



Arcane Language of Human Emotions: Envy and Jealousy in Academia

Mahendra Kumar¹, Anita Kumari², Khina Sharma³

¹Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, India

²Captain, MNS Base Hospital, Command Hospital area, Lucknow, India

³All India Institute of Medical Science, Rajasthan, India

ABSTRACT

Jealousy and Envy are essential part of human emotions and behavior. In today's fast-moving world where everyone is in rush to cut-throat competition, it is more important to discuss these emotions than ever before. Jealousy and envy somewhere connected. Jealousy is a practice to defend something that is owned and threatened whereas envy is a tendency to obtain something that does not own by one. Jealousy and envy develop naturally and also test their character by the response they give due to emotional burnout. Sometimes these situations broke and turn healthy competition into a rivalry at cost of long-standing personal relationships. Jealousy and envy include compound emotional experiences during the exercises to acquire or not lose something desirable. The impact of envy and jealousy is not assessed in academia and research area moreover it is important to understand that envy is often hidden in the classroom context, but it must still be discussed.

Keywords: Envy, Jealousy, Academics, Students

One of the most potent causes of unhappiness is envy. Envy is, I should say, one of the most universal and deep-seated of human passion. Not only does the envious person wish to inflict misfortune and do so whenever he can with impunity, but he is also himself rendered unhappy by envy. ~Bertrand Russell

INTRODUCTION

Some emotions and actions have been going on since the first day of humanity where undoubtedly Envy and Jealousy are two emotions that hardly accepted by the person across societies and regions." The evil eye has been connected for centuries across every culture. This is also mentioned in Freud's statement where he said "Jealousy and Envy are an essential part of human emotions and behavior.

In today's fast-moving world where everyone is in rush to cut-throat competition, it is more important to discuss these emotions than ever before. Lewin 1948 describe jealousy and envy as a storm of emotions and their unsure action in behavior have the potential to spoil a deep close relationship.¹

Jealousy is a painful situation of mixed emotions that

is a result of insecurity and losing their favorable position (Pines and Bowes 1992).² The essence of envy and jealousy is critical to define as it shows unconscious feelings of emotions. According to Greenberg and Pyszczynski (1985), Jealousy is a bunch of emotions and behavior owing to, feelings of lack of competence and inferiority due to comparison with others. The most common emotions witnessed with jealousy are anxiety, feeling of loss, and losing their place with the direct or imaginary threat from their opponent.³

Whereas envy is not that negative as it does not have a very sharp fringe. Envy has a pan-human phenomenon that existed inherently among all to a more or less extent. Envy is an emotion of dejection and emotions of the atrocity of not having what is achieved by someone else once the individual wanted to have it

How to cite this article: Kumar M, Kumari A, Sharma K. Arcane Language of Human Emotions: Envy and Jealousy in Academia. Natl J Community Med 2022;13(9):669-671. DOI: 10.55489/njcm.130920222197

Financial Support: None declared

Conflict of Interest: None declared

Date of Submission: 24-06-2022

Date of Acceptance: 02-08-2022

Date of Publication: 30-09-2022

Correspondence: Mahendra Kumar (Email: Kumarmahen9@gmail.com)

Copy Right: The Authors retain the copyrights of this article, with first publication rights granted to Medsci Publications.

for himself.¹ Simpson and Weiner 1989 defined envy as a feeling of displeasure and ill will at the tendency to regard with discontent another's possession of some superior advantage which one would like to for oneself.⁴ Freud 1982 describes envy as when an individual compares themselves with others and also wants to get something that has others. Frequently envy is shown through some symbolic behavior.⁵ Envy further discussed two subtypes Benign and Malicious. Mainly distinction between benign and malicious envy is how this subtype directs our emotions and motivates us to deal with our envy. Benign envy motivates us to positively raising our level whereas the malicious envy subtype produces negative down motivation.⁶ Cultural values may have a significant impact on the way individuals express envy.

THE DIFFERENCE AND COMMON BETWEEN ENVY AND JEALOUSY!

Jealousy and envy somewhere connected. Jealousy is a practice to defend something that is owned and threatened whereas envy is a tendency to obtain something that does not own by one. We can understand the difference and association between jealousy and envy by example. As if there are two subjects A and B. Here A have X and B want to have X. Hence exertion of A to protect X from B is jealousy and B wants to get X but A owns it. In this case, B's motive to obtain X from A is envy. Jealousy and envy include compound emotional experiences during the exercises to acquire or not lose something desirable.

Many other authors also reported that jealousy is a more social phenomenon and the feeling of being excluded from something worthwhile and once believed to be their possession. Envy is cold, seemingly dispassionate emotion seeing other people having similar desires.^{2,3}

Massé and Gagné in the year 2002 conducted a study on 689 French high school students with a motive to assess the level of envy and reported that students were more envious of their peer's social acceptance and popularity than their achievement or intelligence.⁷

Every nation invests heavily in educational resources. Education is a means to change behavior and improve human resources. The issue of jealousy among peers and colleagues is frequently raised in universities and educational institutions. During our schooling, we also experienced that our peer students who were either in rank positions were afraid of losing their position to the very next competitor, and their contestants, have a strong desire to cross them. Despite other aspects responsible for the performance and well-being of students, competition holds the utmost significance.

However, the current trend of ruthless competition in society for achieving goals and external rewards can lead to negative emotions like jealousy and envy. Being from the same field is an all-sufficient ground

for the feeling of envy because competition invites negative emotions. Researchers reported possible reasons behind academic jealousy are incompetence of their own, feeling of failure and lower inner morale and the habit of finding competition in everything.⁶

The essence of envy among students depends on how they are taught to handle others' elevation. Heikkinen et al 2004 reported in their study on Finland nurses that the nurses cope with their envy by not speaking about it with others due to guilt and ashamed feelings.⁸ Foster in 1972 reported that students' sense of self-belief and coping ability with envy develop over the time. Very often students hide envy because of their self-image and even they have been taught not to speak and accept it publicly and use mild nuances such as bad mood, and rationale of self-perfection, when they talk about other classmates, they use harsh words and try to consolidate their stand.⁹

Some researchers and academicians are agreeing to point out that envy and jealousy don't always carry a package of impaction and negativity. Vande Ven, Zeeleberg, and Pieters (2010) reported the positive side of envy as they found envious people more productive to achieve their position and desired goal, he/she is envious.¹⁰

The author believes that the experience of envy and jealousy is, very personal and difficult to assess and evaluate due to the diversity of variables. It is probably because we are reluctant to admit to envy and jealousy and avoid discussing it on open platforms. Moreover, this was found to be a taboo subject to discuss among academicians and researchers due to the complexity of the subject, the dearth of previous work, and the non-availability of a standard validated scale to measure envy and jealousy.

DISCUSSION

Examining the subject indexes of major Indian journals over recent years we did not find sufficient work on the topic "Envy" and "Jealousy among academics." We happily admit the emotions of guilt, feeling of guilt, pride, and even momentary greed without damaging our egos as our self-image does not suffer as long as we can justify our anger. But we are reluctant to accept feelings of envy and jealousy as this could be harmful to our self-image. Envy surrounds us and penetrates our innermost being far more often than we consciously realize.

The authors strongly support the idea of inclusiveness in learning. Students are never prepared and motivated to express, or accept envy and jealousy with their peers. Students' sense of self-belief and ability to cope with envy develop over time and can impact learning. It is important to understand that envy is often hidden in the classroom context, but it must still be discussed.

REFERENCES

1. Nesse, R. M., and Ellsworth, P. C. (2009). Evolution, emotions, and emotional disorders. *Am. Psychol.* 64, 129-139. doi: 10.1037/a0013503
2. Kozak W. "Jealousy Envy, Envious Jealousy": Muriel Spark's. *Linguistics and Literature Studies* [Internet]. 2016 [cited 13 June 2022];4(5):313-319. Available from: <https://www.hrpub.org/download/20160730/LLS1-19305316.pdf>
3. Pyszczynski T, Greenberg J, LaPrelle J. Social comparison after success and failure: Biased search for information consistent with a self-serving conclusion. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* [Internet]. 1985 [cited 10 June 2022];21(2):195-211. Available from: <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1986-06365-001>
4. KOÇAK D. Academic Jealousy Scale: Validity and Reliability Study. *Eğitimde ve Psikolojide Ölçme ve Değerlendirme Dergisi* [Internet]. 2019 [cited 7 June 2022];10(4):467-479. Available from: <https://app.trdizin.gov.tr/makale/TXpNd01UZzNOdz09/academic-jealousy-scale-validity-and-reliability-study>
5. Neubauer P. Rivalry, Envy, and Jealousy. *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child* [Internet]. 1982 [cited 11 June 2022];37(1):121-142. Available from: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00797308.1982.11823360?journalCode=upsc20>
6. Xiang Y, Chao X, Ye Y. Effect of Gratitude on Benign and Malicious Envy: The Mediating Role of Social Support. *Frontiers in Psychiatry* [Internet]. 2018 [cited 8 June 2022];9. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5949559/>
7. Massé L, Gagné F. Gifts and Talents as Sources of Envy in High School Settings. *Gifted Child Quarterly* [Internet]. 2002 [cited 7 June 2022];46(1):15-29. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241648249_Gifts_and_Talents_as_Sources_of_Envy_in_High_School_Settings
8. Heikkinen E, Isola A. Student nurses' experiences and perceptions of envy in one nurse education environment in Finland. *Nurse Education Today* [Internet]. 2004 [cited 8 June 2022];24(3):160-168. Available from: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/15046849/>
9. Foster G, Apthorpe R, Bernard H, Bock B, Brogger J, Brown J et al. The Anatomy of Envy: A Study in Symbolic Behavior [and Comments and Reply]. *Current Anthropology* [Internet]. 1972 [cited 7 June 2022];13(2):165-202. Available from: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2740970>
10. Lin R, van de Ven N, Utz S. What triggers envy on Social Network Sites? A comparison between shared experiential and material purchases. *Computers in Human Behavior* [Internet]. 2018 [cited 6 June 2022];85:271-281. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5990704/>