the retreat process. The research process included dialogue before and after the retreat with participants in group settings, sharing circles in retreat settings,

observation of participants by researchers, and ongoing dialogue of reflections between researchers. The research process led to the formulation of a Relational Healing Process Model. The research findings showed that healing did not equate to the absence of suffering but rather to a change in relating to suffering. The participants showed signs of improvement in affect management, reflective understanding, and relating to others over the course of the research process. The first-time participants showed signs of engagement in establishing safety and accessing felt experiences, whereas the returning participants showed signs of integration and relating to others in supportive ways. The research process led to the formulation of a ten-phase model that showed a recursive pattern of growth in relating to others in communal settings. The research process contributed to an understanding of healing in community-based settings that is beyond clinical settings. Healing is ultimately this unfinished ethical possibility to learn to stay with the suffering together. The research process also contributed to Cooperative Inquiry in the area of relational transformation.

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07. MUDGAL (Ritu)
First Person Inquiry as Therapist-Researcher: Engaging in Reflective Writing to Develop a Reflective Framework for Psychotherapy.
Supervisor: Dr. Ishita U. Bharadwaj & Prof. (Dr.) Harpreet Bhatia
Th 29420

Abstract

Reflection is widely recognized as central to therapist development. In the Indian psychotherapy context, reflective engagement is emphasized but remains largely centered on client material, formulation, intervention, and outcome. Therapists` subjectivity and how their positioning shapes clinical meaning-making often receive lesser attention. This study addresses this gap by developing a therapist-centered reflective framework for Indian context. Informed by constructivist epistemological stance and autoethnographic traditions, the study employed first-person inquiry to study the researcher`s own lived experience as a therapist. Reflective writing, following the Knott and Scragg framework, was undertaken to examine 10 therapy cases, focusing on emotional responses, clinical dilemmas, assumptions, and shifts in therapeutic stance. The reflective material was analyzed through an Iteratively process across three levels: case-based analysis, cross-case analysis, and validation through survey with 50 practicing clinical psychologists in India. Three global themes emerged from the analysis: uncertainty as an epistemic condition of practice; the complexity of care, responsibility, and presence in the therapeutic relationship; and the therapist's role beyond the clinician, where life, self, and culture enter practice. Survey findings indicated that 70–90% of practicing therapists resonated with these themes, affirming them as shared tensions within therapeutic work. The insights generated further informed the development of a therapist-centered 3 × 3 Reflective Matrix Framework, with expert review supporting its face validity. The framework organizes reflection across three dimensions: therapeutic approach, therapist–client relationship, and the

professional self of the therapist. Each dimension is explored through three reflective layers: immediate in-session experience, personal influences, and broader professional, institutional, and cultural influences. Together, the framework offers a practical way for therapists to examine how their clinical choices, relational positioning, and personhood shape therapeutic work. Thereby contributing to translation of reflexive clinical experience into academic psychotherapy knowledge. Keywords: Reflection; First-person inquiry; Autoethnography; 3 × 3 Reflective Matrix.

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1. Introduction 2. Review of literature 3. Method 4. Findings of phase one: case based analysis 5. Findings of cross case analysis and validation survey 6. Findings of phase two: development of the reflective framework 7. Discussion 8. Conclusion References. Appendices.

08. SINGH (Vartika)
Psychosocial Safety Climate at Workplace.
Supervisor: Prof. Eric Soreng and Chander Mohan
Th 29235

Abstract

In recent years, employees have become increasingly exposed to psychosocial hazards in the workplace, making it psychologically exhausting. Dollard and Bakker introduced the Psychosocial Safety Climate (PSC) in 2010, defining it as a "shared perception of policies, practices, and procedures for the protection of worker psychological health and safety." Establishing PSC can significantly reduce the risk of psychosocial harm to workers. The present study aims to fill the gap in PSC research in India. The study utilized a mixed-methods design. Quantitative data were collected from a sample of 140 private-sector employees in India, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with 30 employees. The study explores the relationship and role of PSC in predicting work engagement, psychological well-being, burnout, psychological distress, work-family conflict, and bullying among private-sector employees in the Indian context. It also examines the moderating role of PSC. Quantitative results showed that PSC was significantly related to all variables. PSC was a strong and significant predictor of five outcome variables but a weak predictor of work-family conflict. PSC had a limited ability to moderate the relationships between quantitative demands and other variables. Thematic Network Analysis of qualitative data revealed 10 Global themes, 28 organizing themes, and 40 basic themes reflecting experiences of psychosocial safety in their work environment. In totality, the present thesis, by identifying PSC's impact on psychosocial health and employee outcome variables, has highlighted in the literature the urgency for PSC development. The various suggestions emanating. from the study would help in the construction and application of psychosocial safety policies and practices. It will assist in developing tailored learning and awareness modules for hierarchical and managerial positions, promoting early recognition and sensitivity to work stress factors that pose a risk to employees` psychosocial health. Keywords: Psychosocial safety climate (PSC), psychosocial hazards, employee health, private sector.

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1. Introduction 2. Review of literature 3. Methodology 4. Results 5. Discussion and Conclusion. References. Appendices and Publication.