

The Voice Of The Voiceless: The Cognisance Of Psychosocial Influence On Prenatal Learning In Ian Mcewan's *Nutshell*

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Abstract:

Abhimanuyu and Prahalada are ancient Indian mythological characters possessing strong dominant roles because of their prenatal learning and character. An individual human character and his practices are formed in his mother's womb. As parents, they just consider about the physical improvement of the unborn baby in the womb, not the psychic development. The pre-birth learnings are foundation for one's behavioural, cognitive and emotional qualities. Unborn babies are very much impacted by their outer environments and the other maternal influences, when they are in their womb. Every individual at one point or the other must experience this phase of life, so it is important to analyse the impacts of external environmental influence in one's pre-birth and perinatal period. This research paper explores the necessity of maternal learning and its impacts on an unborn child, and how the infants are obtaining basic developmental knowledge and ideological insights with reference to Ian McEwan's *Nutshell*.

Keyterms: Psychosocial, Prenatal learning, Impacts, Character, behaviour.

The World has seen different disciplines of the Literature in every one of these years. It has never neglected to acknowledge the people, through its different domains on human

development. Ian McEwan takes one such job and he prophesizes the life in the dark world (Womb), through his novels. He places the light into the womb and picturises life of unborn in this novel. Human beings are conceived as 'blank slates', since the learning process starts in the womb, they are coming in these created in this world with their very own set of memories and Character. In *Nutshell*, a nine months old unborn narrator learn out about this outside world through his external society, even before he come into it, through his auditory sensory mechanisms. This article makes an attempt to study the psychological development of the character of the unborn baby and how the effect of socio-environmental changes influences the unborn baby.

The unborn narrator is conscious in his mother's womb, everything began like an explosion and all of a sudden he was pulled into this world with the series of consciousness, as an detective observer. He is clever understanding about both external and internal self. Since, the human character are planned in the womb dependent on the environmental and maternal components, it is obviously true for this situation of the unborn. The narrator expresses the, "The beginning of conscious life was the end of illusion, the illusion of non-being, and the eruption of the real." (Shang, p.2). Human 'consciousness' differs from 'conscience', while the first one is awareness, the other is ethical judgment. Thus consciousness starts even before one's birth to the world, however conscience comes just through one's experience. That is the reason the unborn baby needs ethical judgements of good and bad, due to the lack of his experience and empathy.

The path of consciousness prompts learning about one's own self, parents, external environment and outer society. It makes the unborn to adjust to outer environment and situation. As per the geneticists, each human mind is a 'blank slate' at the time of conception; things are infused as one grows. In "Mary Shelley and the Rights of the Child: Political Philosophy in *Frankenstein*" the essayist Eileen Hunt Botting has says, "Godwin put forth

the provocative rejoinder that the education of the children in fact began in the womb”(Botting, p. 55). Unborn are learning out about their outer world with the assistance of their tangible auditory and sensory components, scientists are looking this as the survival technique of the unborn in this present world, “ I state awake, I listen, I learn.” (Carlos, p.25) These lines of the unborn narrator, clarifies his source of learning. Listening is the strong source of learning in the womb, the repetition of sounds is acclimatized in their brain in an unconscious manner. It is substantially more like the learning strategy for the babies. The unborn Christopher in Carlos Fuentes *Christopher Unborn*, learns in the comparable way. In the novel, *Nutshell*, the unborn narrator says,

I’ve no choice, my ear is pressed all day and night against the bloody walls.
listen, make mental notes, I’m troubled. I’m hearing pillow talk of deadly
intent and I’m terrified by what awaits me, by what might draw me in.....
When I hear ‘blue’, which I’ve never seen, I imagine some kind of mental
event that’s fairly close to ‘green’ – which I’ve never seen. (N, p. 1)

In the book *The Secret Life of the Unborn Child*, Thomas Verny said that “The womb is the child’s first world. How he experiences it, as friendly or hostile, does create personality and character predispositions” (Verny, p.2). The experiences that unborn get in the womb, influences his character. The unborn’s perception changes as indicated by the circumstance and experiences. “... . My thoughts as well as my head are fully engaged.” (Verny, p.1) says the narrator. The unborn narrator’s life is in clear stress, where his mother is intending to kill the unborn narrator’s father John, with her brother in law, with whom she has illicit relationship. This creates confusion in the psyche of the unborn, and gives him bad impression about this world. The world which is depicted before him is extraordinarily little, with a couple of individuals from his family and all that he knows is simply news, which is

an illusionary one. With these information's and learning, he envisions this present world through his psychological cognition and turns out with a negative perception.

The negative impression of the humans leads to the anxiety, stress, fear and trauma, where both the mother and the unborn are associated with each other and they share their blood, food, thoughts and destiny together. In *Nutshell* the creator expresses that, "Mother and child – a great religion has spun its best stories around this potent symbol." (N, p.132). Their lives are inter-twined, each shares the same soul but the mind is two. One lives within the other, and are bounded together, listening the thoughts, working like a conscience at times. The eating habits of the mother enriches for the development of the baby, the junk food like alcohol which she takes creates poor physical and intellectual impacts lower his senses of awareness.

Maternity care and the environment are the two predominant elements which affects one's behaviour. Sometimes by way of the source which they are exposed are the reason for it, for example in Emma Donoghue's *Room*, the protagonist Jack, a five year old boy study the world by television, while right here the unborn learns approximately through radio podcast and audio sources.

The maternal attachment is certain, and despite the fact that a mother is cruel to others, she is good to her baby constantly. It is due to the mental attachment of the mother and the child. The narrator in *Nutshell* tells that, "My thoughts turn with my mother's world. My father's rejection of me, his possible fate..." (N, p.76). The father's affection is taken away by way of the satanic intentions of his mother Trudy, the destiny of the unborn narrator is absolutely shattered, it results in psychological stress and the impacts of these incidents affects the psychological stress and cognitive development of the unborn inside the womb.

The acculturation and family process have taught us a few basic insights, like saving our neighbourhood or the loved one's from danger. Here the unborn narrator is making an attempt to save his father, "Don't waste your precious days idle and inverted. Get born and act." (Venry, p.46). But, due to his bounded state, he can neither get help from others, nor act consequently his thoughts. In spite of these elements, there are few internal changes of the mother, both physically and mentally, like internal vibrant change affects the unborn. Thomas Venry in *The Secret Life of the Unborn* states that when mothers form an emotional connection with the unborn, through constant communication, it helps in the growth and development of the child. The unborn is stuck among the binary states of cognition, and it ended in revenge. Here the unborn narrator has not encountered fault with his mother, but for namesake, he places all of the blame on Claude.

Most commonly every individual fails to recognize the presence of the unborn while they are within the womb. They fail to understand that the domestic violence and the unpleasant mental notions of mother at once affects the unborn, the unborn narrator in this novel is a paragon of this case. Thus, one has to realize that even the unborn infants are motivated by way of their external surroundings, even though they are now not physically present there. On the whole, the unborn are also need be pampered with more care to create a pleasant environment, which contributes for the well-described prenatal experience and future.

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