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The Student Persona: A Neo-Jungian Analysis of Personal Growth and Emotional Wellness among University Students

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Abstract: *This study is conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the unconscious archetypal energies at play behind a student persona. Pearson-Marr Archetypal Indicator was used to assess archetypes in relation to student persona and level of personal growth in university students. Subjective-psychological Well-being Scale was supplemented to gauge the level of life satisfaction and emotional wellness. Result indicated that most students were found to be at individuated level, prioritizing personal growth during their education journey. The results support the research assumptions that integration of archetypal energies is positively associated with personal growth, life satisfaction and emotional wellness where education mediates this relationship and enhances personal growth and emotional wellness. There were indications in the students' archetypal profile that they were innately Warriors, Rulers, and Caregivers which fuel their sprit to navigate effectively in the competitive educational environments. The results do affirm the gender wise differences regarding archetypal identification of university students. University students demonstrated well-integrated archetypes,*

Introduction

Carol Pearson is a pioneer in the field of Jungian analysis who focused on the role of archetypes in personal growth. Jung first coined the word "archetype" in 1919. The term archetype refers to an primordial image, idea, behavioral trait or a particular way of thinking common in all humans (Merrium-Webster; Jean, 2003). It is derived from the Latin noun *archetypum*, which means mold, pattern, model, or type (Mehmet, Baysar, 2015). The concept of archetypes is closely related to the Freud's notion of instincts, as both are innate and source of psychic energy that motivates and guide human behavior (George, 2004; Jean, 2003).

Jung's work reveals four major archetypes: anima/animus, self, shadow, and persona (Hull, 2014). A neo-Jungian author, Pearson (1991) in her book "The Awakening Heroes within" describes metaphoric representation of heroic journey towards self-realization.

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Pearson (1991) identifies the twelve archetypes based on Jung's concept of individuation by clustering the archetypes developmentally in three groups: Ego, Soul, and Self. The first four archetypes (Idealist, Realist, Caregiver, and Warrior) are basic to human functioning, while the Soul cluster, composed of the Seeker, Lover, Creator, and Revolutionary, contributes to identity development that deepens as people mature. The third cluster, containing the Ruler, Magician, Sage, and Jester, represents the self, which Jung thought was the balancing point of the entire psyche. The model is described in stages, but in experience, the journey is spiral, encountering the same archetypes at different levels of integration as personal development progresses. All twelve archetypes are potentially present in any moment, and what may be called forth depends on both the situation and the archetypes (gods) overseeing that particular life period. Steinbrecher (2006) elaborated on how these phases reflect the broader process of individuation, aligning the conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche. These studies collectively underline the universality and adaptability of archetypes across cultural and developmental contexts.

Jacobi (1959) expanded on Jung's ideas by emphasizing the role of archetypes in shaping individual behavior and societal norms. Archetypes provide foundational model and framework for constructing persona that align with personal and societal values. In academic context, these social masks represent idealized roles and behaviors manifested by students and teachers. The educational systems reinforce curiosity, creativity and individuality through a structured curriculum that further aids in self-reflection and foster growth mindset. In cognitive psychology, the mindset theory of Dweck's (2006) relates with archetypal theory of Jung (1968) as link outward behavior with internal attitudes. According to Dweck (2006), students either have growth mind set or fixed mindset. Students with growth mindset have a belief in their own potential for improvement through effort by aligning their psychic energies which embody curiosity and creativity. Contrary to this, a student with fixed mindset over identifies with certain energies and resists change. Their rigid persona does not allow them to grow and prosper.

Person's model of personal growth in education emphasis the role of curriculum and mentors. Curriculum is an important mechanism for fostering holistic growth and development. A well-structured curriculum offers a student with an opportunity to develop critical thinking skills and problem solving abilities. These are the necessary competencies to achieve success in educational and personal domains. Mezirow (1997) pledged to expose students to the archetypal themes in literature; art and philosophy, as these experiences enhance self-awareness and critical thinking in them. Similarly, mentors do also play a very crucial in the student's life. Mentorship has a profound impact on student's overall development. A mentor's role a caregiver, sage and magician, has a profound impact on student's overall development. In the persona of Sage, mentors are wise men who have the wisdom and knowledge to guide and inspire a student. As Caregivers mentors safeguards a student's wellbeing and

nurture their emotional, intellectual and personal development. With their Magician energies, they transform students by developing insight for personal growth.

Jungian psychology provides a roadmap for educational institutions to help students understand their challenges and growth. In this context, the curriculum and the mentorship facilitate the process of individuation by encouraging students to explore archetypal themes and reflect on their own identities. Fostering archetypal awareness in educational settings will enable the students to connect with their authentic selves move beyond the rigidly assigned societal roles. This idea is aligned with the theories of transformative learning which advocates the personal change, critical reflection, and integration of inner and outer perspectives. Archetypes such as Seeker and Sage carry energies of critical reflection and rational analysis for pursuit of growth, knowledge and self-discover that guide students navigate educational journey.

While a great deal of research is available that explores archetypes in relation to psychological and therapeutic outcomes however, gaps exists in relation to educational outcomes, such as academic performance or emotional wellbeing associated with student persona. This study is an attempt to ensure that this oversight does not exist. Future research could explore how archetypal awareness influences mindset development and resilience in diverse educational and cultural context. Additionally, more research is required to examine the role of cultural diversities in archetypal expression for educational outcomes.

Objectives of the study

1. To explore archetypes in relation to student persona.
2. To identify the gender wise variation in archetypal identification among university students.
3. To identify the impact of archetypal integration on personal growth and emotional wellness in university students.

Hypothesis

1. Archetypal identifications tend to outline the formation of the student persona in university students.
2. Students tend to identify more with Seeker and Sage archetypes.
3. Archetypal awareness is positively correlated with personal growth and emotional wellness.
4. Females are more likely to identify with caregiver archetype as compared to male who are more likely to identify with Hero archetype.

Methodology

This quantitative study explores the mediating role of education in personal growth and emotional wellness, as analyzed though a Jungian framework. The study examines the extent to which archetypes in relation to emotional wellness and personal growth. It investigates the impact of certain archetypes

on emotional regulation and resilience and assesses the role of integration of these archetypes in life satisfaction. The research is guided with the assumption that integration of archetypal energies is positively associated with personal growth, life satisfaction and emotional wellness where education mediates this relationship and enhances personal growth and emotional wellness. Therefore, university students who Identify with adaptive archetypes (lover or fool) tend to be emotional resilient and optimistic. Similarly, those who resonate with relational archetypes (lover and caregiver) can exhibit greater emotional well-being through improved interpersonal relationships and communication skills. Over identification with Warrior or Magician tend to increase emotional distress. Similarly, Ruler, Seeker, and Sage archetypes are associated with personal growth, life satisfaction and emotional wellness in young adults. The study recruits sample of young adults of ages 18-24 years from public universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The sample represents diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. The data is gathered with the help of standardized scales, including: The Pearson-Marr Archetypal Indicator (PMAI) and Subjective and Psychological Well-Being Scale. Pearson-Marr Archetype Indicator (Pearson, 2002)-a 72-items scale is used to assess the archetypes related to student persona and their level of personal growth in university students. The scale yields twelve sub-scales, each representing the deep psychological structures of unconscious called 'archetypes' that give meaning to one's life (Pearson & Marr, 2003). The highest score for each archetype is 30. The higher score is decoded as the underlying logic of certain energies associated to student persona and their journey towards individuation-a process of making unconscious conscious. Subjective And Psychological Well-Being Scale by Diener, & Biswas-Diener (2008) is supplemented with PMAI. This scale consists of two distinctive components (Diener, 1994): an affective part and a cognitive part. The affective part is a hedonic evaluation guided by emotions and feelings, while the cognitive part is an information-based appraisal of one's life for which people judge the extent to which their life so far measures up to their expectations and resembles their envisioned 'ideal' life.

Results

Table 1

A persona profile of students and Ranks of the archetypes from highest to lowest

Level of Integration		M	Integrated Mean Score	Ranks of Archetypes		Mean
1	Idealist	16.45	34.43	Inner Allies	Ruler	23.90
2	Realist	18.08			Caregiver	22.63
3	Seeker	19.59	40.02		Warrior	21.48
4	Lover	20.43			Sage	20.77
5	Warrior	21.48	44.11		Lover	20.43
6	Caregiver	22.63			Magician	20.40
7	Revolutionary	19.22	38.95	Inner Treasure Chest	Seeker	19.59
8	Creator	18.79			Revolutionary	19.22
9	Ruler	23.90	41.30		Creator	18.79
10	Magician	20.40			Fool	18.53

11	Sage	20.77	39.30		Realist	18.08
12	Fool	18.53			Idealist	16.45
-	-	-	-	Blind Spot	*None*	*N/A*

Results indicate that students have strong identification with Ruler (M=23,90), caregiver (22.63) and Warrior (21.48) archetypes. The other active archetypes among university student include: Sage (M= 20.77), Lover (M= 20.43), and Magician (M=20.40) archetypes. These archetypes serve as inner allies and area of their strength, reflecting their most able self that is aligned with their purpose. Further, students are open to Seeker, Revolutionary, Creator, Fool, Realist and Idealist archetypes, suggesting they are intentional to develop these potential attitudes and skills to attain their educational goals. No blind spot or shadow archetype discovered in these students-suggesting a relatively well-rounded distribution of these energies in the psyche. The overall scores on PAMI indicate that students are found to be at individuated level, prioritizing personal growth in their educational journey.

Table 2
Gender Differences across Three Psychological Levels for N=500 University Students

Gender	Ego level archetypes	Soul level archetypes	Spirit level archetypes	Total
Women	71	102	65	238
Men	91	52	119	262

X^2 *(2, 500) 33.48, p < .05.*

The results indicate that majority of the male students are identifying with Ego and Sprit level archetypes as compared to female students. Male students identified more with roles of a Hero, Magician and Sage archetypes, suggesting they are more focused on achieving concrete goals and high purpose. Similarly, female students show a significantly higher identification with soul level archetypes as compared to male students. They are more occupied with their inner emotional growth and relational and personal expressions. Further, male students have a significantly higher identification with Spirit level archetypes as compared to female students. Therefore, more male students are found occupied with transformative energies for personal power and mastery in comparison to female students and the difference is found statistically significant, X^2 *(2, 500) 33.48, p < .05.*

Table 3
Integrated scores on Masculine and Feminine Archetypal Energies by Gender

Masculine vs. Feminine Energies	Idealist vs. Realist		Seeker vs. Lover		Warrior vs. Caregiver		Revolutionary vs. Creator		Ruler vs. Magician		Sage vs Fool	
Gender (N=500)	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Masculine Energies	18	14	20	19	22	19	18	21	27	18	22	20
Feminine Energies	16	21	20	21	22	23	20	18	21	19	20	17
Mean Score	34	35	40	40	44	41	38	39	48	37	42	37
t-value	-2.48		0		7.43		-2.48		27.25		12.40	

df	498	498	498	498	498	498
Sig.	<0.05	1.00	<.0001	<0.05	<.0001	<.0001

Data provides multiple sets mean scores on PMAI for two male and female students. Mean scores on all pairs except for Pair-2 are found statistically significant. The difference between the means on Pair 1 and Pair 4 suggests both male and female students are identifying with the archetypal energies. These differences are found significant at alpha 0.05 level, indicating gender wise variation in the integration of psychic energies represented by Pair 1 and Pair 4. Mean scores on Pair 3, Pair 5 and Pair 6 have shown a very strong significant difference by gender. However, mean values on Pair 2 have shown no significant difference. Despite this gap, all archetypes at other levels are well-integrated in students which are a sign of considerable mental maturity and psychological growth. This integration is an indicative of the fact that students are prioritizing their personal growth and are pursuing their educational goals that are quite aligned with their inner values and purpose of life.

Table 4
Bivariate Correlation among Numbers of Active Archetypes and Components of Subjective-Psychological Wellbeing for N=500.

Variables	Pearson Correlation	N	Sig
Active Archetypes & Life Satisfaction	0.154	500	.000
Active Archetypes & Pleasant Feelings	.214	500	.000
Active Archetypes & Unpleasant feelings	-.173	500	.000
Active Archetypes & Hedonism	.227	500	.000
Active Archetypes & Flourishing	.146	500	.000

Correlation coefficients for factor components of Subjective Psychological wellbeing and number of active archetypes as predictor variable has shown a significant linear relationship between the variables understudy. A strong correlation between indicate that variables are not distinct from one another. The results further indicate that the scores on Life Satisfaction, Pleasant Feelings, Hedonism, and Flourishing positively correlated while, the Unpleasant Feelings had an inverse relationship with active archetypes. Specifically, hedonism ($\beta = .227$; $p < .001$) and an amount of pleasant feelings ($\beta = .214$; $p < .001$) had the highest weight of prediction, respectively.

Discussion

Attainment of education is a heroic journey for many students, demanding resilience and determination. It is a journey full of opportunities to draw upon inner resources in the form of archetypes to navigate this journey. A transformative educational approach is needed to help students empower and overcome personal barriers and limitations. The study stands out for its originality in exploring student persona through the lens of Pearson's Model of archetypal identifications for the first time. The study has explored archetypal unconscious traits in university students that are guiding them

in their personal and academic journey. It is assumed that the benefits of the positive qualities of each archetype have the potential to be activated for personal and academic growth.

The results support the research assumptions that integration of archetypal energies is positively associated with personal growth, life satisfaction and emotional wellness where education mediates this relationship and enhances personal growth and emotional wellness. Studies (Graham & Donaldson, 1996; Frager, 2007; Ugur, Constantinescu & Stevens, 2015) have shown that education plays an important role in personal growth and development by making the unconscious conscious. It pushes students to recognize archetypes-inner potentials, and integrate them for personal growth. At the same time, educational environments are created help students awaken and integrate these inner guides that can illuminate their academic journey. Educators who personify powerful archetypes such as Magicians, Wise Sage and Caregiver are best at guiding and inspiring students. These energies if modeled effectively tend to encourage adopting them. The archetypes that are brought to awareness are the Curious Seeker, the Wise Sage, the Nurturing Caregiver, and the Courageous Warrior. These archetypal traits are inculcated in students as they embody qualities that not only bring value to learning but also assist students to face challenges with wisdom, bravery, and compassion.   Through creative and intensive learning experiences students are pushed move beyond their comfort zones and critically evaluate their weaknesses and strengths that would d broaden their understanding of conflicting aspects of self and the ways to integrate these aspects for persona growth.

In the journey of education critical thinking and self-reflection are important tools facilitating archetypal traits and self-discovery in students. Critical thinking refers to students' ability to analyze their own values & believes (Euric, 2018). This is done by identifying their biases that most of the time clouds their judgments for self and others. It also involves developing insight by reflecting and understanding the consequences of their behaviors and responses. The critical thinking and self-reflection in students can improve academic performance. It enhances their confidence and efficacy to navigate through the challenging learning experiences and the competitive environment of education. Self-reflection, on the hand, is the practice of introspection, where students can evaluate their thoughts feeling s and behaviors and identify their weaknesses and strengths.   By reflecting on their own self and academic progress they can recognize their unique capabilities and talents. Not only this but reflecting on failures can also be beneficial for students as it promotes a growth mindset that allows them to view a failure as an opportunity new learning and growth.

Similarly, the archetypes related to student persona are Ruler, Warrior and Caregiver as these archetypal traits are found most common in them. On of the plausible reason might be the fact that students have to deal with the competitive educational environments where they need to spark the spirits of Ruler and Warrior archetypes. Here, the presence of Caregiver archetype neutralizes the

negative qualities associated to Ruler and Warrior energies to make the competition and the educational journey healthier. The other archetypes related to student persona are Sage, Lover, and Magician. This combination of all these archetypes is making the education as transformative experience for students.

The finding that students are open to Seeker, Revolutionary, Creator, Fool, Realist and Idealist archetypes indicate students' are intentional to develop certain potential attitudes, latent talent, or skill to attain their educational goals. Students with Seeker energy have growth mindset. The desire for novelty and exploration is so strong that it keeps their minds stimulated due to which they take risks and challenging their boundaries. For them fulfillment comes from pushing boundaries, discovering the unknown and forging a personal path. Driven by the desire innovate, students with revolutionary ideas become non-conformist who are flexible enough to challenge their own belief and societal norms or status quo when necessary. They seek to align their external environment with their inner values. While doing so they can confront resistance from others which can rob their psychological wellbeing.

Similarly a student with Creator, Fool, Realist and Idealist archetypes possess a dynamic blend of psychic potential. These are considered as adaptive archetypes as they offer resilience, hope and optimism. Fusion of these traits in personality can lead to strengths such as such as dreaming big, believing in the good, acting with practicality, and bringing levity and joy to the process.

A student with qualities progress and inspire others with their optimism and faith in success. They navigate challenges with humor. This combination makes them a source of motivation and stability for themselves and those around them

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