

# The role of post-conscious in creating dreams and imaginations of the future

Hashim Talib Hashim<sup>1</sup>, Mustafa Ahmed Ramadhan<sup>1</sup>, Sudhan Rackimuthu<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Baghdad, College of Medicine, Baghdad, Iraq

<sup>2</sup>Father Muller Medical College, Mangalore, Karnataka, India

**Summary.** Post-conscious is an imaginary state of consciousness that convinces the mind to do the work that it intends to do only to help overcome the conflicts between consciousness and unconsciousness. This state of consciousness is developed to explain what is not explained by the other states of consciousness. So, what we propose is in essence that the post-conscious as such an unconscious function of the mind, designed to ignite dreams that correct or solve these (conscious or unconscious) conflicts or challenges. To determine the role of post-conscious in creating dreams and imaginations of the future. The study is a cross sectional study involving 112 participants from 25 countries. Convenient sampling was employed with all participants involved in the study either pursuing or have completed their undergraduate education with no past history of any psychiatric illness. The questionnaire was administered, and data recorded through in person or video call interviews. The questionnaire was tested for reliability and validity. 54.5% said that they sometimes dream about their thoughts and conflicts about future events. 88.4% of them said that their dreams about the future did not come true for any more than two times during their life up until now. 90.2% of the participants said that this kind of dreams make them relaxed. No significant differences were found concerning age and gender of the subjects dreaming about future events. Dreaming about future events and thoughts do not take enough time to be saved in one's unconsciousness, which is why they are released by our postconscious to make them satisfied and relaxed about what we are worrying about or stressed about. Some of the dreams causes us to relax, we suggest calling them "Good dreams", While others make you uncomfortable; "Bad dreams".

**Keywords:** Consciousness; Dreams; Psychiatry; Unconscious; Postconscious; Psychology; Preconscious

## 1. Introduction

Since time immemorial, the concept of consciousness as well as that of unconsciousness has continued to be a matter of immense interest in helping understand the true nature of human psyche and mind. Consciousness, as explained in psychology, is the fineness or the state of being aware of any external object or something within oneself, such as thoughts, feelings, memories, or sensations. It has also been defined as the awareness, the ability to experience or to feel, wakefulness, having a sense of selfhood, and the executive – control system of the mind [1]. Consciousness is something that cannot be touched or felt, it controls our feelings, ourselves, and our sensations in the way that it thinks is most suitable in a given situation [2]. When someone intends to undertake a wrongful doing, it is believed that one's consciousness creates a conflict based on one's previous experience of what is right and wrong [3,4].

An ideal equipoise is said to exist between the conscious and the unconscious with the conscious playing a predominant role over the other. Psychiatric illnesses such as psychosis and depression have been hypothesized to occur when the ideal relationship between them is lost [5,6].

Dreams are believed to be emanations from the brain or mind that as such do not require any external stimulation, although often influenced by external events. The contents of the conscious minds are filtered through an altered sleeping brain giving rise to dreams. Dreams are therefore a distillation of what our lives consist of without the distractions of the external world, and at times, also entirely new creations put together by self-organizing processes without input from external sources [7].

Post-consciousness is an imaginary (unreal) state of consciousness that convinces the mind to do the work that one intends to do, to help shadow or dismiss the conflicts that arise between one's consciousness and unconsciousness [8]. This state of consciousness helps explain what is not explained by the other concepts of consciousness and can control not only the persuasion of the human mind, but also influence actions of individuals that are not under their immediate control, but which result in provision of a sense of satisfaction and comfortableness [8]. It is pertinent to note that this state is not a defense mechanism even if it seems to be similar to "Rationalism" wherein rationalism is always based on reasonable thoughts and bases whilst post-conscious is not necessarily based on reason. The post-consciousness is hence believed to control a wide range of reactions and feelings that relate to future or upcoming events [8].

Unconscious, also called Subconscious, the complex of mental activities within an individual that proceed without his awareness. Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, stated that such unconscious processes may affect a person's behavior even though he cannot report on them. Freud and his followers felt that dreams and slips of the tongue were really concealed examples of unconscious content too threatening to be confronted directly.

Corresponding address:

Hashim Talib Hashim, Iraq, Thi Qar, Nasiriyah, 64001.

Email: : hashim.h.t.h@gmail.com

Submitted for publication: November 2021

Accepted for publication: May 2022

DOI: 10.11588/ijodr.2022.2.84393

Freud distinguished among different levels of consciousness. Activities within the immediate field of awareness he termed conscious; e.g., reading this article is a conscious activity. The retention of data easily brought to awareness is a preconscious activity; for example, one may not be thinking (conscious) of his address but readily recalls it when asked. Data that cannot be recalled with effort at a specific time but that later may be remembered are retained on an unconscious level. For example, under ordinary conditions a person may be unconscious of ever having been locked in a closet as a child; yet under hypnosis he may recall the experience vividly. Because one's experiences cannot be observed directly by another (as one cannot feel another's headache), efforts to study these levels of awareness objectively are based on inference; i.e., at most, the investigator can say only that another individual behaves as if he were unconscious or as if he were conscious.

This study hence aims to study the role of post-conscious in creating dreams and imaginations of the future.

## 2. Method

The study is a cross sectional study involving 112 participants from 25 countries. Convenient sampling was employed with all participants involved in the study either pursuing or having completed their undergraduate education with no past history of any psychiatric illness. Ethics approval was obtained, and all participants provided informed consent to take part in the study. The questionnaire was administered, and data recorded through in person or video

Table 1. Country wise distribution of participants involved in study

Variable	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Algeria	3	2.7	2.7
Brazil	3	2.7	5.4
Canada	3	2.7	8.0
Egypt	4	3.6	11.6
France	2	1.8	13.4
Germany	1	.9	14.3
Iran	6	5.4	19.6
Iraq	42	37.5	57.1
Italy	2	1.8	58.9
Jordan	4	3.6	62.5
Kenya	2	1.8	64.3
Lebanon	2	1.8	66.1
Morocco	1	.9	67.0
Oman	3	2.7	69.6
Pakistan	1	.9	70.5
Peru	2	1.8	72.3
Rwanda	3	2.7	75.0
Saudi Arabia	5	4.5	79.5
Sudan	2	1.8	81.3
Switzerland	6	5.4	86.6
Syria	2	1.8	88.4
Tunis	1	.9	89.3
UK	5	4.5	93.8
USA	4	3.6	97.3
Yemen	3	2.7	100.0
Total	112	100.0	

Table 2. Frequencies and percentages of responses obtained

Variable	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Q1: When you have a problem that has not been resolved yet or when you are thinking about something of the near future, do you dream about the same or matters relating to it during your sleep?			
Always	21	18.8%	18.8%
Sometimes	61	54.5%	73.2%
Seldom	23	20.5%	93.8%
Never	7	6.3%	100%
Q2: Do these dreams or even some of them come true (Occurrence of more than at least twice during your life)?			
Yes	13	11.6%	11.6%
No	99	88.4%	100%
Q3: How do these kinds of dreams make you feel?			
Comfortable	101	90.2%	90.2%
Uncomfortable	11	9.8%	100%
Q4: Have you dreamed about something you do not think about or people you do not know and then happen to meet or see them after dreaming?			
Yes	63	56.25%	56.25%
No	49	43.75%	100%
Q5: Do the dreams seem to reduce conflicts and change your thinking and mind?			
Always	13	10.7%	10.7%
Sometimes	87	77.7%	89.3%
Never	12	11.6%	100%
Q6: What is the maximum type of dreams that affect you the most?			
Repressed Dreams	35	31.25%	31.25%
Future's Dreams	77	68.75%	100%

call interviews. The questionnaire was tested for reliability (Two-way mixed effect) and Pearson correlation coefficient was used, which was significant at 0.01 (R = 0.00). Data was analyzed by Statistical Package for Social Science Program (SPSS) version 25.0 and appropriate statistical tests were employed which included regression analysis, statistical correlation, and ANOVA test to evaluate the significance between the variables.

## 3. Results

A total of 112 participants were included in the study with a mean age of 36.4 ± 13.2 years with a minimum age of 16 years and a maximum age of 65 years. Among the study

Table 3. Regression analysis for age

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)	38.050	9.495		4.007	.000
Q1	.427	1.624	.026	.263	.793
Q2	-1.142	3.971	-.028	-.288	.774
Q3	-.375	4.250	-.009	-.088	.930

Table 4. Regression analysis for gender

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.641	.358		4.581	.000
Q1	.041	.061	.066	.674	.502
Q2	-.065	.150	-.042	-.434	.665
Q3	-.163	.160	-.098	-1.014	.313

population 64 were males (57.1%) and 48 were females (42.9%).

The countries of the participants involved in the study are distributed as depicted in Table 1. The frequencies and percentages of the responses to the six questions are shown in Table 2. Age and gender effects for the first three questions are presented in the Tables 3 to 6. The correlation between age and gender was  $r = -.007$  ( $p = .945$ ,  $df = 107$ ).

The first three questions (Q1, Q2 and Q3) in the questionnaire have been mainly assessed to correlate and determine the possible relationship between post-consciousness with dreams and imaginations of the future. The inter-correlations between the Q1, Q2, and Q3 are depicted in Table 7.

The remaining questions (Q4, Q5 and Q6) of the questionnaire were administered to further aid in assuring as well as to inculcate further interest on the overall subject pertaining to the questionnaire.

#### 4. Discussion

Dreams are events of our life that are kept in the unconsciousness and are released to the reality as dreams at times when the unconsciousness becomes unable to keep them any longer. But dreaming about future events and thoughts that do not take time to be saved in the unconsciousness that's they are not released by it. They are released by our postconscious to make us satisfied and comfortable about what we are worrying about or stressed about. For example, when someone is worrying about his baby because he was diagnosed with a ventricular septal defect as an example, he sees many dreams that become frequent when he thinks more about it. The dreams that causes you to relax I choose to call "Good dreams". While others make you uncomfortable, here labelled "Bad dreams". Maybe one of these dreams could be real and come true, even for once or twice in all your life, but it is very rare and does not have a sig-

Table 6. The ANOVA test between Gender and the Questions

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Q1	Between Groups	.360	1	.360	.571	.451
	Within Groups	69.354	110	.630		
	Total	69.714	111			
Q2	Between Groups	.007	1	.007	.064	.801
	Within Groups	11.484	110	.104		
	Total	11.491	111			
Q3	Between Groups	.107	1	.107	1.201	.275
	Within Groups	9.813	110	.089		
	Total	9.920	111			

Table 5. The ANOVA test between Age and the Questions

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Q1	Between Groups	30.577	41	.746	1.334	.143
	Within Groups	39.137	70	.559		
	Total	69.714	111			
Q2	Between Groups	4.646	41	.113	1.159	.290
	Within Groups	6.845	70	.098		
	Total	11.491	111			
Q3	Between Groups	3.586	41	.087	.967	.538
	Within Groups	6.333	70	.090		
	Total	9.920	111			

nificant percentage. Postconscious creates these dreams to release the thoughts from our mind and to make us more tolerant and realistic with our reality, not with our imaginations, so it creates some kind of imaginations (Could be real or not and could be good or bad), just to fight our own worries and stressing thoughts. [9,10]

The age and gender do not have any affect in this process, so it occurs to everyone at any age regardless of gender.

Efforts to interpret the origin and significance of unconscious activities lean heavily on psychoanalytic theory, developed by Freud and his followers. For example, the origin of many neurotic symptoms is held to depend on conflicts that have been removed from consciousness through a process called repression. As knowledge of psychophysiological function grows, many psychoanalytic ideas are seen to be related to activities of the central nervous system. That the physiological foundation of memory may rest in chemical changes occurring within brain cells has been inferred from clinical observations that: (1) direct stimulation of the surface of the brain (the cortex) while the patient is conscious on the operating table during surgery has the effect of bringing long-forgotten (unconscious) experiences back to awareness; (2) removal of specific parts of the brain seems to abolish the retention of specific experiences in memory; (3) the general probability of bringing unconscious or pre-conscious data to awareness is enhanced by direct electrical stimulation of a portion of the brain structure called the reticular formation, or the reticular activating system. Also, according to what is called brain blood-shift theory, the transition from unconscious to conscious activities is mediated by localized changes in the blood supply to different parts of the brain. These biopsychological explorations have shed new light on the validity of psychoanalytic ideas about the

Table 7. The correlations between the Questions

		Q1	Q2	Q3
Q1	Pearson Correlation	1	.172	-.136
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.070	.153
	N	112	112	112
Q2	Pearson Correlation	.172	1	-.068
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.070		.478
	N	112	112	112
Q3	Pearson Correlation	-.136	-.068	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.153	.478	
	N	112	112	112

unconscious. So, what we are proposing is the need for an additional type of consciousness, one that serves the role of solving emotional / personal or even practical problems, by simply initiating / causing dreams that work on and potentially solve, or at least puts a different perspective to, this given issue

## 5. Conclusions

Dreaming about one's future events and thoughts normally do not take enough time to be saved in our consciousness. That's why they are released by our postconscious to make us satisfied and comfortable about what seems to be frightening us or making us anxious. The dreams that cause you to be comfortable which we here label "Good dreams", while others make you uncomfortable, "Bad dreams". Postconscious creates these dreams to release the thoughts from our mind and to make us more tolerated and realistic

## Acknowledgment:

I thank everyone helped us in the collection of the samples from all the countries that were involved in the study: Waed Yassir, Morad Mustafa, Mustafa A. Mohsen, Ahmad Diya, Azzam F., Mojtaba Ziae, Yahya Zia, Ali Mahdi Mansour, Omar Al-Silman and Ali Talib Hashim. And to the people who helped us in editing and correcting the language of the paper: Mo'yed Hassan, Mahmood Alawy, Mukhaled Ahmed.

## References

1. Armstrong, David M. "What is consciousness" *The nature of mind* (1981): 55-67.
2. Bouveresse, Jacques. *Wittgenstein reads Freud: The myth of the unconscious*. Princeton University Press, 1995.
3. Dietrich, Arne. *Introduction to consciousness*. Macmillan International Higher Education, 2007.
4. Fireman, Gary D., Ted E. McVay, and Owen J. Flanagan, eds. *Narrative and consciousness: Literature, psychology, and the brain*. Oxford University Press on Demand, 2003.
5. Ornstein, Robert E. "The psychology of consciousness." (1972).
6. Schimek, Jean, G. "A critical re-examination of Freud's concept of unconscious mental representation." *International Review of Psycho-Analysis* 2 (1975): 171-187.
7. Kahn D, Gover T. Consciousness in dreams. *International review of neurobiology*. 2010 Jan 1;92:181-95.
8. Hashim, H. T., and M. A. Ramadhan. "The Need for Developing a Fourth Level of Awareness in Human Consciousness: Unconsciousness." *Pre consciousness, Consciousness and Post consciousness* 9.361 (2019): 2161-0487.
9. Hashim, Hashim T., and Mustafa A. Ramadhan. "The Concept of Post-consciousness & Its Role in Human Behavior." *Journal of Consciousness Exploration & Research* 11.1 (2020).
10. Hashim H. The role and the spectrum of the post-conscious in the control of behavior by geriatric subjects. *NPG Neurologie - Psychiatrie - Gériatrie*. 2020;20(119):297-302.