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Introduction to psychology in an interesting way....

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Tushar Ahire says

Good introduction and brief historical account of development of the field of Psychology.

Pranjal says

First of all, other than Freud's Psychological research, this was my first book that I read on Psychology. I think it is one of the best books out there. The complete subject is based on facts and history. There are scientific evidences, anecdotes and life stories of successful psychologists and psychiatrists in this book. Its also something that can be a light-read. The approach of Mr. Godbole to write a book on such a serious subject in a way that it can be understood by everyone and moreover they will enjoy reading it, is most singular. Reading his autobiography 'Musafir', his acumen and struggle to win is self-evident. I recommend this book to everyone and especially to the ones with interest in Psychology. The epilogue is something that makes you realize the condition of the world today. It is something that the author wants us to be aware of and expects from at least the few of us to change it. Hope we do.

Swapnil Shingote says

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Archies says

this book made me like psychology. what a fantastic piece of writing and collection of different psychologists. gives different level of joy, a mental one.

Rohan says

Perhaps the best book i read so far

Pradnya K. says

Every field of science has vast history of centuries efforts taken by several people. The journey is colossal. And so is this book. It's an interesting journey of how psychology is evolved as a science. From the times when the heart was believed as the think-tank and no one paid attention to the brains as a master of body, when the mental disorders were considered as a curse from previous life and were dealer brutally to the era

of emotional quotient, the author takes us to the every significant achievement in the field.

The book starts with interesting prologue where author talks of his encounters with psychology and the making of Alfred Hitchcock's movie, psycho. While studying technology in IIT Mumbai he met many artists, singers, read a lots of books and held discussions with a group of other distinguished colleges. Frantz Fanon's question "if the people in colonies are treated with very inhuman, cruel ways and like that of animals then on what basis laws and ethics are applied to them?" - was something that set my expectations. He muses about the cruelty of Nazi soldiers and how they were under their superiors' orders. The Obedience theory psychologist proved later on.

The seeds of psychology are found in all three early civilizations. Hippocrates, Democritus, Socrates, Plato covered some theories about how human think and feel. Some of the theories (Like Plato's belief that feelings traverse through blood vessels, or Aristotle's concept of heart as a center of feelings) are ruled out. However the concept of storing memories in brains, or Hippocrates's argument of mind being master of feelings and all actions did actually proved with time. Vedant, and Buddha also talked about human mind and its nature. However it took 18th century to realize that any mental disorder is not a fault or sin of the patient but a disease and it can be treated. Earlier the mental hospitals did not exist and the patients were kept in prisons where they were treated with contempt and cruelty.

Then came Phrenology (to measure intelligence shape and size of skull) and after a few years dismissed due to lack of any proof between intelligence and the structure of skull. Meanwhile medical science took over and surgeons like Wernike and Broka discovered the centers of speech production and comprehension. There's a very interesting story about Broka. He was humanitarian and active in social welfare. He founded a group named Free thinkers which scared the French government. They believed that like Socrates, he was misguiding youngsters and hence the police started spying on him and attended all his lectures on Mythology, physiology, medical science, psychology. Once the police got bored and asked him permission to go out and requested him not to give provocative lectures meanwhile. Broka, in turn, chided them to do their duty!

The author thus talks of interesting hypnotism, psychoanalysis, behaviorism theory, Gestalt (mind and body coordination) theory, development psychology, and humanistic theory. With every step, he not only describes the evolution, studies, experiments but also gives the generous details of eccentricity of the each psychologist, their life, struggles and impact on the future development. The experiments were also quite weird. In one case they built a prison in Stanford university and found 24 volunteers. It was supposed to be carried out for 15 days but mere four days people were found behaving like in real prison, the guards dominant and bullying, the prisoners full of guilt and submissive. Everyone was shocked by the results and the experiment was called off on sixth day. Victor Frankel's (Writer of man's search for meaning) being caught by Nazis and his story of counseling in the death camps is very moving. Then there are Bystander Effect, social loafing (Everybody's work is nobody's work), obedience, mass hysteria (witch burning in 16th century) and bandwagon effect, Henn's dilemma of ethics, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, learned helplessness, and conditioning.

The book also gives the simplified account of the complexity of neurons, Dendrites, and synapse and their function to accumulate, store, spread thoughts. Though it is academic part it's no less interesting than the case studies and psychology experiments. There's also history of IQ and its part in world war decisions, how intelligence and idiot savant differ, importance of emotional quotient and social and ecological intelligence. How a book on psychology can be complete without talking of feelings? The scientists tried to measure the intensity of feelings by monitoring body reactions. How the memories are stored, amnesia, different states of sleep in humans, dreams, language and the unsuccessful results of teaching a chimpanzee to speak, illusion, vision and perception of depth and movement in man and animals. Talking of amnesia, there's story of

Agatha Christie being disappeared for a few days and found after a frantic search in a hotel living under the false identity. She was said to be under attack of amnesia.

There's a separate section about personality tests. The basic and evolved human traits, especially the Issac's traits, and the transactional analysis (Parent - Adult - Child). Eric bern, the father of transactional analysis stated the theory that every human being goes through the parent adult child roles while dealing with others and though they change the roles, there's a dominant role in each person.

Many creative geniuses were found to be neurotic and few of them even committed suicide. It includes stories of Robert Schumann, Virginia Woolf, Van Gogh. Including Sylvia Plath and Hemingway in the list, I am sure we have lost a many budding artist with huge potential to this trap of depression and such disorders. While reading story of John Nash, I was moved even though I was familiar with the story.

The mental disorders like schizophrenia, depression, OCD, phobias, anxiety and stress.

There's a personal story about the author's son who was diagnosed with autism and how he struggled to accept it and then take initiative to open first autist school in india.

The book ends with an impressive epilogue stating how materialism and modern lifestyle is impacting human mind and pushing us towards the dark caves of mental disorders. There's statistics of suicide, people with mental disorders, and projections which is scary.

Throughout the book there are references to the books, right from 1984 or Brave new world to Freuds's essays, Fear of freedom, I'm ok - you're ok, The sane society and a lot like that. I have created a separate shelf named AGs recommendation on goodread for them.

Also I got some movies recommendations including Blow hot blow cold, psycho, the castaway, Girl intercepted, the hours, rain man,sweethearts.

It includes all the major contributors and I cannot keep track of all of them but few of them were writers and now I've a bit elongated "to-read" list.

It's one of those books that make some change in our daily lives and is entertaining all the same.

Parag Kale says

Amazing read for anyone having even a bit of interest in mind science, psychology etc

Its a very interesting and brief of how the world of psychology has evolved over decades.

This book is filled with stories and (mind boggling)experiments of many amazing people who have tried to explore our unknown and vast "mind".

This book has enriched me. Surprised me by the fact that to what not extent people experiment, experiment and experiment to dig deep into anything they are interested in.

I guess any age group can read this book, its simple and enriching.

Rajendra Patil says

This is existing book i love this experience i love this app

Chetan Kadam says

Explore Psychology in amusing way

Archie says

Good collection of facts. Can't help but think where is the originality though? Author read 87 books on psychology and provided a nice summary (550+ pages)! Still a good read for lazy readers who may not read all those books themselves ?

Ajinkya Deshmukh says

one of the best books i read for the psychological stories
