



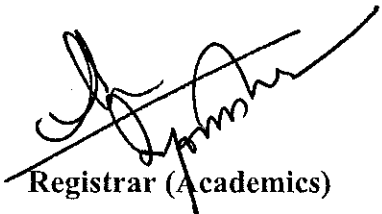
## Notice for the PhD Viva Voce Examination

Mr Daniel M Abraham, Registration Number: 2270077, PhD Scholar at the School of Psychological Sciences, CHRIST (Deemed to be University) will defend his PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Wednesday, 01 July 2026 at 10.00 am in Room No. 044, Ground Floor, R&D Block, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru - 560029, Karnataka, India.

- Title of the Thesis** : **Experience of Guilt in Young Adult Women: A Descriptive Phenomenological Study**
- Discipline** : **Psychology**
- External Examiner - I** : **Dr B Rangaiah**  
Professor  
Department of Applied Psychology  
Pondicherry University  
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- External Examiner - II** : **Dr Erica Munik**  
Associate Professor  
Department of Community and Health Sciences  
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Cape Town - 7535  
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- Supervisor** : **Dr Padmakumari P**  
Professor  
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The members of the Research Advisory Committee of the Scholar, the faculty members of the Department and the School, interested experts and research scholars of all the branches of research are cordially invited to attend this open viva-voce examination.

**Place:** Bengaluru  
**Date:** 16 June 2026

  
Registrar (Academics)

## ABSTRACT

The experience of guilt is a ubiquitous yet complex self-conscious emotion that is fundamental to the moral and relational life of the individual. While prior research has established its prevalence and functional correlates, the lived texture of guilt, particularly among young adult women in the Indian context, remains underexplored. This study employed a Descriptive Phenomenological design, grounded in Husserlian philosophy, to explicate the essence and meaning of guilt as it presents itself to consciousness. The research proceeded through five sequential stages, advancing from foundational methodological preparation and participant screening to the final articulation of the phenomenon's essence. Data were collected through in-depth phenomenological interviews with 16 young adult women (aged 20 to 40) residing in Bangalore, selected via purposive sampling after screening for high guilt proneness and the absence of psychological morbidity. The study adhered to a specific four-pillar model of rigor, ensuring philosophical integrity and the disciplined practice of epoché throughout. Data analysis followed Colaizzi's seven-step method, progressing from the extraction of 523 significant statements to the identification of invariant thematic clusters and the production of the fundamental structure. The analysis yielded eight cluster themes organized into two emergent structures. Together, these findings show that the lived experience of guilt in young adult women is constituted as a layered and deep-reaching relational anchor that touches thought, body, and being. The invariant structure is a consuming and recurring cycle in which a sense of rupture in personal and relational harmony leads to efforts to make things 'right or light', resulting either in some relief or in a lingering feeling of unworthiness that continues to shape everyday life and relationships. This study offers the descriptive phenomenological accounts of guilt among young adult women in the Indian context, and advances the emerging integrated framework of guilt by bridging intrapsychic and interpersonal traditions. It also highlights the inseparability of guilt and shame in lived experience and offers implications for theory, measurement, and affirms the methodological value of phenomenology in clarifying self-conscious emotions.

**Keywords:** Guilt, descriptive phenomenology, young adult women, lived experience, self-conscious emotions

### Publications:

1. **Abraham, D. M., & Padmakumari, P. (2025).** A Methodological Framework for Descriptive Phenomenological Research. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 47(2), 125–134. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01939459241308071>
2. **Abraham, D. M., & Padmakumari, P. (2025).** Descriptive Phenomenology as a Resource for Advancing Psychiatric Research. *Annals of Indian Psychiatry*, 9(4), 423. [https://doi.org/10.4103/aip.aip\\_112\\_25](https://doi.org/10.4103/aip.aip_112_25)
3. **Abraham, D. M., & Padmakumari, P. (2025).** Understanding Guilt: A Conceptual Synthesis with Insights from Indian Literature. *Annals of Indian Psychiatry*, 10.4103/aip.aip\_115\_25. [https://doi.org/10.4103/aip.aip\\_115\\_25](https://doi.org/10.4103/aip.aip_115_25)
4. **Abraham, D. M., & Padmakumari, P. (2026).** Articulating the essence: Developing and naming themes in descriptive phenomenological research. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ORJ-11-2025-0430>
5. **Abraham, D. M., & Padmakumari, P. (2025).** Bracketing workbook for phenomenological researchers (Indian Patent Application No. 202541067350 A). Indian Patent Office, Chennai.