

THE CONCEPT

In its dynamic history, the definition of psychology has changed several times. From being initially defined as the study of consciousness to later being described as the study of behaviour, more recent definitions consider it to be the scientific study of the mind and behaviour. However, no single definition can take into consideration the wide variety of activities that psychologists engage in. Psychology is made interesting by its rich diversity of methods, areas of research and assumptions about human nature.

'Psychology at the Edges: Exploring Issues and Themes at the Margins' seeks to be an academically rigorous attempt to understand the complexities of issues such as gender, identity, violence and human rights. Psychology with its emphasis on investigating human subjectivities provides an important lens through which new interpretations of these issues can be reached. Our efforts shall be furthered by invaluable insights from experts in the fields of Political Science, Sociology and Literature.

Two themes we shall address during the seminar are conflict resolution and the needs of displaced populations. We hope to identify challenges that stand in the way of resolving conflicts affecting the people of India and understand how these may be overcome. Another major theme of the seminar is that of alternative sexualities. We look to confront rigid notions of sexuality and gender and move towards an understanding of heterosexuality as merely one of many possibilities.

AIMS OF THE SEMINAR

1. Highlighting themes that remain at the fringes of mainstream psychology- conflict/peace-building, displaced populations and sexuality- while focussing on identity and human rights.
2. Identifying contributions that academicians can make in the above listed areas with respect to the current Indian conditions.
3. Triggering inter-disciplinary debates and collaborations with specialists from a variety of fields.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE

1. How can psychology be used as a "tool of social analysis" to explore the complexities inherent in human subjectivities, and from there recover insights of relevance to entire groups or communities?
2. What kind of roles can psychologists play in developing early interventions to avert war, creating measures to limit violence and in identifying steps to re-establish civil infrastructure after a conflict, and ultimately establish a sustainable peace?
3. What are the most prevalent mental health problems of different displaced communities and refugees in India and what are the psychological services required to combat these problems?
4. How do alternative sexualities alter existing understandings of sexuality, particularly as it is shaped by caste, class, religion and nation?

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Day 1: Friday, the 23rd of January, 2015

08:15 – 09:00 Registration

09:15 – 09:45 Opening Address and Welcome by the Vice-Principal, Dr. Priti Dhawan and Ms. Longchar, Head of the Psychology Department.

09:45 – 11:15 Keynote Address

Dr. Ashis Nandy, renowned political psychologist and sociologist.

Moderator: Dr. Parul Bansal

11:15 – 12:00 Tea

12:00 – 13:30 Panel Discussion

Piece of Land vs. Peace of Land: A conversation on Conflict Resolution

Panelists:

Dr. D. Suba Chandran, Director at the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS), New Delhi.

Ms. Sravana Majumdar, Research Fellow, Psychology Department, Jamia Millia Islamia.

Dr. Rosemary Dzuwichu, Associate Professor at the Department of English, Nagaland University.

Moderator: Ms. Sentisungla Longchar

13:30 – 14:30 Lunch

14:30 – 16:45 National Paper Presentation

Competition

The purpose of this competition is to provide a forum to bring together research being conducted by bright minds across the country to generate a novel and panoptic understanding of social scientific concepts.

ABOUT US

Day 2: Saturday, the 24th of January, 2015

09: 00 – 09:20 Registration

09:30 – 11:00 **Keynote Address**

Dr. Honey Oberoi Vahali, Dean and Professor of Psychology, School of Human Studies, Ambedkar University.

Moderator: Dr. Priti Dhawan

11:00 – 11:45 Tea

11:45 – 13: 15 **Panel Discussion**
Interrupting Heteronormativity: From Thinking Straight to Thinking Bent

Panelists:

Mr. Harish Iyer, an equal rights activist.

Dr. Shalini Anant, a practicing counsellor and psychotherapist.

Dr. Ashley Tellis, a freelance academic, journalist, editor and LGBT activist.

Moderator: Ms. Diana Cherian

13:15 – 14: 15 Lunch

14:15 – 16: 00 **Workshops for Students on Gender, Sexuality and Media and Movie Screening**
Workshops to be conducted by Ms. Shreena Thakore (co-founder, No Country for Women) and Dr. Sandhya Devesan (Assistant Professor of English at Ramjas College, Delhi University).

Lady Shri Ram College for Women is one of India's best Arts' colleges. The Psychology department of LSR is extremely active in academics and research. It aims to provide students with hands-on, as well as theoretically-rich learning. The vision of the department is to harvest and nurture curiosity, critical thinking, collaborations and cognizance. With more than 600 dissertations completed by the students of the department, along with an independent department library, the department has grown manifold since its founding in 1971.

In 2014, the department organized a 'Mental Health Awareness Week' tackling the theme of 'Living with Mental Illness', and a TEDx Conference. The department recently published its annual magazine 'Zeitgeist'. We are now looking forward to the release of our annual academic journal, 'The Learning Curve' (ISSN 2321-7057).

Faculty

Dr. Priti Dhawan (Vice-Principal, LSR College)
Ms. Sentsungla Longchar (Head of the Department), Dr. Kanika Ahuja, Dr. Puspita Behera, Dr. Parul Bansal, Ms. Diana Cherian, Dr. Megha Dhillon (Association Incharge), Ms. Khyati, Ms. Anesha Juneja and Ms. Bhuvaneshwari Sharma.

Department Union

President: Devika Gupta
Secretary: Yamini Bhagat
Treasurer: Bhavna Mehrotra



PSYCHOLOGY AT THE EDGES

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A National Seminar
23 - 24 January 2015

Psychology Department
Lady Shri Ram College for Women
University of Delhi

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