

Subject: Confronting Colonialist Hegemonic Ideas in Psychology in India, and Indian Psychology as a Viable Alternative by Dr. Suneet Varma on February 21st, 2023

You are invited to attend the *inaugural* talk from Confronting Coloniality in Indian Psychology and Psychology in India: A Quarterly Speakers Series.

The *first* speaker is Dr. Suneet Varma from the Department of Psychology at the University of Delhi. The talk is titled, “Confronting Colonialist Hegemonic Ideas in Psychology in India, and Indian Psychology as a Viable Alternative.” It will be held online (Zoom) on *Tuesday February 21st, 2023* at 7:30pm Indian Standard Time (6am Pacific Time, 9am Eastern Time).

Abstract

Psychological explanations are not western inventions. There are other alternative explanations of psychological processes and these alternatives conflict with western assumptions of what is being taught as universal psychological truth in the West, as well as academic psychology in India. We know that socio-cultural factors can influence the composition of a psychology through constructs and concepts which are culturally mediated. However, Euro-American cultural values have dominated the field of psychology for so long that these limited value assumptions are being imposed on non-Western cultures where alternative assumptions apply. If culture can explain a significant part of variance in psychological dimensions, the hegemony of Euro-American psychologies can reasonably be challenged. As a consequence, much of what we consider psychological data is not universally but only relatively true. Orthodox Western psychology, as it is being taught in the universities, may be guilty of teaching relative facts as universal truth. The colonization of India is long over but the legacy of colonialism lingers on in India and in the mentality and lived experiences of Indians all over the world, including those affiliated with the discipline of psychology. There has been a long-standing complaint that research and teaching of psychology in India has been excessively dependent on imported models to the neglect of local context and issues on the one hand, and disdainful of indigenous traditions of psychological knowledge on the other. Psychology in India needs to adopt a decolonizing framework and should aim to investigate, deconstruct, and confront the colonial manifestation of Euro-American psychology. Indeed, some attempts have been made to correct this situation.

Registration required. Online event limited to the first 500 registrants. Please register online at <https://ubc.zoom.us/meeting/register/u5AofuCoqDwqGddZRb51Wmt61ffEYbrUYjoE>

This talk is part of the “Confronting Coloniality in Indian Psychology and Psychology in India: A Quarterly Speakers Series.” The purpose of this speakers’ series is to better mobilize knowledge about coloniality in Indian Psychology and psychology in India in both Canada and India, and promote its application, not only in India and Canada, but globally. More specifically, this speakers’ series adopts a decolonizing framework and aims to investigate, deconstruct, and confront the colonial manifestation of EuroAmerican psychology in the India national context. It is hoped that the end result of this speakers’ series is greater societal awareness of the legacy of

colonialism on contemporary Indian Psychology and further decolonization of Indian Psychology and psychology in India.

This talk is brought to you by Dr. Bedi's Counselling and Psychotherapy Research, Teaching, and Service Lab at the University of British Columbia in partnership with Dr. Suneet Varma, University of Delhi; with funding provided by the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute.

