

Rediscovering Madhu through Carl Rogers Self-Concept in Anosh Irani's *The Parcel*

MARIENA KAMALA BRINDA NOEL. S

Assistant Professor of English, Holy Cross College (Autonomous),
(Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nādu)

&

DR. R. JAYAKANTH

Research Advisor & Assistant professor of English,
St. Joseph's College (Autonomous),
(Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nādu)

Abstract:

This paper addresses Carl Rogers' self-concept theory through Madhu, a transgender who spent more than 40 years in the red-light community. The journey is painful, and this theory is used to discuss how society sees her and what has changed her life.

Key Words: Madhu, Thirunangai, Red-light, Rejection

Both social and humanistic psychology relies heavily on self-concept. The existential self is a fundamental component of the self-scheme that gives a person the sense of being alone or apart from others. It is a state of self-awareness. The youngster begins to recognize himself or herself and to understand who he or she is.

The categorical self is when a child gets more self-aware and begins to associate themselves with something they perceive. They begin to identify their gender at a young age, with simply the color, hair, and other physical characteristics, but as they progress through adolescence, they begin to compare themselves to others and to see how the rest of the world sees them. In the instance of Madhu in the novel package, she is referred to by a variety of names, none of which are of her own.

I am called Ali, Aravani, Kojja-the list goes on and on like a politician's promise. There is a term for me in almost every Indian language. I am reviled and revered, deemed to have been blessed, and cursed with powers. Parents think of me as a kidnapper, shopkeepers as a lucky charm, and married couples as a fertility experts. To passengers in taxis, I am but a nuisance. I am shooed away like a crow (1)

The above lines tell us how society talks about them, and their self-esteem goes down completely. Even they start hating themselves at times. The names mentioned are not even one that was named by their parents or of their choice. But one name that Madhu like from the list is Thirunangai in Tamil which means Mister, woman. As every child Madhu was also named gloriously like a unisex, he started slipping in and out when he was fourteen and finally the day came for him to become a eunuch. Madhu has set her mind thinking that the names they call her give her peace. Again, this is where self-esteem goes low. She considers it as her fate. Society plays a vital role here.

According to Carl Rogers, to "develop," a person needs an atmosphere that fosters sincerity (openness and self-disclosure), acceptance (unconditional positive regard), and empathy (being listened to and understood). Relationships and healthy personalities will not develop properly without these, just as a tree cannot grow without sunlight and water. When Rogers discusses the concept of self, he discusses three related concepts: self-image, self-esteem, and the ideal self.

The ideal self is the version of ourselves that we wish to be. The discrepancy between one's self-image and one's ideal self is common. This discrepancy can hurt one's self-esteem. According to Carl Rogers, self-image and ideal self can be congruent or incongruent. There is considerable overlap between the self-image and ideal self when they are congruent. While perfect congruence is difficult, if not impossible, increasing congruence will permit self-actualization. Inconsistency between one's self-image and one's ideal self indicates a disconnect between oneself and one's experiences, resulting in mental perplexity (or cognitive dissonance) that obstructs self-actualization.

When transgender adult doesn't know what to do about a problem with their identity, they experience the events described above. Everyone who sees them has a name for them and makes assumptions about them, but they are never treated as what they are. They are not even accorded the same level of deference as animals or non-living objects in society. Parents have a large influence on children's self-concept.

Children who are loved by their parents have high self-esteem, whereas those who must work and care for their families have poor self-esteem. Most of the time, the ideal self plays a significant role, as the image a person imagines never fits their current impressions. Now, in the instance of Madhu, even if their family is aware of what Madhu goes through, it is extremely difficult for a person to determine where they belong.

Even though Madhu's family knew who he was from the moment he was born, they were unable to accept it until Madhu was ready. They are well-suited to the name Hijra, which implies migration. Madhu yearned to be a part of the red-light district. Madhu did not choose to be there; rather, fate selected her to be there. She has developed from a little child to a mature woman. Even though she likes herself, she has never felt happy because of the society she lives in.

She never stops smoking, and the last of the cigar was used to burn the fabric in her saree, which was part of her anxiety-relieving ritual. Even dead cigars wanted to get rid of her, she used to claim. Their mental state is so awful that she believes that life itself despises her. This is where one's self-concept comes into play. This is how they think of themselves. When they are young, their self-perception is more pliable, and they continue to go through a process of self-discovery and identity construction.

Self-image, ideal self, and self-esteem are all important throughout this time. Madhu was happy while she was young, but as time went on, he became unable to accept the version of himself that others saw. He wanted to be himself, so he chose to become a eunuch and abandon his family. It's a grueling procedure. Madhu has always believed that she would never be considered a woman. People believe she was brittle braying while she spoke. Madhu, on the other hand, sees it as good, claiming that she needed a voice like that to catch people's attention on Bombay's busiest street.

Carl-Rogers' self-concept is important in every child's existence beginning in childhood. They develop most of the time based on how others treat them and how they approach their personal development to confront the world. And, in the case of transgender people, how society perceives them and how this affects their emotional and physical well-being is critical.

References:

- Irani, Anosh. *The Parcel*. Haper Collins Publishers.2016.
- Wiley, John. *Personality and Individual Differences*. Willey and Sons Ltd,2020