

THE CATHARSIS: A STUDY OF PSYCHOLOGY AND INDIAN CULTURE DEALING WITH REPRESSED EMOTIONS.

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Abstract: What if there is no person to share our good and bad feelings? What if our brain is storing shocking events and there is no desensitization for emotions? Our life starts with the first emotional sound of cry. This sound is imperative for the perspective of physiological and psychological health. The baby, reveals emotions through various gestures (facial and body). This is significant to share good and bad feelings to relieve our brain from adverse affect on emotions, behavior and social adjustments. Many investigations are propagated by Psychologists and Social scientists. Some of significant studies are the Free Association and Dream Analysis Theories of Sigmund Freud, Client Centered Therapy by Carl Roger and so on.

India is a Secular Democratic State with diversified culture, nevertheless there is a common and rich integration of civilization. Indians have been using catharsis through social gathering and sharing these extreme feelings of happiness (celebration of Marriage, Party, Festivals and so on) and sadness (death of near and dear, failure in exam/project, misbehave of others, financial adversity, natural catastrophe and so on).

Index Terms: Catharsis, Psychological, Indian Culture, Repressed Emotions.

INTRODUCTION

The life of human being is full of stress of perpetual struggle for survival. The person is facing pro and cones of life and also to release the accumulated unconsciously suppressed thoughts. The existence of these thought affect life and mould toward horrible consequences. There are so many psychologists exerting to understand the software level functioning of our brain for more than one and half century. The Psychology is this time new science that needs to upgrade for the welfare of worldwide people.

The catharsis means the release of repressed thoughts that is initially studied by Sigmund Freud, in the form of Free Association and Dream Analysis. This notion of emotion is further studied humanitarian psychologist Carl Roger in his famous theory, "Client Centered Theory or Person Centered Theory". To decrease the inferiority complex in the subject, Carl Roger replaced the term from patient to client. Roger emphasized in self efficacy, congruence, unconditional positive regard and empathy.

The humanitarian optimistic approach inspired Gestalt approach. They had also concentrated on the present of the client rather than past and future. They developed the theory to balance the client's covert and overt behavior. They believed that the persons are industrious toward his well being. The various projective techniques are used by researchers to bring out the repressed thoughts that can harm the individual's health. The some of these are: Association Techniques, Construction Techniques, Completion Techniques, Choice Ordering Techniques and Expressive Techniques

Our brain shut off the emotion when there is trauma, violence and abuse. It adversely affects our body and mind. The emotion suppression is used as a coping strategy such as distracting situational avoidance, the avoidance of people or object and substance use (MySahana, 2011).

The emotional suppression has affects on body like high blood pressure, diabetes, joint stiffness, bone weakness, ailment caused by weak immunity, nervous system problem and temporal lobe damage. Psychologically, the individual has the disorders like social adjustment, anxiety, depression, insomnia and memory loss.

India is continuously developing secular state with diversified and complex culture. The Indian culture has its roots in the oldest civilization Indus River. The over populated country is using its cultural parts (art and craft, festivals, languages, religions and so on) to get the relief from cumbersome life struggle. There is the threatening of unemployment, lack of medication and lack of basic need fulfillments. The catharsis aspect is seen in the Indian behavior or culture. This paper is trying to study suppressed thought releasing factors hidden in Indian culture.

PSYCHOLOGY AND CATHARSIS

The major emotions, in the life of human beings are happiness and sorrow. These emotions affect not only psychological and physical life of an individual but also sociological adjustment.

I. PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH

After the hypnosis, Sigmund Freud (1953, pp. 252-253), used his pioneered work Free Association to desensitize the patients from anxiety disorder. The patients are asked to narrate their thoughts without hesitation. This method reveals their unconscious associations with anxiety. Sigmund Freud had worked on conscious, subconscious and unconscious level of thought processes. He worked impact of hidden thoughts that elicit through Dream Analysis. He believed that repressed thoughts and feelings, in unconscious mind can be released through dream analysis or through free association.

II. HUMANISTIC APPROACH

According to humanistic approach people are well known to their potentials, can resolve their problems and convert themselves toward optimistic thought of life (Seligman, 2006). According to Carl Rogers (1961), the client can be helped through person-centered approach (Also called Client-Centered Approach). The Person-centered Approach has following major terms:-

- 1) **Empathy:** skill of therapist to show the consideration of client's emotions.
- 2) **Unconditional Positive Regard:** the therapist accepts, respect and care the thoughts of client.
- 3) **Congruence:** The genuineness and authenticity of therapist in saying and working.

Other efforts in this therapy are the reflection of feelings, open questions, paraphrasing and encouragers. The client is empowered to have congruence in working and saying, to change behavior and feelings, to aware about self esteem and feel free without judging of therapist.

III. GESTALT APPROACH

Before Gestalt Approach, the notion of duality was prevailed regarding mind/body, body/soul, thinking/feeling, and feeling/action. Laura Perls coined Gestalt Therapy in 1940's and that was also affected by Kurt Lewin and Kurt Goldstein (Corsini & Wedding, 2000). In Gestalt Therapy the focus was on the Experimental and Humanistic Approach rather than Psychoanalytic Approach of unconscious concept. Gestalt Approach concentrates on the integration of whole person with his environment and believes in the present rather than future or past. According to this approach, the person is fully efficient to integrate and deal with his/her emotions.

IV. PROJECTIVE TECHNIQUES

It is difficult and complex to penetrate the emotions, thoughts and feelings of an individual with scientific investigations. Likewise, still the software level of brain is a great mystery. To get out the information from human brain at software level (intangible part), researchers have been using various techniques. Projective Techniques involves the meaningful exploration and percepts of respondent pertaining to given stimulus. Lawrence K. Frank (1939), coined the term Projective Techniques that was the outcome of intrinsic study of Free Association and Dream Analysis of Sigmund Freud, and Gestalt psychology. According to Gardner Lindsey (1961), Projective Techniques are classified in the following manner:

1. **Association Techniques:** the stimulus is presented and subject is asked to respond with first word, image or percept that occurs to him, for instance Word Association, Rorschach Ink Blot Test, Cloud Pictures.
2. **Construction Techniques:** The construction work is given to subject, like a story or picture such as Thematic Apperception Test, Blacky Pictures.
3. **Completion Techniques:** The incomplete product is given to subject and asked to complete it in any way he like, such as Sentence Test, Picture Frustration Study.
4. **Choice Ordering Techniques:** The subject had choices to alternate items or arrangement that best fits some criterion, such as Szondi Test, Picture Arrangement Test.
5. **Expressive Techniques:** The subject combines or incorporates stimuli into some kind of novel production, such as Play Technique, Drawing and Painting Techniques, Psychodrama and Role Playing.

INDIAN CULTURE AND CATHARSIS

The catharsis, in any civilization is dependent upon people's pattern of living. In any nation, there are subtle and hidden cultural patterns working as a catharsis of any country person that project the life. This notion is coupled with, the relief from the adverse affect of cumbersome life struggle encountering the people. If we try to theorize at Indian context then India is a secular state with diversified cultural structure. India has been assimilating the thoughts, dance, music, dressing, foods, languages, art and craft, rituals, religion, festivals of living patterns at international level. People are projecting their suppressed thoughts through their culture.

India has complex, adjustable, globalized ideology as shown in the terms "*VASUDHEV KUTUMBKAM*", means "The world is one Family", and "*SARWE BHAWANTU SUKHINO, SARVE SANTU NIRAMAYA, SARVE BHADRAYANI PASHYANTU MA KASHCHID DUKHBHAGWET*", means "May All people should be in Relief, May All become Happy, May All be Free from Illness, May All See what is Auspicious May no one Suffer". The globalization has affected Indian culture. The family pattern is changing from joint family to a nuclear family.

I. RELIGION

As above mentioned, India is a secular State where there is equal significance of religion belief. These religions are, Hinduism (about 82%), Islam (about 12%), Christianity (about 2.5%), Sikhism (about 2%), Buddhism (about 0.7%), Jainism (about 0.5%), Zoroastrianism (about 0.01%) and Judaism (about 0.0005%) Aharon Daniel (1999-2005).

India has very complex web network of relations with one another. There is social support in diversified unity that helps to release stressful events. According Cobb (1976), social support is the awareness of a person to believe he or she is cared, loved, respected, valued and he or she is the part of mutual obligation network.

According to House, Kahn, McLeod and Williams (1985), social support is comprised of *“(a) emotional concern (empathy, caring, concern), (b) instrumental aid (giving money, assistance), (c) information (advice, suggestions, directions), and/or (d) appraisal (feedback or social comparison relevant to a person’s self-evaluation)”*. Indians are very much supportive during the grief period of an individual. There is social gathering during the death of relative, natural catastrophe, illness and so on. The Indians, supports their relatives with small amount of money, items and incident mourning discussion for about a week. After the mourning period, the victims of incident feel relaxed from repressed thoughts and energize him/her to cope with new days’ challenges. The life is continuous phenomenon in which the support is needed to share repressed thoughts and feel from anxiety, depression and psychological problems. The ideology of religion gives the relief differently with various communities but the social gathering is identical in which people are obligated to participate. The Indians also release their suppressed thoughts through the story telling/chanting of mantras/sacred messages of their Ideals/ Gods.

II. FESTIVALS

The festivals are harmoniously celebrated by different religions. These festivals are manifestation of Indian culture and traditions. Some of these festivals are: Diwali, Holi, Dussehra, Navratri, Durga Puja, Janmashtmi, Ganesh Chaturthi, Gurupurab, Rakshabandhan, Eid Ul Fitr, Bihu, Hemis, Onam, Pongal and Christmas. In Indian culture the festivals are very significant. The farmers working at fields, striving through natural calamities (flood, dry weather and scarcity of resources); business men struggling in a globalized competitive market; servicemen running to secure job; political leaders coping with diversified problems of people, need stress releaser occasions of festivals where all of them gathers, greets and celebrate their happiness. That is also the mode of social gathering in highly populated India, Negi Pradeep (March, 2018).

III. ART AND CRAFT

Art and craft of Indus Valley Civilization had amazed the contemporary world with its excellence. The Indus Valley civilization is one of the primitive urban civilizations in the world, similar to Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt. In the time duration, the Harappa civilization is categorized into three parts:

(i) *Early Harappan phase (3500 BC-2600 BC)*

(ii) *Mature Harappan phase (2600 BC-1900 BC)*

(iii) *Late Harappan phase (1900 BC-1400 BC)*

Famous Art and craft, states in India are, Gujrat, Jammu and Kashmir and Rajasthan. The familiar arts are Folk Paintings, Mithila Paintings, Pahari Miniature Paintings, Tanjore Arts; and Crafts are Carpet Weaving, Stone Carvings, Jewellery, Blue Pottery and Kashmiri Embroidery.

Many psychologists are focusing the importance of art and craft. They are using related psychological activities in which child or person is given the art and craft material and is asked to manage according to his desire. The client is also provided pre designed art and asked to express his feelings and perceptual meaning. In India such sort of psychological activities have been done naturally. The repressed thoughts are projected in the form of art and craft, and are providing natural therapy of such sort.

IV. DANCE AND MUSIC

In India, the dance and music was seen in the festivals and religious worship. The oldest, dancing sculpture is found from 2500 BC that is linked with the religion and mentioned in Vedas. The mixture of dance and music is known as Sangit that is connected with Drama.

The beginning of Natyashatra is considered in the A.D. 200's, the Brihaddesi in 700's and Sangitaratnakara in 1200's. During the first period of Muslim Emperor in 1200's, the music was divided into two parts Hindustani music for northern tradition and Karnatak music for southern tradition. The three composer-musicians of Karnatak music are called Trinity: Shyama Shastri, Tyagaraja and Muthuswami Dikshitar, during the period of 1700's and 1800's. For the period of 1900's, the prominent composers and performers for Indian Music are Sitar player Ravi Shankar and Alla Rakha on Tabla.

Indians are historically sharing their grief and happiness through music and dance. The recreations with dance and music is affecting not only with spiritual and psychological health of a person but also physical. This is very amusing source to release repressed emotions. If the dance and music is done with full concentration it works as a meditation technique.

V. LANGUAGE

The language is a significant means of communication among human beings. According to Edward Sapir (1921), *“It is difficult to see adequately the functions of language because it is so deeply rooted in the whole of human behavior that it may be suspected that there is little in the functional side of our conscious behavior in which language does not play its part”*.

According to Duranti (1997), “*something learned, transmitted, passed down from one generation to the next, through human action, often in the form of face-to-face interaction and of course, through linguistic communication*”.

India is the country of multifarious languages. The multi-circumference of every five kilometer changes the tone and meaning of many terms so the country may be called multi-linguistic. The commonly spoken languages and their percentages (of speaker population) are: Bengali (8%), Gujarati (4%), Hindi (40%), Kannada (4%), Malayalam (3%), Marathi (7%), Odia (3%), Tamil (6%), Telugu (7%), Urdu (5%), and English (10%). The speakers of other languages like Punjabi, Maithili, Kashmiri and Assame, has also large number in India.

In the context of emotions like joy and sorrow, the language plays significant role in India. The language is comprised with verbal and non verbal gestures. During the sad situation there is change in the dialect and gestures. Indian people, very often nods their head to show their attention toward speaker. These gestures powerfully interconnect the emotions of two people and remove the geographical boundaries. The repressed feelings and thoughts are released with consolations that can harm the life of person.

CONCLUSION

The Psychology has very short history of about 150 years. The roots are deeper than its birth that was initially in the form of Philosophy. The catharsis was significantly used by the founder of Psychoanalytic Theory, Sigmund Freud. In Psychoanalytic Theory, it is used in the form of Free Association and Dream Analysis to treat the people at clinical level. The psychologists have been trying to understand the human brain at software level and to treat it in the effective way. While focusing the traumatic problem of human cognition, many psychologists had tried to propagate various theories.

The Carl Roger with his pioneer work in “Client Centered Therapy or Person Centered Therapy”, tried to release the repressed thought. The Carl Roger emphasized to call the patient/subject in the name of client to get the rid of being patient feeling and to come out of inferiority complex. In his work he focused on unconditional positive regard, empathy and congruence. The client should be feeling free to speak anything because the person has self efficacy.

In the Gestalt Approach, the psychologists emphasized to treat subject on the present rather than past and future. According to this approach the subject should be adjusted in the present while pulling from future and past. They also gave the importance for environment and were inspired from humanitarian thought of person being good by nature. These psychologists think that the person is optimistic and potentiality to solve his complex problem.

The research scholars in the field of psychology discovered many projection techniques to reveal the hidden thought processes the individual has. Some types of these techniques are Association Techniques, Construction Techniques, Completion Techniques, Choice Ordering Techniques and Expressive Techniques. Some glimpse of these techniques is also seen in the Indian culture.

Indian culture has guiding characteristics of living patterns revealed through art and craft, languages, music and dance, religions and festivals. Most of the activities in Indian culture are stress releasing, if dealt intelligently.

India has richest and oldest civilization of more than 5000 years. The Indus Valley Civilization shows the intellectual, urban management capacity. India is Secular State with the equal respect to the diversified religions. Indians has the cultural thought of “the people of world is like a family”, where there should be no discrimination on the basis of human existence. This is also drawback that there are many superstitious thoughts emerged with the evolution. In fact these superstitious elements were not existed in the basic holy books but the selfishness of educated scholar added in these books and culture. The sacred books like Gita, Kuran, Gurugrantha and bible, are giving the message of unity in the diversity.

In fact, the Indian Culture is based on the Indian traditional Philosophy in which there is equal chance to live in this world. There so many hidden activities that are responsible to release repressed emotional thought. These non-washed repressed thoughts harm the people not only at psychological, spiritual, social but also physiological level.

LIMITATIONS

1. The first limitation of this research paper was very few studies done in the context of psychological aspect of diversified Indian culture.
2. The reliable, validated and standardized questionnaires/inventories are not available.
3. The focus of investigators in India is least in scientific study of culture with appropriate up gradations.
4. Govt. is not emphasizing the importance of Psychology and its application in our culture and education.
5. The people still are not capable to discriminate the factual scientific study and superstitious beliefs.
6. Only interview method was used wherever it was necessary.
7. The researcher used limited information sources and the study could be done in large extant with extended sources.
8. India has complex diversified culture with huge population due to this it was not so easy to uncover facts due to limited budgets and the time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The quantitative, analytical study can be done on this topic.
2. To go deeper in this topic standardized questionnaires/inventories can be developed.
3. The collective intervention modules of Psychological theories and the culture, should be designed, developed and applied even at educational level.
4. Change is the law of nature. The research scholar should be induced to work on this topic and this will optimistically modify the present Indian cultural aspect.

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