We Witness

ANNUAL MAGAZINE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

KACCHI MITTI

THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF CHILDHOOD

2025-2026



SRI VENKATESWARA COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF DELHI

COVER PAGE : LATENT MEANINGS

Childhood is a part of an individual's life often referred to as years of innocence and a phase of life where the individual is yet to be completely absorbed by the social forces around him. Childhood carries a very special meaning in itself not because of the kind of innocence which an individual has but because of the existence of the phase of adulthood which further does not change into any other phase of an individual's life. It is the phase which signifies the total absorption of an individual by the social forces and vice versa. We have tried to depict this idea via the cover page of our annual magazine themed as childhood. As the readers can see there is this small kid standing at the centre of the page which depicts two things. First is the hand on his one eye which depicts the innocence of a young kid for whom there are no pressures on him regarding any kind of social processes whether it is about career, job, family or other kinds of social aspects of it. On the other hand the one eye through which he is seeing depicts the gradual change of time and transformation of a child from childhood to adulthood towards the formation of a totally new person with new lenses through which he is going to see this outer world and guide his life according to it, in short becoming a new person as compared to what one was before.

On the left side of the page a rainbow can be seen which tries to articulate the idea of diversity among kids. Like in a rainbow all the different colours are blended together to form a beautiful creation, likewise kids with different interests and qualities contribute within the formation of this society. Opposite to this rainbow a few windows with some scenes behind them can be seen which depict the different phases of a child through which he goes. For instance in one portion of this part of the picture a child can be seen sitting alone which depicts or represents the idea of self introspection and in another part one with family depicts the formation of new bonds and overall becoming a new person as a part of this society.

Above this picture three different figures can be seen depicting three different personalities like a model, doctor and an athlete which try to convey a message that only in childhood kids are more free in terms of thinking and in terms of developing admiration for different roles when it comes to the idea of what they want to be in the future. But then there are many fluctuations within their ideas driving them towards learning and exploring more and more. On the top right side of the page two kids can be seen standing above the water and looking at some fishes around them which refers to words like curiosity and the will to learn new things and observe them which contribute towards the idea of growth and maturity. With the passage of time innocence, ignorance and feelings of fear get replaced with seriousness, rationality and a sense of responsibility towards society and their own self.

DISCLAIMER

The views and opinions expressed in the articles, essays, and creative entries featured in this newsletter are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the official policies, values, or positions of the Sociology Magazine Commitee or Sri Venkateswara College. While we encourage free expression and diverse perspectives, Magazine Commitee and the editorial team are not responsible for the accuracy of the information shared by contributors. All entries are published in good faith to foster dialogue, learning, and community engagement.

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BATCH OF 2026



Your paragraph text

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From The Principal's Desk

With great joy and enthusiasm, I welcome this 2025-26 edition of the Department of Sociology's annual magazine "We Witness". It is a unique endeavour on the part of our students as they use this as a platform to express their innermost thoughts, emotions and ideas.

This year the magazine is based on the theme of "childhood", exploring a very intricate phase of human life where several of our fundamental personality traits are built. It reflects a diverse set of thoughts that surrounds the phase of childhood in the form of essays, poems, autobiographical narratives and artworks.

I commend both the students and faculty for this remarkable initiative and encourage all readers to immerse in this edition where they will get to know how our budding minds experience the phase of childhood. I congratulate the team and the department on this edition of 'We Witness' and look forward to future editions of the magazine.

Warm Regards



Principal

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Readers,

The date is 15th of February 2025, and the time is quarter past 5 in the evening when we are writing this note, and as the clock ticks, we are all moving a distance away from our own periods of childhood. With each passing moment, new experiences and interactions are being constructed that reshape the lens through which we reflect upon the lifeworld of childhood episodes.

Childhood is not just a phase of life but an accumulated treasure of memoirs, stories, experiences and learnings that shape our future self and this edition of "WE WITNESS", that titles "KACCHI MITTI: THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF CHILDHOOD", tries to provide a glimpse of how the students of the Department of Sociology, Sri Venkateswara College, perceive those moments. They are presented by the students themselves in the form of stories, articles, poems, autobiographical narratives, artworks and photo essays. The title Kacchi Mitti metaphorizes the stage's inherent flexibility when an individual's fundamental personality traits are moulded, and the phenomenology of childhood expresses unique lived understandings of the subject that vary from person to person. The magazine also includes writings of the department's faculty members. In addition, there is an interactive section that engages readers with fun, lighthearted activities.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Prof. Vajala Ravi (Principal, Sri Venkateswara College) for his unwavering support. Gratitude to Dr Padma Priyadarshini (Magazine, Convener) for her insightful feedback and guidance from time to time. Finally, we appreciate the contribution of all fellow contributors for sharing their ideas and personal lived experiences that have shaped this piece. "We Witness" is our legacy. Here is yet another endeavour to uphold it!

As you immerse yourself in this edition, we hope the time you spend here will reshape your own reflections on your childhood.

Happy Reading

CONVENER'S MESSAGE

It gives me immense joy to present the Department of Sociology's Annual Magazine "We Witness" 2025-26. As always, the magazine is a reflection on issues that we notice in and around us. As sociologists, we believe in multiple perspectives, meanings and empathetic understandings of situations without wearing one particular badge representing one single perspective. In keeping with the sociological tradition, "We Witness" since its inception, has tried to incorporate diverse discussions on various subjects with an inclusive approach. It understands that our students come from varied backgrounds and from different regions, representing unique socio-cultural standpoints. The objective of the magazine is to adopt a participatory, inclusive and emancipatory approach where students, irrespective of whichever background they come from, feel free to contribute. Like life and society, where there exists no finality, the "We Witness" is an 'unfinished dialogue' that our students and faculty engage in.

This edition is on the theme of childhood. Titled as "Kacchi Mitti"/ "The Phenomenology of Childhood", the entries offer a myriad of expressions, emotions and memories associated with one's formative years that go a long way in building one's personality. It has sub-themes like 'Childhood and Chaos', 'Letters to my Younger Self', 'Forgotten Games', and 'Whispers of Innocence'. Again, through the sub-themes, the idea is to encourage the students and readers to critically reflect upon the essence of lived experiences related to childhood and how we assign subjective meanings to those through a phenomenological lens. The magazine as a forum helps us to showcase the creativity and intellect of our students on the one hand and conveys the ethos of our department on the other. This issue of "We Witness" also has a section "Faculty Speak" where both our superannuated and current faculty members share their views on topics of interest. In addition, we also brought out two editions of our wall magazine (which happen to be a part of our departmental magazine) using the broader symbolic interactionist perspective, highlighting how meanings get conveyed in different mediums: "Colours in Cinema" and "Shamanism".

Finally, I congratulate our student editorial board and all contributors for their outstanding contributions. Our students are extremely talented and, in keeping with the departmental tradition, through this magazine capture our community's creative spirit. On a personal note, I remember the endless debates and discussions that they had before finalising any topic. Let's all join hands in making "We Witness" a success story that emphasises diversity, inclusivity and equity, simultaneously sparking meaningful conversations.

Dr Padma Priyadarshini
Magazine-in-Charge
Department of Sociology

THE YEAR IT WAS

Fresher's Event 2025

On 13th August 2025, Sri Venkateswara College organized a Fresher Event specifically for the newly admitted students of the Department of Sociology. The primary objective of the event was to warmly welcome the freshers and help them integrate seamlessly into the academic and social environment of the department. The proceedings began with a formal welcome address delivered by senior students and faculty members, setting supportive tone for the year ahead. To encourage participation and foster peer-to-peer interaction, the department organized various cultural and interactive segments, including dance performances, singing, and games.A major attraction of the day was the fashion show, which highlighted the confidence, creativity, and diverse talents of the incoming batch. The faculty members highly appreciated the participants, noting that such events are successful in building a sense of belonging and confidence among new students.

EVENT COORDINATOR: DR SATHEESH PERUMALLA

Career Counselling Seminar

In an effort to equip students for the professional world, the Department of Sociology conducted a Career Counselling Seminar on 20th September 2025 in the College Seminar Hall. The seminar was attended by a large cohort of students and faculty members who gathered to learn about the various career trajectories available in the current competitive landscape. The session benefited significantly from the presence of prestigious professors and Mr. Aditya Shrey, who shared valuable insights and personal experiences. The speakers emphasized a wide range of career options following a sociology degree, including higher studies, competitive examinations, research, teaching, social work, and opportunities within the corporate and government sectors. Beyond specific roles, the session focused on essential skill development, such as goal setting, improving communication skills, and the importance of lifelong learning. The interactive nature of the seminar allowed students to clarify doubts, helping them gain significant clarity regarding their future prospects.

EVENT COORDINATOR:
PROF. NABANIPA BHATTACHARJEE
DR. NIHARIKA JAISWAL

Alumni Seminar

On 23rd September 2025, the department organized an Alumni Seminar aimed at providing students with firsthand accounts of academic growth and real-world professional experiences. The program commenced with a welcome address by a faculty member who emphasized the vital role alumni engagement plays in the professional development of current students. The seminar featured esteemed alumni, including Dr. Megha Pushkarna, who shared her academic journey, the challenges she faced, and her eventual achievements. The alumni discussed diverse career pathways, including research careers and work in the social sector, encouraging students to maintain discipline and focus on continuous skill development. This interactive session proved to be both informative and inspiring, providing students with the motivation and knowledge needed to make informed choices about their own career paths.

EVENT COORDINATOR:
PROF. NABANIPA BHATTACHARJEE
DR. NIHARIKA JAISWAL

Newspaper Collection Drive for Sustainability

To promote environmental sustainability and social responsibility, the Department of Sociology, in collaboration with the Eco Club, organized a week-long Newspaper Collection Drive from October 2nd to October 9th, 2025. This initiative was conducted in association with "The Family of Disabled" (FOD), a Delhi-based NGO that empowers persons with disabilities through the production of eco-friendly products. The drive saw active participation fromstudents, faculty, and staff, resulting in the collection of approximately 95 kilograms of newspapers. These materials were donated to FOD, where they were upcycled into recycled paper pencils by the organization's artisans. These pencils were later distributed back to contributors as a token of appreciation, successfully combining environmental awareness with social empowerment and supporting inclusive livelihoods.

EVENT COORDINATOR:
PROF. NABANIPA BHATTACHARJEE
DR. NIHARIKA JAISWAL
DR. URMI BHATTACHARYAA
PROF. POOJA GOKHALE SINHA

Gender Sensitization Session for Non-Teaching Staff

On 9th October 2025, a Gender Sensitization Session was organized for the non-teaching staff, jointly conducted by the Department of Sociology. The Internal Complaints Committee (ICC), and the Women's Development Cell (WDC). The session aimed to promote gender equality, sensitivity, and a thorough understanding of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act. The resource person, Ms. Shveta Kalyanwala, a gender rights advocate, led the session through interactive discussions in both Hindi and English to ensure maximum accessibility. She traced the evolution of the POSH Act from the 1997 Vishakha Guidelines to its 2013 legal enactment, explaining the critical role of the ICC in the college hierarchy. The session encouraged the staff to reflect on everyday gender dynamics and emphasized the importance of continuous sensitization to maintain a safe and respectful workspace.

EVENT COORDINATOR:
PROF. NABANIPA BHATTACHARJEE
DR. NIHARIKA JAISWAL
PROF. RINA RAMDEV, WDC CONVENOR
DR. NAMITA PANDEY, ICC CONVENOR

Seminar on Parliament in Indian Polity

The department concluded its major seminar series for the semester on 4th November 2025 with a session titled "Parliament in Indian Polity." The invited speaker was Dr. Rup Narayan Das, a Consulting Editor and Consulting Secretariat in the Lok Sabha, who brought a wealth of practical political knowledge to the students. The seminar consisted of a detailed lecture and presentation followed by an interactive Q&A session. The main objectives were to analyze parliamentary proceedings and discuss the various developments and challenges facing the Indian Parliament today. The event provided students with enhanced awareness of policy reform and legislative insights.

EVENT COORDINATOR:
PROF. NABANIPA BHATTACHARJEE
DR. NIHARIKA JAISWAL

M.N Srinivas Declamation

Adding to the department's accolades this session, our students represented the college at the prestigious M.N. Srinivas Declamation held at Janki Devi Memorial College on 17thNovember 2025. This competitive event brought together Sociology departments from various colleges to engage in intellectual debate and discourse. Representing Sri Venkateswara College, Satwik Ranjan Nanda delivered a compelling argument on the theme "The Digital Mirror: Are we becoming the avatars we create?" His insightful sociological analysis of digital identity and the blurring lines between virtual and physical selves earned him the distinguished Best Speaker Award. This achievement underscores the department's commitment to fostering critical thinking and oratorical excellence among its students on a competitive, inter-collegiate platform.

Academic Examination Session with Vision IAS

To provide students with a practical understanding of the competitive examination landscape, the Department of Sociology organized a specialized academic examination session in collaboration with Vision IAS. The session was supervised by guest representatives Sarthak and Ashish, who provided critical insights into effective time management and strategic preparation. Commencing at 2:00 PM, the session saw active participation from 44 students who were challenged through a dual-paper format: a conceptual MCQ paper designed to test quick decision-making, and a sociological essay paper aimed at evaluating analytical thinking and theoretical application. This initiative proved highly beneficial, allowing students to gauge their preparation levels in a simulated competitive environment. The department extends its gratitude to the Vision IAS team for their guidance in fostering academic excellence and professional readiness among our scholars.

EVENT COORDINATOR:
DR. Satheesh Perumalla

Annual Departmental Fest

The Department of Sociology successfully hosted its Annual Departmental Fest "Conscience Collective," on February 24, 2026. This flagship event served as a vital intersection of academic inquiry and cultural expression, beginning with a formal lamp-lighting ceremony at 09:30 AM. Throughout the morning, the college was transformed into a vibrant intellectual hub as students participated in diverse competitive segments, including Poster Making in the Audi Lobby, the "Socio Speak" oratorical contest, and the "Film Fanatic Feud" analytical debate. The artistic spirit of the department was further highlighted during the Poetry Slam, which preceded a break for refreshments. The afternoon concluded with high-energy games and performances, followed by a formal lunch that facilitated networking and dialogue among students and faculty. This successful endeavor reaffirmed the department's commitment to nurturing a community of engaged, critical thinkers.

EVENT COORDINATOR:
DR SATHEESH PERUMALLA

Annual Lecture

On March 17, 2026, the Department hosted its annual seminar titled, ‘Understanding the Politics of the Early ‘Public’ in Schooling: Dalit Struggle for Equitable Education’. The invited speaker, Professor Geetha B. Nambissan, examined the historical and political dynamics of public schooling in India, focusing on Dalit communities and their navigation in this arena. She discussed the persistence of this inequality and importantly the role the British played with their colonization. The seminar began with an introductory note by the event convenor, Dr. Urmi Bhattacharyaa, and concluded with a Q&A session where the students participated actively.

EVENT COORDINATOR :
DR. URMI BHATTACHARYAA



GENERAL ENTRIES



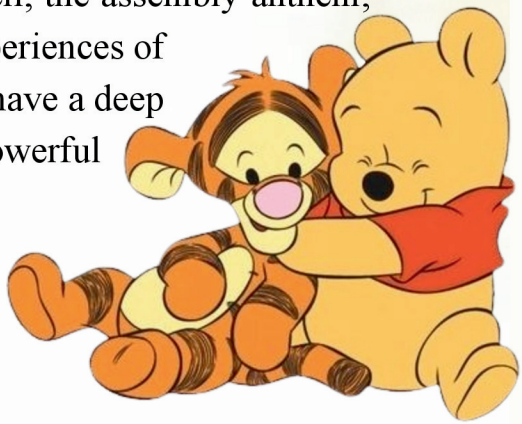
Childhood & Socialization

- Nishant Roy (3rd year)

Childhood is associated with innocence, enthusiasm, and the discovery of new things around us. Deeply embedded in it lies the quiet phenomenon of socialization, the process by which a child internalizes the prevalent norms, values, and beliefs of the society, which shapes much of our childhood and adulthood, obviously. Talking through phenomenology, the lived experiences, family, peers, and schooling are heavily responsible for socializing a child at the beginning, which results in making a child more social than individualistic and thus extremely woven into the societal expectations of the people around.

Childhood is not just about the biological stage of being a child but deeply a social stage infused with different values, norms, and expectations of the society. Agents of socialization include family, peers, schools, cultural traditions, and festivals, especially during one's childhood, and here are some instances that link the process of childhood to socialization. Starting with the family, parents and caregivers not only teach them to learn to dress, eat, and speak; they also emphasize how to do these in a specific way so that a child's behavior is aligned to the structured and accepted norms, behaviors, and expectations of the family. These everyday trivial practices have a long-lasting impact on the child through phenomenology, i.e., lived experiences. Secondly, peers and friends give a wider taste of the real world. For instance, a child playing in a game not only plays but also learns through its cooperation, conflict management, and patience, which ultimately adds to the shared experiences of living in a community through rules and regulations to maintain harmony and peace.

Thirdly, schools extend the scope of socialization beyond the intimate world of family and friends. They not only impart academic knowledge but also reinforce discipline, punctuality, and collective belonging. For instance, the ringing of the school bell, the assembly anthem, and the ritual of raising one's hand before speaking are all lived experiences of structured social order. Lastly, cultural traditions and festivals also have a deep impact on a child, as they are not only mere celebrations but also powerful








vehicles of socialization; they teach children about collective identity, rituals, and the meaning of community at the time of celebration, which gets transferred to generations and generations.



Through these lived experiences as a child, I have presented some of the instances of different agents influencing a child, which then makes a child a social human being following particular social structures, norms, values, and expectations throughout life. At present, technology is a more prominent factor influencing a child through smartphones, cartoons, and online games, as their way of understanding can differ from the older generations in some or the other way, but the primary norms and expectations will be socialized in the same manner.

In conclusion, childhood is not a universal experience, but it can differ through different histories and cultures, as every society imposes its norms, values, and expectations differently onto their child. For instance, a child living in rural areas in poverty can have a different meaning of childhood, whereas a child living in an affluent family in an urban area will conceive childhood differently.
At last, every experience of childhood carries a latent meaning behind
it, which must be observed carefully and must not be ignored as a mere activity.







CHILDHOOD

BY -VAANI (1ST YEAR)

Childhood basically refers to the period between infancy and adolescence where a child develops the very foundation of their personality as an adult. Childhood is a very crucial period of our identity as a person because it shapes us psychologically. As the most formative stage of life, childhood lays the foundation for an individual's future personality and choices. Our Childhood influences us mentally and emotionally. Mostly our childhood is shaped by the family and environment we are born in. For example, a child born in a supportive family with a healthy environment will live the rest of their life with confidence, self belief and self trust. Whereas, a child born in a controlling and unhealthy environment where an individual was compared and criticised it is most likely that the child will turn into an underconfident person with poor self worth. A positive childhood with love, care and support is necessary for a person to live their life in a happy and growing way. Childhood is also a period where a person is developed morally. It is during that period a person develops their moral values which later shapes their actions and choices in this world.

However, childhood has a very changing nature because it gets influenced by technology, academic pressure and social comparison. Technology also has an impact upon us as a child because the shows and content which we watch shapes the mindset of a child. The kind of content which a child watches has a certain amount of influence on him as good content can shape him positively while poor content can shape in a negative way. Academic pressure is also one of the aspects of childhood which determines our career. However, academic pressure has more to do with us mentally than with our career as academic pressure during childhood can lead to mental health problems like anxiety and stress. Social comparison like criticism based on achievements and results with other children by our parents during childhood can shape us mentally as if we are not good enough which is not true.

There are some childhood problems which some people may have faced like emotional neglect, lack of education and child labour which leaves a scar upon them as an adult. Therefore, it is very important to have a healthy childhood where there is growth and support.



The Rules We Never Wrote: A Phenomenology of Childhood





By -Satwik Ranjan Nanda (Ist year)

To look back into my childhood phenomenologically is to understand that it wasn't just a phase in my life that passed by, but a distinct way of being in the world. What I mean by this is we do not exist as simple detached observers of life, but as people within the world, in relation to others and more importantly to time (Heidegger, 1927). Childhood is not just a stage but, as I would say, a whole way of being. Childhood to us now is a time of nostalgia, the smell of wet soil, early school mornings, early school dispersals, the iconic Shinchan theme song and the perfect afternoon nap. This is not an individual experience, but a lived and an intersubjective experience.

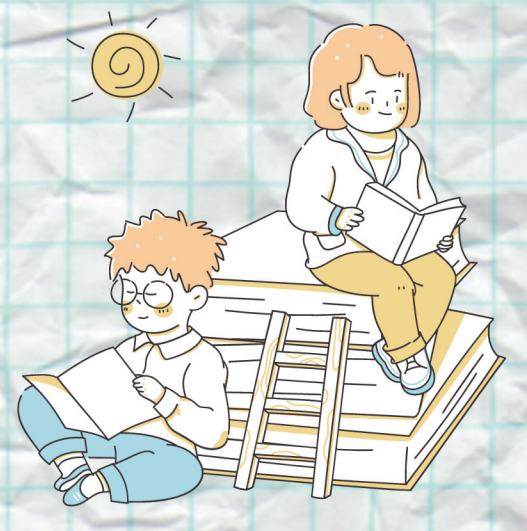
To be Sociological, "Phenomenology", is the study of the lifeworld - the realm of everyday, taken for granted experiences that are shared, interpreted, and made meaningful through interaction (Schutz, 1967). Oftentimes, the experiences of childhood are ignored, not discarded, but made irrelevant by those around us. We constantly try to create and confirm memories and their meanings through interaction with others who have experienced them. This is how even the smallest fragments of our childhood memories exist. They become meaningful only in the company of others who have shared them. Ask yourself, what relevance does Shinchan's comedic deviance hold if it was an individual experience? If you were the only one who knew about it? Nothing. Though this argument is arguable by gatekeepers of great experiences, I argue memories do not and cannot exist in isolation, they need to be confirmed and validated by others to even qualify as "memories".



Memories of the games we played and of the rules we made up share characteristics across the country. One such rule - one drop, one hand, catch out - one we all internalize and still follow to this day. Who taught us these rules? Was there a rule book on gully cricket you could buy from a Kirana store? Even the smartest and most-versed of us cannot recall why this rule came into existence, but it

holds immense significance. Primary socialisation is defined as the first level of interaction, to be more precise we can use the definition by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann - it is the first socialization an individual undergoes in childhood, through which he becomes a member of society. We did not just internalize the rules of gully cricket, we made them our own. A specific wall signifies 4 runs, the car parked by the end of the street is a sixer. These are not experiences any member of society has undergone individually. Members across communities have lived these experiences collectively.

If all childhood experiences are lived collectively, why are we all so different? While many childhood experiences are shared and validated collectively, some are uniquely personal. These are the memories that you don't share with others, a personal hiding spot, a favourite part of the house or the quiet hour of the day. These memories are not universally experienced but they are no less impactful or significant. Phenomenologically, these subjective experiences contribute significantly to our emotions and our actions. They remind us that childhood is not just about shared cultural or social phenomena, but also a deeply personal journey. This interplay between personal experiences and shared values of childhood is what validates our actions. While some memories are given meaning due to its universal nature, others exist within the consciousness of the individual. This gives a unique sort of texture to each life. Hence, to look back into my childhood phenomenologically is to understand that it wasn't just a phase in my life that passed by, but a distinct way of being in the world.



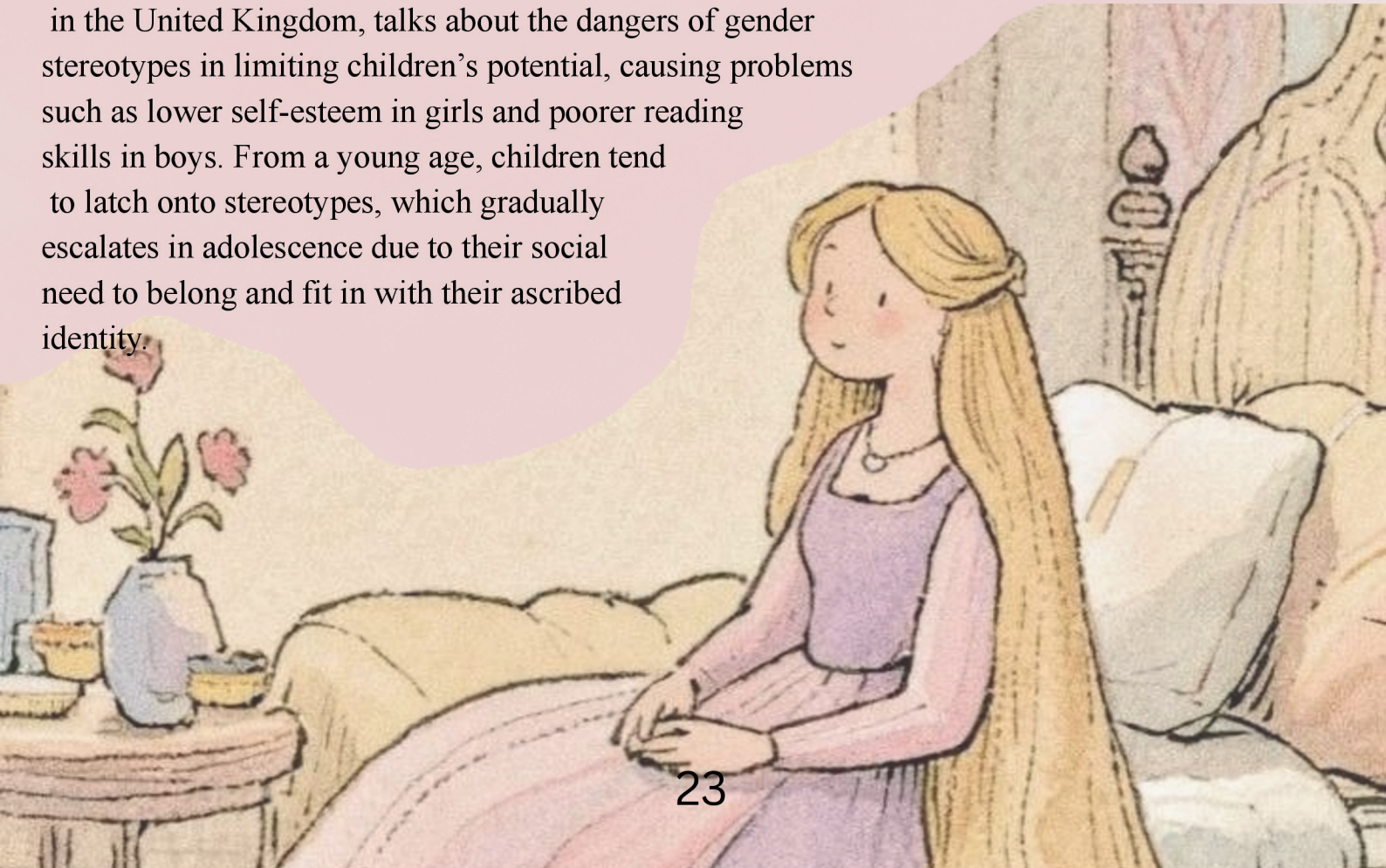
Pink and Blue Beginnings: How Gender Shapes Childhood

By - Rudrani [2nd year]

An individual's childhood is one of the most sensitive and influential stages of their life, which acts as an important determinant of their identity, ideas and values as an adult. For many of us, our childhood may just appear to be filled with nostalgic memories of playing with toys, making friends and a time without the worries of adulting. However, all these aspects of childhood such as the clothes we wear, the toys we play with and how we are socialised, have been predetermined for us. This very systematic and subtle categorisation into the pink and blue boxes, lurks over every step of our childhood and to a huge extent influences our adult lives. On the surface, gender stereotypes may seem like a trivial issue, but it's not just a case of too much pink and blue. If we impose rigid ideas of masculinity and femininity on children, we limit their potential and actually cause real harm in later life. This very vaguely visible segregation ends up contributing to the larger structure of sex role divisions and notions of masculinity and femininity. Anything outside of these boxes may be seen as abnormal or deviant. Thus, understanding these very minute forms of gender segregation and stereotypes operate is of utmost importance.

Gender stereotypes refer to socially constructed beliefs and assumptions about how a particular gender is expected to act, dress and express themselves.

A research conducted in December, 2020, by the Fawcett Society in the United Kingdom, talks about the dangers of gender stereotypes in limiting children's potential, causing problems such as lower self-esteem in girls and poorer reading skills in boys. From a young age, children tend to latch onto stereotypes, which gradually escalates in adolescence due to their social need to belong and fit in with their ascribed identity.



An article by Dr Meghna Singhal on ParentCircle.com talks of the direct and indirect gender messages which are installed into children's minds. When daughters are constantly familiarised with toys such as dolls and tea sets while sons are made to play with dinosaurs and trains, we implicitly link children's sex to gender roles. This form of direct gender message is also seen in responses to disruptive behaviour in boys and girls. While girls are expected to control their disruptive behaviour, mothers' response to their son's disruptive behaviour is relatively less negative. Dr. Singhal also points out how division of household work based on gender, also leads to children associating certain tasks with one gender and thus may be motivated to identify and imitate the parent of their own sex. This also affects children's academic performance and their choice of subjects in school or colleges.

Similar observations were also made by Stuti Jain in her article titled "Gender socialization and gender stereotypes" in blog.ipleaders.in . Jain talks about fairytales such as 'Cinderella' or 'Sleeping Beauty' read to children, which unknowingly establish ideas of the female as helpless and vulnerable and the male as the saviour and protector. The way a child is dressed and what colours they are made to like, also plays an important role in adding to these gender stereotypes and how it shapes a child into an adult. While girls are made to wear skirts, dresses and frills, boys are put in trousers and shorts. A boy showing liking towards the colour pink or choosing to wear dresses, may be seen as unusual or even unnatural and vice versa. All these ideas and stereotypes of gender add to how a child acts, where they may choose to conform to gender stereotypes, despite having different personal preferences, in order to fit in and not draw unwanted attention to themselves. Jain also talks of gender socialisation in adolescence, where girls are restricted and monitored while the boys are encouraged to go outside and socialise with their peers. While girls are expected to dress modestly, be obedient and polite, and preserve their purity, boys are encouraged to be loud and active as a sign of their "masculinity". All of these patterns of expectations and socialisation add to the vicious cycle of gender stereotypes.



This may cause implications in individuals' mental health, career potential and overall development as well. The growth of 'toxic masculinity' is a very good example of the mental implications of gender stereotyping. Boys are forced to not cry and suppress emotions, which may lead to anger issues, high aggression and mental health struggles. They also may be burdened by the expectation of becoming the breadwinner for their family and perform accordingly. For girls, stricter restrictions on movement and being associated with domestic roles, may leave them with unfulfilled ambitions and education. The societal pressures to always be tolerant, polite and modest, also suppresses their confidence and may lead to additional mental health problems.

Thus, childhood practices act as the root for the growth of the larger structure of gender stereotypes and practices attached to it. Busting these gender stereotypes becomes essential in ensuring a childhood without unwanted constraints and expectations, which allows a child to fulfill their desires and interests to the maximum. Encouraging a child to play with whatever toy they wish to rather than toys based on gender stereotypes, modeling emotionally healthier behaviour for all children, exposing children to non-stereotypical media and checking gender roles and behaviors at home, are some ways to avoid the growth of strong gender-based upbringing. This allows for the scope of building a more gender neutral and healthier attitude towards work, behaviour, mental health, etc. for every individual in society.



"Eigi ema-epa na takpirakpa - What my mom & dad taught me!"

(Childhood: The stage of sowing cultural roots)

By- Harsh [1st year]

Supportive environments help a child to evolve into a well-balanced and versatile person. Values, beliefs and traditions learnt during early socialisation at home and in the community provide the cultural context that builds a child's personality. It gives him a sense of his identity and worldview throughout his life. Home is the primary group where a child's first lessons in socialisation begin. Simple manners and gestures, like greeting elders, sharing food, and celebrating life's moments both big and small, are taught here. When my feet accidentally touched another, my mother would shout back "Laibak Katlo" meaning that I need to apologize by touchinestivals also play a significant role in conveying a set of ideas intrinsic to one's culture. This is turn helps in providing a cultural context to one's purpose and existence in life.



For instance, when children dance during 'Lai Haraoba', or participate in 'Yaoshang', or 'Nakatheng Niba', they learn a lot about community living, ethics and cultural traditions. This is the medium through which they connect with the past, enjoy the present and preserve the future. The child's personality is not just biology or psychology but a nice combination of all these factors that constitutes his/her historical legacy.

Apart from festivals, lullabies, folktales and stories also contribute towards character building. My grandparents used to gather us around the 'phunga' (fireplace) to narrate the tales of 'Eta Thaomei', 'Keibui Keioiba', 'Khamba Thoibi' and others. These stories and poems indirectly instilled in us values and ethics that were part of our shared culture. The lullaby 'Naoshum esei' sung by my mother during my childhood painted vivid images of the moon and instilled warmth and comfort. These narratives, stories and poems handed down to us over generations go a long way in shaping our thought processes.

Culture is a total way of life. It includes values, beliefs, mores, and folkways. Values like gratitude, kindness, honesty, and respect are all learnt through the above mentioned processes. These serve as anchors when one goes through turbulent phases of one's own life. Thus, a child's code of conduct as an adult is a reflection of what he/she has observed and learnt from their elders.

Socialisation through family, community and culture indeed starts during the formative years and lasts a lifetime. The teachings of love, tradition and respect help develop a strong adult who is open to the world but rooted in their heritage if these roots are warmly and carefully fostered. Like a tree, culture flourishes when its roots are strong and well-maintained, and childhood is the period when those roots take root.

The Price Of An Unequal Beginning : Childhood In Poverty

- Vanisha Singh Gautam (2nd year)

Growing up is often talked about as this golden carefree time of life but the reality is that childhood looks very different depending on where you start For kids stuck in poverty life is a struggle from day one It is not only about having a small bank account, it is about how that lack of money messes with your education, your health your safety and even what you think you are capable of becoming. Basically social inequality is not something that happens to adults it starts right in the cradle.

Poverty does not just happen for one reason, it is a mix of things like parents not being able to find steady work, low pay the insane cost of living and a lack of good schools or healthcare When families are drowning in these issues the kids are the first to feel it. They often miss out on decent meals a good education or just a basic support system which puts them way behind everyone else before they even get a fair shot.

The stats from places like UNICEF and the World Bank are pretty depressing, showing that millions of kids are living with almost nothing, especially in places like Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. These are not just numbers on a page they represent real lives being lived without the basics most of us take for granted.

If you want to see what this actually looks like there is a book called There Are No Children Here by Alex Kotlowitz, which follows two brothers in a rough part of Chicago, where life is all about dodging danger and dealing with failing schools. They are worrying about survival while other kids are worrying about video games showing how for some childhood is not about playing but just trying to make it to the next day.

We see the same thing closer to home like in Ludhiana Punjab where you will find kids working in hosiery workshops, because their families are desperate for cash, when local education centers closed down in 2022 a lot of these kids lost their only path back to school and their attendance just tanked meaningthe exit signs for a better life start to disappear.

Luckily there are people fighting back like the Mamidipudi Venkatarangaiya Foundation, which tries to pull kids out of work and get them into classrooms, in Jharkhand they have linked Anganwadi centers with schools so kids can get a meal and a checkup while groups like CRY and the Kailash Satyarthi Childrens Foundation also push for child rights.

At the end of the day poverty rewrites what childhood feels like because if you start the race ten miles behind everyone else, you are going to spend your whole life just trying to catch up, it hits your confidence and your future and often the cycle just repeats with the next generation meaning we can not really claim that society is moving toward equality.



Begging for a Childhood: Lives on the Streets

Sheetoshna Pattnaik(2nd Year)

When you step out of the college gate, heading towards the metro station, it's almost a routine to spot young children begging. Not just there, but at traffic lights, outside tourist spots, and near temples, they are everywhere. Many were painfully thin, some babies cradled in their mothers' arms. Yet, having seen them so often, we almost stop seeing them at all. Have we become numb to their presence? This piece tries to look at these very childhoods that we pass by every day.

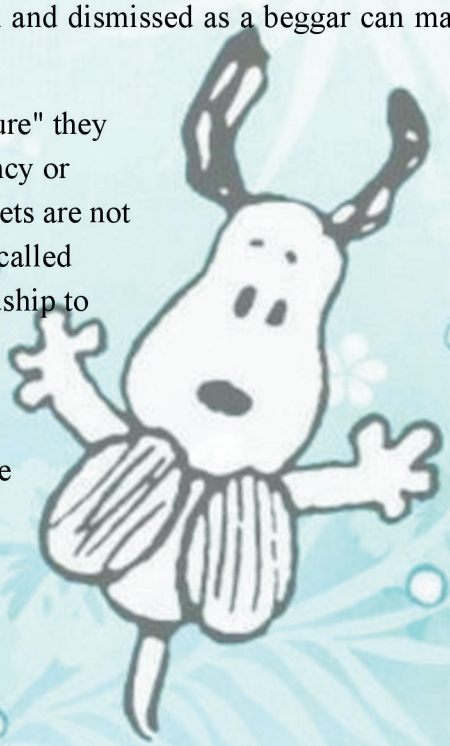
Why are children begging in the streets? Is it the shackles of poverty and starvation, or is there a larger racket behind it? Whatever the cause, it's clear that children are forced into begging by poverty or coercion. The moral economy of begging plays a role here (Moral Economy, Thompson, 1971). Women and children often occupy the most visible spots because they evoke greater sympathy, which translates into more alms. Begging, then, is not only an act of survival but also a social exchange built on emotions like pity and compassion. Empathy becomes currency, fueled by social, moral, and ethical codes.

Usually young children are taken care of, protected, and looked after. What about those left to their fate on busy roads, with no concern from society? They could be orphaned, trafficked, or simply lost children whose lives have slipped through the cracks of social protection. These children face structural violence every day, not necessarily physical, but built into the systems that fail to protect them (Structural Violence, Galtung, 1969). The lack of education, healthcare, sanitation, or security is the result of how society distributes care and neglect. Living on the streets entails exposure to every danger, from speeding vehicles and harsh weather to hunger, abuse, and harassment. Their childhoods unfold in public spaces where the idea of privacy, safety, or play is almost unimaginable. Their vulnerability is produced by design, not by accident. For sociologists, the concept of social exclusion applies here; it is a process through which entire groups are pushed to the margins and denied participation in social, economic, and institutional life (Social Exclusion, Rene `Lenoir, 1994). These children are excluded from the sanitized and safe idea of childhood we imagine.

How we perceive them also shapes their future. When we look at these children, do we see them as children first or as beggars? The answer to this simple question reveals much about how society categorizes people. It can be explained by the idea of labeling (Labeling Theory, Becker, 1963). Once a person or group gets tagged with a label, society starts treating them the same, and over time, that label shapes how they see themselves. A child labeled as a beggar is not treated like other children. Continuing to experience being seen and dismissed as a beggar can make that negative label stick, turning an act of survival into a permanent identity.

I see those children running in the lane near college, smiling over some "treasure" they find in the piles of garbage. And I wonder if I see them as victims without agency or whether they are just living the only life they know. For many of them, the streets are not just spaces of deprivation but of adaptation. Psychologists speak about a thing called learned helplessness, the tendency of individuals who have faced repeated hardship to eventually stop trying to change their situation, believing they have no control over their lives. (Learned Helplessness, Seligman, 1975)

Crowded by our apathy, indifference, and brief discomfort, we fail to recognize this different childhood than what we expect and the cry that continues to go unheard.



“Good and Bad Touch”from the body to the mind

- Nitin Kumar (2nd year)

- “Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate”.This statement by “Carl Jung” depicts the nature of people that how they have this tendency to label certain indefinable outcomes of their life as fate, which they are not able to understand, and take the overall blame on themselves by taking into account the actions only done by them as a whole. We tend to blame ourselves at first when we are dealing with uneasiness and personal troubles in terms of any undesired outcomes in our lives,mostly in our teenage and young years.

This article tries to explain the tendency of self-blaming in humans, mostly in teens, when they are young and in a learning phase, which could lead to several major problems like depression, anxiety, stress and sometimes suicidal thoughts. This whole article revolves around what is referred to as “Good and Bad Touch” as a metaphor to give more clarity of the thought regarding the concerned topic. Some of you or most of you might be thinking about this title and aligning it with the normal preconceived notion of an idea related to personal awareness, which was being taught to us when we were young. Then, I would say your idea is somewhat right.When we were young, our parents and elders used to warn us about strangers, like try to stay away from them and avoid any kind of interaction with them. Because you never know the intentions of other people, as they may harm you. As a kid, you don't know much about this world, and it's easy for someone older to manipulate you and misuse your innocence. You could get kidnapped or harmed, and one other aspect of it is physical abuse, touching inappropriately, that's why we are taught from a very young age about "Good and Bad Touch". Which refers to an idea or information related to awareness regarding our own bodies, where physical touch to certain parts of our body by a stranger or someone in our own family has to be considered as a bad touch. Now, in this scenario or in this field of matter, the involvement of two persons in a physical contact is necessary because one is the victim who gets touched, and the other one who performs this act is the culprit. Because a person or a kid can't do bad touch to himself/herself on their own, it would be referred to as some sort of experiment or exploration of their own body. Now, the thing is that it all happens physically because touch is a physical sense.



And when you don't know certain things about yourself and society, when you don't have awareness of right and wrong, you may feel guilty or blame yourself. But there are many laws and rules to protect us from all these kinds of things. Like in physical form, there is a concept of Good and Bad Touch. The same thing happens in terms of thinking, ideas, actions and their results, which sometimes go in our favour and sometimes it doesn't, and we credit or blame ourselves in both of these situations. Because hypothetically, we have a virtual or invisible concept of "Good and Bad Touch" which can't be seen but can only be felt by our own mind and body.

When we perform any kind of action, there are ideas involved in it, that somehow lead us towards a desired or undesired outcome, which turns out to be a good or bad touch for us virtually or invisibly. Ideas lead towards actions, actions make results, and results lead towards their after effects, which further lead to the analysis of the overall situation, and eventually, overthinking, stress and depression, which create problems for other ideas and actions that one tends to perform in future. Now, how do we deal with this situation? We only consider results that go in our favour, or those which we conceive as a good touch for our mind, and only a good touch has to be accepted because it gives us a kind of push and allows us to focus further. And those that don't go in our favour, we categorise them as strange and problematic.Before coming to any decision or any action, we have a single idea in our mind that fosters multiple other ideas. Before arriving at the final one, according to which we could perform our actions, we select the final idea from all those ideas present in our mind. The thing is that we don't know what could happen after the actions are being done. So what we mostly do is that, the one idea that senses to our brain as a good touch, we tend to go with it, we only choose those ideas that give us a sense of good feeling in our mind, and then we tend to perform actions upon those ideas and if it goes in our favour, we see those actions and ideas as good touch, and if not, we see them as bad touch [as mentioned earlier]. When we say it's a bad touch and that the result was solely based on our own actions and ideas, and blame ourselves on and on, then we contradict ourselves. Because at first, when we decide which one idea could lead towards a good outcome, it was certainly based upon the best and a sense of good touch among all other ideas, which we chose to act upon accordingly. Now, the problem is that in terms of choosing an idea and performing any action based upon it could be termed as an independent act. But sociologically, the result or reaction of one's own action also depends on others. Till there is no counteraction to our own actions, it won't lead towards any favourable or unfavourable results,and we are solely not responsible for whether a result goes in our favour or against our desired outcomes, because there are other people who are also involved in the essence of these outcomes. In simple words, the whole idea of right or wrong, invisible good or bad touch depends equally on the collision of our own and other people's actions also.





Upbringing Amidst Chaos

By- Ayush Rawat [3rd year]

“Kids who have never seen peace and kids who have never seen war have different values. ”.
Comic artist Eiichiro Oda wrote this famous dialogue for the manga series ONE PIECE, where he was referring to the different meanings inferred for the idea of justice, a term whose understanding has changed over the course of history. In contemporary times, as many regions around the globe have turned into arenas of violent combat, Oda’s words gravitate our attention to the kind of social fields that are getting constructed in these war-torn places and what repercussions they might create on the personality traits of those children who firsthand experienced an environment of pervasive death and destruction.

Childhood is the phase of primary learning for an individual when he embodies the norms, values, culture, language, and behaviors through immediate everyday social interactions. This foundational process occurs within the unit of family and neighborhood, where kids internalize the pattern of conduct through the medium of sensory stimuli. Simultaneously, the process of early-age socialization occurs at the secondary level when children get exposed to the outside world of formal schooling, peer groups, mass media, and many other agents. However, violent conflicts have profoundly dismantled the roots of both primary and secondary arenas. Family structures are getting distorted as many parents die, and those surviving are meagerly able to sustain themselves as basic necessities like food and shelter are out of their reach. Often school buildings are the targets of missile attacks and violent infiltrations. In such conditions, feelings of persistent threat and vengeance got deeply imprinted on young minds. Children began to perceive violence as a normal behavior pattern, and it gets reflected in their future actions.

In a UNICEF review, the international body called the year 2024 one of the worst for children living in conflict-prone zones. Over 450 million children are reported living in the world's most lethal war zones, and we don't know how many of them remain unreported. In these situations, they experience existential risks of death, injury, sexual violence, and mental assault and often find themselves susceptible to forced recruitment in armed groups and trafficking rackets. War trauma often persists over generations. The scenario becomes even more lethal for those belonging to marginalized racial, religious, ethnic, class, and caste identities, as for them the security nets are comparatively thinner. For women from marginalized groupings, the brunt is even heavier, which is not viable to weigh in statistical figures.

Bilateral negotiations will continue to take place among nations in international forums. Cease-fire agreements might get agreed upon as the result of interventions made by some self-proclaimed peacemakers. But the wounds inflicted on the minds and consciences of young souls will continue to horrify the generations to come. In the end, it becomes essential to add the second part of Oda’s statement to get a glimpse of the future that awaits and which has repeated over the epochs of human history.

“Justice will prevail, you say? But of course, it will. Whoever wins becomes justice.”

Fear - A Childhood Experience

By - Suhana Samal (3rd year)

Childhood is often thought of as a time filled with happy memories. Being nostalgic about one's childhood days and reliving those "good old memories" seems natural, since this age is seen as a time full of wonders, where children are curious to know the world around them. What people tend to ignore is the negative side of childhood. Childhood is also a time of various traumas, fears, and negative emotions. This essay will mainly focus on fears in childhood and how society shapes those fears, highlighting how childhood can be looked at through a different lens. Natural sciences say that fear is triggered by the perception of a threat, causing a physiological reaction in the body called the "fight or flight" response. The release of stress hormones, cortisol, and adrenaline, prepares the body for action in situations of fear. However, social sciences, especially sociology, would go beyond this "natural" definition of fear and reflect on the societal structures, cultural norms, and power dynamics present to understand fear in individuals.

As a child, who did not have fear? Be it the fear of darkness, or insects, or even heights- everyone had some sort of fear. An infant in their developmental stage goes through the fear of separation, which is only viewed psychologically and can even progress into "Separation Anxiety Disorder" in almost every child. However, when we talk about the role of caretakers, nannies, and even kinfolk in limiting or alleviating this fear, it may be ignored in these psychological studies. The Indian concept of "Aaya", who acts as a caregiver not just for the child but also the mother after delivery, has always been ignored in the natural sciences. These people have always helped the primary caregivers to alleviate this fear in the child, so that they can go through their developmental stages easily. Kinsfolk, especially the grandmothers or aunts, also play a vital role not just in taking care of the child, but in instilling values and making them understand how society works.

As a child grows, from the infancy stage to the early childhood stage, they then become more active and their social world expands from the family to those beyond it. Their range of fears may also expand as they start becoming more aware of their surroundings. From my own personal experience, as a child, I was very scared of the dark. I don't know why I was scared of it, for I had never had a traumatic experience with it before. But as I grew up, that fear of darkness slowly faded. My mother always used to say that this fear in me was only because I watched a lot of horror movies. But I still watch many horror movies. So, how then did this fear



of darkness start disappearing as I grew up? As Interpretative Sociology understands, there are always certain meanings that we as individuals, as well as society, place upon certain things. Even a small act of hugging can have different meanings. So, I feel that my fear of darkness is also because I associated certain meanings with the word “darkness”, which can only be done if certain values are at play. These values are, of course, taught to us by our family and the society we belong to. Darkness has various connotations attached to it. As a child, I considered darkness as a place away from my loved ones, symbolising loneliness.

So, can we really say that fear is just a mind game? Or does society play a role in instilling fear in individuals? While fear is a deeply personal experience, society most definitely helps in shaping that fear and amplifying it. Many of us have experienced this question as children- “Who is stricter in your family- your mother or your father?” A child also answers this question on the basis of their relationship with their parents. Parents are the primary socialising agents in our lives, and whatever values they have taught us often shape how we make our life choices. When a parent is stricter, it is only to generate a fear in the child that they won’t choose the wrong path. One incident that took place with me as a child was when, as a 7-year-old, I would just take up Rs. 10 or Rs. 20 notes from my mother’s purse without even asking. At that time, I never felt that it would lead me to great trouble. But one day, my father got to know about it, and he scolded me a lot, and I even started fearing my father. This did not just instil a fear in me, but also instilled a value in me that it is not ethical to do things without your parents’ permission when we are still dependent on them. This fear of making a mistake, which is in almost every child, is only because society has made certain unstated norms, and we are bound to follow them in order to be considered “normal”.

We will always have fears in us at every stage of life; it is only a matter of perception that plays a great role in understanding them. For me, fear is intensified by societal norms and restrictions, and a child needs to have certain fears in order to shape their life decisions. However, I want to clarify that I am not encouraging children or people to live in constant fear or suppress their individual opinions. Rather, I believe that fear can be used as a powerful tool in guiding one’s life choices. Looking at this phase of nostalgia, i.e. “Childhood”, with a different lens reveals that nostalgia as a concept is not just a collection of happy memories, but also a tool for understanding how early fears shape us, offering insights into how fears can be embraced and used in making one’s life choices. Childhood, thus, reveals both wonders and veiled doubts.

Experiences of childhood

By-Tiyasha [2nd year]

Any place where one finds peace, solace and familiarity could be called “home”. The feeling of “being at home” radiates from the warmth and familiarity that surrounds a person. Home is also an essential factor that affects an individual’s personality. A good home cultivates, in a person, good values. Such an environment is not only important for a child’s physical well-being, but also essential for their mental growth. A stable and secured environment creates a sense of belonging, assurance, as well as confidence within the child.

Unfortunately, not everybody is privileged enough to have a good, stable and secured “home”. A large number of children across the world lack a good “home”, and experience multidimensional poverty. In India there is a similar situation. Many children live in deep poverty, lacking basic resources and living standards. This affects the children adversely. They lack proper nutrition due to unpleasant living conditions, which leads to various health issues. Lack of access and awareness about the medical system, often results in worsening conditions, or even deaths. Apart from this, children of such backgrounds are mostly made to engage with activities of begging or illegal undertakings. The familial conditions that many a times a child has to go through, in such contexts, creates a lasting traumatic psychological effect on the child. This establishes a sense of panic and anxiety within the child, and lowers their confidence level.

Although these issues have often been discussed, but my first hand experience at ‘Pathshala’ through interaction with children of such backgrounds, established a clearer picture of the prevalent atrocities within some poverty-stricken families.

Pathshala is an initiative by Srotoswini Trust, who aim at helping children of the impoverished and unprivileged sections of the society. The Trust began its journey back in early 2010s, imparting education on the footpaths of Vadodara city (in Gujarat), naming it “Footpath Pathshala”. Presently, it accommodates around 104 kids in a hostel, called Pathshala, located on the outskirts of the city, in a place called Lasundhara. Apart from this, the trust has established other different initiatives like “Pathbhavan”, which is a study center for children of deprived families living in the slums of Vadodara; and Churni-a clothing brand-that employs the mothers of the deprived families in the production process.

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To attend Pathshala's grand annual event, 'Udham', I got a chance to stay in the hostel premises and be a part of the process. During my stay, I was able to interact with the kids there. Children at Pathshala hostel have had traumatic childhood. Most of them come from impoverished and under privileged backgrounds. Some have been abandoned by their families, or have an abusive father, or a mother who no longer lives with the family. To most, home is not a permanent space for the reason that the area of residence keeps on changing, from different footpaths to completely different cities.

With time, Pathshala Hostel has become home to many children. The teachers and staff there have become family. The four corners hold warmth, comfort and familiarity, establishing the home-like quality. Moreover, the disciplined routine has definitely brought a change in the children. Not only have they improved academically, but also have had holistic developments. Their daily routines have been organized in an effective manner. While their physical growth is being ensured through balanced and nutritious diets, their mental and emotional well-being is being monitored and nurtured through meditation and team-based activities that focus on various topics.

A good home creates a loving and a safe childhood, which ultimately, is beneficial to one's personality. Pathshala kids have found a good home, as well as a great place for learning, which definitely will shape their future in a positive manner.

Childhood Memories

By- Rishab Rajput [3rd year]

"If life is a book, childhood is its preface—innocent, colorful, and filled with endless possibilities."

I was born in Aligarh, where I lived with my paternal uncle. I was the only child in my family who was born outside our motherland, which always made me feel a little special. My early years were full of joy, curiosity, and adventure. Being the younger son, I often received more privileges than the others. There were six members in my family—my two elder sisters, one elder brother, my parents, and me.
We were closely connected to our village because my father wanted us to experience the same simple life that he had lived during his childhood. He had studied there before becoming a Police Inspector. My mother is a housewife and a wonderful cook. Her food always felt magical to us.

As a child, I mostly played cricket with my friends. My elder brother and I often promised our mother that we would return in two hours, but usually, we came back only in the evening. Sometimes we were scolded or beaten for this—especially my brother. During that time, I found my two best friends, Ashish and Anshul. I loved spending holidays in the village with them. We had a mango farm where I enjoyed climbing trees and eating fresh mangoes. During the harvest season, we would also fry potatoes together in the fields.

One funny memory from those days was when I attended the government school in my village during the holidays. Everything went fine until the maths teacher asked us to recite tables. Since I didn't even know the tables up to 10, my friends and I climbed over the wall and ran back home. A similar thing happened in Badaun when I joined school there. On my very first day, I entered the class with my mother, but within minutes I ran out towards the school gate. Unfortunately, the gatekeeper caught me.
Later, we moved to Bareilly for higher education, where I completed my 12th. In Class 12, I made another close friend—Ayush. We spent so much time in the canteen that people started calling us the "Canteen Boys." That was also when I met my first female best friend, nicknamed "Dorami." Today, Ayush is still my closest emotional partner, but sadly, I lost touch with Dorami. She will always remain in my heart.
With hard work, I secured admission to Delhi University (DU). There, I made many new friends, especially Rampal, with whom I often went on trips.

Looking back, I feel my childhood was filled with simplicity and happiness—an age free from the worries of adulthood. Even the smallest things gave me the greatest joy. Those sweet memories may belong to the past, but they continue to guide me in life today.

Childhood Memories from Pashkum: A Village, A Library, A Life

By Hamid Ali Qarrari, 3rd Year, BA Hons Sociology



Memory acts as a window. Childhood isn't just about games and laughter; it reflects the society we grow up in. Our early years are shaped by our surroundings, like the land, the river, the community, and the history. My childhood in Pashkum, a village 15 kilometres from Kargil town near the Line of Control, was shaped by this reality. Pashkum lies between mountains, split by the Wakha River. To outsiders, it might look remote and ordinary. To me, childhood is more than personal; it's social, cultural, and historical too.

The Village and Its People tell the story of a small community and the lives of those who live there. It shows their daily routines, traditions, and how they support each other through challenges. The people in the village share close bonds and work together to keep their culture alive and their homes safe. Pashkum is a village known for its strong cooperation. As a child, I never saw work as just something for one family. When it was time to Plow fields, relatives and neighbours joined in, laughing and sweating together. When a new house is built, many hands contribute, not just one. Festivals were shared, weddings included the whole community, and grief was collective. My childhood friendships grew in this spirit of togetherness. We raced along narrow mud lanes, played by the riverbanks, and made small worlds in our courtyards. Even play came with responsibility, like carrying water for elders, watching younger siblings, or helping in the fields. Life here followed the rhythm of village living closely. From a sociological perspective, this was the best kind of community living. Survival and joy came only through mutual support. When one hand works, a hundred hands follow in harmony.





The Natural Library is my mountain classroom. Here, nature teaches me lessons no book can offer. Every tree, rock, and stream is a page filled with stories and knowledge. This place is where I learn about life, growth, and the world around me directly from the earth. Books opened before me, but nature became the teacher. One memory that captures my childhood is the natural library I created for myself. During exam days, I had a routine. I would wake early, do small chores, and pack my bag with books. I brought books along with tea leaves, sugar, milk from our cow, and chapattis my mother made. Then I climbed the mountains behind my house. Those mountains were steep but familiar, having watched me grow, play, and wander. At a chosen spot, I set up a chulha with three stones, gathered dry wood, and lit a fire. While the kettle boiled, I opened my books. The wind gently turned the pages as birds sang, and the wide valley below held a silence deeper than any library.

From that high point, I could see much of Kargil town. It reminded me that living in a remote village didn't mean I was cut off from the larger world. The taste of hot tea, smoke from burning wood, and fresh mountain air became part of my lessons.



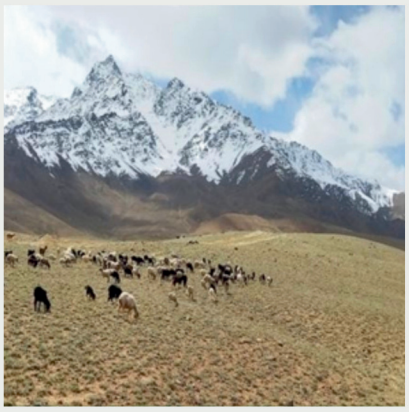


This was more than a library; it was my companion, my temple, my haven. The mountains taught me patience, the river taught me continuity, and the silence invited reflection. Memory and learning became one for me. Sociologically, this Natural Library represents the creativity of rural education. It shows how children cope with missing infrastructure by using nature as a classroom.
In my words: main Yahi kaha krta tha ki,

"Mujha yun toh fakhr hai ki twallud hee ladakhi hai, Krun kese fakhr isksa, mujha krna nahi aata."

"Tijarat ka rah-a mai, Leh-Kashmir ka darmiyan e mai, Chamakta hua shahr e Kargil hai, mujha chamakna nahi aata."





From mountains to walls, from open sky to four walls, the change felt strange. Years later, when I went to Jammu for higher studies, I entered a proper library for the first time. It had tall shelves, neat desks, and total silence. Yet, I felt something was missing. I missed the sound of magpies, the smoky tea taste, and the cool breeze on my face. That longing made me see education is about more than just books. It includes the environment where we learn, the memories tied to those lessons, and the emotions around knowledge. For me, walls and shelves could never replace horizons and skies. This change reflects a larger social shift from open, place-based learning to formal, standardized education. My heart held both worlds, but the mountains shaped my soul.

Childhood work often shapes family bonds, influencing how members connect and support each other over time. Life in Pashkum was never idle. Along with school, I often went with my father and brother to herd cattle in the mountains. The sound of their bells echoed across the valley as we led them to pastures. My father shared stories on these trips about our ancestors, survival, and the wars that affected our land. Those stories were more than just tales; they taught values like patience, courage, and respect. Childhood here came with responsibilities. When we shared work, we also shared wisdom and love. Learning meant listening to cattle bells, Father's stories, and the land itself.

Winters of Togetherness. Winter locks the valley but opens every heart. Winter in Pashkum was the toughest and most beautiful season. Heavy snow closed the roads, cutting us off from the outside world. But that isolation brought us closer. We played non-stop in the snow, throwing ice balls, building small forts, and laughing until our cheeks froze. Festivals during winter felt warm because only locals stayed in Kargil. Community activities brought people together, stories were shared around fires, and the valley's silence was filled with voices of togetherness. From a sociological perspective, winter was not just a hard time; it was a time for solidarity. When nature closed doors, people opened their hearts wider.







History Written on the Land shows how the earth holds stories from the past. Places carry marks of old events and people, making the land more than just soil and rocks. Each site tells a part of our shared story through what remains there, connecting us to those who came before. Growing up near the Line of Control, war was always part of our lives. Pashkum was a key spot during the Kargil War in 1999. Even as kids, we knew the land had scars—bunkers in the hills and stories of shelling told by our elders. Our childhood games took place in valleys that had once served as battlefields. Joy and danger, beauty and history, existed side by side. We realized our home was fragile during conflict but strong in how it endured.

Conclusion: Childhood as Sociology. Now, when I reflect on my past, I realize my childhood memories go beyond personal nostalgia. They also offer insights into society. The Natural Library shows rural resilience in education. Winters symbolize solidarity. Herding cattle passes down oral traditions and builds bonds between generations. The land shows the weight of history. Remembering childhood in Pashkum shows how society forms through cooperation, culture, adaptation, and memory. I learned that a person is shaped not just by themselves but by the land, community, and history around them. I still hear the same birds and the same winds whenever I return.

A WALK THROUGH MY CHILDHOOD

- Anup (3rd year)

I am of the view that childhood is one of the most crucial stages of an individual's life. The experiences, the socialization, and the values I learned from my family have guided me in every step of my life. I was born in Bhawanpur , a small village in Gaya, Bihar, and I feel very connected to that place, which shows clearly in my lifestyle and everyday practices. Growing up in a joint family helped me interact with multiple personalities. My grandfather, grandmother, father, uncle, mother, each of them gave me something different. My uncle was more caring than my father, and that balance of strictness and care shaped my personality. My grandfather taught me wisdom and traditions, my grandmother gave me affection, my father gave me discipline, while my mother is everything for me- both then and now. Most of the values I carry are given by her only. She taught me compassion, respect for others, and the importance of education. In sociology we often say that family is the first agency of socialization, but in a joint family this process becomes richer because many people guide you at the same time.

My village life added another layer of learning in my childhood. I always considered playing as an important aspect of my childhood, whether with clay or toys, and through play I learned sharing, creativity, and cooperation. The social gatherings used to catch my attention. I used to sit quietly and listen to the conversations of elders about farming, festivals, and politics. These parleys helped me a lot in real life. Every morning my mother gave me something to eat, and while eating I would run to my Dura, the place where my grandfather lived. Dura was not only my second home but also the centre of daily social life. I played there with toys for a while and then enjoyed listening to the villagers who came to talk. This mixture of play and observation made my childhood both joyful and educational. The simple routine of food, play, and village talks created a strong sense of belonging in me, and it showed me how childhood is shaped not only inside the home but also in the wider community

.

One memory that stands out very strongly in my childhood is about tractors. Our family was the only one in the entire village that owned tractors, and this made us the centre of attraction, my friends friends from the neighborhood used to come to ride the tractor. I loved watching them and felt connected to them in a special way. In a rural setting, where farming was the backbone of economy, tractor turned out as a symbol of progress. Even though I was a small child, I felt that connection with change and development through tractors. Looking back now with a sociological eye, I realis how material objects like tractors are not just tools but also symbols of status and identity in a community.



Another very important figure in my childhood was my Mama ji, whom we lovingly called Mamu. He gave me everything I ever asked for. His role was very important in my childhood. In many families, the role of Mama ji is always special, and same was the case for me. Along with my parents, Mamu's support built my confidence and joy in childhood. But above everything, my parents constantly reminded me of the importance of education. According to them, education was the only key to change everything. The teaching made a life long impact on me. Even when I played or sat at the Dura, I knew that studies were important. In sociology, we learn that values are transmitted from one generation to another, and in my case, the value of education was strongly transmitted. This is why education even today holds a sacred place in my life, because I see it as a bridge between the village and the larger world

.

When I look back at my childhood now, I see it not just as personal memories but also as a sociological example of how families, villages, and communities shape individuals. This shaped my personality and gave values like cooperation, respect, discipline, and love for education. For me, childhood was never really about the toys and fun, it was about learning through the interactions of family members and relatives, through social gatherings, and through everyday observations of village life. Today, while I look back and my childhood, I can relate it to the theories that I study in my discipline. But beyond theory, my childhood remains a story of love, care, and rootedness. Born in Bhawanpur, Gaya, Bihar, I am proud of my family and village. Of course, with time, many changes have come: joint families are breaking into nuclear ones, dependency among villagers has gone down, and festivals are now celebrated in different ways. Yet, those memories of togetherness and support remain alive in me.

Memory of Monsoons

Devanandana (2nd year)

Rain in Kerala is long. We get rain during summer, winter, and then there is monsoon. Monsoons actually—Edavappathy and Thula Varsham. In English, they call it the South-West monsoon and the North-East monsoon.

I always loved rain, especially when I was a child. Back then, our home was small and was surrounded by a pond and grounds, which are filled with taros. The rain would fill the pond, wash the taros, and make everything looks fresher and greener.

Sometimes, when the water rose, we could see fishes rushing to the nearby paddy field. Rain was fun for us.But that wasn't the case for our parents,for them the feeling was different. Our house leaked back then. My brother and I enjoyed it; it meant we could carry buckets and pots around and place them wherever the water fell. Whenever we discovered a new source of leakage, it was a source of joy for us, but for them, the rain was a problem. we saw their faces change into worry when the rain drops fall heavily.

Thula Varsham is the season when rain falls after evening. Thunder and lightning always came along with it. Power cuts during nights were also a common phenomenon back then. There wouldn't be any electricity after 7 till 8 and it would be pitch black if there wasn't my grandma's old kerosene lamp and the frequent lightning.

Whenever there was lightning, we all sat together in my grandma's room. That was the only room without any leakage, and my dad firmly believed that was the safest place in our home. The lamp would draw shadows on the walls. The wind which blew through the doorless windows raised the curtains and sent chills through our skin, and at every thunder my brother shivered in fear. But for us that was also the time for stories. My grandma would tell Puranas, my dad would share experiences, and my amma would crack jokes here and there.Despite the fear we smiled and laughed. That was one of my best memories.

After some weeks, the monsoon starts feeling heavy. By that time, our house would also be the home of insects and frogs. The clothes have a hard time drying, and everyone starts to wish for sunlight. But when the sun shines and shines people start to wish for monsoon again.Everything repeats again and again.

Things have changed a lot over these years. There is no leakage in my house now, and after 2018 monsoon means floods and landslides in Kerala. But I still enjoy rain. We still have taros, and we still sit together during lightning, and at least during rains, I feel things haven't changed that much.

Who Did I Need When I Was Younger?

By-Riya Attri,B.A. Sociology hons, Ist year

'Who did I need when I was younger?' is a question which have crossed my mind a lot many times in the transition from childhood to adulthood. I believe its not a nostalgic question but rather a reflective one. Childhood is not only a stage of innocence, it is a foundational phase where emotions, self-worth, and expectations of care are first formed. The absence of certain forms of support during this phase does not always register as trauma, sometimes it registers as silence, confusion, or a sense of being unseen. Asking this question shifted my focus from who I wanted to become to who would have helped me become myself.

For many people the answer could have been someone who listened without judgement. Someone who normalised fear of failure. Someone who modelled boundaries without guilt. Even those raised in loving environments often identify a gap- not because care was absent, but because certain needs went unnoticed.

Becoming the person we needed as children is not an attempt to fix the past. It is an intentional choice about the present. It shapes how we lead, listen, nurture, and respond in families, classrooms, friendships, and workplaces. The values we consciously practice as adults often emerge directly from what childhood lacked. People who always wanted surprise birthday parties throws the best parties; people whose voice were often ignored in conversations becomes the best listeners; people with insecurities and body dysmorphia now showers others with constant reassurance.

Importantly, this transformation is not about perfection. The adult we needed was not flawless, she was just present, grounded, and emotionally available. Growth, then, is less about self-improvement and more about emotional steadiness. It is reflected in small, daily choices which may be pausing instead of reacting, listening instead of dismissing, staying instead of withdrawing.

In this way, childhood continues to shapes us as individuals and part of the wider society long after it ends. The spaces we create for others often mirror the spaces we once longed for. And sometimes, it is still the younger version of ourselves, learning what care can look like. When we reflect on who we needed then, we realise who we choose to be now.



WHY DO WE MISS OUR CHILDHOOD

By - Rajesh - 3rd Year, BA Hons Sociology

Why do we miss our childhood? Isn't it obvious that we memorize our good memories and what we call "carefreeness," which makes us free from worries, responsibilities, and the burden of adulthood? Childhood is a very important age that shapes your future personality and behavior, which can be bad or good. But childhood is socialized by society to think, act, and behave according to the codes of society. It is the time you learn many things, like values and cognitive abilities, that make you who you will become in the future. It has an important place in your heart, which makes you feel warm, calm, and happy just by thinking about it. Childhood is full of memories with our family and friends, which is more worthwhile than anything else.

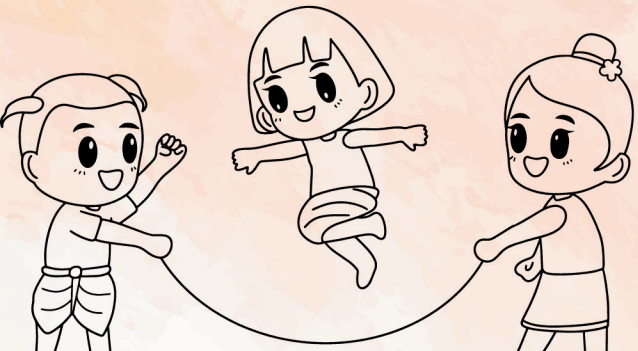
Do you think childhood is the same for all? Big no, it can be more cheerful for one and gloomy for another. It is an age where you build relationships with your family and friends. It is important to know in which circumstances a child grows or how he/she is socialized by the actions of their family, friends, neighbors, and teachers in making their values. It is important to remember that not every child enjoys a happy childhood because of poverty, neglect, or family trauma where he/she witnesses fights.

Nowadays, children face issues like education pressure, technology addiction, mental health problems, and lifestyle problems, which steal childhood from them. As we see, parents are busy in their work, so they give their mobile phone to their child without seeing future consequences, like the child becoming addicted to it and wanting the mobile 24/7. When I visit my relative, the child is crying for not being given a phone. The child is so addicted to it that he needs it while eating; because of this, he refuses to play outside with his friends when they come to ask him to play. Another day, when I visited my neighbor's house, I saw that a small child was forced to study by his parents. They force him to study hard so he becomes successful in his life, but because of this, his parents don't allow him to play outside with his friends, which ruins his childhood. He can't do what he wants, and things don't make him happy. Nowadays, I see that parents send their children to coaching for the JEE or NEET at a very young age, and they have to face competition that they can't cope with, which causes mental stress.

Parents should take a balanced approach in parenting children. They should use a mild approach to socialize children so they can enjoy their childhood. Parents should encourage responsible use of technology, give mental and emotional support, and not be so strict that their own child fears them and doesn't share their problems with them. They should provide a friendly environment to grow so that their children feel safe with them and share their problems without hesitation. But there is a big rift between parents and children, which increases the distance between them. Because of this, the child finds a friend outside with whom he/she shares their problems. That's why, in childhood, we give more importance to friends, and memories with them are one of the things we love.

Childhood is the golden time of life, and its memories stay with us forever. It is a treasure chest of joy, wonder, and innocence where we cannot return, but it never vanishes from our hearts. Time goes on and on, but the child within us lives forever in our memories. It makes our core memories that we want to live again and again, and these memories fill our hearts with joy.

"Childhood is the last time in life when happiness is found in little things.





CHILDHOOD- A stage of conflicting values

By - Harsh Pansari ,3rd year,BA Sociology honours

The child is father of the man

- Williams Wordsworth

Childhood is one of the most crucial yet nurturing phases of a person's life. While some experience the most beautiful moments, others struggle to attain even a fraction of happiness. Factors like poverty, gender disparity, socialisation, parental expectations, and a long list of challenges force children to confront harsh realities.

Childhood should be a stage where children are given proper care, nurtured well, and taught important values that help them grow. However, in this fragile yet cautious phase, they often face conflicting values and insufficient care. From an early age, boys are expected and treated to embody masculinity, while girls are expected to be feminine. This is reflected in their treatment, the toys they receive, their clothing, colour choices, language, and body image. Female infanticide is not a new phenomenon, with some medical treatments even banned nationwide, but such policies do not change the mindset of parents. After a girl is born, she is often marginalised; boys are prioritised, and everything is given to them first. What remains is then allocated to girls, reinforcing boundaries between the sexes.

Boys are given a sense of responsibility and are expected to adhere to it. Failure to do so results in being considered a disappointment in society. If they deviate from the societal standards of masculinity, they are met with disapproval. These expectations place immense pressure on boys. While assigning roles is necessary for societal functioning and interdependence is essential, such roles should not be imposed or burdensome, nor should they establish rigid boundaries dictating who should do what.

The attitudes and beliefs learned during childhood significantly affect individuals' lives, shaping their thoughts, behaviour, mindset, and how they present themselves. Over time, these learned behaviours become natural, boys favour blue, and girls prefer pink (a marketing strategy from the late 19th century). Politeness becomes associated with girls, while toughness is linked to boys. Society exerts influence through various mechanisms, and violations of societal norms are often met with punishment.

But are we doing this correctly? Are we suppressing the inner qualities of individuals? Are we shaping them solely to meet societal needs while leaving little room for personal growth? As a society, we should establish norms but also embrace individuality and respect equality. Our goal should be to prevent conflict, yet we must also remember that if chaos arises, it should be addressed humanely and effectively.



"SUMANG-A sanctuary embracing holistic blooming"

-Taruba Khuraijam, BA Sociology Hons.(1st year)

The age of childhood in our lives is indeed an archive of memories that often grips us tightly, taking us to a nostalgic trip with slideshows of moments that we treasure to the core, and snippets that have shaped us surviving the test of time that ever flows onward, and waits for no one. It is no wonder that most people quite frequently, including myself, plead guilty to the act of disassociating from reality and looking back at the past, romanticizing the ever so carefree innocence of boyhood filled with boundless joy and laughter. As per my personal reflection on my very own childhood, I cherish it as an adventure just as venturesome and engaging as any fictional story tailored in a whimsical fantasy world.

Being an only child without siblings, I spent almost every second of my childhood in the company of my dearest cousins running around, playing all sorts of peculiar games at our *sumang* (something like a courtyard with a small worship area in the centre which is an essential feature of traditional Meitei homes). Despite constant scolding from my grandmother and other elders for being too wild and loud, we would always turn a blind eye to all of them and keep playing, even in the most scorching heat of afternoons. We would sometimes get into fights with each other for the silliest reasons, or get punished for shattering windows, destroying plants, and every other shenanigan in the book. Besides lunchtime, those were the only instances from sunrise till sunset which would put our playtime frenzy to a halt.

Fast-forward a decade, our sumang which was once a space of wholesome socialization and emotional connection between the cousins, has evolved into a mere parking lot occupied by grumpy four wheelers. Most of us today are constricted and burdened with the responsibilities of growing up, transitioning into adulthood. One has even graduated, now trying his best to be the main breadwinner of the family. I've parted ways with them to pursue my studies, in endeavour to sow something out of nothing for the ever so enigmatic but near future, residing in an unacquainted city quite the mile away.

At present, in my hometown Imphal, more and more homes with less emphasis on conserving abundant space for a sumang are becoming prevalent as per my observations, and children are stuck inside their houses with a mobile phone in their hands from a very young age, deprived from the coherently crucial physically, socially. and emotionally enriching experience which can only be gained from growing up in an environment such as the sumang. This is a matter of grave concern in the "mordernized" urban society where children are increasingly getting shackled by technology on top of academic burden leading to sedentary lifestyles, which is most obviously not a desirable manifestation especially in a phase of growth as crucial as the childhood.

Treasure Box

By - Prarthana Nambiar (1st year)

The older we grow and the farther we drift from our childhood years, the more we long to go back to those years. For me, when I think of childhood, it's always been a mosaic of memories that I find hard to piece together. Yet, one thing I am certain of is that it was a beautiful period of my life, and once I grew out of it, I've never felt the same. With each birthday cake I cut, the less I resembled my younger self.

Childhood emotions of innocent joy, curiosity, playfulness, and more have become so foreign and strange to me that I can't help but question, 'How come I am incapable of feeling those emotions now?' As a child, I've always wanted to grow up quickly, but it is now that I realise childhood possessed its own innocent charm, which was truly special. The ten-year-old me had a mind that throbbed with questions and wonders, and the me now would give up anything to think like that again. To see the world in the way I saw it back then: colourful, bright, and full of hope.

It can actually be a dumb thing to want to be a child again. I didn't know how the world worked, and I was actually fine with it. I was clueless. Yet, I knew what I liked and what I disliked. I knew what I wanted to do and what I wanted to become. In those regards, I'm clueless now. The childhood spark had made me so sure of myself that I didn't know how to doubt. Just to feel that certainty, even if it is for a moment, I sometimes wish to be a child again.

In this sense, I feel childhood is like a treasure box. I, myself, had buried it in me, and only when time took me far did I realise how precious the box was. I happen to have lost the map to it now, and even after digging in so deep, all I could ever find were fragments of memories. Perhaps even if I find the box, it might appear to me as pointless since I may not relate much to it now. It can be very childish, and even though it was once me, over the years, I have turned out to be a complete stranger to myself.

Maybe we are meant to never find the treasure box. The wonders and thoughts of my ten-year-old self did shape this eighteen-year-old after all. Today, even though I am not exactly where my younger self wanted me to be, every day I strive to get more and more closer to her version of the older me and, in turn, closer to the ten year old herself. The box I've been looking for lies in me, and I carry it with me; it's probably time I accept that.


Petals
of Poetry

खोया बचपन

Nandini (2nd year)

पिता की बाहें, माँ का आचँल,
नन्हीं किलकारियाँ, मुस्कान थी निश्छल ।
कोमल तन और चचंल मन,
तमस भरे इस जीवन में,
खोज रहा मैं वो खोया बचपन ॥
वो बचपन जिसकी मुस्कान से,
घर का आगँन चहका था।
वो तन-मन जो सन कर मिट्टी से भी,
सोंधी-सोंधी महका था।
सामाजिक बधंन में लिपट गया,
कल जो स्वछंद परिंदा सा उड़ता था।
खोज रहा मैं वो बचपन; जो पापा की
जेब धरकर, जिद्द खिलौने की करता था।
ना शादी, नौकरी ना ही
जवानी के जाल में फसता था ।
कहाँ गया वो बचपन, जो
दादी-नानी की कहानियों में पलता था।
वीडियो गेम्स में खो गया कहीं
जो गड्डे-गुड़िया, कंचे-गोलियाँ
शौक से खेला करता था ।
कार से चलने वाली दुनिया आई,
कहाँ गया वो दादा का कंधा,
जिस पर बचपन घूमा करता था।



स्वप्न का दरवाज़ा

Puneet Sharma (2nd year)

जब भी मैं बीते हुए समय को याद करता हूँ,
तब स्वप्न में जीवित कदमों की आहट तेज़ हो जाती है।
इस पास आती तस्वीर में सब कुछ ठीक दिखाई देता है।

पर ठीक का भाव आज का भाव है।
मनपसंद का भाव बचपन का भाव था, जो बीत गया है।
क्या मनपसंद के भाव में सब कुछ ठीक दिखाई देता था?
तब क्या जीवन एकरंगी नहीं बहुरंगी था?

अगर जीवन बहुरंगी था,
तो बचपन भी साकार था?
क्या बचपन साकार था, या जीवन साकार था?
क्या जीवन और बचपन को कभी अलग देखा जा सकता है?

इस बात का सिरा कहाँ खत्म होता है?
क्या सिरा हमारे हाथ में भी होता है या समाज ही उसे चलता है?

चलिए रहने ही देते है,
जी इस बात को नहीं... इस ठीक के भाव को।

अब जो भी है, हमारे जीवन का अहम हिस्सा है।
हाँ, तो ठीक के भाव में
बचपन समाप्त होता दिखाई देता है।
बचपन में सीखे जीवन सरीखे वाक्य मिटने लगते हैं।

अरे, यह क्या लिख दिया?
बचपन वो भी समाप्त!

चलिए रहने ही देते है,
जी इस त्रासदी को नहीं... इस समाप्ति के भाव को।

तो हाँ,
जीवन सरीखे वाक्य मिटने लगते हैं।

मिटने में बचे दृश्य को देखने में जीवन फिसलने लगता है।
इस भाव में जीते-जीते असल में जीना कठिन हो जाता है।
कठिनाई में स्वप्न का दरवाज़ा बंद होता दिखाई देता है।

दरवाज़े के बंद होने में
नदी की रफ़्तार बढ़ जाती है।
पास आते कदमों की आहट हृदय में समा जाती है।

आहट का आना और हृदय में समा जाना
सामान्य दिखाई पड़ता है।
जिसमें लेखक अलविदा लिखते वक्त सामान्य हो जाता है।

सामान्य—यह कैसा अजीब विरोधाभास है?
लेखक अगर सामान्य है तो जीवित कैसे है?

लेखक सामान्य हो ही नहीं सकता।

अरे!
याद आया।
हो सकता है,
अगर बचपन समाप्त हो गया हो तो।

चलिए आगे पढ़ते है!
हाँ, अलविदा लिखने के बाद का अंश।

अलविदा लिखने के बाद
बीते हुए का स्वप्न वयस्कता में मिट जाता है।
मिटने की प्रक्रिया में ठीक का भाव भी मिट जाता है।

वयस्कता—
इतना कठिन शब्द।
बचपन कहाँ गया इस लेखक का?
बच्चों की सरल भाषा नहीं लिख सकता।

अरे,
याद आया।
इनका तो जीवन ही समाप्त हो गया है—
जीवन नहीं, बचपन।

पर
क्या जीवन और बचपन को कभी अलग देखा जा सकता है?

नहीं न। या हाँ?

चलिए, आपका निर्णय है,
हम कौन होते हैं बताना वाले?

हम तो खुद मिट गए हैं।
जी हाँ, मिट गए हैं!

आपको पता है मिट जाने के बाद क्या होता है?

सब कुछ मिट जाने के बाद
संवेदनहीन हो जाना ही उचित दिखाई देता है।
उचित दिखते ही जीवित कदमों की आहट थम जाती है।

भला संवेदनहीन होना कबसे उचित लगने लगा?

अरे,
याद आया।
इन्हें लग सकता है।
इनका जीवन...

थम जाने में तस्वीर तक जाते क़दम रिक्त हो जाते हैं।
रिक्तता के भाव को बचाने में अंतिम वाक्य भी मिट जाता है।
अंतिम वाक्य
के मिटने में बचपन याद आता है, याद...बहुत।

Until Innocence Shines

-Anushka, BA(Hons) Sociology 2nd year

A little child under the veil of ingenuousness
Looked up at the skies in wonderness
She touched the grass with quiet care
And listened to the call of wind or air

She asked the sky how it is blue
And if clouds have feelings too
She asked where the wind goes
And if like flowers snowflake too grows

She spoke to birds and named the trees
Thinking they kept her secrets on lease
She watched the ants move in silent lines
And wondered how they read the signs

Slowly her gaze, wide with wonder,
Dimmed beneath society's thunder
Time moved on, as time will do
And skies turned grey, and questions flew

Reason claimed curiosity and innocence
Systems of measure stole her innate brilliance
Yet still within, nature so believes
The child she was, softly lives.

Childhood: A Vivid Journey

Saanvi Khanna, BA(Hons) Sociology, 1st year

The sweet and sour memories of childhood,
When I was the nightingale,I was the Robinhood.
From the fortress built in mother's arms , where no one could ever harm.
From holding her finger and wishing the time could linger.

Making boats in the rain, not letting the energy ever drain.
Childhood was a time of thousands of memories and dreams,
Of cold breeze and mango trees.
The time when grandmothers home was the travel destination,
The time when I spoke everything without hesitation .
The time when nights were spent under the sparkling sky with stars,
The time I wanted to reach Mars by car.
The time of hot chocolate, sugar candy and lollipop,
The beautiful phase when I wanted to be cool and learn hip hop.

Colourful classrooms,slides and see-saw, time when my dreams were raw.
When picnics were under the trees , when running was behind the bees.
Mesmerizing phase of fun and delight, there was no room for sorrow and plight.

Childhood is a never ending dream,for it is beautiful and has a bright beam .
I wish the child in me never dies , even if I have to say many other goodbyes.
Childhood is the time of playing on slide, it was the time to glide.

Childhood should never end , it is the time where no one pretends.
I miss my childhood even now ,not sure if I would
ever regain it and how?



A WORLD WITHOUT WORRY

Yashvi Srivastava(2nd Year)

To the sky that appeared blue,
Sometimes full of magic.
To the clouds that took the shape of my favorite objects—
Be it the sun, the moon, or the toys.
To the magical dreams that we had,
And the mornings that always began with hope.
To the games we played all day long,
To the wounds we wore proudly while playing.
To the hands we held without hesitation,
To the hands that forever kept our secrets.
To the paper boats, the dragonflies, the orange candies,
To all the things we chased with laughter and love.
To the innocence we buried along the way,
To the innocence that lives now only in photographs.
Oh dear childhood, you gave me the best—
And though time carried you away,
You'll forever remain
The first poem I
learned by heart.







Essence of childhood

By-Shifa Bano 1st year

Childhood was not a tale we knew,
it was a world we walked into.
Where time would pause, then slowly bend,
and moments didn't rush to end.
The days were wide, the hours were kind,
no ticking clocks inside the mind.
A small delight could flood the chest,
a single hurt could steal all rest.
We thought the moon could keep our pace,
That silence held a listening face.
The walls were warm, the dark had eyes,
and fear wore shapes we'd still outsize.
Before we spoke, we understood,
the language of the felt and good.
The body knew what words would miss
that truth could live inside a kiss.
No meaning ranked, no memory small,
dust, light, and laughter kept them all.
We didn't ask what things were for,
we lived them, fully, nothing more. While
adulthood names, explains, defines,
draws careful borders, measured lines.
But childhood knew, without a proof,
that being there was the only truth.





Spark-eyed boy of May:

Puneet Sharma(2nd year)

Have you ever felt like nothing can be written in the moment you are in right now? A lot of times, I find myself in such moments, where the upholstery of white layers begins to slow down a bit. This process of slowing down stops the possibility of an incessant dopamine rush.

I wonder—is it not great to cease to be?

Answer: This phase, this endless pause, this gentle breeze, sheer trouble, and the trail to survive—all constitute my identity.

A lot of times, and this phrase becomes the vulnerable part I long yearn to bypass. Am I alive is a question I keep asking myself.

In cessation, I achieve life—the moment I release this phrase, a wave of despondence strikes hard—too tender to unleash haunting beauty on my pale, glittering face, desperately eager to cling to a known path—the one that I witnessed burnt alive in the face of a dismembered bard. This bard never appeared closer to reality. But one day, the day it should have succumbed to silence, it roared aloud. And the glory returned. And I now walk on that unknown path—the path I never dreamt of being full of merry. Unknown because it doesn't constitute my identity. Unknown because it doesn’t provide relief to my legs which are shivering. Unknown because this path I am now condemned to walk on leads me closer to reality—reality of reliving the past.

To walk in the field, to graze the ambiguous zeal, I tread in search of a path reminiscing the past. I wonder if—I had to relive some moments of that reminiscent past, what would I choose to be? I, who is made to reminisce about the past, wants to leave the space disturbed with words that I don't accept aloud, let alone forget the ability to vouch for its dystopian head covered in shroud.



Shroud—a single entity, as its single presence suffices my single monotonous, loathsome reply.

Answer: The atoner of shattered beams, the mourner of maltreated heaps, and the dreamer of revered gleams. To walk in the field, to ingest the unfinished meal, I maneuver to deliver the pipe dream. To rekindle bygone days—those I would never craft in this present rage—rage towards my impoverished May, who is sitting on the verge of a sudden death, drowning in the gutters of self-pitying, outwardly insensitive gaze, striking chords of disaster in my inner, naive self.

Before the decay of May (the beloved phase of jubilant sail), I want to behold the grieved; I want to tender its last lead—the one that flinched my thaw apart. I expect nothing else in the lament of stars but to nurture the rosemary as if it had never bloomed. I want to wait, and let the merry come to me in the form of grief—to applaud the bards of the loveless lords I debrief.

I stop in the moment to start afresh, I ponder over the existence of unfulfilled bygone self. I wonder—will it ever be able to bid the last goodbye to my naive self? I have no answer. I have no faith left. I aim to achieve cessation of the lifeless realm. I aim to let the pedestrians cross by and wave off the track—the track on which my naive self shall take its last breath.
This act shall I celebrate aloud, throw a wretched party to negate its self-destructive cloud—the one I am cursed to endure and inspire everyone to endure with an anxiety-ridden crown. The crown of losing our lovely childhood we never noticed, at least I, when it withered away before even giving a slight hint of its deteriorating timeframe. This timeframe I ought to reckon in one way or the other by being true to the wishes of that ever blooming spark-eyed boy of May—this boy full of potential, full of hopes, and full of commitments to bless the lives of all those who never reminisce about the past, as their past, present, and future are nothing but ghastly bleak.

The writer may extend to explain the wishes of the boy, but the boy strictly abhors such overt displays of humanitarian aid which have now become the trend of algorithm-backed lip service, distracting people of what actually constitutes service to the betterment of all those in
distress.

PHOTO ESSAY
TRYING TO HOLD HAND'S

Captured by- Jai Kumar, 2nd year



ARTWORK
MEMORIES OF CHILDHOOD

Made by- Yashvi Srivastava, 2nd year



FACULTY ENTRIES

Where the Mind is Without Fear: Childhood, Power and Fragile Selves

By- Dr. Saba Firdaus

"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high" are the words of Rabindranath Tagore from his book Gitanjali depicting the poet's longing and desire for a nation awakened into freedom and human dignity. The freedom that the poet refers to in these lines is not only political independence rather an ethical condition of inhabiting the world without humiliation, violence, coercion and silence. More than a century later Tagore's prayer reads less like a nostalgia and more like a necessary manifesto. Revelations of heinous crimes against children and their sexual abuse in the present world not only exposes individual depravity but also systemic complicity-as how wealth, influence and institutions shield abuse. If Tagore feared a world fragmented by narrow domestic walls, the present times reveals walls reinforced by power, secrecy and fear. Fear has become a lived reality for children across the world. To understand the unprecedented crisis, we must turn to the phenomenology of childhood as how it is lived, experienced and felt. Childhood is not only a phase in the process of development to adulthood; it is also a unique mode of being in the world. The fragile selves of children are so vulnerable that violence and abuse not only harms their bodies but fractures their life worlds. This fragmentation of selves produces a split between experience and expression, memory becomes unspeakable and self gets shrouded in fear. "Into that Heaven of Freedom my Father, let my Country Awake"- in these lines Tagore's aspirations of moral courage, fearlessness and freedom seem to be absent in the world today. The societies seem to prioritize the reputation of the wealthy and powerful over the sufferings and testimonies of the vulnerable exposing complicity in accepting silence over exploitation in elite circles. Violence at the global and local level reveal similar patterns of unequal power, gendered vulnerability, economic dependency and institutional negligence. Exploitation thrives where accountability is weak. Childhood is a phase where not only the body grows, but with each passing day the mind grows with curiosity, imagination and creativity and any interruption in this phase through abuse and violence has a deep-seated impact both on the body and mind-the world then becomes something to endure rather than to explore. A traumatic childhood phase obliterates the distinction between past and present and often the past and its abuses invades the present such that the future becomes

fragile. Freedom no longer remains a childhood experience for children facing violence and mind is not fearless.

The world is witnessing an epidemic proportion of sexual abuse of children today and still millions of cases go unnoticed and unreported because the fragile selves of children often plunge into silence and depression on experiences of violence and trauma such that recovered memories of trauma becomes difficult to express. The world Health Organization estimates that more than one billion children aged between two to seventeen experience violence each year. An estimated ninety million children alive today have experienced sexual violence according to UNICEF. Around one in five girls and one in seven boys suffer sexual violence in childhood. Violence against children in all its forms-physical, emotional and sexual-is a global crisis. Its impacts are severe leading to injuries, sexually transmitted diseases, mental health issues such as anxiety, depression and death.

Most children never disclose violence and the horrific experiences get hidden and shrouded by silence because phenomenologically experience precedes language. When something traumatic occurs that has no available category, it becomes unspeakable as it is yet not formed into meaning. Silence fills the gap between experience and articulation. Fear is not only experienced as an emotional episode; it becomes a mode of being in the world. It reshapes the mental categories of the child such that the world feels as a dangerous space, time collapses into threatening continuum of past and the present, body becomes alien, speech and expression becomes muffled and relation with others feel unsafe. Horrendous cases of sexual abuse of young girls in the most developed parts of the world coming to light after years of systemic silence reveal that violence and abuse is very much an accepted social reality within elite and powerful circles where these crimes are both perpetrated and protected by the rich. The question that needs to be asked at this juncture is how should the society which is unnerved and intimidated by these events react and respond? Is it time for action or burying the pain and suffering of the children under layers of silence by the powerful and rich adult society?

CURRICULUM IN SCHOOL EDUCATION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF HISTORY TEXTBOOKS OF CBSE AND STATE BOARD OF ODISHA IN INDIA

By - **Ms. Garima Rath**

Education is widely regarded as a crucial marker of a developed society and an important instrument of social transformation. Its importance is evident in the numerous policies and reforms aimed at improving both access and quality. Among the various components of education, curriculum plays a decisive role in determining what knowledge is transmitted and legitimized within society. Sociological scholars have long problematized school textbooks, particularly in social sciences, by highlighting their ideological nature and role in reproducing dominant social values (Apple 1979; Kumar 2001; Thapan 2015). Inspired by such works, this paper examines how school textbooks present history as "legitimate knowledge" and argues that such knowledge is neither neutral nor uniform across educational boards.

The paper develops the argument that the content of school textbooks varies significantly depending on the educational board, the publisher, and the broader political and ideological context in which the curriculum is framed. This variation is particularly evident in social science subjects such as history and civics, where representations of the past, along with concepts such as identity, democracy, and nationalism, are deeply ideological. Textbooks thus become important sites for understanding the orientation of the state, policymakers, and curriculum designers. By comparing history textbooks of Classes IX and X prescribed by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Odisha, this paper seeks to problematize the notion of objective school knowledge.

The selection of Odisha's State Board textbooks allows for an examination of the relationship between national and regional narratives and highlights the relative absence of such regional comparisons in textbook studies. Specifically, the paper explores how Indian national and regional history are portrayed and what kind of identity, these textbooks attempt to construct among students.

The study is grounded in Althusser's (1971) concept of ideology, which conceptualizes education as an ideological state apparatus that reproduces the worldview of the ruling class. From this perspective, school knowledge is not neutral but reflects dominant ideological interests. Drawing from this framework, the paper treats history education as a subjective and culturally loaded enterprise rather than an objective account of the past.

The paper adopts a qualitative content analysis approach. Four textbooks were analysed: India and the Contemporary World - I (CBSE, Class IX, 2006), India and the Contemporary World - II (CBSE, Class X, 2007), History and Political Science (BSE Odisha, Class IX, 2012), and History and Political Science (BSE Odisha, Class X, 2013). The analysis focuses on recurring themes, omissions, and emphases to identify ideological patterns.

One of the most striking similarities between the CBSE and Odisha Board textbooks is the privileged position accorded to the Indian National Congress (INC) and Mahatma Gandhi. In the Odisha Board Class X textbook, the section on the Indian independence movement is explicitly titled Gandhiyug. The narrative highlights the role of the INC under Gandhi while marginalizing or completely excluding alternative political ideologies, leaders, and movements. Figures such as Bhagat Singh, Periyar, and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar are either briefly mentioned or absent. Even when discussing Odisha's contribution to the freedom struggle, the focus remains limited to leaders associated with the INC, reinforcing a Congress-centric narrative.

Another common feature of both sets of textbooks is the presentation of a consensual and conflict-free version of history. Internal disagreements within the nationalist movement, ideological contestations among political groups, and conflicts related to caste, class, and gender are largely ignored. While the CBSE textbooks briefly acknowledge popular responses to Gandhian movements and note the Congress's limitations in representing lower classes, caste as a structural issue remains conspicuously absent. Dr Ambedkar is mentioned only in passing, primarily as a leader who did not trust the Congress, without any discussion of his critique of nationalism or caste oppression. The Odisha Board textbooks are even

silent on such issues, offering an uncritical account of the nationalist movement. As a result, history is presented as a unified struggle against an external enemy - the British, where the Indian population appears homogenous and internally harmonious. Such representations erase dissent, conflict, and diversity, thereby producing a simplified version of the past.

The absence of subaltern perspectives further reinforces this homogenized narrative. Neither the CBSE nor the Odisha Board textbooks provide meaningful space to anti-caste thinkers and movements or to tribal resistance. Leaders such as Jyotiba Phule, Periyar, and Ambedkar are excluded from the historical narrative, and caste is not treated as a significant analytical category. Similarly, in the context of Odisha's history, tribal movements and leaders such as Laxman Naik, Birsa Munda, or communities like the Kondhs are omitted. Even significant events such as the Paik Rebellion find no mention. While CBSE textbooks do include women as participants in the nationalist movement, they are largely portrayed as symbolic figures rather than political agents. Odisha Board textbooks offer even less visibility to women.

These omissions have important implications for identity formation. Both CBSE and Odisha Board textbooks emphasize the construction of a pan-Indian national identity. Nationalism is portrayed primarily through symbols, folklore, songs, and shared struggles against colonial rule. Although the CBSE textbook briefly acknowledges the limitations of using Hindu symbols to mobilize nationalist sentiment, this issue is not explored in depth. Odisha Board textbooks similarly emphasize cultural unity and heritage, portraying Indian culture and tradition as monolithic and timeless. Such representations suggest that regional and social identities are expected to be subsumed under a singular national identity. The possibility that multiple identities may coexist, overlap, or even conflict with the national identity is not addressed. This emphasis is particularly strong in the Odisha Board textbooks, where discussions of Indian heritage reinforce the idea of a homogeneous national culture.

In conclusion, the comparative analysis reveals significant similarities between

CBSE and Odisha Board history textbooks in terms of ideological orientation and omissions. Both prioritize the INC-led nationalist movement, marginalize subaltern perspectives, and promote a monolithic notion of national identity. By neglecting internal conflicts and diverse social experiences, these textbooks limit students' understanding of India's complex historical realities. As Althusser (1971) suggests, history education in this context functions as an ideological state apparatus, reinforcing dominant narratives while silencing alternative voices. Such use of history has far-reaching implications, as it shapes students' perceptions of identity, citizenship, and nationhood in ways that discourage critical engagement with the past.

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Who's my neighbour| My neighbours taught me that acceptance is built through small, everyday acts of openness

Dr. Shahana Rafiq

Living in a "mixed" locality taught me that proximity does not always guarantee connection, but connection is possible when people are open to it. For a long time, I believed that neighbours were people who lived next door, ones we met at staircases, households we recognised without knowing, and exchanged occasional greetings over hurried mornings. It was only when my surroundings changed that I realised how deeply a neighbourhood shapes one's everyday life, sense of self, and feeling of belonging. I was born and brought up in a predominantly Muslim locality of old Delhi. It was not something I consciously noticed as a child; it was simply normal. Our everyday life included the sound of azaan echoing through the lanes, aromas of familiar food during Ramzan, shared greetings of Assalam Alaikum, and a quiet understanding of each other's routines. In that space, identity did not need explanation. In 2012, when we moved to Paschim Vihar in West Delhi, the change felt unsettling. Though it was a mixed locality, Muslim families were few and scattered, which made the transition harder. In this new place, everything — from festivals to daily routines — felt unfamiliar, and adjustment seemed difficult. So, while searching for a house to buy, my parents wanted a locality where there were at least a few Muslim families in the neighbourhood. At the time, I did not fully understand why this mattered. Eight years later, I do. It was never just about religion; it was about comfort, safety, and the freedom to live without constantly explaining oneself.

Within a year of us moving into our own house, something began to change — slowly and quietly. We started exchanging sweets during Eid and Diwali with people who were once complete strangers.Festivals became shared occasions

rather than private celebrations. Small bonds started forming in unexpected ways. I was good at applying mehendi, and one girl from the neighbourhood was skilled at makeup. Over time, we began calling each other whenever there was a function. What started as a practical exchange turned into a friendship built on trust and mutual support. Similarly, since no one in my family knew how to drape a sari, one aunt who resides just next to us always stepped in to help. She never let us feel the weight of cultural difference, if any. From a stranger, she became an aunt for us and didi for my mother. Even today, she prepares something in advance, knowing that I will visit her on Eid. Similarly, I look forward to her visiting our home on Diwali. These exchanges may seem small, but they carry deep meaning. They represent acceptance that goes beyond tolerance, an acceptance rooted in care. Living in a "mixed" locality taught me that proximity does not always guarantee connection, but connection is possible when people are open to it. We may not share the same religion, food habits, or traditions, but we share everyday life. We share festivals, emergencies, conversations, and concerns.

I see how homemakers form relationships with one another in the neighbourhood. For many of them, these exchanges are much more than merely social. In a world of mundane household chores, these neighbourhood interactions add value to the ordinary. Conversations on balconies, shared laughter during afternoon breaks, and simple exchanges turn ordinary spaces into living communities. These women also engage in negotiations that happen collectively — with the sabji wale bhaiya and the suit wale bhaiya. Such shared activities create a sense of unity and companionship. Standing on balconies, exchanging updates, or calling each other downstairs might appear insignificant, but these moments are what keep a neighbourhood alive. They transform physical closeness into social connection.

At the same time, neighbourhoods also quietly regulate behaviour. Familiarity can feel protective, but it can also feel intrusive, especially for women. Because neighbours matter so much, their opinions often carry weight within families. For any act that goes against accepted family or social norms, there is a familiar warning: “What would our neighbours say?” Neighbours may not be part of our families, but they are people we see everyday — witnesses to our routines, choices, and changes. Their presence becomes a form of social accountability, shaping how individuals behave, especially in closely-knit communities. Our neighbourhood determines how safe you feel, how freely you express yourself, and how deeply you feel rooted. Perhaps the most important question is not who our neighbours are, but whether our neighbourhoods allow us to live with dignity — seen, respected, and accepted.

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Looking Back

Dr. Geeta Jayaram Sodhi

I entered the teaching profession by chance...not by intention. Soon after my MPhil at the Dept. of Sociology, DU, I was offered an ad hoc teaching appointment there. After about five years of teaching at DU and JMI, I joined Sri Venkateswara College in 1987 when the BA (Hons) Course was introduced in it.



The first batch of BA (Hons) Sociology (1987-90)

Let me first give you a peek into the past of the department. Since 1974, Sociology was being taught in our college by Dr. Usha Panini as an elective subject of the BA Pass Course. With the coming of the Honours Course in 1987, began the challenging task of building the new department. The first and pressing task was to set up a departmental library with the initial goal of providing the students with the readings required for the newly introduced Honours course. Under our guidance, the students efficiently managed this library, keeping meticulous records. Another landmark in the very first year was the formal inauguration of the Sociology Association in a ceremonious manner.Its first activity was to organize the annual inter-college festival which was subsequently named 'Conscience Collective' after the phrase coined by Emile Durkheim. Would you believe that in the early years, the prizes given away during the festival were in the form of book coupons of modest value, which were

exchanged by the prize-winners for books of their choice?! Again, in those days, the festivals were funded entirely out of the association funds! The vibrant Wall Magazine also came up in the early days. Being one of the first in college, it attracted the attention of all those who passed by! By 1990, the fledgling department had grown into a full-fledged one, with all three years of students and fiveteachers. It was indeed a proud moment for us when our student secured the first rank in theUniversity in the final year, and received the gold medal from the legendary Prof. M N Srinivas!

In 1999 came the department's own print Magazine. 'We Witness' went on to earn the reputation of being one of the best departmental magazines in the college! In the year 2005, the Annual Lecture series was introduced. Since then, a number of eminent scholars have been visiting the department each year, delivering the annual lecture on a diverse range of topics. The early scholars who visited included Profs. Andre Beteille, A.M. Shah, J.P.S. Uberoi, Mushir-ul-Hasan, Yogendra Singh, T.K. Oomen, T.N. Madan, Satish Sabharwal, Veena Das, B.S. Baviskar, Anand Chakravarthi, Virginius Xaxa, Dipankar Gupta, Patricia Uberoi and Anand Kumar.

It's been two years since retirement, but my journey of 42 years in the profession has certainly been very eventful, memorable and enjoyable! I have been fortunate to have had the experience of teaching a variety of Courses across Universities and colleges, in both the Annual and Semester modes, at both the post-graduate and undergraduate levels, both at home and as a Fulbright Visiting Lecturer at Washington University. I have enjoyed all aspects of the profession - be it teaching, co- curricular activities, administrative duties, membership and Convenorship of various Staff Council Committees, organization and participation in various departmental and college activities, syllabus revision at DU, and so many more. But the highlight of my teaching career has been my experience and interaction with students both in and outside the classroom, and this is what I now miss most! Teaching is learning, and I have always judged my performance as a teacher by the response of my students. They have helped in moulding my teaching style and in constantly

improving my teaching skills. Be it lectures, discussions, seminars, presentations, debates, enactments, quizzes or film- screenings - each has been an invaluable experience! It has been especially invigourating to teach the first years the Introductory paper in Sociology (in its many revised versions) throughout my teaching tenure! Beyond the classroom, accompanying students on field trips and working with them in various activities such as the association, magazine and department library, has been truly rewarding!

Thanks to my students, over the years, I have been able to keep abreast of whatever was 'in' - be it movies, gadgets, ideas or even trending vocabulary! I consider myself blessed that they continue to stay in touch.



My last batch of Final year students (2023)

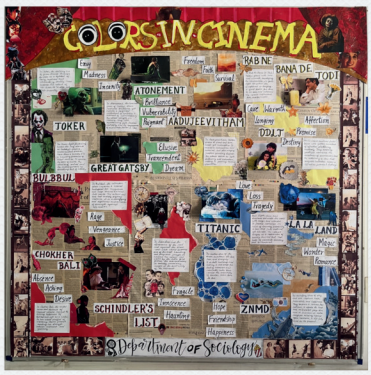
All in all, there have been trials and tribulations as well as triumphs and celebrations - but looking back, I can say that though I may have become a teacher by chance, there's nothing else I would rather have become!

WALL MAGAZINE

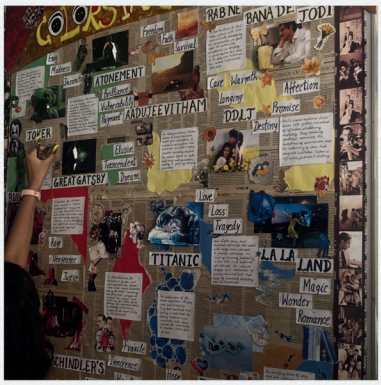
COLOURS IN CINEMA

[Writeup for 1st edition of the wall magazine
Written by Saanvi Khanna, 1st Year]

Cinema is far more than a visual aesthetic; it is a powerful storytelling device which reveals characters, mood and even influences the audiences in many ways. Each colour in the cinema enhances our understanding by spreading a message in both subtle and more direct ways. It would not be wrong to say that each colour carries a symbolic meaning that can be universal or culture specific. Colours have a significant role as the filmmaker uses them to guide the audience's emotional journey. When we talk about different colours, each one of them creates a unique feeling which we tend to associate with different emotions. Some warm tones can create a sense of nostalgia and comfort while the cool tones may evoke detachment and melancholy.







Cinema is full of different colors but some of the recurring ones are Green, Red, Blue and Yellow, each one having a different meaning and intensity depending on the context. Talking about green it is a powerful visual tool carrying a wide range of symbolic meanings like greed, hope and nature. Red carries diverse emotions- passion, love, even danger. Blue and yellow contrast meanings in the cinematic world; both of them are used to convey the meaning of depth and harmony. Blue is associated with loneliness, isolation and serenity whereas yellow may represent anxiety and delusions. The filmmaker depicts the feelings and emotions through different dialogues, costumes and lighting, colour grading. When we talk about movies that excellently use colours to flesh out their narratives, names such as Joker, Atonement, Bulbbul, Chokher Bali, Titanic, Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara, DDLJ and Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi come to mind.

On one hand the color green serves as a striking and powerful symbol of envy, madness and instability, representing more than just a costume choice, it becomes a visual signature of the protagonist's unravelling psyche and chaos in the movie Joker. But on the other hand, green symbolises passion and deals with the consequences of misinterpretation and loss when we justify its usage in Cecilia's dress in the movie Atonement.



Red, the ultimate symbol of rage, ache and desire, not just embellishes but amplifies the core theme of Bulbbul. It is the color of blood; it is the color of turning trauma into transcendence; It is also the color of reclamation of strength against oppression. When a masterpiece in subtle storytelling is talked about, red becomes sacred in Chokher Bali, it becomes an emblem of everything a widow has lost and everything she dares to want.

Blue the color of love, loss, tragedy. In the movie Titanic, blue carried in the depth of the ocean that has tremendous power, to highlight the great tragedy and loss. Through the color blue, Titanic communicates the weight of what was lost and fragility of what was found briefly. Blue is not just about loss, it's about living the moment, enjoying life and about happiness; this beautiful portrayal of emotions is shown in Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara.

When we speak of the color yellow we speak of warmth, care and quiet promises. It is the color that keeps gentleness and hope alive. Yellow in DDLJ signifies affection, destiny and promise; it is about youthful romance and commitment. Whereas yellow in Rab ne banadi jodi radiates more than just brightness, it shares the importance of warmth, devotion and unconditional love.
Different colors carry different meanings- sometimes a single color can represent opposing or varied emotions depending upon context. Cinema without color loses much of its depth; color is a powerful tool in filmmaking- shaping mood and depicting emotions.

SHAMANISM

[Writeup for 2nd edition of the wall magazine
Written by Satwik Ranjan Nanda ,1st year]



Traditions survive not because they resist change, but because they adapt quietly - like a river shaping a stone over centuries. Shamanism is an example of one such tradition. It exists in the deep trenches of India. In a forest or a village disconnected from the city - between history books and folk stories. It is not a belief, it is a lived experience. An experience that people cannot describe and we cannot study.

Shamanism is about mediation. A mediator - the Shaman, becomes the bridge between the humans and the spiritual world. They speak to ancestors, negotiate with forces our eyes can't see and finally, seek answers where language fails. In many communities, illness is not viewed merely as a physical condition - but an imbalance in the forces, a disturbance between the relationship of a person and the spiritual realm. Then the ritual is not treatment but restoration.

Across India - from the hills of Manipur to the tribal belts of Central India, from the dense, evergreen forests of the South to the mountains of the North - these practices take different forms. Yet they share a common spirit. Loud drums echo and Chanting fills the air. The performer enters a trance and the individual becomes a vessel. Questions are asked and guidance is offered. In short, healing is attempted.



Although a question comes to mind. Is Shamanism confined only to dramatic rituals which invoke a tribal image? It is simply rooted in nature. Hills, rivers, trees and forests - not landscapes but living presences. Rituals conducted under open skies or beside a sacred grove are symbolic of nature - human interdependence. When it comes to Shamanism, ancestors remain active participants in community life. They are remembered, honored and most importantly invoked.

Non-material tradition persists through oral transmittions. Stories, songs and chants of the elderly echoes on the youth. Knowledge carried without written texts. Through repetition and performance, memory is preserved. Here culture breathes through voice.

From a sociological perspective, the significance of shamanism extends beyond the written spirituality. It offers explanations when modern systems feel inaccessible. They provide emotional reassurance in uncertain times when medicine seems alienated. When rituals happen, the community comes together and bonds are strengthened. In this sense, shamanism functions as an informal support group - social and cultural.

In modern India - science and technology dominate the public discourse, shamanistic traditions are dismissed. Yet their endurance suggests otherwise. They continue, not because of a lack of knowledge, but because they fulfill needs that modern systems overlook.

Thus, Shamanism reminds us that beyond the visible structures of society lies other dimensions - one shaped by shared belief, emotion and imagination. Whether one views it through faith and analysis, it stands as a testament to humanity's search for balance, healing and connection with the unseen.

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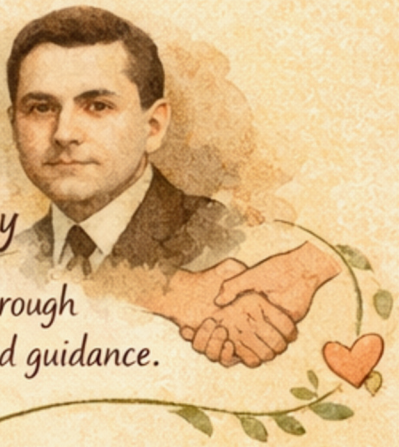


Understanding the Growing Child



Jean Piaget

Children actively construct knowledge through stages of thinking.



Lev Vygotsky

Learning grows through social interaction and guidance.



B.F. Skinner

Behaviour is shaped through reinforcement and rewards.





Erik Erikson

Identity develops through life's psychosocial stages.



John Bowlby

Secure attachment creates emotional safety and growth.

Every child grows through mind, relationships, and experience.



Sigmund Freud

Early childhood experiences shape personality deeply.

A child's journey is shaped by thinking, feeling, bonding, and learning.



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