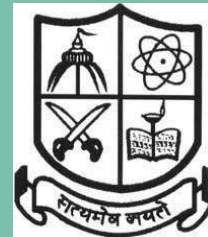


# DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

B.J.B AUTONOMOUS COLLEGE, BHUBANESWAR  
JANUARY 2024-MAY 2024



## SEMI-ANNUAL NEWS LETTER

JANUARY 2024- MAY 2024

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# Note from Prof. Dr. Jhumki Rath, HOD, Psychology

The winter session of 2023-2024 kickstarted from January 2024. The semester was marked by two path - breaking events in the department.

The first was appointing a counsellor for the counselling centre of the PG department of psychology, to facilitate one -to- one counselling of the students of the college. The aim of this move was also to sensitize students regarding the benefits of counselling.



The second event was signing of an MOU between the Department and Manam, a leading mental health foundation of Bhubaneswar. The purpose of such a MOU would be to conduct regular mental health campaign in the college, including hostel. Moreover, it would set the stage for faculty and students exchange for community - based research projects and internship facilities for UG and PG students.

The semester ended with bidding farewell to the outgoing +3 students by all the students of the department of psychology.

# Articles by Students

## Beyond Band-Aid Solutions: Positive Psychology Addresses

The burden of societal problems can be overwhelming. Poverty, discrimination, and violence are all dark and intimidating figures that stand in between us and the ideal change that might last for years. Nonetheless, what if we did not just focus on the treatment of the symptoms? Positive psychology, which has initially been based on the study of individual well-being, has offered a new perspective from which such complex problems are to be viewed.

### Shifting the Focus: from hindrances to flourishing

Normally, traditional social programs function from a social deficit model, focusing on the missing items in individuals or communities. Low-income areas' training programs may focus more on skills' development outside the context of greater aspirations and strengths they possess. Contrary to the pessimistic view, positive psychology provides another perspective. Projects such as "Strengths Finder" help people discover their unique capacities within themselves, through which self-confidence and a profound sense of purpose develop. Positive interventions, which are based on the existing human capital, may spread a circular effect, thus increasing self-efficacy and/or the optimistic view of life.

### Creating an Environment of Gratitude and Interconnection

The majority of social problems don't develop in isolation. Communities that suffer from poverty may also suffer from fragmented social bonds. Here, positive psychology stands for the collective well-being-promoting approach. "Gratitude circles," for example, ask you to list your neighbours and the positive sides of your community that you are grateful for. The suggested method builds a sense of gratitude and belonging and helps strengthen the social fabric of communities, making them more resilient when faced with issues.

### Tapping into the Power Reservoir of Positive Emotions

Social conflict can amplify negative behaviour. Bias and stereotypes thrive in the ominous landscape of fear and suspicion. Positive psychology comes with a bag of useful tools that will help to build a more positive emotional ambience. For example, "compassionate training" develops empathy and the ability to find a common language with another person with a diverse background or differing point of view. With this change of perspective, one can begin building a more cooperative and not just problem-solving attitude towards solving these

### A brighter future, one step at a time

Effective social interventions to solve issues aren't magic solutions. They take time, effort, and periodic evaluation. While they provide a contrast, they propose a path that is not only about what's not right but also about what can be made. Positive psychology, through the strength of nurturing, the harnessing of positive emotions, and promoting collective wellbeing, equips people with the tools to deal with these social issues with a newfound sense of optimism. The road might be a long one, but we can take it one small step at a time until it reaches its destination.

Manosmita Patanaik  
UG, Final Year.

## Exploring Portrayals of Mental Illness in Cinema

Cinema is a powerful medium that has the potential to entertain, educate, and challenge societal norms. It inspires and motivates individuals with its thought-provoking dialogues, while also providing a glimpse into the unconscious assumptions of past societies. By presenting complex issues in an engaging way, cinema encourages us to examine them more closely and push our psyche to new depths. People with mental illness face immense challenges, including overwhelming feelings, volatile emotions, and a range of debilitating symptoms such as withdrawal, delusions, paranoia, and anti-social behaviour. It is crucial for society to provide support and understanding for those with mental illness, rather than further alienating them. However, when it comes to portraying mental illness in Indian film industry, filmmakers often fall short. They neglect the facts and present a misguided interpretation of mental disorders, perpetuating negative stereotypes and stigma. As a result, those with mental illness are often unfairly ridiculed by society and seen as a burden or outcasts.

However, it is important to note that not all Indian films adhere to this stereotype. There are several exceptional films that break the mold and tackle complex mental health issues with confidence and sensitivity. Aparna Sen's *15 Park Avenue*, for instance, tells the compelling story of a schizophrenic woman, while the movie *Black*, starring the legendary Amitabh Bachchan and Rani Mukherji, portrays Alzheimer's disease with remarkable authenticity. *Tare Zameen Par* beautifully explores the life of a child with dyslexia, and *My Name is Khan* subtly delves into the world of Asperger's syndrome. *Barfi*, on the other hand, depicts the heartwarming journey of an autistic woman finding love. *Heroine* boldly showcases a bipolar Kareena Kapoor Khan in the lead role, while *Tamasha* sees Ranbir Kapoor brilliantly portraying a character with borderline personality disorder. The Tamil film *3* famous for its pappy song "Kola Veri Di", starring Dhanush, sheds light on bipolar disorder. These films not only challenge stereotypes but also contribute to a more confident and nuanced representation of mental health issues in Indian cinema.

Cinema serves as a powerful platform for the authentic portrayal of individuals grappling with mental disorders. It is through the lens of cinema that mental illness is explored with utmost precision and accuracy. Esteemed directors such as Martin Scorsese, Daniel Aronofsky, David Fincher, Charlie Kaufman, and countless others have masterfully depicted mental illness in their films, enlightening society and challenging the stigma surrounding it. These films serve as a conduit for empathy, allowing audiences to truly comprehend and empathize with the arduous battles faced by those with mental health issues. Here are some outstanding examples of movies that have masterfully portrayed mental health issues: The Academy Award-winning film "A Beautiful Mind" (2001) flawlessly captures the life of a brilliant mathematician grappling with schizophrenia. Russel Crowe's portrayal of John Nash is nothing short of perfection, showcasing his struggle with the fluctuation of reality and delusions. The supporting actress in this film impeccably justifies her role, aiding in Nash's recovery. "Girl, Interrupted," starring Winona Ryder and Angelina Jolie, delves into the world of a 17-year-old girl with borderline personality disorder, who finds herself rushed to a mental institution after a suicide attempt. This movie not only explores BPD but also sheds light on anorexia, depression, substance abuse, self-immolation, acute psychosis, schizophrenia, and even sociopathy, brilliantly portrayed by Jolie.

“One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest,” featuring the incomparable Jack Nicholson, exposes the harsh reality of mental asylums. The film’s most significant lesson is that there is no one-size fits-all approach to helping individuals with mental illness. As a society, we must strive to understand them and approach them with the best of intentions. “Silver Linings Playbook,” directed by David Russell, offers a profound insight into the positive and negative aspects of bipolar disorder. The movie powerfully demonstrates the importance of finding oneself and not allowing others to control our destiny. Martin Scorsese’s “Shutter Island” and “The Aviator” flawlessly depict delusional disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder. Leonardo DiCaprio’s portrayal in both films is exquisitely balanced and expertly presented. These movies stand as some of the finest works in cinema when it comes to representing mental illness.

In “Black Swan,” Natalie Portman flawlessly embodies the character of a bulimic, anxious, and OCD individual. “Requiem for a Dream” masterfully portrays the depths of psychosis, anorexia, depression, PTSD, and addiction. And in “Pi,” Aronofsky fearlessly delves into the complexities of a schizoid personality disorder. These films boldly explore the intricacies of the human mind, leaving an indelible mark on the world of cinema. There is an abundance of coming-of-age films that exude confidence and tackle the challenges faced by teenagers head-on. Movies such as Inside Out, Dr. Birds’ Advice for Sad Poets, A Beautiful Boy, Donnie Darko, All the Bright Places, The Perks of Being a Wallflower, and the Netflix series 13 Reasons Why, to name just a few, boldly address the issues that adolescents encounter and provide valuable insights on how to navigate through these transformative years. Teenagers are at their most vulnerable during this period, and these films serve as a powerful source of motivation, enlightening the masses about the significance of therapy, friendship, and the struggles teenagers face with identity crises, eating disorders, depression, and forming meaningful relationships. Works like Dead Poets Society and Good Will Hunting go beyond the confines of academia, teaching us that life encompasses so much more. They remind us to seize the day, to pursue our passions and dreams, and to discover our true selves. Above all, they emphasize the importance of self-love and the value of dedicating ourselves to the things we are passionate about. Indian cinema often fails to adequately address mental illness issues, prioritizing commercial interests instead. Films like “Hasee Toh Phasee,” “Bhool Bhulaiyaa,” “Tere Naam,” and “Atrangi Re” tend to romanticize and overly dramatize mental health, merely entertaining audiences without raising awareness. Woody Allen once famously said, “If my film makes one more person miserable, I’ll feel I’ve done my job,” this quote is definitely not acknowledged by Indian filmmakers. It is crucial for Indian cinema to become more vocal about pressing issues like depression and anxiety. The reality is that 10.6% of India’s 1.3 billion population suffer from mental health disorders, according to India’s National Mental Health Survey 2015-16. Shockingly, 80% of these individuals do not receive any treatment, primarily due to a lack of education and awareness surrounding psychological disorders. Mental health problems are often considered taboo, and seeking help from a psychiatrist is seen as a sign of weakness. This stigma leads to derogatory remarks being made towards those suffering from depression and anxiety, further exacerbating the problem. Cinema’s beauty lies in its ability to influence people effortlessly, irrespective of their educational background. It’s a medium that anyone can comprehend, making it accessible to all. Cinema is undeniably a reflection of society, a medium through which we seek to see ourselves.

In a world that can often feel mundane and repetitive, it offers a much-needed escape and a stunning illusion. However, the true power and significance of cinema are yet to be fully comprehended. Like poetry and art, it has the potential to inspire and uplift millions, but also to devastate and destroy. In recent times, many actors have bravely opened up about their struggles with mental health. As an audience, we often hold these individuals in high esteem and are deeply influenced by their words and actions. Therefore, it is imperative that actors exercise caution and responsibility in the messages they convey. In order to truly make a bold and influential impact in the Indian film industry, we must have the confidence to eliminate unnecessary drama, present raw and unfiltered facts, and completely eradicate the objectification of women in dance numbers. Only by taking these decisive steps can we hope to achieve our goals and make a lasting impression. In order to bring this article to a close, I would like to include a quote - “*Cinema is not only about making people dream. It’s about changing things and making people think.*” – Nadine Labaki.

# MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING



A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Manam Foundation, Bhubaneswar and Department of Psychology on 13.02.2024. This MoU is expected to facilitate internships, exposure to community-based outreach activities and case studies to be conducted for project work. Faculty exchange and series of lectures as a result of this collaboration would expand the sphere of work for the Department.



# Students' Achievements



Snghe Sido Murmu of 1st year bagged First prize in Debate competition Pratyasha Barla, Final year secured 3rd position in the Mobile Odia Typing Competition held during Youth Red Cross Volunteers' State Level Camp held on 06.02.2024 to 08.02.2024.

Srujani Jena, 2nd year got 3rd prize in Essay, Payal Pattanaik, 1st year got 2nd prize in Slogan, Nupur Pattanaik, 1st year got 3rd prize in Painting and Singe Sido Murmu, 1st year got 2nd prize in Debate competition held in the Annual Day Celebration of Red Cross Blood Bank Center on 1st April, 2024



Pooja Rout, 2nd Year secured 2nd position in Debate and Srujani Jena, 2nd year, Ananya Priyadashine 2nd year and Badal Kumar Mahalik, 3rd year secured Second Position in the Role Playing Competition held in Srusty Academy of Management on 31.03.2024.

# Minigolf

Payal Pattanaik and Nupur Pattanaik of 1st year won bronze medal at the 9th Senior Minigolf Championship held at Nagpur on 03.03.2024 to 06.03.2024



**Nupur Pattanaik** of 1st year received two Gold Medals at the Odisha State Minigolf Championship on 13.01.2024 and 14.01.2024 at Bhubaneswar

**Payal Pattanaik** of 1st year received one Gold and one Silver Medal at Odisha State Minigolf Championship on 13.01.2024 and 14.01.2024 at Bhubaneswar





# Departmental Activities



Prof Itishree Padhi was felicitated by Faculty members upon taking over Charge as Principal, B.J.B Autonomous



Counsellor Swagatika Panda continuing her counselling classes



Pledge on National Voter's Day



International Women's Day Observed in the Department

Faculty members bidding farewell to **two seniors** office staffs who attained superannuation



Project Viva of UG Final Year

Annual Competitions in the Department



Farewell of UG Final Year Students

# Invited Talks



**Prof Jhumki Rath,**  
HOD, Psychology addressed a  
group of teachers in Blossom's  
School, Bhubaneswar on the  
topic "The Cost of Workplace  
Stress and its Management" on  
**10.05.2024**



**Mrs Lekha Das, Assistant Professor**  
was invited as Resource Person to  
deliver a talk on "Psychological  
Issues of Adolescents" at Nilachal  
Polytechnic, Bhubaneswar on  
**11.05.2023**



**Mrs Lekha Das** was invited as  
Guest to address the students  
on Positive Psychology in  
the on "Capacity Building  
on Mental Health for Youth  
Red Cross Volunteers and  
Counsellors on 30.03.2024  
at Srusti Academy of  
Management, Bhubaneswar.



**. Mrs Lekha Das addressed the  
YRC Volunteers of Maharshi  
Women's Degree College,  
Bhubaneswar on "Disability" on  
19.03.2024.**



**Dr. Pragnya Paramita  
Priyadarshini Das, Assistant  
Professor, was invited as  
Resource Person to deliver a  
talk on "Enhancing Mental  
Health in Adolescents" on  
01.03.2024 at R.D Women's  
University.**