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Notice for the PhD Viva Voce Examination

Ms Shrutkirti Singh, Registration Number: 1951072, PhD Scholar at the School of Psychological Sciences, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), will defend her PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Monday, 28 September 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 : **A Grounded Theory Study on Interparental Conflict and Romantic Relationships of Young Adults**

Discipline : **Psychology**

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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.

Registrar (Academics)

Place: Bengaluru

Date: 03 September 2026

ABSTRACT

Researchers have been examining the effects of interparental conflict (IPC) on young people's romantic relationships (RR) for over two decades, studying mediators like attachment styles, commitment, appraisals, emotion dysregulation, beliefs about aggression, and more. However, inconsistent findings remain and there is an absence of a cohesive theory to explain the mechanism of how IPC impacts young adults' RR. Moreover, studies exploring a nuanced understanding of the human experience of going through IPC and experience in future RR are lacking. The present study aimed to identify a mechanism of how IPC impacts young adults' romantic relationships using a Constructivist Grounded Theory design. Ten interviews were conducted with eight participants (six females, two males), lasting two to four hours each. The interview questions were focused on observed conflict characteristics in childhood, internal experiences, parent-child relations, experiences while growing up, and recent and present romantic relationships and conflicts. Three key pathways were identified in the data that highlight how IPC has psychological consequences that reinforce shifts in the sense of self and personality, which in turn affect romantic relationship outcomes: a) 'Internalising Conflict Dysfunction: Carried-Forward Conflict beliefs, b) 'Carrying Emotional Chaos: Issues with Regulation and Expression, and Relational fears', and c) 'Living the Pattern: How Childhood Roles Shape Adult 'Self''. These categories describe the impact of IPC on RR through observation and modelling, negative beliefs and self-esteem, emotion reactivity, dysregulation and specific relational fears, conflict and relationship schemas, negative experiences with the family, attachment styles and entrenched relational patterns in childhood, initially adopted as attempts at homeostasis but later continuing in other relations. Apart from these three pathways, several descriptive categories helped explain the internal experiences of participants of witnessing IPC. The theory developed from the data is titled 'The IPC-shaped Self Theory'. Findings of this study reveal several new factors that add to existing knowledge in the field of children's responses to IPC, the impact of IPC on social development, and the effect of IPC on romantic relationships. Various practical applications of the findings are provided for use in self-help, individual, group, couples and family therapy settings in the form of a 11-step potential intervention including suggestions related to addressing modelling, beliefs, triggers, relational fears, emotional blueprints, sense of self, unmet needs of childhood, internalisation and functioning of parts of the psyche, experience of the world, entanglement in the parental subsystem, and exploring intergenerational trauma. Further, recommendations for parents, caregivers, schools and learning spaces are also highlighted. Lastly, qualitative, mixed methods and longitudinal research is recommended to further address the intergenerational transmission of romantic relationship issues.

Keywords: interparental conflict, romantic relationships, qualitative, constructivist grounded theory, intergenerational.

Publications:

1. Singh, S., & Thomas, E. (2023). Interparental Conflict and Young Adult Romantic Relationships: A Systematic Review. *Trauma, violence & abuse*, 24(4), 2630–2647. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15248380221109787>
2. Singh, S., & Thomas, E. (2025). A model to understand the impact of interparental conflict on social difficulties of the offspring (Indian Patent No. 202541012173). Office of the Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trade Marks.