



A Clinical and Psychological approach in analyzing Age Sensibility and Pain in Kabuliwala and Idgah short stories by Rabindranath Tagore and Munshi Premchand

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ABSTRACT

Tagore and Munshi Premchand wrote stories in Indian languages in the pre-independence era of India. In both the stories Kabuliwallah and Idgah the protagonists are children around 7-10 years old and other characters revolve around them. This research paper tries to explore that, is there a connection between age, sensibility and pain or they are apart from each other. The theory of accomplishment and reward is connected with Age, Sensibility and Pain. With every accomplishment if there is a reward then happiness increases and pain decreases. Here it is also discussed that with the increase in age comes more sensibility and with more sensibility the person with the negative attitude suffers from more pain. The adage, ignorance is bliss, comes true. Mini a girl of 7 and Kabuliwala, middle aged, share their feelings and are happy together but Kabuliwala at the same time because of the environmental insult and his developed senses of love and affection is missing his daughter while Mini due to accomplishment and reward theory and the less evolved sensibility, is happy with in the given situation. In Idgah, Hamid a boy of 4-5 years, is happy in the given situation. He thinks his parents are away to earn money while his grandmother is the most unhappy on the earth as she pretty well knows that her son and daughter-in-law had died. With her aged sensibility and physical and mental incapacity she can't find the situation happy.

Keywords: explore, age, sensibility and pain, hormones, happiness, accomplishment, reward, process, environment, insult, evolution, mind, attitude, life, situations.

1.1 Introduction:

Mini hasn't wasted a single minute of her life in silence. She is always chattering and prattling. She has thousands of questions and even without getting her answers, her another question is ready. Her father is a writer and her mother is a housewife. They both are busy in their work and don't have time to answer her variety of questions. It was her father in the whole world who had patience to listen to her hyper imaginative and flamboyant questions. He struggled hard to answer them but when the discourse lasted longer he too got tired of answering his daughter.

Rehman, a dry fruit seller from Afghanistan, sells dry fruits in the streets of Kolkata and also comes to sell them in the vicinity where Mini lives with her family. He is a paddler, carrying a big cloth bag on his shoulder and boxes of grapes in his hands. His tall stature, beard and soiled clothes, from nowhere makes him a pleasing personality but his wares and his style attracts the little Mini and she calls him to buy dry fruits. Rehman too had a daughter of Mini's age, the pressing need to raise his family has brought him to a farland. He finds his own daughter in Mini. This belongingness brings Mini and Rehman, the Kabuliwallah, closer. Language, religion and age make no difference in their friendship.

Rabindranath Tagore, took up the challenge of exploring race prejudices in the short story Kabuliwala (LAL Malashri, 2010). Though initially Rehman had to buy his friendship by gifting Mini, dry fruits, but later they befriended each other so closely that her mother grew suspicious that may Rehman kidnap her young daughter and parcel her to Kabul as a slave. Their friendship grew and everyday they started meeting. Their laughter can be heard in her father's sitting room. Rehman many a times says, "**Soshur bari jab?**" (Kabuliwallah 1892), to

tease Mini, meaning that when will she go to her father-in-law's house and without understanding the meaning she would reply "When will you go to your father-in-law's house", (Kabuliwallah).

Besides selling dry fruits and grapes Rehman was a secret money lender also. To one of his consumers he had sold a Rampuri Shawl and the person kept on denying and this time the buyer became violent and Rehman in the rage of anger stabbed him. He is caught with a blood stained knife and the police are taking him to jail. On listening a hue and cry Mini and her father too came out and they gathered the above said story. When police were taking Rehman, he happened to meet Mini and there also he clenches his fist and says, that he is going to his father-in-law's house, i.e., jail, where he has no work only to eat.

Several years have passed and Mini has grown up. They all have forgotten Kabuliwallah. It is Mini's marriage day and Kabuliwallah comes and meets her father. He insists on meeting her but her father does not allow him to meet Mini. As he goes out Mini's father stops him and calls Mini to meet Rehman. Mini, now a grown up female, comes in her bridal dress to meet Rehman and there itself Rehman says, "Soshur bari jab". This time Mini understands it and shrinks with shyness. Rehman was on the verge of breaking into tears seeing this, Mini's father took out a sum from his budget for Mini's marriage arrangements and gave it to Rehman to go to his country and meet his daughter who must have grown up like Mini.

In Idgah, Hamid is a 5-6 years old boy, with a face on which poverty has set permanently, so early. His clothes are soiled; his white cap has become yellow and has black patches at the corners of embroidery. Last year cholera has taken the sacrifice of his father and slowly his mother died due to anemia, is full of enthusiasm to celebrate the long awaited Eid. He lives with his old grandmother Amina and sleeps in her lap. Amina is the only guardian in the world Hamid had and she is one of the most unhappy lot. She is old and knows nothing to earn a good living that is why she is cursing Eid. The children of the neighborhood have 10-12-14-17 paise while Hamid had only three to spend in the Eid fair. He goes to Idgah with other villagers and after observing prayers the band of villagers pounce on different shops of sweets and toys. The village boys were busy buying their favorite toys, some went to the merry-go-round, some were busy with giant-wheel, while Hamid had to keep patience. After these there were hardware shops and there Hamid saw tongs. He asked the price and was told six paise. On this he negotiated and finally he was able to purchase tongs for three paise. He brought it home and gave it to his grandmother who initially started to scold him but when he said, "Amma I saw you burning your hands while picking chapatis from the stove." (Idgah, 1933). The old lady couldn't keep herself calm. She started crying and hugged Hamid tightly.

1.2 Age, sensibility and pain: Mini's Vs Rehman

Mini is a girl of 6-7 years. She has a lot of curiosity which normally every healthy child of her age has save the child is full bellied. "To a hungry man a piece of bread is the face of God" (Mahatma Gandhi, 1931). Her questions are so varied that in a moment she would ponder on the wrong pronunciation of crow and the next moment she would ask how it rains, then immediately without waiting for the answer she would ask what is the relationship of her father to her mother. "Albert Einstein reportedly said, "I have no special talents, I am only passionately curious". We can say that she is a curious and intelligent girl child who is very talkative and full of fun.

From where the food comes, from where the clothes and how do they live, this is none of Mini's business. At her age every child is carefree, the theory of accomplishment and reward is very much there in her life at that point of age. "From this perspective, rewards are seen as effective in getting people to perform an activity, but once the rewards are no longer available, people's intrinsic motivation to engage in activities is undermined", (Cameron, Pierce, Banko, and Gear, 2005). Her sensibility is less evolved and being innocent she is not involved in the affairs of the family. She is talkative and full of curiosity and like her might be the daughter of Rehman, Rabiya. That is why he tries to find Rabiya in Mini. Both Mini and Rehman have different circumstances. They have their own sorrows and happiness.

Rehman, a middle aged man in the search of better prospects has come to a farland, India. Here, on foot, in the streets of Calcutta, he sells dry fruits, grapes and other wares. Being far away from his family, struggling hard to earn money, being environmentally insulted, is not enough to stay happy, has made a negative impact on his personality. "In particular, social environment in early life has a profound influence on the development of the social brain (Champagne and Curley, 2005) and the subsequent expression of social behaviors in adulthood" (Fleming et al., 1999; Veenema, 2012; Branchi et al., 2013). In order to find solace and to reduce the pain of being separated from his family he has befriended Mini. Her alacrity, her talkativeness and her age attracts him and he sees his daughter in her. He not being satisfied with his circumstances is carried away by a situation, where on asking several times a person denies returning his money and in the rage of anger he stabs him though with evolved sensibility he did a work of a non sensible man.

"During brain aging, several environmental insults can produce a neuronal damage by inducing oxidative stress and inflammation. Neuronal protection and repair play a crucial role in order to prevent neuronal damage. These defense and repair processes are genetically determined, and the presence of functional variants within genes involved in neuronal protection and repair likely induce age-related inter individual differences in cognitive phenotypes as a consequence of different levels of neuronal damage" (Oommen Arun, 2014).

Finally in the end, after serving a prison sentence of eight years Rehman is back and reaches to meet Mini on her wedding day. Here again he cuts a sorry figure because neither it was the occasion nor Mini's father was ready to let his daughter meet Kabuliwallah on her marriage day. But his compassionate appeal melts the heart of a daughter's father and he asked Mini to come and meet Rehman. Here again, he says, 'Soshur bari jab'. Now the grown up Mini understands this and does not reply anything but blushes. Rehman is touched rather is pained to the core of his heart as he felt that his own daughter might be of the same age and would be missing him too much. This is such a situation that compelled Mini's father to cut down his budget from Mini's marriage and give an amount, good enough for Rehman to reach Afghanistan and meet his family. Here we can presume that now using his senses appropriately Rehman has achieved his reward, fare to reach Afghanistan.

We can infer with this that it may be a child or an adult if the situation or circumstances are not conducive they cannot remain happy however another point which can be raised here is that those with evolved sensibility even in dire circumstances can keep their calm and can keep themselves happy.

Age, sensibility and pain: Hamid Vs Ameena

Hamid is a boy of 5-6 years, wears a worn out Kurta- pajama and his white round cap has become so dirty that it seems that it is of gray color. On the sides of nets of his cap black patches have emerged to describe the boy belongs to a poor family. In the beginning of the story it has been portrayed that like the other children of his age Hamid too is least affected by the materialistic gains and losses of the life but in the end of the story we found that Hamid is more sensible than his old grandmother he though wanted to play, swing, eat and enjoy in the fair but restrained himself and bought tongs for his grandmother and made both of them happy.

On the other hand Ameena, Hamid's grandmother, is one of the unhappy lots on the earth. Her son has died last year and subsequently her daughter-in-law too has died. She is old and has no hope for any materialistic gains and progress and penury is making her sad and unhappy. May her sensibility be evolved to a level of understanding that it is her workmanship that can bring her fortunes not her continuous cursing of her fate.

Age, sensibility and pain: A site of a sad child of 5-6 years is rare. At this age children are busy playing with ingenuity. With anything they can make a toy and a fanciful object of their imagination and are happy, most of the time. "Importantly, children use their imagination to explore new knowledge and ideas, for example, revisiting the day at the beach could lead to imagining life underwater. When play taps into the imagination of other children and adults, the possibilities for exploration and learning are endless." (Irvine Susan, 2019)

A site of a happy grown up man and woman of the age 45-50 is really rare. Even in the happiest moments they are trying to find the moments of solace and responsibilities.

Can we say that age has brought the pain? Or has evolution and growth of mind increased the pain? This research paper tries to explore the eternal question of the relationship of happiness/pain and age or there is something else in between, which causes pain.

With the increase in knowledge and awareness, we say and have heard people saying, comes power, wealth and happiness. Then why two people of the same age in the same given circumstances have different level of happiness and pain and when we compare their level of happiness and pain with that of children of 5-6 years we find that children are far more of a happier lot. Pain is not even in their neighborhood. Then, what actually happens with the growing age or with the increased sensibility.

Actually there is a big difference between a brought up of a child up to age of 5-6 years and an adult of 40-50 years. With most of their small accomplishments children are rewarded by cheers, clapping, hugging, kisses or their favorite chocolate or ice cream is given.

Think about a man or woman of 45-50 most of them are not rewarded for their small accomplishments sometimes even for their big accomplishments they are neglected. Besides that either in the family or at the workplace there are several people who don't want them to be recognized.

This process of accomplishment and reward has a great deal of effect on the human emotions. Here comes the role of Dopamine. "A very effective hormone also known as the "feel-good" hormone. Dopamine is a hormone and neurotransmitter that's an important part of your brain's reward system. Dopamine is associated with pleasurable sensations, along with learning, memory, motor system function, and more". (Crystal Raypole, Legg, J Timothy September, 2019). As said above that this accomplishment and reward process has a deep rooted effect on human mood. The more the accomplishments the more the rewards and with rewards comes the recognition and that brings happiness.

Both the stories Kabuliwallah or Idgah have Indian plot and setting and they were written in those days when India was under the clutches of British government. All over the society a kind of gloom and despair was pervaded as nothing was seen by the Indian public as a ray of hope. Kabuliwallah as compared to Idgah represents an urban society that too of affluence. Only Kabuliwallah is shown in penury and for making a living he is going from one street to another and from one house to another selling dry- fruits. Hard work and no rewards neither in the form of compliments and even financial form makes him more reflective and he tries to find solace while talking to Mini as on one hand he sees his daughter in Mini and on the other her selfless laughter, her innocent questions and endless talks makes him happy. He forgets his pains with Mini. His two

pains are, one he is missing his daughter and another pain is he is getting no rewards for his hard work while talking with Mini he feels that this is his reward.

In this way we can say that age and happiness are not related but if with work reward is given then happiness increases.

If we take another example, that a child who is always scolded and is stopped from playing and sharing his toys with other children can also make the child unhappy.

Sensibility ,pain and happiness

Sensibility and age have no direct connection. A common adage is that, with the growing age we grow wise while we are intelligent by birth. But this is not true in all cases. You can see around yourself several aged people behaving immaturely. At the same time you can see a young girl or a boy behaving or dealing maturely. Now let's talk about sensibility and intelligence in relation with age . They too are not directly connected. They stand apart. Some scholars opine that they go hand in hand while a lot many say they aren't.

Some university professors who have done great in their fields could not even manage to park their cars and for parking their cars in no parking zones are often challaned .This challan factor plays a role on their happiness while driving resultantly they start giving up frequent driving. Some intelligent people even can't tie a tie. Some of the great scientists have been found struggling to remember their street numbers.

Wisdom is the knowledge of the world which comes with experience and the observation .

In Kabuliwala with grown up age and sensibility,Rehman couldn't keep himself happy.His environmental insults like walking from home to home ,street to street and shouting and alerting people of his presence to buy his wares, have caused a neuronal damage, and this gets repaired by spending a quality time with Mini.He though grown up ,quiet a matured person but couldn't control his anger and in fit of anger,again a case of environmental insult,stabbed a person for which he had to spend a lot many years of his life in the jail.

In Idgah there is a bit of a complicated situation. Ameena is old but not too old to work anywhere to eradicate her from poverty.She has given up to the circumstances and has accepted that she has to stay in poverty.This thinking has made her sad.Any other person, in the given situation of Ameena, with a positive attitude may not be laughing loudly or busy partying but with a positive attitude could have come out of the situations and be satisfied and could have arranged toys and food for his grandson.

Here I would like to mention a very unique disposition of Hamid ,just a boy of five years has no age which can be equated with his sensibility . He has his own pains but he knows to get out of them and be happy from the given situation. He is given just three paise to go and enjoy in the fair while the other children have 10-12-13 paise to enjoy in the fair. That sensible boy of just 5 years had enough patience to overcome the allurements of giant wheel, merry go round and different sweets. He is not sad , he is not cursing anyone but with his given age behaving quite sensibly avoids those petty pleasures and brought the tongs for his grandmother who burns her hands daily while baking chapattis while his grandmother who is always cursing the God and situations is always sad.

Cultural social attitude: pain and happiness

All over the world for over the last one century it has been established that all adults should be serious for their career and work and if they are found laughing and misbehaving they are considered nuisance or immature thereby the so called responsible citizens ask their children or their family members to be away from them.

If we talk about girls their situation is pathetic. If girls are found laughing loudly and talking jovially, especially in conservative Hindu and Muslim communities they are immediately nipped and if there is some revolt then a label of characterless is labeled on the females.

Typically our societies around the world are enveloping themselves with gloom, pain and sadness .They want happiness but their actions are totally different. From poetry to films serious subjects are invited and liked. Culture and society in Idgah play a very big role of afflicting pain on Ameena. No society in the world accepts that a parent after the death of her child should look happy or behave jocularly. The common parlance would consider it madness. This was also one of the big reasons for Ameena's sadness.

Conclusion:

These beautifully plotted stories can bring many more research. But confining to the subject of Age sensibility and pain in both Kabuliwallah and Idgah this research paper tries to bring objectively that there is only a little connection among age and sensibility and pain. It is all the human attitude to inflict pain or shower happiness on oneself or on his family within the given situation. It has also come forward that accomplishment and award theory and environmental insult theory also play a crucial role on age sensibility and pain.

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