YoungAdults

PsyMAG

A Psychology Magazine by
Department of Psychology
School of Social Sciences and Humanities
University of Management and Technology

Editors
Dr. Tehmina Saqib
tehmina.saqib@umt.edu.pk
Azher Hameed Qamar
azher.qamar@umt.edu.pk

Welcome to the inaugural issue of our Magazine!

We are pleased to have the opportunity to let you know what is going on in the Department of Psychology

Since, long our students are showing our teaching contributions and their learning abilities in the form of research papers, projects, assignments, and posters. They participate in intra-university competitions and prove their excellence in all types of activities. There are several fruitful activities in which we remain engaged throughout the semester. All these contributions create knowledge and awareness. PsyMAG is a psychology magazine that publishes all these contributions as a rich source of knowledge shared with the serious readers. At the same time PsyMAG helps the readers to understand psychology in a larger perspective and to the core of their routine social and individual lives. PsyMAG aims at caring about and promoting the psychological health by researching, discussing, and bringing into light the core issues of the society. It is a part of the process to let you know how and what we are doing in Psychology. PsyMag will be published at the end of every semester (Spring and Fall). We invite you to join us as we continue this magazine as a tradition of knowledge sharing. Many thanks for your interest!

Editors
Dr. Tehmina Saqib
Azher Hameed Qamar

Programs of Study
at Department of Psychology, UMT

MPhil Psychology

M-Phil Psychology Program with 33 Credit Hours of work takes 2 years to complete. It is a graduate psychology program with two distinct areas of concentration: Counseling Psychology and Personnel-Organizational Psychology. There are 5 courses which are compulsory for all students, another 2 elective courses, an internship and a thesis. Two elective courses can be taken either in the area of Counseling Psychology: i) Introduction to Counseling Psychology, ii) Counseling Intervention OR in the area of Personnel-Organizational Psychology: i) Organizational Psychology ii) Personnel Psychology

Eligibility:

(i) Must have 16 years of education: MSc in Psychology or BS (Honors) in Psychology

(ii) Must pass admission Test & Interview to assess their understanding of Psychology

MSc Psychology

The degree in Master of Science in Psychology, a 2 years program (70 credit hours), was launched in UMT in 2012 to cater to needs for higher education in Psychology for those students who did simple BA/ BSc and wanted to get a degree in Psychology. Invariably, they have studied Psychology as an elective subject in their college years.

Since MSc in Psychology would equal BS Psychology in terms of years of education in Psychology, the curriculum for the former is set to be similar to that of the latter in an inclusive education framework. The instructional methodology is appropriated in the individual courses in line with the nature of the subject and expertise of the relevant faculty.

The graduates of the both the programs are eligible to seek higher education; M-Phil Psychology / MS Psychology in Pakistan or Master's degree from abroad. The program is a blend of theory and practicum. Thesis and internship is offered to the students in the last two semesters.

Entrance Requirement: BA /BSc with minimum 45% marks

Admission Criteria: Applications are evaluated on the basis of previous academic record and performance in the interview/ written test.

Program Duration: Two years

BS Psychology

At UMT, BS Psychology is a 4-year program (130 credit hours) that focuses on behavior of people in the perspective of social sciences. It introduces students to the fundamental principles of psychology, various fields within psychology and methods used in psychological research. As a field psychology studies areas as diverse as clinical behavior problems, child development, workplace violence, self-esteem, racial prejudice, memory, decision making, mental illness, cognition and effect of different drugs on the brain. Psychologists also learn to critically evaluate "common sense" knowledge about how people function. Education in psychology, by its subject matter and method of study, develops and promotes the following skills and insights in learners:

- Critical & creative thinking skills
- One-on-one and small group communication
- Understanding of individual human behavior
- Knowledge of group and organizational behavior

Rector's Message

I WELCOME the first issue of PsyMAG and congratulate all the colleagues and contributors.

The University of Management and Technology has emerged as a symbol of quality higher education in the country and abroad. Department of Psychology as part of School of Social Sciences and Humanities strives to face the contemporary challenges in the field of psychology in particular and social sciences in general. Both faculty and participants are actively engaged in offering mental health services of good quality to the community.

Considering the importance of psychology in all spheres of life, PsyMAG (the psychology magazine) is a great initiative to open up a new thought avenue in psychology. PsyMAG, I hope, will highlight the departmental activities and promote research. As the professions in social sciences are continuously transformed to meet the new demands of the society in the 21st century, this effort will be seen as a great contribution. I wish all the best for the entire team of participants and faculty members and look forward to seeing this magazine transforming into a high quality research journal.

Dr Hasan Sohaib Murad
Rector UMT

Dean's Message

I WELCOME the first issue of PsyMAG and congratulate Head of the Department, the editors and all the contributors.

PsyMAG, the first psychology magazine at UMT, published by Department of Psychology is an ice-breaking contribution to School of Social Sciences and Humanities. I am delighted to see first issue of PsyMAG. Indeed, I like the idea to present curricular and co-curricular activities at the department in the form of a magazine that also focuses on the students' research activities. This will help the readers to become familiar with the psychology department and to know the efforts that teachers and students are putting in the field of contemporary psychology. Psychology Magazine is coming up as a source of knowledge and information. It is supporting learning and growth at the department, and I am quite optimistic about its successful academic future. I welcome the first issue of PsyMAG and congratulate Head of the Department, the editors and all the contributors. I hope that department of Psychology will continue its academic traditions and will contribute more to Psychology.

Prof. Dr. Abdul Hameed
Ph.D. Ohio State University, USA.
Dean SSH

HOD's Message

I WELCOME the first issue of PsyMAG and congratulate all the colleagues and contributors.

UMT is an excellent place for learning and teaching. Psychology is an exciting popular program here and faculty enjoys independence of thought and is encouraged to take innovative initiatives for improving quality of teaching and research in psychology. Students are engaged in seminars and co-curricular activities leading to their personal growth in addition to developing their mind for much needed social change in our society. In a conducive environment, students find their time stimulating and rewarding in UMT.
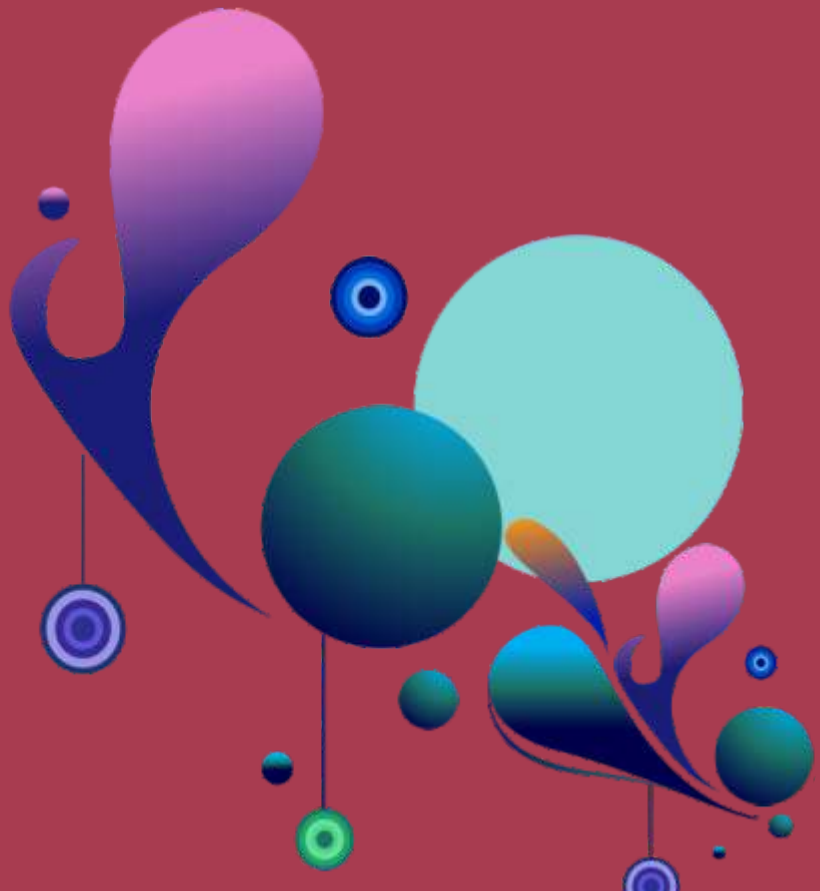
Prof. Iftikhar Ahmad
Head of the Department
PhD in Psychology, Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad.

Contents

PSYMAG.

BRINGING UP A DAUGHTER!
Islamic Perspective and Muslim Societies

Right to LIFE
Right to EDUCATION
Right to INHERITANCE
FREEDOM of Choice
Right to PARTICIPATE

Azher Hameed Qamar
First published in; PSYKOLOGISK TIDSSKRIFT, 13 March, 2010
Psykologisk Institute, SVT-fakultetet, NTNU, Trondheim, Norway

A 'child', who needs to be protected and nurtured by the elders of the society, is vulnerable for being an easy victim of discrimination on cultural, social, and religious or gender based prejudices. Thus, child-rearing practices raise a baby girl into a woman that is desired by the family or the culture. Most of the gender-based issues are followed in the name of religion. And more than 80% of the world population is practicing some religion or faith. More than half of the world is following Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) and Islam is the second largest religion in the world. Gender-based discrimination in many Muslim countries is not Islamic, as it is referred, but it has its roots in cultural and family traditions, or for other reasons that include greed for property inheritance, and male-domination. Following are some of the perceptions that can be seen in practice today.

Discrimination on the basis of physical and mental strengths. Discrimination on the basis of social and economical status.

A female child should be trained to serve the male members of the family because an ideal wife is the one, whose love is selfless like mother and whose service is dedicated like daughter (this concept goes for an ideal daughter and an ideal mother as well).

A female child should learn the submission of her own will. This is the role she has to play towards her parents when unmarried and to her husband when married.

The real home of a daughter is her husband's home and she is supposed to leave her parents, brothers and sisters one day. Before looking into the status of female child in Muslim families, first we have to see what Islam says about bringing up a daughter.

Non-discrimination in Islam

Pre-Islamic discrimination in Arabia was not limited to Arab or Non-Arab, but also dominated in their whole social life. Sons were preferred on daughters. Burying infant daughters alive was not a crime, rather a traditional act. Birth of a daughter was taken as a curse. Women were deprived of all rights and were no more than slaves, an easy victim of exploitation (Shah, 2006). Islam brought a revolutionary change and abolished all types of discrimination. All men and women are offspring of Adam and Eve, and born with equal religious, social, political, moral rights to spend a free life. Superiority among them is only based on piety and good deeds.

> "O mankind, We have created you from male and female; and We have divided you into tribes and sub-tribes for greater facility of communication. Verily, the most honored among you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most righteous among you. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware." (Al-Quran, 49:14)

Men and women share the same spiritual nature. They both have the honor to be the trustees of Allah on earth. They are equal in practicing social, moral, economical, and political rights sharing the concerned responsibilities. They are responsible for their good or bad deeds individually and will get equal reward in return. Most pious and virtuous is most loved by Allah (Badawi, 1995). There are many verses in the Quran that declare non-discrimination between genders in whichever aspect.

Sanctity of life, before and after Birth

> "Whosoever has spared the life of a soul, it is as though he has spared the life of all people. Whosoever has killed a soul, it is as though he has murdered all of mankind." (Al-Quran, 5:32)

The life of every soul is sacred, thus abortion is also forbidden, whether it is due to poverty or gender

discrimination. Quran called them as losers who killed children foolishly. According to most of the Islamic Scholars, life begins at conception and an embryo deserves respect and protection at all stages of the pregnancy. Anyhow, exception is the case, when the life of mother, foetus, or both is in danger, or there is risk of severe foetal deformity.

'A Child' in Islam

There is no numerical age definition of a child in Islam. A child is considered a child till it reaches puberty and maturity. According to the Covenant on the Rights of the Child in Islam (2004, article 1),

> "A child means every human being who, according to the law applicable to him/her, has not attained maturity.

According to Islam, a child is born innocent, without sins and he/she is loving and the most miraculous creation of Allah. The birth of a child should be celebrated. A daughter is a blessing upon parents.

Islamic Family System and Parent-Child Relationship

Article 5 of Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam (1990) states the importance of family and marriage in Islam in the following words;

> "The family is the foundation of society and marriage is the basis of its formation. Men and women have the right to marriage, and no restrictions stemming from race, color or nationality shall prevent them from enjoying this right."

Moreover, it is also stated that the Islamic state is responsible to remove all obstacles to marriage, family and welfare. Islamic family system assures the rights of parents, children, husband, wife and other relatives with selfless and loving behavior to each other. In fact the family is also the basic unit of Islamic Society (Khan, 2003). Family is a source of joy, love and contentment. Family is an institution for socialization of children by providing education, training, and socio-economical protection. Both genders play their role according to the status they have in the family. Quran and Sunnah are the source of guidance to perform their said role in the best interest of family. Islam lays special emphasis on

parent-child relationship and specifies rights and duties to provide a firm foundation for an Islamic Family System.

Parent's Rights and Children's Obligations

Parents must be respected and obeyed. There is no concept of 'old houses' in Islam. Children are responsible to take care of their parents when they get old.

> "Your Lord has commanded that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to your parents. If one of them or both of them reach old age with you, do not say to them a word of disrespect, or scold them, but say a generous word to them. And act humbly to them in mercy, and say, "My Lord, have mercy on them, since they cared for me when I was small." (Al-Quran, 17:23-24)

Even after death of parents, children should do kindness to them. To do kindness to parents after their death, Prophet (PBUH) advised to invoke blessings on them, forgiveness for them, carry out their final instructions after their death, join ties of relationship which are dependent on them, and honour their friends. (Sunan Abu-Dawud; Sahi Muslim)

Dignity of a 'Mother'

> "And We have enjoined man in respect of his parents-- his mother bears him with faintings upon faintings and his weaning takes two years-- saying: Be grateful to Me and to both your parents; to Me is the eventual coming." (Al-Quran, 31:14).

Mother suffers far more sufferings than a father in bringing up the children. Her sufferings start long before the birth of the child. Pregnancy, childbirth, nursing and rearing are the spiritual acts for a Muslim mother. Therefore, mothers are placed in the highest esteem among all relations in the family (Schleifer, 2007). According to a famous saying of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), paradise lies beneath the feet of mothers. A person asked Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) about the most worthy of his kindness among his relatives. The Prophet (PBUH) replied: "Your mother, again your

mother, again your mother, then your father, then your nearest relatives according to the order (of nearness)." (Sahi Bukhari; Sahi Muslim)

Children have obligations of respect, honor, obedience, kindness, service, and care to their parents. The failure to perform these obligations is a big sin. Even, if parents are not Muslims, they have these rights to be honored by their children. Parents can be disobeyed only if they ask something that violates Allah's Commands.

Children Rights and Parent's Obligations

Bringing up children well and without any discrimination is the main obligation of parents. It further includes all those rights that are comprised of provision, protection and participation rights. The details of these rights have been mentioned in Covenant of The Rights of The Child in Islam (2004) and almost all rights confirm United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). In an Islamic context, father is responsible for food, clothing, accommodation and all other needs of the family. To fulfill these needs, he must not discriminate among his children for any reason. Mother has an important role of child rearing because she spends most of her time with the children and thus also have the responsibility to educate and train them according to Islamic beliefs and values. Family is the first and foremost social and legal responsibility of a man, also associated with great virtue. Children should be loved and parents must spend their time with them, playing, chatting and having fun. It is exact Islam to be kind to children and teach them with love (Hussain, 2004). Love and kindness for children is a mercy from Allah that He puts in our hearts.

All rights about children and liabilities are practiced on the basis of Islamic moral and social system, consequently, forming a society free of social, economical, and sexual exploitation of the children. Summing up, a child must be loved, cared, educated and brought up into a confident, wise enough adult who may spend a free prosperous, peaceful and (morally and physically) healthy life according to Islam.

Birth of a Daughter – A Blessing

Before Islam, Arabs were used to kill their daughters and the birth of a girl was considered as a curse. It was a tradition to bury the newborn baby-girl alive.

"When news is brought to one of them, of (the birth of) a female (child), his face darkens, and he is filled with inward grief! With shame does he hide himself from his people, because of the bad news he has had! Shall he retain it on (sufferance and) contempt, or bury it in the dust? Ah! What an evil (choice) they decide on?" (Al-Quran, 16:58-59)

Islam rejected all these cruel attitudes and regarded the birth of a girl as a blessing from God Almighty. Quran condemns the cruel act of killing girls and holds the doers answerable for their sinful deed.

"And when the female infant buried alive is asked. For what sin she was killed." (Al-Quran, 81:8-9)

And the Prophet (PBUH) said "Allah has forbidden you (1) to be undutiful to your mothers (2) to withhold (what you should give) or (3) demand (what you do not deserve), and (4) to bury your daughters alive." (Sahi Bukhari)

Hussain (2004), quotes a hadith from Tabarani that shows how the parent are blessed on the birth of a daughter and Allah extends His succor to him who will look after her and bring up her.

Bringing up a Female Child

Children are a gift from God Almighty and God Almighty doesn't discriminate between the two genders. Therefore, in Islam, there is no distinction of bringing up a boy or a girl and the Covenant of The Rights of The Child in Islam (2004), is valid for both genders. That's the reason verses of Quran and the Prophet's saying regarding children rights, include rights of provision, protection and participation without discrimination. A female child enjoys personal freedom, individual identity, inheritance, freedom of choice and right to health and education. Like boys, girls should also be brought up and trained with pleasure and religious satisfaction. According to many Ahadiths; parents

who brought up their daughters in a good way, treat them with love, feed them, educate them, and arrange a good marriage for them, they deserve paradise. Same advice is also for brothers towards their sisters.

Participation Rights

Likewise, all other rights on equality basis, girls do have the right to participate in social, political, and religious activities. There are numbers of examples from Islamic history, where Muslim women took part in political, educational, social, and administrative affairs. They had been subject specialists, scholars, teachers, poetess, lawyers, judge, doctors, soldiers, and administrators (Qadri, 2009). For financial activities, they are advised not to engage themselves if they don't have any financial problems. But if the husband or father are not earning enough to meet the needs of the family, they can support them taking part in financial activities.

Inheritance

A girl shares the inheritance from her father and husband. Though she gets the one half as compared to the inheritance of a son but she also inherits from husband and enjoys the freedom to use her inheritance according to her own wish, since she does not have any financial liability. Moreover, son is responsible for old parents, sisters, wife and kids whereas daughter has no financial responsibility before or after marriage. Before marriage, father and brothers are responsible for her needs and after marriage husband is responsible. The misconception that 'Islam prefers men on women' is a misunderstanding of the Quranic verse that says:

"Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allâh has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend (to support them) from their means." (Al-Quran, 4:34).

This verse says about the responsibility that a man has more than a woman, and not the superiority. Islam emphasizes on equality but with equity because "Equality might be misunderstood to mean absolute equality rather overall equality" (Abidin, 2007).

Marriage

The minimum age for marriage is 'when a boy or girl is not a child' and the definition of child has been described earlier. Marriage is a spiritual, moral and social union of two persons on equality of rights to each other and as partners in life through thick and thin. An Islamic marriage takes place only if; Both the groom and the bride are agreed in the presence of witnesses. Husband is religiously bound to pay 'Mahr' (obligatory bridal money) to the wife that cannot be taken back in any case. Any forced marriage will be cancelled according to Islamic laws. There are examples in Islamic history when the forced marriages were declared null and void. Islam does not consider any woman to be the possession of any man. The Quran describes this as a sacred, loving and calm relation between two genders.

A Glimpse into Muslim Societies Today

Due to concision requirements of the article, it is not possible to describe all societies and all types of discrimination. Therefore, I will discuss some of the important issues of gender-based discrimination in the Sub-Continent (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh). I think, the number of Islamic religious organizations (belonging to different school of thoughts and on different level or priorities) in the Sub-Continent is more than in any other Muslim country. Following are some of the issues, that I have observed which highly violate the women rights as granted by Islam.

Desire for a Son

A mother, who is giving birth to daughters, is a victim of emotional and psychological torture by the family and community as well. Her food and health requirements are neglected during and after pregnancy. Whereas, a mother giving birth to a son is a special one, cared and looked after in the best possible way. Consequently, reinforced by this, a woman desires for a son (Violation of right to life, health, survival, development).

Right to Education

So far the right to education is concerned; situation has improved in the last few years, but still not up to the mark. Girls' education is not considered as important as that of boys because: They are not supposed to do jobs like boys. They are not supposed to get the freedom of opinion that education can give them. Even religious education is limited to offering prayer, reciting Quran,

and acting upon some basic beliefs. That's the reason women are also not well aware of their rights in Islam. It also highlights the fear that male elders can lose their 'control' on educated girls.

Freedom of Choice for Marriage

A girl is not supposed to go against the decisions of the family elders regarding her marriage. Her freedom to choose the right partner is considered immoral. A refusal of parent's choice might result into severe treatment towards her. She might be tortured psychologically, emotionally, or physically. Such cases have also been reported where the girl's life is at risk, who tries to choose her life partner herself. Honor-killings are also one of the aspects of this serious issue. Similarly, child marriages, exchange marriages, marrying girls as ransom for murder, using girls for tribal disputes etc. are the issues directly violating women rights to life, physical safety, psychological peace, and freedom of choice according to Islam.

Right to Inheritance

To deprive the girls of property inheritance, totally or partially is also a major issue. This is also a reason why girls are not allowed to choose their mates. Even, culturally it is considered a good action if the sisters 'gift' their inheritance to brothers. 'Marriage with Quran' (to cover the head of the girl with Quran and teach her the Holy Quran, to remain unmarried afterwards) is also an 'Against Islam' act that is done to deprive the girl of inheritance. These are some of the serious issues, which as a whole violate many important rights granted by Islam and other human right conventions. Islam is very clear about the status of woman in a Muslim society on the basis of equality and equity. Unfortunately, there are many human rights activists and organizations, who promote their campaign while ignoring the Islamic perspectives or rather opposing Islam according to their limited knowledge. I suggest that they must study Islam in a more optimistic way ignoring or arguing those so-called Muslim scholars who presents Islam according to the cultural or traditional needs. I am sure, when common people will get a clear picture of Islam, they will be motivated to honor status of a woman in a Muslim society. And for sure, child-rearing practices will also be influenced optimistically.

For detailed reference list please contact azher.qamar@umt.edu.pk

Picture Source: www.mukhiddin.deviantart.com

IMAM AL-GHAZALI

Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (450-505 AH/1058-1111 AD) [aka: al-Ghazzali , Algazel] is one of the great jurists, theologians and mystics of the 12th Century. He wrote on a wide range of topics including jurisprudence, theology, mysticism and philosophy

Contribution of Muslim Psychologists will be a regular feature of PsyMAG

Al-Ghazali is most famous for his contributions in philosophy, religion and Sufism. He is also known as Algazel in the West. Abu Hamid Ibn Muhammad Ibn Muhammad al-Tusi al-Shafi'i al-Ghazali was born in 1058 C.E. in Khorman, Iran. His father died while he was still very young but he had the opportunity of getting education in the prevalent curriculum at Nishapur and Baghdad. Soon he acquired a high standard of scholarship in religion and philosophy and was honored by his appointment as a Professor at the Nizamiyah University of Baghdad, which was recognized as one of the most reputed institutions of learning in the golden era of Muslim history.
After a few years, however, he gave up his academic pursuits and worldly interests and became a wandering ascetic. This was a process (period) of mystical transformation. Later, he resumed his teaching duties, but again left these. An era of solitary life, devoted to contemplation and writing then ensued, which led to the authorship of a number of everlasting books. He died in 1128 C.E. at Baghdad.

Al-Ghazali was a prolific writer. His immortal books include Tuhafat al-Falasifa (The Incoherence of the Philosophers), Ihya al-'Ulum al-Islamia (The Revival of the Religious Sciences), "The Beginning of Guidance and his Autobiography," "Deliverance from Error." Some of his works were translated into European languages in the middle ages. He also wrote a summary of astronomy.

Al-Ghazali's influence was deep and everlasting. He is one of the greatest theologians of Islam. His theological doctrines penetrated Europe, influenced Jewish and Christian Scholasticism and several of his arguments seem to have been adopted by St. Thomas Aquinas in order to similarly reestablish the authority of orthodox Christian religion in the West. So forceful was his argument in the favor of religion that he was accused of damaging the cause of philosophy and, in the Muslim Spain, Ibn Rushd wrote a rejoinder to his Tuhafut.

In Islamic psychology, al-Ghazali discussed the concept of the self and the causes of its misery and happiness. He described the self using four terms: Qalb (heart), Ruh (spirit), Nafs (soul) and Aql (intellect). He stated that "the self has an inherent yearning for an ideal, which it strives to realize and it is endowed with qualities to help realize it." He further stated that the self has motor and sensory motives for fulfilling its bodily needs. He wrote that the motor motives comprise of propensities and impulses, and further divided the propensities into two types: appetite and anger. He wrote that appetite urges hunger, thirst, and sexual craving, while anger takes the form of rage, indignation and revenge. He further wrote that impulse resides in the muscles, nerves, and tissues, and moves the organs to "fulfill the propensities."
Al-Ghazali was one of the first to divide the sensory motives into five external senses (the classical senses of hearing, sight, smell, taste and touch) and five internal senses: common sense (Hiss Mushtarik) which synthesizes sensuous impressions carried to the brain while giving

meaning to them; imagination (Takhayyul) which enables someone to retain mental images from experience; reflection (Tafakkur) which brings together relevant thoughts and associates or dissociates them as it considers fit but has no power to create anything new which is not already present in the mind; recollection (Tadhakkur) which remembers the outer form of objects in memory and recollects the meaning; and the memory (Hafiza) where impressions received through the senses are stored.

He wrote that, while the external senses occur through specific organs, the internal senses are located in different regions of the brain, and discovered that the memory is located in the hinder lobe, imagination is located in the frontal lobe, and reflection is located in the middle folds of the brain. He stated that these inner senses allow people to predict future situations based on what they learn from past experiences.

He argues that the intellect is "the fundamental rational faculty, which enables man to generalize and form concepts and gain knowledge." He also argues that human will and animal will are both different. He further writes that the Qalb (heart) controls and rules over them and that it has six powers: appetite, anger, impulse, apprehension, intellect, and will. He states that humans have all six of these traits, while animals only have three (appetite, anger, and impulse). This was in contrast to other ancient and medieval thinkers such as Aristotle, Ibn e Sina, Roger Bacon and Thomas Aquinas who all believed that animals cannot become angry. Al-Ghazali writes that knowledge can either be innate or acquired. He divides acquired knowledge into phenomenal (material world) and spiritual (related to God and soul), and divides acquired knowledge into imitation, logical reasoning, contemplation and intuition. He also argues that there are four elements in human nature: the sage (intellect and reason), the pig (lust and gluttony), the dog (anger), and the devil (brutality). He argues that the latter three elements are in conflict with the former element and that "different people have such powers in different proportions."

He argues that for a soul to reach perfection, it needs to evolve through several stages: sensuous (like a moth which has no memory), imaginative (lower animal), instinctive (higher animal), rational ("transcends animal stage and apprehends objects beyond the scope of his senses") and divine ("apprehends reality of spiritual things").

He stated that there are two types of diseases: physical and spiritual. He considered the latter to be more dangerous, resulting from "ignorance and deviation from God", and listed the spiritual diseases as: self-centeredness; addiction to wealth, fame and social status; and ignorance, cowardice, cruelty, lust, malevolence, envy, deception, and greed. To overcome these spiritual weaknesses, al-Ghazali suggested the therapy of opposites ("use of imagination in pursuing the opposite"), such as ignorance and learning, or hate and love. He described the personality as an "integration of spiritual and bodily forces" and believed that "closeness to God is equivalent to normality whereas distance from God leads to abnormality."

Al-Ghazali further asserted that human beings are midway between animals and angels and their distinguishing quality is knowledge. He argues that a human can either rise to "the level of the angels with the help of knowledge" or fall to "the levels of animals by letting his anger and lust dominate him."

Note: Material is based on a classroom project carried out by students of MSc Batch II (Course Title: Perspectives in Psychology). A documentary capturing the contribution of Muslim Scholars was also prepared which is available with the department.

Resource Person: Dr. Tehmina Saqib

PARENTS AND ADOLESCENCE

Dr. Aliya Aftab

Adolescence is a time of challenge and change – for both teen and parent.

A dolescence is a time of challenge and change -- for both teen and parent. Our teens are at a stage in life where they face a multitude of pressing decisions -- including those about friends, careers, smoking, drinking, drugs and parental values. At the same time, they are confronted with profound physical, social and emotional changes.

Although the first use of the word "adolescence" appeared in the 15th century and came from the Latin word "adolescere," which means "to grow up or to grow into maturity." It wasn't until 1904 that the first president of the American Psychological Association, G. Stanley Hall, was credited with discovering adolescence. In his study entitled "Adolescence," he described this new developmental phase that came about due to social changes at the turn of the 20th century.

Adolescence is a time of overcoming one's beast-like impulses as one is surrounded in a period of "storm and stress." It is perpetuated in part, because many adults buy into the "myths" of adolescence. What, for instance, do you think of the following statements?

– **Adolescence is an abnormal age, characterized by neuroses, anxieties and other psychological problems.**

– **Teenagers are inherently rebellious.**

– **Adolescents are nonconformists and unconventional in their habits and beliefs.**

– **A "generation gap" exists between adolescents and adults. Adolescents don't want to have anything to do with adults.**

All of the statements (see box) are **false!** Myths of adolescence are perpetuating because adults do not spend the time and effort learning about normal, expected changes during this period. It is much easier for us to put a label on people rather than to try to understand them. The teen years are truly "high speed, high need" years. The major developmental tasks to be answered during this time are: (1) "Who am I?" This helps the adolescence use their mind to make their identity. To find out who they really are? By asking clear self-identity questions, they may find answers that will be enlightening, even insightful and complex. They will strive to learn to make good choices and decisions toward their future as a responsible citizen. Whereas, (2) "How do I relate to the world?" This will help them realize the meaning of life. It gets them connected to the deep inner self for self realization.

While most parents realize that there are normal struggles between parents and teens as their sons and daughters struggle for independence and identity, they are often shocked by the length and intensity of the conflict. They are stunned by

apparent rejection of some of their most sacred values and confused by their teenagers "acting up" and "acting out." In attempting to become psychologically independent of their parents, teens often attempt to move completely away from any control or influence by their parents.

Disagreements arise between parents and teens, usually over a matter of control, and the power struggle over "Who's in charge" and "Who's right" begins. On one hand, the parent is frequently correct in saying, "My teen is just not responsible enough or careful enough to be allowed to ..." On the other hand, a teen is often correct when he/she says, "My parents continue to treat me like I am 10 years old."

One reason that the struggle for control continues or heats up is because both parents and teens are human. Parents give up control and then take it back. Teens act responsibly one weekend, irresponsibly the next. There are few things more difficult about being a parent than trying to figure out how to give the teenage son or daughter freedom enough to learn responsibility, self-reliance and the consequences of decision making, yet still keeping some control over behavior that is potentially dangerous. The typically stormy emotions of a teenager often increase the difficulty of situations. And, if the parent is angry, hostile or rejecting, the situation can deteriorate into a "standoff" between them and full-blown crisis in the home.

What can parents do? How can parents combine flexibility with the control necessary to help adolescents regulate their inner impulses? These guidelines may help:

Give teenagers clear rules. Adolescents need help in setting limits on their behavior. They need to know what rules are acceptable for family members to follow. They need to know what parents expect and what their "bottom lines" are. Often, teenagers resent rules and test the absolute limits. But parents should not be afraid of "taking a stand" and insisting on certain behaviors that reflect their values. Parents can show respect for their teenager's feelings and opinions, but should reserve the right to set a few absolute limits about their teen actions.

Don't overact. The most important attribute a parent can have toward the teen is patience. And, it is often the most difficult attribute to give to teens. Patience means accepting the teenager's feelings. It means "listening with your heart as well as your ear." Listening, in a non- judgmental fashion opens the door for understanding.

Teach survival skills. Parents can do this by encouraging teens to take part in group activities.

Give lots of encouragement. Teens need to know that their families care about them, especially when they get in trouble. Be sure they know that you care. Show interest in their friends, school, and activities. Stand by them, not over them.

Only battle over important matters. As long as teenagers don't hurt themselves or others, ignore little things that irritate you. (Example: hair styles, clothes.) If parents battle with teens over everything they don't like or disapprove, teens may decide to rebel by "dropping out" or using drugs. Save your influence for important matters!

Don't treat teens like children. Don't say, "You aren't eating well enough" or, "You aren't getting enough sleep. You'd better be in bed early tonight," or "You can't have the car anymore till you bring your grades up." Treat your teens like responsible persons and they will act responsibly. Teenagers resent being treated like children. If you treat them like children, they will set out to prove they are not children, sometimes with delinquent, antisocial behavior.

Encourage independence. Parents have to learn to "let go" to keep their teenagers intact. Separation from parents is a gradual process -- not a one-time event. It begins in infancy when the child first crawls away from mother and continues when the two-year-old says, "No! Me do it!" Separation, individuation, identity, autonomy are tasks which teenagers must accomplish to become mature, responsible adults. Parents can help by "letting go" gradually as the child matures.

What can the teenagers do to improve relationship with parents?

Be Open And Honest With Your Parents. This is the only way you will earn trust from them. Don't tell your parents what you think they want to hear; tell them the truth. If you think they will use your honesty as influence against you, and then explain that to your parents so the dynamic can change. Communicating with parents is extremely essential. Sometimes due to lack of communication a lot of misunderstandings take place. Think of your parents as your friends. Confide in them. Take advice from them as they are more experienced.

Respect your parents. No put-downs, each of you having the right to have an opinion, listening and being able to voice what you think. Greetings the parents and giving them respect and dignity helps create a good rapport. Respecting parents shows good mannerism. It will give them happiness and pleasure that is essential for a healthy relationship.

Empathy. Listening and understanding each other - putting yourself in the other person's shoes. This creates balance and understanding.

Don't fight with them. Remind them that not everyone has the same interests, desires, or makes the same choices. Tell them that although you learned much from them, you have become your own person with your own preferences and feelings. After you have finished, sit quietly and see how they react and what they have to say. If they are positive and accepting, then you have made your point. Hug them and emphasize how

much you love and appreciate them. If, however, they say that they cannot accept you for who you have become, just say you are sorry they feel that way.

Consistency. Don't have erratic behavior patterns as they are bad influence on personality building. You know where you and others stand. Consistency brings in balance and harmony.

Don't turn your back on your parents. You cannot force them to love and accept you, but you can be kind to them. Accept them as they are and always be there for them. Be there for them when they need you.

As an adult, you must model acceptable adult behavior in all situations. If you can say "I'm sorry I got angry," or "I apologize for criticizing you before listening to all you have to say," teens will have more respect for all adults. It is also useful to remind young teenagers (13-15) that it is easier to treat them as adults if they act like adults. And it is very useful to adult parents to remember that they were once teenagers themselves.

About the Contributor: Dr. Aliya Aftab is a Psychologist and a member of Provincial Assembly of the Punjab. She recently completed her PhD in Clinical Hypnotherapy from the National Guild of Hypnosis in California, USA.