



An Extensive Study on MASCULINITY: PSYCHOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE IN NEPAL

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ABSTRACT

Masculinity is a complex and multifaceted concept that has been the subject of much research in both psychology and anthropology. This paper explores masculinity in the context of Nepal, a small South Asian country known for its strong patriarchal culture. The paper begins with an overview of the cultural and historical factors that have shaped masculine ideals in Nepal, including the influence of Hinduism and the caste system. It then examines some of the key psychological and anthropological theories and concepts related to masculinity, such as hegemonic masculinity, gender socialization, and the intersectionality of gender with other social identities. One of the central themes of this paper is the intersection of masculinity with other social identities, such as caste, class, and ethnicity. In Nepal, as in many other cultures, masculinity is often closely linked to notions of power and dominance, and is often used to reinforce existing power structures. The paper also examines the impact of traditional masculine ideals on men's mental health and well-being in Nepal, including the pressure to conform to rigid gender roles and the stigma around seeking help for mental health issues. The paper discusses some of the interventions and programs aimed at promoting more positive and equitable forms of masculinity in Nepal, such as gender sensitization programs and campaigns to challenge harmful gender norms.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Masculinity is a complex and multifaceted concept that has been the subject of much research in both psychology and anthropology. It refers to the set of behaviours, attitudes, and characteristics traditionally associated with men, and is often defined in opposition to femininity. In many cultures, including Nepal, masculinity is closely linked to notions of power, dominance, and control.

Nepal is a small South Asian country known for its rich cultural heritage and diversity. Despite its relatively small size, Nepal is home to a diverse array of ethnic and linguistic



groups, each with their own distinct cultural practices and beliefs. One of the key features of Nepalese culture is its strong patriarchal traditions, which shape many aspects of social and political life.

In Nepal, as in many other cultures, traditional masculinity is often associated with physical strength, emotional resilience, and sexual prowess. Men are expected to be the primary breadwinners, protectors, and decision-makers within the family unit, while women are expected to be subservient and nurturing. These rigid gender roles and expectations are often reinforced through socialization processes and cultural norms. However, while traditional masculinity may be highly valued in Nepal, it can also have negative consequences for men's mental health and well-being. The pressure to conform to rigid gender roles and expectations can lead to stress, anxiety, and depression, and may also contribute to the perpetuation of gender-based violence and discrimination. (Skultans, V,2022).

In recent years, there has been increasing interest in understanding the impact of masculinity on men's health and well-being, both in Nepal and around the world. This interest has led to a growing body of research in both psychology and anthropology aimed at exploring the complex interplay between masculinity, culture, and social identity. This paper will provide an overview of the psychological and anthropological perspectives on masculinity in Nepal. It will begin by examining the historical and cultural factors that have shaped masculine ideals in Nepal, including the influence of Hinduism and the caste system. It will then explore some of the key psychological and anthropological theories and concepts related to masculinity, such as hegemonic masculinity, gender socialization, and the intersectionality of gender with other social identities. One of the central themes of this paper is the intersection of masculinity with other social identities, such as caste, class, and ethnicity. In Nepal, as in many other cultures, masculinity is often closely linked to notions of power and dominance, and is often used to reinforce existing power structures. This paper will examine how these intersections contribute to the construction and expression of masculinity in Nepal.

2.0 NEED OF THE STUDY

The study of masculinity in Nepal is important for several reasons. Nepal is a country with a strong patriarchal culture, where traditional gender roles and expectations are deeply ingrained in society. Understanding the impact of these gender norms on men's mental health



and well-being is essential for developing effective interventions and programs that promote positive and equitable forms of masculinity. There is a growing body of research on the negative consequences of traditional masculinity, both for men themselves and for society as a whole. In Nepal, as in many other cultures, traditional masculinity is often associated with aggression, violence, and discrimination, and can have negative consequences for men's mental and physical health. There is a need for culturally sensitive interventions and programs that challenge harmful gender norms and promote more positive and equitable forms of masculinity in Nepal. Such interventions can help to reduce the stigma around seeking help for mental health issues and promote healthier, more fulfilling relationships between men and women. (Mankowski, E. S et al, 2010)

3.0 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite the growing interest in the study of masculinity in Nepal, there is still a need for more research on this topic. Traditional masculine ideals and gender roles continue to shape social norms and expectations in Nepal, and can have negative consequences for men's mental health and well-being. However, there is a lack of research on the specific ways in which these gender norms impact men's health in Nepal, and the cultural and social factors that contribute to their construction and perpetuation. Furthermore, there is a need for more culturally sensitive interventions and programs that challenge harmful gender norms and promote more positive and equitable forms of masculinity in Nepal. While some efforts have been made in this area, there is still a lack of understanding of the cultural and social context in which these interventions take place, and their effectiveness in promoting long-term behavior change and social transformation. In light of these issues, the problem statement of this study is to explore the psychological and anthropological perspectives on masculinity in Nepal, with a particular focus on the impact of traditional gender norms on men's mental health and well-being, and the cultural and social factors that contribute to their construction and perpetuation. The study will also examine the effectiveness of existing interventions and programs aimed at promoting more positive and equitable forms of masculinity in Nepal, and identify areas where further research and intervention are needed to promote gender equity and social justice. (Dancy II, T. E, 2012).



4.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Uprety, S. (2016). Violence against women is a global issue that has been the subject of much research and advocacy in recent years. In Nepal, a small South Asian country known for its patriarchal culture, violence against women is a widespread problem that affects women of all ages, classes, and ethnic groups. This paper examines the complex interplay between masculinity and violence against women in Nepal, focusing on the ways in which traditional gender roles and expectations contribute to the perpetuation of this problem. The paper begins with an overview of the historical and cultural factors that have shaped masculine ideals in Nepal, including the influence of Hinduism and the caste system. It then explores some of the key psychological and anthropological theories and concepts related to masculinity and violence against women, such as hegemonic masculinity, gender-based violence, and the intersectionality of gender with other social identities.

Turin, M., & Yang, D. (2021). One of the central themes of this paper is the impact of social class on the construction and expression of masculinities in Nepal. Working-class men often face a range of social, economic, and cultural barriers that can limit their opportunities for social mobility and shape their experiences of masculinity. These barriers can contribute to feelings of frustration, insecurity, and anxiety, and can also impact mental health and well-being. As Nepal undergoes rapid economic and social change, young working-class men are often forced to adapt to new roles and expectations, while also navigating the pressures of traditional gender norms. It highlights the need for more research and intervention aimed at promoting more positive and equitable forms of masculinity, particularly for marginalized and disadvantaged groups.

Dudgeon, M. R., & Inhorn, M. C. (2003). The study of gender, masculinity, and reproduction has been the subject of much research in anthropology, as it sheds light on the ways in which cultural and social factors shape reproductive practices and experiences. This paper explores the intersection of gender, masculinity, and reproduction from an anthropological perspective, focusing on the ways in which cultural and social norms around gender and masculinity impact reproductive practices and experiences. The paper begins with an overview of the historical and cultural factors that have shaped masculine ideals and gender norms around reproduction, drawing on examples from different cultural contexts. It



then examines some of the key anthropological theories and concepts related to gender, masculinity, and reproduction, such as the division of labor, socialization, and the intersectionality of gender with other social identities.

Pun, K. D., Tjomsland, T. R., et al,(2020). Domestic violence is a widespread problem in Nepal, with women and girls disproportionately affected by physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. This paper explores the views of Nepali men on domestic violence, with a particular focus on the ways in which masculinity and cultural norms contribute to the perpetuation of this problem. Drawing on qualitative interviews with Nepali men, the paper examines the complex interplay between masculinity, cultural norms, and domestic violence. The paper begins with an overview of the historical and cultural factors that have shaped masculine ideals in Nepal, including the influence of Hinduism and the caste system. One of the central themes of this paper is the role of masculinity in shaping men's attitudes towards domestic violence. Many of the men interviewed for this study believed that violence was a legitimate way of expressing manhood and dominance, and that women who challenged their authority or disrespected them deserved to be punished. These attitudes were often reinforced through socialization processes and cultural norms, which depicted women as subservient and men as dominant.

Kaiser, B. N., &Kohrt, B. A. (2019). One of the central themes of this paper is the importance of cultural factors in shaping mental health and illness. Culture plays a critical role in shaping how mental health is perceived, experienced, and treated, and can impact everything from the symptoms that are reported to the effectiveness of different treatments and interventions. The paper also explores the ways in which cultural factors intersect with other social identities, such as race, ethnicity, gender, and social class, to create complex and sometimes contradictory expectations and norms around mental health and illness. These intersections can contribute to stigma and discrimination, as well as barriers to accessing care and treatment. It highlights the need for psychiatrists and other mental health professionals to work with anthropologists and other social scientists to gain a more nuanced understanding of the cultural context of mental health, and to develop more effective interventions and treatments that take cultural factors into account.



Understanding Masculinities in Nepal

Masculinities in Nepal, like in many other societies, are complex and diverse. They are shaped by cultural, social, economic, and political factors, and are constantly evolving over time. Traditional gender roles in Nepal often reinforce patriarchal norms that place men in positions of power and authority, while women are expected to be submissive and subservient. However, Nepal is also a society that has been undergoing rapid social and economic changes in recent years, and this has led to a shift in gender roles and expectations. Women's participation in the workforce, politics, and other spheres of public life has increased, and there is a growing recognition of the need for gender equality and empowerment. At the same time, however, there are also challenges to this progress. Social and cultural norms that perpetuate gender inequality still exist, and many men in Nepal continue to hold onto traditional ideas about what it means to be a man. This can manifest in a variety of ways, from the perpetuation of violence against women to the marginalization of men who do not conform to traditional masculine norms. To truly understand masculinities in Nepal, it is important to take a holistic and intersectional approach that considers the diverse experiences of men across different social, economic, and cultural contexts. It is also essential to engage men in discussions about gender equality and encourage them to become allies in the fight for women's rights and empowerment. (Paudel, R. (2011).

5.0 METHODOLOGY

The research aims to explore the psychology and anthropological perspectives of masculinity in Nepal. The primary data collection method used in this research is a survey. The survey was conducted among 60 respondents to gain insight into the perceptions and experiences of masculinity in Nepal.

The sample size of the research is 60 respondents, which is a convenient sample. The respondents were selected based on the criteria of being male and belonging to the age group of 18-45 years. The survey was conducted in different regions of Nepal, including urban and rural areas, to ensure diversity in the sample.

The primary data collection method used in this research is a survey. The survey was conducted online and in-person using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consists

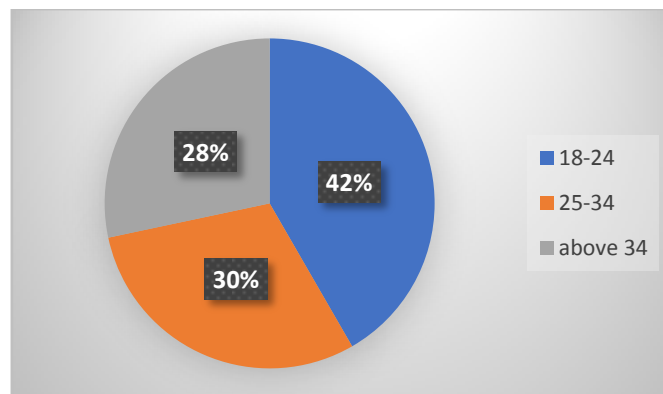


of close-ended questions to gather quantitative data and open-ended questions to gather qualitative data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

What is your age?

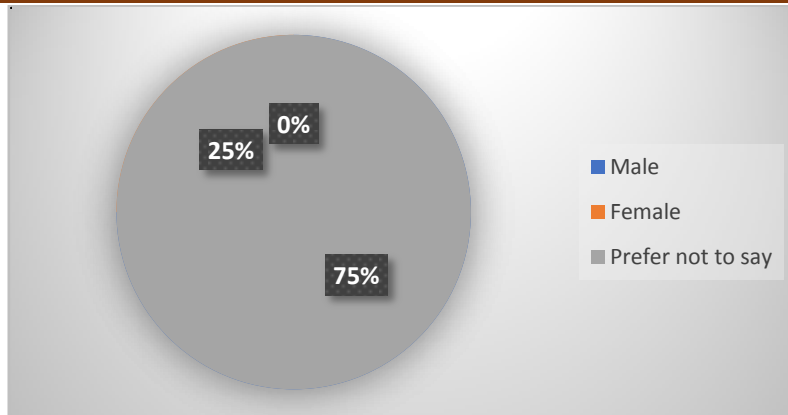
- a) 18-24
- b) 25-34
- c) Above 34



Out of the total respondents, 18 participants fall in the age group of 18-24 years, which is the youngest age group considered in the survey. The next age group considered is 25-34 years, which had 25 respondents. Finally, the age group above 34 years had 17 participants.

What is your gender?

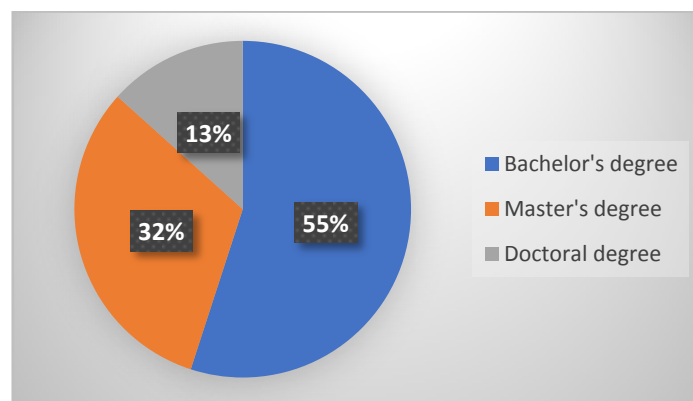
- a) Male
- b) Female
- c) Prefer not to say



Out of the 60 respondents, 45 identified as male, representing 75% of the total, while 15 identified as female, representing 25% of the total.

What is your highest level of education completed?

- a) Bachelor's degree
- b) Master's degree
- c) Doctoral degree



Out of the 60 respondents. Out of the 60, 33 respondents have a Bachelor's degree, which is the highest number of respondents in this category. 19 respondents have a Master's degree, which is the second-highest category.

What is your occupation?

- a) Agriculture
- b) Business

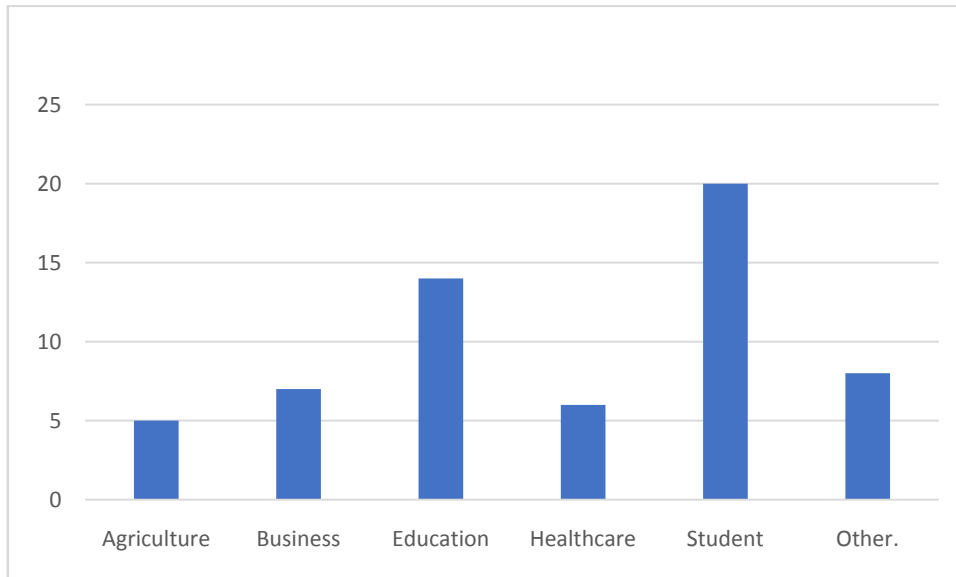


c) Education

d) Healthcare

e) Student

f) Other.



Out of the total of 60 respondents, 5 identified their field as agriculture, 7 as business, 14 as education, 6 as healthcare, 20 as students, and 8 as other (which may include fields such as arts, social sciences, engineering, etc.).

How do you define masculinity?

a) Being physically strong

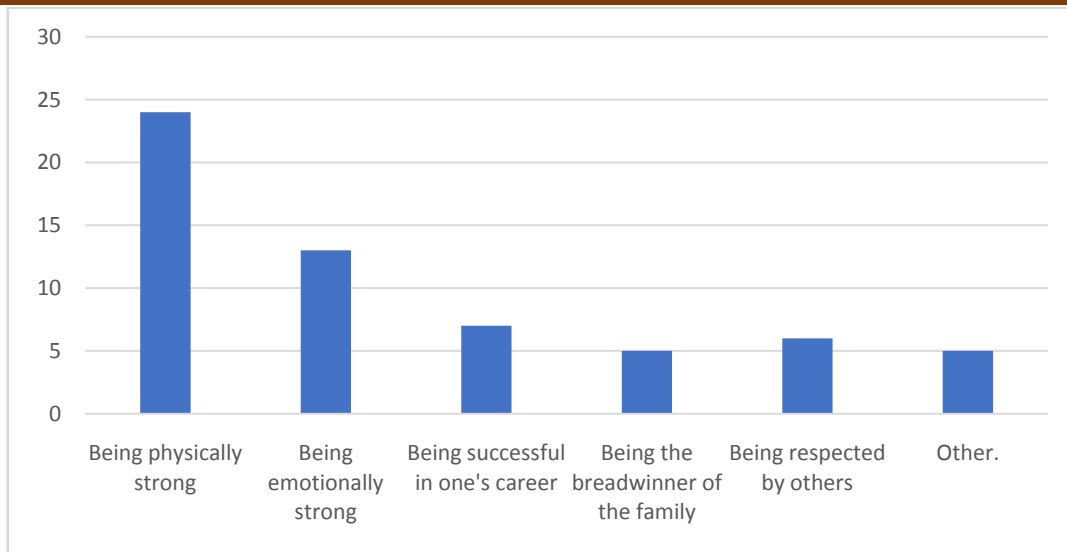
b) Being emotionally strong

c) Being successful in one's career

d) Being the breadwinner of the family

e) Being respected by others

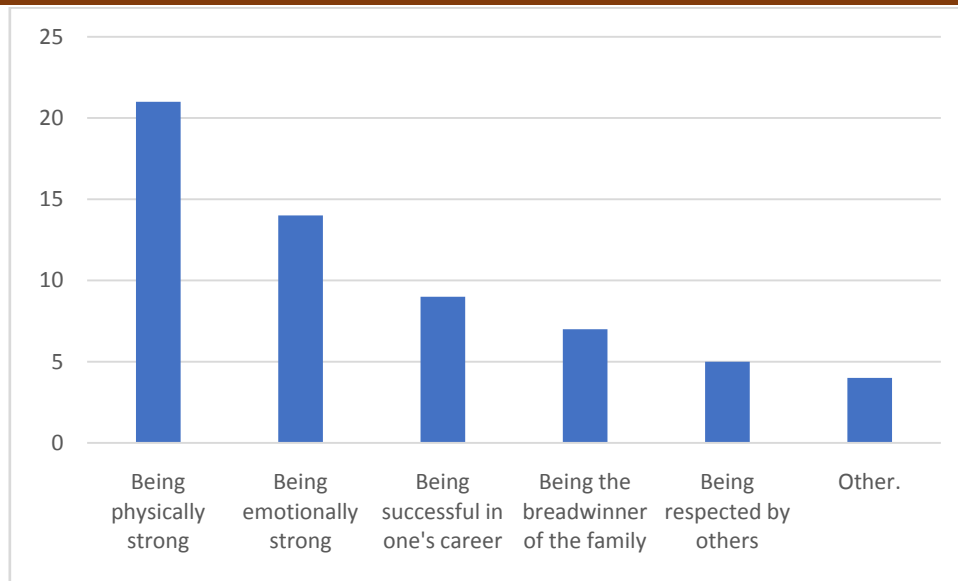
f) Other.



This data represents the responses of 60 individuals regarding what they consider to be the most important measure of being a successful man. The highest number of respondents, 24, indicated that being physically strong is the most important measure, followed by being emotionally strong with 13 respondents.

In your opinion, what are the most important characteristics of a "real man" in Nepali society?

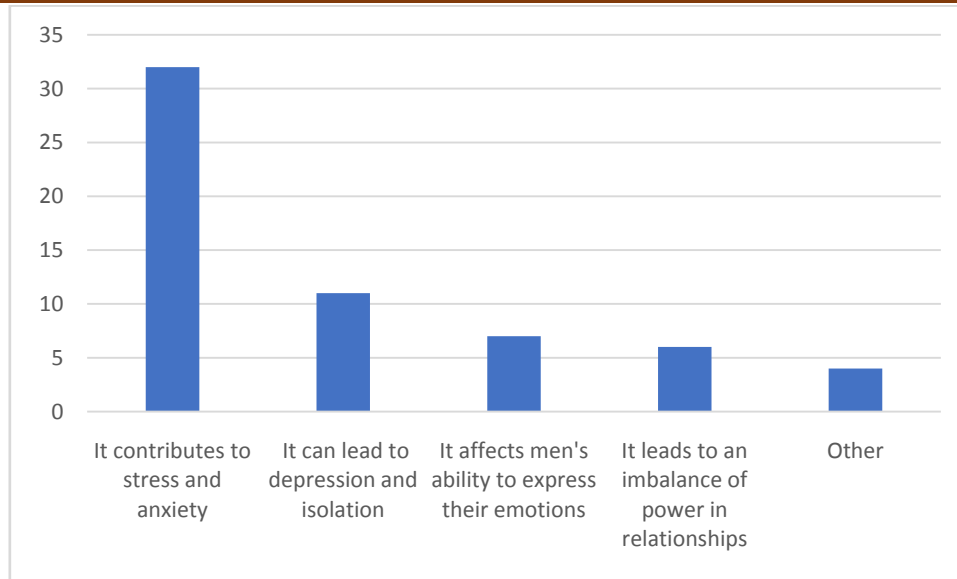
- a) Being physically strong
- b) Being emotionally strong
- c) Being successful in one's career
- d) Being the breadwinner of the family
- e) Being respected by others
- f) Other.



Out of 60 individuals regarding what they consider as the most important measure of their personal success. The majority of the respondents, 23 out of 60, chose being physically strong as their most important measure of success, followed by being emotionally strong, selected by 14 respondents.

How do you think traditional gender roles in Nepal affect men's mental health and well-being?

- a) It contributes to stress and anxiety
- b) It can lead to depression and isolation
- c) It affects men's ability to express their emotions
- d) It leads to an imbalance of power in relationships
- e) Other



Out of the 60 respondents, 32 believe that traditional masculinity contributes to stress and anxiety. 11 respondents believe that traditional masculinity can lead to depression and isolation. 7 respondents believe that it affects men's ability to express their emotions, while 6 respondents believe that it leads to an imbalance of power in relationships. 4 respondents selected "Other."

6.0 Significance of the Study

The study of psychology and anthropology in Nepal is significant for several reasons. these disciplines can provide insight into the cultural, social, and psychological factors that shape people's experiences and behaviours in Nepal. This understanding can be used to inform policies, programs, and interventions aimed at improving the well-being and quality of life of individuals and communities in Nepal. psychology and anthropology can help to challenge harmful gender norms and promote gender equality in Nepal. These disciplines can be used to understand how gender is constructed and experienced in Nepal and to identify the factors that contribute to gender-based violence, discrimination, and inequality. This understanding can inform interventions that promote gender equality and challenge harmful gender norms. the study of psychology and anthropology in Nepal can also contribute to the development of a more nuanced and culturally sensitive understanding of mental health and well-being. Mental health is often stigmatized in Nepal, and there is a lack of awareness and understanding of mental health issues. By studying the cultural and social factors that shape mental health experiences in Nepal, psychology and anthropology can help to develop



culturally appropriate interventions and promote greater understanding and acceptance of mental health issues.

7.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study of masculinity in Nepal is an important area of research that has implications for understanding the complex interplay between culture, gender, and social identity. Traditional masculine ideals and gender roles continue to shape social norms and expectations in Nepal, and can have negative consequences for men's mental health and well-being. However, there is a lack of research on the specific ways in which these gender norms impact men's health in Nepal, and the cultural and social factors that contribute to their construction and perpetuation. Furthermore, while some efforts have been made to promote more positive and equitable forms of masculinity in Nepal, there is still a need for more culturally sensitive interventions and programs that challenge harmful gender norms and promote social transformation. Such interventions can help to reduce the stigma around seeking help for mental health issues and promote healthier, more fulfilling relationships between men and women. Moving forward, it is important for researchers and practitioners to continue to explore the psychological and anthropological perspectives on masculinity in Nepal, and to develop more effective interventions and policies aimed at promoting gender equity and social justice. This will require a nuanced understanding of the cultural and social context in which gender norms are constructed and reinforced, as well as a commitment to challenging harmful gender norms and promoting positive and equitable forms of masculinity.

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9.0 About the Author:

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