VOL II

# Introduction to Social Work

*Editor*
Gracious Thomas

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**School of Social Work**
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# Preface

The two volumes on 'Introduction to social work' will introduce you to the discipline of professional social work. Social work is a fully recognized profession across the globe. However, in India, social work is yet to be recognized as a full-fledged profession. Many people still confuse social work with voluntary work, charity and other forms of social services. Social Work emerged as a profession early in the 20th century and today the profession charged with fulfilling the social welfare mandate of promoting well-being and quality of life of people across continents. It is a field of study that has uniquely blended perspectives from other disciplines, particularly the biological and social sciences, with its own values, knowledge, and skills.

Social work as a professional discipline evolved in the West, mainly in Europe and America. Today the profession is practised in most countries of the world including Africa and Asia. This profession is being practised in numerous settings. Social workers today are employed in governmental, non-governmental, private and industrial settings as well as work as private practitioners. Since evolving as a profession in UK and USA, it has now spread to other countries of Europe, Latin America, Australia, Asian, African and middle east countries.

The philosophical and historical bases of social work and social welfare form the backbone of the profession. Trends in contemporary practice can be better understood in the context of the history of social work profession and practice. A historical perspective gives insight into the attitudes about persons receiving social work services, evolution of the different social work

methods, and the nature of training and education that emerged for those volunteering to provide help in a more systematic way.

The first two chapters 'Introduction to social work concepts-I' and 'Introduction to social sork concepts-II' will help you understand the basic concepts used in the social sector and social work profession. The third chapter 'Emergence of social work abroad' introduces you to the history of social work in the west. The tradition of social work in the west continues to influence the profession in our country as well. Indian social work educators and social work practitioners are trying to evolve indigenous methods and techniques for social work practice. The fourth chapter 'Evolution of social work and social service tradition in India' traces the development of social work profession and social work education in India.

Chapter five to chapter nine will clarify the important concepts related to the social work and the evolution of schools of social work in India and abroad. These chapters will introduce you to the philosophy, principles, methods and ethics of social work profession. The fifth chapter 'Professional Social Work: nature, scope, goals and functions' describes the place of social worker in the society. We also discuss about the various tools that the social workers use in their profession. The variety of approaches and ideologies of social work profession are also introduced to you in this chapter. The sixth chapter further explores the areas of social work, methods, principles and their application. The next chapter 'Social service and social welfare programmes in Five Year Plans' will introduce you to the various programmes that the government implements for the well-being of its people. The 'Five

Year Plans' reveals the approach of the government towards social issues and therefore a brief discussion is presented here which is very informative. The eighth chapter 'Voluntary action and social work in India' describes the non-governmental initiatives being taken to improve the living standards of people. The ninth chapter 'Social work ethics in Indian context 'deals with the need and importance of professional ethics in social work profession in the Indian context.

Chapter ten on Knowledge about basic social science concepts deals with sociological terms that are frequently used in social work practice. The eleventh chapter 'Evolution of society: nature and characteristics' discusses how society evolved from simpler forms to complex forms as a result of social forces from within the society as well as from outside it. Chapter twelve on 'Social process' deals with processes like competition, conflict, assimilation and cooperation. Chapter thirteen on 'Social change: concept and factors involved in social change' explains the forces of changes in society and its consequences on an individual and society. Chapter fourteen on 'social control' deals with the concepts of social control. Agencies of social control and its functions are described in this chapter. While studying sociology which mainly deals with how society evolved and social groups behave, the social worker should remember that the influences of social groups can be positive or negative.

In the first four chapters in the second volume you will read about some of the important components of the society such as family, class, caste, culture and the state. They play an important role in influencing the individual's personality. They also determine the role of individuals in society, the value framework within

which he or she makes decisions and the privileges and liabilities associated with status.

Chapter fifteen on 'Marriage and family' deals with one of the most important institutions of society-the family. Chapter sixteen 'Society and culture: plurality of culture in India' explains the mutually interacting components of social structure and culture. Seventeenth chapter deals with 'Social stratification' which explains the dynamics of caste and class to you. Chapter eighteen is on 'The state as a social institution: its role and impact on other institutions'. This chapter deals with the state which play an important role in the promotion of welfare among people and protecting their rights.

We have five chapters dealing with the concepts and theories of personality development. Social workers frequently work with people having personality disorders and other personality related problems. While this is particularly relevant to social workers working in correctional settings, schools, health care settings, family counselling centres, and industries, it is also useful to social workers who work in community settings as well.

Chapter nineteen on 'Personality development' introduces you to the concepts and theories of personality development. Chapter twenty on 'Determinants of personality: role of heredity and environment' deals with the factors and agencies that contribute to personality development. Chapter twenty one on 'Different stages of human development' deals with physiological and psychological changes and development in an individual from conception to death. Chapter twenty two is on 'Theories of personality'. It explains to you the different theories of personality by some of the prominent psychologists including Erickson,

Maslow, Carl Rogers, Skinner and others. Chapter twenty three 'Psychosexual development: Freudian concepts' deals with Freud's contribution to the understanding of personality development. A detailed discussion of his theories is provided keeping in mind his contribution to the subject.

In the last five chapters of the second volume you will be introduced to the basic concepts of psychology and their use in social work practice. Like sociology, the knowledge of psychology is very important in social work. It contributes to our understanding of individual human being and their behaviour. Improving human relationship is the objective of social work. However the use of psychology is not restricted to the social worker's dealing with the client. It can be used profitably in relationship with fellow professionals, staff members and others. But its greatest use for the social worker may be in understanding his/her own self. Since the social worker uses his/her self and his/her relationship with the client as a 'tool' in problem solving process he/she needs to understand his/her own motives, emotions, and reactions to various situations. Psychology gives us the key to understand ourselves and unlock the secrets of our personality. Many of these secrets though unknown to us influence our behaviour to a great degree.

Chapter twenty four 'Relevance of psychology in social work practice' explains the importance of psychology in social work practice and describes the various branches of psychology. In chapter twenty five 'Basic psychological concepts in human behaviour' are provided. The next chapter deals with 'Defence mechanism' which explains uses and consequences of defense mechanism in human behaviour. Another chapter: 'Normality and

abnormality' will help you understand abnormal behaviours in human life, its symptoms and cures. The last chapter 'Basic concepts of social psychology' deals with individual behaviour in social groups.

The compilation of these two volumes would not have been possible without the dedicated support and cooperation of several eminent academics and professionals. I am deeply grateful to Prof. Surendra Singh, Prof. P.K. Gandhi, Mr. Joselyn Lobo, Ms. Uma, Dr. Kanaka Durgaube, Dr. B.V. Jagadish, Mr. Vedanshu Tripathi, Dr. Sanjay Bhattacharya, Mr. Joseph Varghese, Prof. K.K. Jacob. Mr. M.K. Saju, Dr. Renu Sharma, Prof. Manjit Singh, Dr. Raj Kumar Singh, Prof. J.S. Gandhi, Dr. Vimla Bhaskaran, Dr. R.K. Chaudhary, Mr. Sundara Babu, Mr. Gautam Prabu, Prof. Eshanul Haq, Prof. A.S. Inam Shastri, Dr. B.D. Pandey, Dr. Hannah Anandraj, Dr. D.P. Singh, Dr. Tomy Philip, Prof. Girishwar Mishra, Dr. Richa Chaudhary, Dr. Gayatri, Ms. Jayanti Mohapatra and Dr. K.R. Nair for their valuable contribution in the form of chapters as well as for collaborating in editing and finalising these two volumes.

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# 15

# Marriage and Family

* *Vimla Bhaskaran*

## Introduction

Marriage is all institution admitting men and women to family life, with the implied purpose of parenthood and establishment of a family. The institution has social approval and religious sanction. This view of marriage has an interesting and varied history.

Several forms of marriage are found universally. The most universally prevalent are monogamy and polygamy. Polygamy is the marriage between one male or one female with several females or males. When a woman has more than one husband at a time it is called polyandry. Polygamy is a form of marriage in which a male has two or more wives at a time. Polygamy existed and was accepted in different periods of time for reasons relevant to situations prevailing in societies at those times. Polyandry existed where conditions of social life were harsh and efforts of two or more men were needed for the support of a family. This is a rare phenomenon and exists only under peculiar and extreme conditions. Sociologists have identified such families in certain parts of Tibet and remote parts of Africa. Polygamy did not develop extensively until human groups had accumulated some degree of wealth and economic surplus to enable one man to support several families. It existed in part became of the lower impulses of the male sex and partly because of desire for that status which has been attached to the practice.

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However polygamy as a form of marriage is not as widely prevalent or accepted as monogamy. Monogamy, the marriage of one man to one woman at a time, has been and is the leading type of marriage. The advantages of monogamy are well recognized universally, as it is understood that it creates clearly defined and stronger family ties than any other form of marriage. It alone produces the highest type of affection tolerance and devotion and secures the superior care of children. The cohesive power of the family is greatest in monogamy. A monogamous family is more stable and lasts longer.

## Marriage Institution

Marriage is a socially approved way of establishing a family by procreation. As an institution it involves certain reciprocal rights and duties. The specific patterns of rights and duties distinguish the marriage institution in one society from the other. There is some clearly acknowledged social ritual in recognition of the social significance of marriage in every society. Thus, marriage is the institution concerned with the reciprocal social relations and cultural behaviour of a man and a woman who publicly signify their union for the implied purpose, among other possible objectives. Of founding a family of procreation. The actual cultural components of the marriage institution, as is the case with all institutions, vary in detail from one society to another and to some degree also among sub-groups and classes in our own society. These variations arise out of the differences in the objectives of the marriage institution and the extent of emphasis laid on them.

Some universal characteristics that can be observed are as follows; sexual activity between husband and wife; trust and loyalty between the members; care and support for each other. Societies everywhere recognize the importance of marriage by the ceremonial rites they establish in this connection.

**The Wedding**

A marriage actually begin with legal or religious ceremonies or both. The wedding is recognition of the public significance of marriage. Such a ceremony indicates society's control. The pageantry impress upon the couple the importance of the commitment they are undertaking.

**The Licensing and Ceremony**

The formal permission to marry usually required by societies is expressed through the issue of a license which then makes it mandatory for persons to meet age and health regulations. The wedding must occur before witnesses so that proper certification and registration are effected. A legally sanctioned and publicly admitted marriage is important because of property and other rights and obligations that are immediately effective when the marriage is a fact. Thus the permanence of the obligations of the contract is established beyond question and these obligations cannot be freely discarded. Public sanction and public acceptance make them binding.

The wedding also indicates that two persons are fused in a new life. The exchange of gold rings, drinking from the same vessel, or eating a common piece of food are all symbolic of the union. The ceremony also expresses the good wishes of relatives and friends. Rice throwing and gifts· of food. and other helpful items are expressions of their wishes.

**Religious Rites**

The marriage ceremony is a religious rite in many societies which consider marriage a sacred institution.

Marriage is considered a sacred bond sanctioned by God and the religious institution. The possibility of dissolving a marriage was unthinkable in most of the societies until recently. Even though some societies are fairly liberal in this respect, they emphasize the sacred character of the relationship which is reinforced through the religious rites. These views when accepted serve as supportive social controls.

**Mate Selection**

Mates for marriage are obtained through two methods generally through arrangement or through freedom of choice. The selection of mates must obviously preceed marriage. Mating of course was carried on in the early associations of people long before ceremonial marriage appeared. Marriage developed in human societies in part as a means of controlling mating.

Arrangements for procuring mates in societies is done by parents or some other person with authority. Sometimes in modem society and the assistance of matrimonial agencies is sort. The professional matchmaker has long been a part of the marriage system among many societies. Two important factors are predominant where mate selection is done by arrangement. Firstly, the social and economic position of the families to be united is an important matter for consideration. They are usually marriages of social and economic convenience, binding families together as coalitions with a common interest. Secondly, the desires of the partners and their feelings of affection and future happiness may get completely ignored: However, it is believed that love develops after the marriage, when this couple gets to know each other. The fact that so many successful marriages and families are started by arrangement supports the view that prior affection or

love between the prospective partners is not necessary for a happy union.

The second method where freedom of choice is exercised and the selection of the mate is largely the result of personal choice and is based on association and the development of romantic love. Hasty decisions based on physiological and emotional reactions that supercede sound thinking are quite common especially where there is a strong desire for marriage accompanied by fear of losing the desired person. A common problem in a society that depends upon free choice and romantic love as the basis for marriage is the danger that the choice will result from temporary sentimental attraction rather than from a considered mature decision.

Several factors condition the actual selection of a mate. The sex drive operates as a strong force in human societies pressing people toward sexually attractive possible mates. Marriages would hardly take place without this drive. This is nature's way of securing the perpetuation of the species. The choice of a specific mate is also controlled or influenced by conditions. Some of the restrictions that societies sets are selection within the race, within definite age limits, within the same class, and the prohibition of incest. Propinquity or the nearness of residence is an other influencing condition situation. Those with similar characteristics live in similar areas and this proximity is favorable to meeting and choosing partners of like ideals and purposes. Purposefully created contact situations for young men and women in large cities creates opportunities and possibilities of acquaintanceship. This often means participating in purposeful groups and organisations which can provide a favorable setting for people to meet.

These factors of nearness, attraction of persons with similar people's personalities  constructs of the ideal

mate and personality needs, however, do not operate as discrete forces in the choice of a mate. All these aspects of an interwoven set of personal relationships constitute a pattern for the choice of a mate.

## Family Institution

The institution of family is a consequence of marriage in several societies. A family is defined as a group *d* people related by blood, marriage, or adoption who form an economic unit are responsible for the care of children, and often live in the same household. It is considered as the primary unit of society which is responsible for several functions of the individual as well as society. It is responsible for socialization of its members and for teaching cultural norms, for provision of the basic needs of its members as well as preparing them for their careers and future family lives. Its importance lies in the fact that no individual can exist without a family and no society can perpetuate itself without enlisting members into families. It aids societies in serving as a significant controlling agent to achieve orderly social relations and social control.

## Relationship within the Family

The family is a procreative, child-bearing, child-rearing and a status-giving group. Its fundamental principle is the bond of kinship, which shows the network of social relationships among the family members. This relationship can be elaborated in many ways which differentiate families from each other in their form and structure in different societies. Basically there are two types of relationships in the immediate family, which are quite apparent: these are the marriage relationship and the relationship of biological kinship. The relationship between the husband and wife is of the

first type while the other interpersonal relations normally found in the immediate family are of the biological type. (like father-son, father-daughter, mother-son, mother-daughter and the relationship between the other members like brother-brother, sister-sister, and brother-sister).

If we examine the family structure of different societies we see that .some place major emphasis on the marriage relationship while others emphasizes blood relationships .. Thus we see two general types of families: the conjugal family in which the dominant relationship is that of the spouses and the consanguine family in which the dominant relationships are those of blood, that is, the bond between the blood kinsmen involves more obligations and activity than that between spouses. The conjugal family often gives the individual member more freedom in the sense that he or she can ,remove himself or herself from the group if the person finds it uncongenial, unlike the consanguine family in which he or she is bound for life.

During the course of a normal life, an individual, belongs to two types of families, namely:

a) the family of orientation which is the family into which he or she is born consisting of parents and siblings (brothers and sisters) , and

b) the family of procreation consisting of the spouse and children.

In the societies, which place emphasis on conjugal families on the basis of social life, the sibling relationships of the family of orientation are loosened and importance is given to the relationship between the spouses. The consanguine family or household permits the perpetuation of sibling patterns learned in

the family of orientation to be carried on in full function even after the person has set up a family of procreation.

The family group was the first human school and despite its weaknesses it has often been considered the best school. The informal education of an individual begins in the family, where the most effective teaching is done in and through it. It is in the family that the children can be best educated to learn the basic lessons of health and personal and sex hygiene. The institution of family is also considered the cradle of personality. The siblings in a family have special social relationships among themselves. They can be effective teachers of each other too, give emotional satisfaction and help each other in times of problems.

It is in the family that individuals acquire, early and effectively the idea that marriages and the family have superior connotations as social institutions. Individuals also learn that the family needs to be considered not lightly, but as (socially necessary and sacred) institution, not as a temporary contract which can be assumed carelessly, but as involving human feelings and intimate relationships that have a lifelong effects upon personality.

## General Characteristics of Family

In their normal functioning, families everywhere show the following characteristics:

1) A family characterized by the existence of a marriage bond between a man and a woman or between more than one man and more than one woman.

2) It is characterized by a recognized actual or blood relationship bond between the offspring of the spouses and the other members of the group.

3) The family groups are distinguished by the possession of a residence or series of residences which are jointly occupied at least occasionally by the members.

4) The family as a group has specific functions to perform, These differ to some extent from society to society. Some of them which are most commonly found are the following:

   a) Protection to family members from bodily harm and illness and care of the invalid and ill members of the family.

   b) Training in eating, elimination, reaction to pain, speech, cleanliness, wearing of clothes, and respect for self and others.

   c) Socialization of the child and making him/her a member of society

   d) Division of labour according to gender, age and other specific circumstances.

   e) The family is vested with the possession and control of certain property. The control of property usually also involves inheritance.

f) Lastly it is through affiliation with a specific family that persons in society first learn to identify one's place in society. Their family becomes one of the main status giving agent's of society. The use of a family name is not universal but where it is prevalent, it serves to symbolise family status and helps in identification of individuals from their point of view. It is widely prevalent in India where the individuals identity is very often solely based on the family name. Another important function of social care is the protection of its members.

**Dimensions of Family**

Sociologists and anthropologists have developed a set of dimensions on which the family structures are based.

Within the general framework of kinship, two main types of family structure are. prevalent: the nuclear family and the extended family . The nuclear family consists of adult parents and their dependents like children. This type seems to be 'common in many societies. The extended family includes the nuclear family and many of its relatives such as grand parents, grand children, uncles, aunts, and cousins. In the Indian context such families are also called as joint families, as they consist basically of the nuclear family and its relatives.

2) Marriage Form - In a majority of societies, a common form of marriage is monogamy, the marriage of one man to one woman. However several other forms have also been observed. Polygamy is the marriage of one person to several others. Where the marriage of one man to several women is called polygamy marriage of one woman to many men is called polyandry. Due to the shortage of women, sharing a common wife among several men became a necessity and where brothers took one common wife it was known as fraternal polyandry.

Certain factors encourage one form of marriage rather than the other. Economic forces, which are usually prominent in specific societies, explain the need for polygamy or polyandry. For instance, in Tibet, the family's land holdings descend jointly to all sons in the family. It is not divided among them individually as it may not be sufficient to support the family. Therefore brothers share the land and the wife.

**Patterns of Authority**

In most of the societies in which extended families are a norm. Patriarchal pattern of authority exists. In patriarchal families, males are dominant over other family members. A matriarchal pattern of authority exists, when authority is vested in the ~emales, or the wife and the mother. The common pattern of authority is patriarchal. Sometimes in patriarchal societies women may informally dominate in many families, but this does not become the universal norm. As more women have joined the workforce, we find a shift in the pattern of authority. Such changes have changed the character of the family system, in which power and authority is shared among' the male and female members of the family.

**Norms for Selection of a Partner**

Societies prescribe rules that pertain to the selection of a marriage partner. A system where people marry outside their family or clan is called exogamy. Parallel to ,this is endogamy, where marriage within the group is permitted.

The most common rule of exogamy is the incest taboo, where marriage or sexual relations between individuals having a close biological relationship is not permitted. The choice of partner often is restricted by the rules of exogamy and endogamy people.

The rule of incest taboo is universal. This rule prohibits sexual relations between two close relatives like between child and parent and brother and sister. Some societies extend this rule to first cousins and close blood relations too. However incest was not a taboo in the royal family of ancient Egypt. There are several reasons

for the practice of 'incest taboo. For instance, some have suggested that humans have an innate aversion to incest while others say that people in the distant .past were aware of the genetic dangers of inter-seeding, still others have pointed out that rules against incest reduce jealousy and conflict in families.

**Patterns of Matrimonial Residence**

Residential patterns of married couples are varied in different societies. In societies where newly married couples live with the husband's family the pattern is called patrilocal residence. In societies in which matrilocal residence is the norm, the newly married couple is expected to live with the bride's family.

In recent years we see more and more couples set up their own houses, which is called neo-local residence. This pattern is very common in western societies which gives more importance to the independence of the individual and his/her personal interests resulting in the rise of individualism.'

## Socialization

The process by which an individual develops through interaction with other people, his specific patterns of socially relevant behaviour and experience is called 'socialization'. It is the family's primary responsibility to socialize children into the norms of the society.

In all human groups, the family is an important agent of socialization. It has a flexible human relationships in which family members interact informally and deal with common concerns in mutual respect and love. The family teaches the child his or her first lessons in social living and helps him or her form basic attitude patterns,

ideals and style of life. It creates feelings of social responsibility and teaches the importance of cooperation and mutual respect.

The human child possesses a tendency towards imitation and the family provides informal conditions where customs and traditions can be learnt through imitation. Accordingly, the child's personality is formed and a social identity develops. Socialization develops the child's ability to control himself or herself and realizes his or her responsibility towards the family, community and the society at large.

**Socialization in the Family**

The family plays the most important role in the individual's socialization. The child finds much to learn in the behaviour of his family members, parents, relatives, and friends. He imitates them in their mannerisms, behaviour, cliches, etc. He tries to avoid such activities which result in punishment or which are considered bad in the family. It is the family environment that forms his good habits and it is in the family that he acquires criminal tendencies.

**Need for Socialization**

The question why is socialization necessary for the development of an individual is best answered by the example of the human beings who were for some reason, nurtured outside society. Human beings of this kind are described by Gessell in his work "Wolf children and Human Children" and by Davis in his essays. In 1920, in India two,children were found in a wolf den, of which one was eight years old and the other a couple of years younger. The second died after the lapse of only a few months while the first continued to live for six years.

She was named KamIn, This girl was completely innocent of the modes and behaviour of human behaviour. She walked on all fours, growled like a wolf and could not speak. She became nervous at the sight of human beings as any undomesticated animals are bound to be. In this way, due to the absence of socialization she possesed none of the characteristics of human beings save for her bodily structure. She was taught to speak, wear clothes and eat. In this way, she could learn some human behaviour due to the influence of socialization after a period of some years.

The self of the individual develops primarily because of socialization. Every social relationship of the individual contributes to this process of socialization. The problem of man's socialization is very complex and it has not yet been completely solved in any human society. In the words of Davis, "The improvement of socialization otfers one of the greatest possibilities for the future alteration of human nature and human society".

## Stability in Family Patterns

The institution of family is a stable system and this makes the Indian society well integrated. However a number of factors have contributed in making the family unstable. The effects of modernization have shaken the family and made it w1stable. This leads to severdl problems of maladjustmcnt, misunderstanding and infidelity, which make the family unstable. People enter marriage with considerations other than for starting a family and sharing each other"s lives. Individuals marry for personal convenience, forgetting that manied life requires preparation and training.

A successful married life requires a lot of sacrifice and adjustment as two distinctly different individuals are sharing their life. Other important factors which support

a good married life include a satisfactory family income, sound household management skills, a high level of commitment of the partners toward preserving the marriage and partners having those value and ethical considerations that support married life.

The attitudes and actions of both partner and the other member may produce an environment which is highly favorable for the proper functioning of the family. The creation of a pleasant atmosphere is a responsibility of both partners. Such an atmosphere fosters adjustment and whenever the atmosphere is destroyed by any one adjustments become difficult. An exaggerated spirit of individualism leads a person to find the guide to his actions in his own wishes and whims. This produces an attitude of carelessness towards the family. This attitude which is often expressed in irresponsibility tends to make the family unstable, as the family thrives on attitudes of personal responsibility.

A sound family life depends to a large extent on a single or the same standard of behaviour and responsibility for both men and women. Double standards, or one standard for men and one for women, destroys personal happiness and social values in the family.

## Adjustments in Marriage

Adjustment in marriage relates to the following areas - sex relations, managing family income, social activities and mutual friends and families. It is important to distinguish marital adjustment from two other terms which are sometimes used more or less interchangeably with it, that is, marital success and marital happiness. Marital success refers to the achievement of one or more goals of marriage. Marital success can be determined by the emotional response

of a spouse. It is at least conceivable that one marital partner could be very happy while the other may be at the nadir of despair. Marital happiness refers to the tone of the subjective response of the individual spouse to his or her marriage.

The family today is in a transitional stage. The institutionalized family has been ignored sometimes giving room for tandem marriages and free love. The growth of individualism has given more freedom to everyone in the family. The trend is undoubtedly in the direction of families as a form across of companionship. The patriarchal family of the past had been too rigid. It did not allow individualistic attitudes in the family. Over decades, the changes occurring in the family have led to a democratic family which is built on respect for each others opinions, for age, on consideration for the personalities, and on cooperation all around. In order to change the family from one in which autocracy and ignorance predominate to one in which rational and mutual give and take rule applies, requires education in democratic relationships, sex relationships parent-child relationships, and in an appreciation of the family group as a training center for social life.

According to Bogardus, " A democratic family is one in which the husband and wife share the authority more or less equally and according to a pre-arranged division oflabour ". It is a group whose life is based not primarily on the fear and force of authority but on the drawing power of mutual respect and affection. Rational love rules in the family. The democratic family rests on the principle of mutual self-sacrifice. A home cannot be a home one if a child cannot find it in the attitudes of a cooperative and companionable father and mother. It should exist as a distinct and strongly functional group in every known form of society.

## Change in Family Patterns

The structure and functions of families today remain no longer the same as in the past. The forces of development have affected changes in every aspect of society and family, as an institution does not exist in isolation. The consequences of changes in non-domestic institutions have had repercussions on the domestic front. An analysis of some of the factors that have changed over the last few decades will help us understand the changes occurring in the family in its present form.

Economic changes and their effects on the family are significant. In the primitive and early medieval times, the family or the home was an economic center. With the advent of new and highly specialized division of labor and mass production of goods, changes in economic life have affected family life. The growth of education and economic opportunities have offered women a chance to make their own living. This has, to an extent, impaired the economic unity of the family as a group, because each member of the family maintains his or her own share of the expenses and lives an independent economic life.

Moreover, even as affecting the men of the family, have been affected by modem industry with serious results for the family and the home. It has often taken them away where they can no longer help to rear the family. The husband is no longer an important social factor in the family. Once children also contributed to the support of the family by working with the parents. Now if they share in the economic burden of the family they have to leave home and its care and engage in occupations outside the home. Thus the extent to which economic activities have been taken out of the home and are

taken over by other institutions has had a significant role to play in the changing patterns of the family.

The effect of other social changes on the family has also been significant. The growth of liberal thought has its effect upon family ideals. Individual freedom and expression of thought have far reaching effects on the family. Certain other factors, like decreasing size of family and the propagation of a small family, late marriages, rising socioeconomic aspirations and unwillingness to procreate, single parent families, are also responsible for bringing about a change in the family patterns.

## Family Disorganisation and Divorce

Divorce is an indicator of the extent of family disorganisation. Disorganisation in the family refers to a breakdown in the conjugal family life. The problems in the family arise from circumstances frequently associated with such a breakdown. William J. Goode points out that families become disorganised due to different reasons. The Empty Shell' is a term used by him to denote a marriage that simply is no longer a real relationship, although the partners remain together for anyone of a number of reasons. The number of people living in such empty shells may be quite large in society. Sometimes these marriages can lead to divorce and desertion. Another reason which may bring about family disorganisation is a catastrophe, either as a result of internal factors like an illness or disability or external factors such as floods, wars etc. These tendencies could affect families in such a way that the members are scattered or are in emotional and mental turmoil.

Some of important reasons of family disorganization according to Robert Weirs are :

1) The changing social context, which emphasizes the right and obligation of the individual to maximize capabilities, to be mobile and adaptive to stress, selfdevotion and self-determination.

2) The lowering of legal barriers. Laws have been changed to shorten the time necessary to acquire a divorce. The current laws provide several different grounds for divorce and even sustain no fault divorces.

3) Greater social tolerance for divorced people.

4) Liberalized attitudes on the part of organised religion.

5) Increased financial independence of women.

In the West one of the most telling causes is the extreme cultural freedom of choice. Freedom to choose a partner means freedom to continue to choose and freedom to replace the choice with another. Divorce results in the creation of single parent families.

## Single Parent Families

There is a distinction between family households and non family households. A family household consists of people related by birth, marriage or adoption and non family household includes two or more unrelated people of either sex as well as people who live alone. Although the family household is still the dominant form, it appears to be giving ground to other forms. They indicate that changes in family structure, parent-child relations, and intimate relations in general, are taking place universally in every society. Single parent households are an offshoot of unstable families, desertion, and divorce while single parent families are those families

with children where men and women who are divorced do not remarry and of women who bear children out of wedlock. For both divorced and never married women with children, the most serious problem appears to be economic. Most of the divorced or single parents must seek work to support their families, and this often turns out to be low paying work.

However, money worries are not the only problems of single parent households. Single parents often feel stigmatized in a society that places a high value on marriage. In the absence of another parent in the home to raise children many single parents feel isolated and unequal to the task. There is however no solid evidence that children who grow up in single parent families are damaged as a result. A number of studies have concluded that whether or not both parents are present makes little difference in the quality of child rearing or the socialization of children. The children's sense of gender identity, their health, their social achievements, and their attitude towards marriage and the family are not affected. Some studies have found that delinquency is more frequent in unhappy two parent homes than in single parent homes.

## Functional Approach to the Family

Sociologists have used several approaches to the study of the family. The functional approach gives emphasis to the functions of the family in society. The contribution made by the family to the maintenance of the social system forms the core of analysis by the functionalists. It is assumed that society has certain functional prerequisites or basic needs that must be met if it is to survive and operate efficiently. The family is one of the agencies to meet those functional prerequisites. Secondly analysis is done of the functional relationships

between the family and other sub systems of the social system. It is assumed that there must be a certain degree of integration, and harmony between the parts of the social system if society is going to function efficiently. Apart from these functions performed by the subsystem for larger society, its functions for the individual are analyzed. In the case of the family the functions of the family for its individual members are to be considered.

Murdock states that the family performs four basic functions - sexual, reproductive, economic, and educational. They are essential for social life since without the sexual and reproductive there would be no members of society, without the economic functions, like provision and preparation of food, life cannot exist and without education, which forms a major part of socialization, there would be no culture. Human society without culture will not function. The family cannot perform these functions exclusively. It makes important contributions to all of them and no other institution can match its efficiency in this aspect. The family's functions for society are inseparable from its functions for its individual members, It serves both at one and the same time in much the same way.

This analysis of the family, from the functionalist approach, "provides a conception of the family's many sided utility and thus of its inevitability" (Murdock, 1949). The family is seen as a multi-functional institution, which is indispensable to society. Murdock, however, does not consider whether these functions could be performed by other social institutions. Other functionalists like Talcott Parsons (l955) and Vogel and Bell (1968) argue that Murdock's description of the family is almost too good to be true. Parsons (1955) analysis of the family relate to two basic and irreducible functions

which are common in all societies. These are, the primary socialization of children and the stabilization of adult personalities of the population of society. He argues that families are factories which produce human personalities and believes they are essential for the purpose of primary socialization and provides warmth, security, and mutual support. The family acts as a counterweight to the stresses and strains of everyday life, which tend to make the personalities unstable. Parsons' analysis has also been criticized as he has been accused of idealizing the family with his picture of well adjusted children and sympathetic spouses caring for each other needs. Like Murdock, Parsons also fails to explore functional alternatives to the family.

Vogel and Bell present a functional analysis of certain families that avoids the tendency of many functionalists to concentrate solely on the positive aspects of the family. They examined the functions and dysfunctions of the family and indicated that what is dysfunctional for children can be seen as functional for the parents, for the family unit, and for the society as a whole. They argue that the cost to the child is low relative to the functional gains of the whole family. While dealing with the family both its positive and negative aspects should be considered. It should also be kept in mind that what is good for a member may be at the cost of another member.

## Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the concepts of marriage and family and aspects relating to individuals and societies. You have learnt about the importance of marriage as an institution, its forms and its functions. You have also learnt about the institution of family, its

structure; its forms, its characteristics, and its dimensions.

You, have also read about instability in families, adjustments, reconstruction of families, single parent families, and divorce. Also in this chapter you have been made aware of the functionalist approach to the study of family referring to some of the leading functionalist theorists in sociology.

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# 16

# Society and Culture: Plurality of Culture in India

* *R.K. Chaudhary*

## Introduction

Cultural man is considered to have existed on earth for about 1.5 million years. Evidence of humans leading a social and cultural life are available from this period. Thus, human heings were the first of species in the animal kingdom, capable of producing culture. Once this capacity for building culture was attained, its exercise led to a secure adaptation to their environment. This exercise generated a need and prompted man to live in the company of others. Man not only started experimenting with his environment, he also started sharing his experiences with fellow human beings, sometimes in their original form and at other times in an improvised and improved form. The beginning of human beings living in aggregates gave rise to the concept of society. Then man started organizing his experiences and behaviour in an·ordered fonn which gave rise to a systematized fonn of life. This constituted his culture. Both the rise and formation of society and culture went hand in hand. Biological evolution in man a process of struggle for survival (accompanied cultural evolution).

In the initial stages human beings grouped and organised themselves in the form of small, simple and nomadic

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bands. This was the beginning of organised society, though it was quite different from today's advanced and complex society. The activities ofhwnan beings, their behaviour and livillg together, and moving in groups from one place to another in search of food and shetter helped them to develop a common way of life .

Some sociologists try to distinguish between 'social' and 'cultural' aspects of human life. They employ 'social' to refer to the relationships among the groups within in society. For them 'culture' consists of the ways of life of the members ofthe society.' The relationship of group to another is regarded as an aspect of culture. The family, e.g., is a social group, the way they act, interact and behave is their culture. A society is considered to be a group of people who share a common habitat and who are dependent upon one another for their survival and well-being. Large societies of today are made up of classes, castes, ethnic groups etc.

## Concept of Society

Socrates said, man is a social animal and being social for man is both natural as well as necessary. There are other animals, who also have an organised life, but the social life of man is different from, them. Behaviour among animals is instinctive and dies with the animal but among men, behaviour is learned and, passed on from one generation to another. This aspect is distinctive of man and distinguishes him from other animals. This characteristic binds all men together to behave in a similar manner. They form an aggregate of people who lead a similar way of life and there is also a similarity in their behaviour and other activities. It is from this aspect that Herskovits has defined society: "Society is an organised, interacting aggregate of individuals who follow a given way of life." In simple words it can be

said that society is composed of people. Man studies himself as a member of this aggregate of people that we call society.

Comte characterizes society in terms of "social statics" and "social dynamics". referring to social stability as well as social change. 'Social statics" deals with relatively stable and orderly aspects of social life, e.g.,family life, marriage and kinship and social institutions. Similarly 'social dynamics' focuses on the changing aspects of social life, e.g., social changes, social processes etc. In the context of social dynamics and the changes that took place in society, Comte emphasized that evolution of society passed'through three stages, i.e. savagery, barbarism and civilization; evolution of marriage and-family has passed through proniiscuity, group marriage, polygamy and finally monogamy. Likewise the evolution of religion .has passed through the stages of animism, polytheism and monotheism.

The question may arise why is it necessary for a man to live in society or why is society necessary for man? The answer to these queries can briefly be given as under:

1) Man has his needs and he chooses to meet or fulfill these needs by himself; He can meet them while beirtg a member of society or while living in society. The meeting of those needs is conditioned by the. patterns of requirements and behaviour that we can call culture. There. is a wide variety of variation in meeting human needs from one society to another. This variation makes one society different and unique from other societies.

2) From the very beginning, i.e., from birth itself, man needs the support of others. Initially he is dependent

upon others who provide who provide him help in social and physical unbringing. His overall growth and development is provided within and by the organised social life. This is where the society has its basic relevance. Though the society extends and plays this role throughout the life of man, in the initial phase of his life he needs itthe most.

3) The society provides the understanding knowledge and exposure to a man about his milieu and environinent. It is in society that man learn to behave, to act, to respond and to play his requisite tole for his environment and for the society of which he is a member.

All these factors do not work independent of each other. They have a cumulative effect. However, each factor has its own significance. Further, there are some basic elements of social organisation and ideology. These elements contribute towards continuity and change and proper functioning of the society.

## Concept of Culture

We can begin by saying that man is the only organism capable of building culture· and transmitting it from one generation to another. Some other animals and insects too are considered to have their culture, but it dies with them but the culture created by man distinguishes man from other animals.

There are a number of definitions of culture:

One of the best, and most acceptable, early definitions of culture was given by E.B. Tylor (1871) in his book "Primitive culture", wherein he described culture as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society".

The definition indicates that culture is not simple and it is not constituted by one or two elements. Rather it is a complex one and is constituted by a large number of aspects of life which range, as shown in the definition, from knowledge to law to customs. This also includes habits acquired by man while living and interacting in society with other members. Though constituted by a large number of units, called traits, culture has to be understood in totality, the whole. All the traits are so well integrated that each one gets almost assimilated into the other. Culture, when seen holistically, is unqerstood as a complex whole. The following are some of the characteristics of culture:

1) ***Culture is a complex whole:*** All the elements and traits of culture are to be understood in relationship to one another. All of them, in this respect, constitute, a whole, called culture, and is complex in nature.

2) ***Culture is learned*** : Culture of mankind is not instinctive, or innate, or transmitted biologically. It is composed of habits, i.e., learned tendencies to react, acquired by each individual through his own life experiences after birth.

3) ***Culture is inculcated:*** All animals are capable of learning but man alone seems to be capable, to a large extent, of passing on his acquired habits and behaviour to his off spring. A dog can be trained to learn many tricks, but it cannot pass them on to its puppies. However, man is capable of transmitting all his learning and habits to his offspring. .

4) ***Culture is social:*** Habits of cultural order are not only inculcated and transmitted overtime; they are all social, i.e., shared by all human beings living together in the society. Th.e habits shared together

by the members of the society constitute their culture.

5) ***Culture is commercial***: The habits that constitute culture of a group form the ideal norms or patterns of behaviour.

6) ***Culture is gratifying:*** Culture always, and necessarily, satisfies biological needs and secondary needs derived from it. It also helps in gratifying human interaction with the external world of nature and fellowmen.

7) ***Culture is adaptive:*** Culture changes. The process of change appears to be an adaptive one, comparable to evolution in the organic realm but is of a different order. Over a period of time culture adjusts to the geographical environment and to the biological and socio-psychological demands of the human organism. It adjusts through borrowing and organisation.

8) ***Culture is integrative:*** In the process of adaptation, all the elements of culture tend to form a consistent and integrated whole. Some anthropologists consider that culture is actually an integrated system which has most of its elements in perfect equilibrium with one another.

9) ***Language as a vehicle of culture:*** All elements of culture are transmitted from one generation to another through language in verbal or written form. Without language man cannot transmit the culture from one period of time to another and from one place to another.

10) ***Culture is cumulative:*** Any knowledge, or skill or any other form of culture is acquired by one generation from the preceding one. The acquired

culture is added or modified and in a cumulative form transmitted to the next generation. This helps man in acquiring knowledge, skills and other aspects of culture from the remote past and hand them over to the future generations.

Out of a huge number of definitions, some which clearly and closely express human behaviour and environment, are given below:

"Culture is the man made part of the environment" (Herskovits, MJ. 1955).

"The sum total of the knowledge, attitudes and habitual behaviour patterns shared and transmitted by the members of a particular society" (Linton, 1940).

"(All the) historically created designs for living, explicit and implicit, rational, irrational, and non-rational, which exist at any given time as potential guides for the behaviour of man" (Kluckhohn and Kelly, 1945).

The concept of culture also includes tools, techniques, ideas, values and all life (Kroeber, 1948). All such aspects, arts and artifacts and the patterns of human behaivor acquired an transmitted, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including-their embodiments in artifacts (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952).

It becomes clear that culture is more than a biological phenomenon. In brief the notion of culture is inclusive of man's mature behaviour acquired from his group by conscious learning or by a conditioning process, techniques of various kinds, social and other institutions, beliefs, and patterned modes of conduct. Thus man becomes the only "culture building"- animal

As stated culture has two aspects :

1) Material culture

2) Non-material culture.

1) ***Material Culture:*** It includes all those artifacts or things that have been created by man himself for his use, e.g., houses, furniture, clothes, tools, etc. It is that aspect that can be seen, touched and observed. The elements of material culture can be created, built, destroyed and rebuilt, and improved upon deliberately according to the needs and desires of man. Some creations are to protect man from the environment, and help'man in the process of survival and to fight the inclement weather and hostile climate. Certain aspects, like medicines, are invented, discovered and put to use to fight diseases, improve health and quality of life. Some aspects of material culture are created and built to fulfill the desires and needs arising out of changes in non-material culture, i.e., ideational aspects of culture. Variations in material culture are wider and more wide spread as compared to non-material culture.

2) ***Non-material Culture:*** It includes all non-material and spiritual aspects of culture. Ellenwood defined culture in terms of the whole of man's material civilization like tools, weapons, clothing, shelter, machines, and even systems of industry', and on the other hand as man's non-material or spiritual civilization, such as, language, literature, art, religion, ritual, morality, law and government. The definition clearly identifies the areas that fall under material and nonmaterial culture.

## Relationship of Culture and Society

In simple terms this relationship can be understood when we say that culture refers to the ideas, values and norms in the minds of the people whereas society

refers to the people themselves. Therefore, ideas constitute culture and people constitute society.

Herskovits its has made this clear when he observed that "a culture is the way of life of the people; while a society is an organised and interacting aggregate of individuals who follow a given way of life". Further "a society is composed of people the way they behave is their culture".

To begin with we may study man's ideas, institutions, and material objects. In reality we study man himself. Thus, it is difficult to separate man as a social being from man as a creature who has culture. The two aspects are so well integrated that one can't be understood and explained in the absence of the other. It can be said that both society and culture are not mutually exclusive. One needs to comprehend social realities with society and· culture.

In society, comprising of individuals, the individual members may die and be replaced by others. Therefore, society has a structural aspect. Its structure and continuation is based on the birth, death and replacement by other members. Culture, on the other and, is independent of individual members. Birth, death or replacement of individual members is not of much consequence to the culture. Society falls in the realm oj. 'clcial structure and social organisation whereas culture falls in the realm of normative urder:

On the social level there is a continuous process of interactive behaviour, whose persistent form of social relationship refers to what we call social structure; whereas on the cultural level there are beliefs, values, norms etc. in terms of which individuals define their world, expressing their feelings and judgments. Therefore, cultUre is the fabric in which human beings

interpret their experience; social structure is the form that action takes. Thus culture and social structure are different aspects of the same phenomenon.

S.F. Nadel (1951) has made a distinction between society and culture in this way:

"Society means the totality of social facts projected on to the dimensions of relationships and groupings; cultures, the same totality in the dimensions of action". In this respect, some scholars have even raised the question "are not people -' society - the reality rather than their way of life". Some consider ways of life as the intangibles and as the inferences drawn from the behavior of people. Therefore, to study society is important for us because it essentially allows us to.understand' how the . life lived by man in aggregates affects his behaviour.

Relations between individuals, in all societies, change with age, with strength, with obligations assumed, and with status achieved. Among all societies, social life of an individual begins by identification with a group. It is the cultural training by the group that makes an individual fit to live according to the expectations of the group, or society. It is through the learning experience that a man achieves competence in his culture.

The necessity of society for human beings has been explained by many scholars. This necessity is explained partly in terms of physcial and mental make up of man and partly in terms of his cultural conditioning.

Why should man live in society? Some of the reasons are explain :

Primarily a man needs to fulfill and satisfy his biological and other needs in society. But he adopts cultural

means to satisfy them and thus culture becomes a means to the end. As a member of society, man can express his choices to satisfy his needs and the process of this satisfaction takes the form of cultural expressions. To meet his requirements of shelter and food, man uses his cultural capabilities.

It is a fact that at the time of birth the child is most helpless physically and mentally, to face the environment around him to meet his needs. It takes a lot of time for him to gain maturity and self-reliance. He needs the sustained support of others in the process of his upbringing. The whole process of his growth and development takes place under the care of other members of society or members of his group. This is carried on in the organised life of the group. It is during this process that a child inculcates values and norms tel develop his personality. He develops skills and capabilities and equips himself to face the world around him.

It is for the above reasons to be self-reliant and competent to respond to the expectations others basic of him that he must live in society, and live as a member of it in continuous interaction with other members.

## Relationship of Culture, Society and Individual

The social and cultural aspects of life are interrelated. The behaviour of members of a society is altogether a matter of social relationships. Membership to this relationship is constituted by individuals who are units of a society. At least two individuals constitute a social relationship. The significance of an individuals in society lies in the promotion of his culture. All the three aspects, culture, society and individuals are related in

a network called the social fabric. Individuals also interact with their environment, construct ideas, and build their culture - both material and non-material. To build adequate and positive relationships, individuals must adjust to other individuals.

The constructive interplay between social, cultural factors and individuals makes society a civilised place to live in. All these factors jointly work and reinforce each other The absence of any one could mean the non-existence of others. It is also in the face-to-face interaction that the individual's that their behaviour is influenced by others.

The behaviour of a single individual can be called his personality, the behaviour of a group of individuals is also called culture. Culture can also be termed as the total behaviour of individuals.

In society individuals learn the forms of conduct or behaviour which is acceptable to group. This process of learning acceptable behaviour is called acculftJation. Thus, this process works as a bridge between culture as it exists and culture as presented by the individuals in their behaviour. It is during this process of acculturation that individuals are moulded into persons as desired by society.

While individuals have a small life span, culture persists from one generation to another. It is more than any individual who lives in it. Similarly, no society is made up of thl.: smile people for a long time. Births and deaths constantly change its members. When a whole generation of individuals in society has passed away, it is the pattern of behaviour (culture) that links the members to the past. This pattern of behaviour is passed to the individuals in society who comprise it now. This alsohelps us to understand how culture helps individuals to it integrated to his society.

## Plurality of Culture

It is observed that in any country we find people having different religions, castes, creeds, races, and above all, following different ways of life, having their own cultures and ethnic identities. Such a country is culhrrally plural. Cultural pluralism is a pattern or a system in which people of different faiths, religions, castes, creeds can all work and live together, retaining proudly their own faith and identity and sharing the common bond of being, either by birth or choice. Plural culture means the co-existence of several sub-cultures within a given society on equal terms. In such a pluralistic culture, the validity of various sub-cultures is recognized.

The people living in different sub-culhrres follow different ways of life, live differently and think according to cultural patterns adopted by them. Thus cultural pluralism also gives rise to the concept of cultural diversity. Cultural differences set apart one group of people with one culture from another. Each group may be characterized by their own language, history or ancestry, religion, style of dress or adornment. The cultural characteristics of plural groups are socially inherited (socially transmitted) from one generation to another rather than being learnt in one generation alone.

Structurally, plural groups presenting one culhrre may be small or large in size, but all of them display a sense of solidarity among themselves. Generally, the membership to such plural groups is closed, i.e., it can be acquired through birth and only its members can use its resources but all the groups live on equal terms and none are considered to be supreme in a moral sense. Also no group can force anyone to follow or adopt its way of life.

Each group falling under a plural sub-culture has a collective opinion and shares a responsibility which is distinct and separate from the desires and intentions of other groups. Members of each group have common beliefs, common rights and common duties towards the group and they make efforts to maintain and integrate it.

Rural and urban areas ofIndia present a plurality of cultures. It has tribal, rural and urban populations. 'It presents a diversity of culture and people in terms of language, religion, caste, food. dress and way of life. racy all constitute sub-cultures of a larger society, that is Indian society, This diversity is carried to urban areas as well, but it is not as clearly defined and demarcated and apparent as it is in tribal and rural areas. Urban areas present a complex and variety of sub-cultures.

## Conclusion

In this chapter we have attempted to learn what is culture and what is society. Culture is the way of life we live and society is the interacting aggregate of people Culture has been defined in a number of ways. The definition by E.B. Tylor is the most acceptable. However other definitions present different aspects of culture and society. All of them lead us to think about ourselves as social being as well as cultural being, i.e., what kind of social life we had and how we can define it and what are the different types of cultures and how different cultures interact with each others.

In this unit we have also tried to establish a relationship between society, culture and the individual. We find that how they are inter-related and inter-twined. One has no meaning in the absence of the other. Culture has been classified into material and non-material

culture. Both social and cultural factors guide and determine social growth and development of an individual and help him to integrate into his group according to its (group) desires and expectations. The individual in turn enriches culture by extending the inter-personal relationships.

The concept of cultural pluralism has been shown to present different sub-cultures living together on equal terms and maintaining their identities.

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# 17

# Social Stratification

*Joseph Varghese

## Introduction

Man has always desired an egalitarian society where all human beings have equality but this noble ideal has never been fully achieved in recorded history and certainly not in modern societies which are more concerned about equality than any other societies. The indicators of development devised by national and international organisations show that inequalities have, in fact, increased within countries and between the countries during the last century.

A number of agencies at different levels are engaged in reducing economic and social equalities. The modem state has taken the major responsibility for reducing social inequalities. International organisations like UNDP, World Bank, and Asian Development Bank also playa major role in policy formulation and mobilization of resources to reduce poverty. Voluntary organisations are increasingly involved in the implementation of development programmes whose major purpose is to reduce poverty and empower people. Needless to say these efforts have been only partially successful.

Social workers have a special interest in social stratification. Social work aims at improving social functioning of individuals, groups and communities. The type and pattern of social stratification in a society

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greatly influences individual and group behaviour. For example, a caseworker will have to deal with an individual who fears loss of status after a series of business losses. Information on the class and caste status is this important to understand the social background of the individual. Similarly groups for doing group work are often formed on the basis of these criteria. In community organisation the need is even more as opportunities for development in Indian society depend on the class and caste position of the respective community.

## Social Stratification: Theoretical Understanding

Social stratification can be defined as the arrangement of groups of individuals in hierarchical positions on the basis of criteria like wealth, prestige, ethnicity, gender and power. Because of the similarity of their positions in the social structure they develop a common consciousness of who they are, what their common problems are and what should be done to remove these problems. Social stratification is a major form of social inequality. Sociologists point out that in complex industrial countries like U.S.A. the main type of social inequality is individual based inequality and profession based inequality. Lists have been prepared to show the public perceptions of the relative prestige attached to various occupations. One such list shows the medical doctor on the top with the sweeper the bottom. The social worker has a middle rank.

The quick mobility of individuals disturbs the arrangement of status in the hierarchy and this prevents the development of group consciousness. For the development of group consciousness it is important that there is stability in the social structure and that

individuals remain in a group for a considerable amount oftime and that the avenues for social mobility are limited. In India class and caste are the main factors of social stratification, about which we will now learn.

There are two prominent social thinkers who have enriched our understanding of the nature, types and consequences of social stratification: Karl Marx and Max Weber.

Marx's analysis of society gives an important role to the economic factor. According to his theory of class, a class consists of a group of people who have similar relations to the forces of production. For example, in modem societies, all individuals who own factories are capitalists and all individuals who work in these factories for wages are workers. Similarly in an agrarian society individuals who own land can be called feudal lords and those who work for them are serfs or labourers. He also believed that the interests of these different groups were irreconcilable, which means that one gains at the expense of others. The result was that the workers, laborers or slaves were always exploited by the capitalists, feudal lords or slave owners in their respective societies. All other institutions in society, religious, political or educational, helped the process of exploitation through various means. For example, religion preaches fatalism, which convinces people that their suffering cannot be prevented and that passive suffering can bring them heavenly rewards after their deaths. Similarly the government puts down with coercion, attempts by the poorer sections to demand justice in economic opportunities by calling it a law and order problem or rebellion. In the Indian context a Marxist analysis would interpret caste and the kanna theory associated with it as justifYing the exploitative relations between the landlord and serfs. They prevent

the serfs from understanding that the landlord is exploiting him and this prevents him from fighting the exploitative system. Thus Marx places before us the theory of economic basis of social inequality.

Max Weber, another prominent thinker, agreed with many ideas of Marx but differed on others issues. He agreed with Marx that the most important dimension of stratification is economic which results in formation of the hierarchical system of class but he points out that there are other factors which determine social stratification. According to him there are three dimensions of stratification: wealth, status and power. Weber also asserted that class formation did not depend solely on ownership of productive forces. It depended on the market situation by which an individual could realize his potential in competition with others. For example, a reputed lawyer or a doctor may not own a field or an industry but he has specialized skills, which not many others have. That is why these professionals are paid lucrative salaries. Weber points out that if the market situa~ion of the individual is good then the person can become wealthy and consequently gains membership into the upper class. Status is the second dimension of stratification and it is a measure of prestige the society gives to an individual and that depends on the lifestyle of the person. A person who occupies a high office would be respected because of his status and not because of his economic position. The third dimension is power which is the ability of the individual to influence the actions of others against their own will. For example a village community leader may neither be rich nor occupying a high office but his position as leader of the community gives him power. Weber agrees that in most cases, all three dimensions, wealth, status and power are interrelated. A person

who enjoys wealth and power is likely to enjoy high status. This is however true of most cases but not in all cases. For example~ a dalit may be skilled and well to do but may not be given the respect he deserves because of his caste background. Weber by adding these dimensions of stratification, has enabled a broader understanding of social stratification.

## Concept of Class

A social class is a group of individuals who have more or less a similar wealth.

The possession of wealth enables the individual to obtain those goods and services that are scarce and are valued by others. These goods and services differ from society to society. In traditional society, the wealthy person may buy land and gold while in modem society he may invest in the stock market or buy luxurious cars or go abroad aboard for vacations. Wealth allows the person to create more wealth the invests it prudently.

### Concept of Class and its Characteristics

Most modem societies have class-based stratification. However many features of traditional stratification may be observed in modem societies such as elements of caste system and feudalism found in India. But with economic development, class based stratification is becoming increasingly important. Some of the major characteristics of the class system are as follows-

### Class is a Relatively Open Stratification System

Any society is said to be relatively open or closed depending on the number of opportunities available to its members for upward social mobility. Equally important, is attitude of the society towards the mobility of its members. If the society offers a large number of

opportunities and encourages members to achieve higher positions then the society can be called as an open stratification society. On the other hand, if tl* society has a limited number of opportunities for upward mobility and its normative values prohibit its members from achieving higher positions, that society is called a closed stratification society. Along with development the system of stratification becomes open and achievement oriented.

The class system is a form of open stratification system. An individual with his achievements can gain entry to a higher class and acquire prestige. There are examples of individuals who by their hard work and achievements rose from poverty and became millionaires. Modem society appreciates such individuals as they are seen as models for others.

Social mobility in modem societies is based on intelligence, merit, competence and achievement of individuals. However, in every society, inspite of the openness, factors like socio-economic background, parental status and resources, social networks and various ascribed factors play an important role in determining individual motivation, achievement and the availability of opportunities. Since these factors are not in control of the individual and cannot be easily modified to his advantage it cannot be said that modem societies are fully achievement oriented and open. That is why we have said class based societies are relatively open, that is, in relation to other societies. We will shortly study shortly the caste system, which is a relatively closed stratification system.

Social hierarchy in traditional societies is formed by ascription while in class based societies achievement plays an important role. In other words the difference

between traditional and modern social hierarchies, lies in the difference between (status ascribed and status achieved being) the bases social stratification. Traditional social hierarchies are based on ascribed states, while modem social hierarchies are based on achieved status.

The level of competition in modem society is high and only the fittest can survive. Social workers have to remember two consequences of an achievement based society. Since achievement is stressed, failures of an individual are look down upon by others and they lose their self-esteem. You may have read in newspapers about school children committing suicide after failing in school exams. It is the desire for high achievement and fulfilling the high expectations of others that pressurize vulnerable students to take this extreme step. Secondly. an achievement based society should provide the minimum facilities of health, education and housing to individuals to make them fit for the competition. In countries like India. we find that these essential facilities are not provided to all and many people are unable to compete with others on an equal basis. This makes the social situation unfair to these people. The government and voluntary organisations implement welfare and development programmes to enable disadvantaged people to enter the mainstream of society.

**Impact of Class System in India**

Membership of particular class groups influences the behaviour of its members. It makes them conscious about their position in society. But in the Indian context more importance is given to caste and related issues rather than class factors. The class character in India is quite different from Western societies. Here class

and caste categories co-exist in India and class categories like upper, middle and lower are parallel to caste categories. They jointly determine the class status, power and prestige of the individual in the society. Studies have shown that the upper classes predominantly belong to the upper castes which are an ascribed status. There have been significant changes in the last decades but the pattern still continues.

The accumulation and distribution of resources including education is determined by the social position of the individual. Those who are higher in terms of the class and caste terms control available resources to a great extent, leaving behind a section of Indian population below and around the poverty line The forces of globalization and liberalization seem to have widened the gap between the haves and have-nots, between the rich and the poor, between urban people and rural people and the upper caste and the lower class and lower caste.

## Concept of Caste and its Characteristics

Caste is a much debated topic in India. The word 'cast' refers to the Spanish word 'Casta' which means 'breed' in Spanish. In the Indian context it represents caste and its related social practice. The caste system influences the social life of the Indian in a number of ways, as it assigns ascribed status to its members.

According to the Rig Veda the oldest and most important of all the four Vedas, there are four Varnas which are placed in a hierarcmcal order-the Brahmans, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Shudras. The profession of brahmans is that of priests and teachers. The Kshatriyas are warriors and rulers. The Visahyas(Vis) are traders and other common people. The Shudras occupy the lowest position in the hierarchy

and perform the menial tasks. According to some historians there is a fifth Varna, the untouchables, and they are not considered as a part of society. The, tribes and people of other religions are also considered outside the Varna system.

Individuals are born into a caste and membership of a caste is determined by . birth. An individual cannot change his or her caste. But there are instances where castes as a whole, after an improvement in economic status and changes in lifestyles have claimed a higher status in society. Such claims mayor may not be accepted. The dominant castes might react adversely to the claim. But even if the claim is accepted the caste system remains intact. However the process of Sanskritization, inter caste marriage and advancement of education has changed the degree of the rigidity of the caste system in India.

According to G.S. Ghurye, a noted anthropologist, caste has six characteristics:

***Hierarchy:*** Hierarchy is superior-subordinate relationship between various individuals and groups. Hierarchy in one form or another exists in every society but the principle of determining the hierarchy differs from society to society. In India caste is the main bases of social hierarchy. The degree of ritual purity and impurity associated with a particular caste determines its position in the hierarchy. Wealth and power are not the determining factors. For example a Brahmin whose economic status is lower than a Rajput is accorded a superior position because of his higher ritual status.

In reality, however, political and economic factors do playa significant role in determining the position of the caste, sociologists have pointed out that high ritual status does not actually translate into higher social

status. For example. while a Rajput may not have as important a role in ritual matters as the Brahamins, it is unlikely that he will give a higher status to the Brahmin in other matters.

According to sociologist, M. N. Srinivasan a dominant caste is that caste in the community that has a sufficiently high ritual status, numerical strength, and material resources like land, wealth and access to power. It is the combination of these factors which keeps a caste high in the hierarchy. The dominant caste often has a major role to play in the village politics and its social life.

***Segmented Division of Society:*** Castes are well-developed groups with membership based on birth and not by selection. The rights and duties of the individuals are controlled by caste councils, which exist in every caste. These councils have large powers to regulate the social life of its members. They can enforce order by punishing offenders for a variety of offences. Offences include adultery, causing injury to others; killing and punishments can include the imposition of fines, ordering corporal punishment and even the death sentence. Many castes have their own gods and goddesses that are not a part of the larger religious tradition. Thus caste has a sufficient degree of autonomy in dealing with the issues related to its members, and is independent of the controls by the government.

***Restrictions on Feeding and Social Intercourse:*** The exchange of cooked food between various castes is based on specific rules and conditions. Certain castes accept only certain kind of foods from members of other castes. Food items are divided into *pakka* and *kacha. Pakka* is cooked in ghee and are considered superior to *kacha*

food which is cooked in water. A Brahmin can take only pakka food from Kshatriys and Vaishyas but not from Shudras and untouchables. On the other hand, Kshatriyas will take kacha food from Brahmin but only accept pakka food from the Vaishyas who are lower than them. The distinctions in the offering and taking of food are based on the positions of the caste involved.

Such kinds of differences are seen in the maintenance of social distance between different castes. The physical distance between castes reflects the caste positions. For example in traditional Kerala society, a Nayar may approach a Nambudri but cannot touch him whereas a member of the Tiya caste (lower than the Nayar caste) has to maintain a distance of 36 steps from the Nambudri.

***Civil and Religious Disabilities and Privileges of Different Castes:*** Different castes in the hierarchy have different rights and privileges. The result is that social life is segregated on the basis of caste. In north Indian villages impure castes are segregated while pure castes live together. In South India all castes tend to be segregated. In Tamil Nadu for example, we find that the place where caste Hindus live are called *Ur* and where dalits live are called *Cheri*. The *Cheri* is situated at a distance from the village.

Ghurye gives a number of instances from the late ninetieth century and early twentieth century to show to how these disabilities were enforced. For instance in Viakom, a town in the princely state of Travancore, Shudras were dissallowed from walking on the temple streets. A nationwide agitation by prominent leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Periyar against these discriminatory practices changed the situation. Similarly in Pune, a Shudra could not enter the city

during the morning and evening as their long shadows would pollute high caste members. We also find differential treatment in the punishments for committing similar crimes. For example if caught stealing a Brahmin had to pay only a fine but for the same crime, a Shudra had to undergo corporal punishment.

The religious practices reinforced this hierarchy and Shudras had liabilities that were attached to his caste status. They could not enter the most part of the temple, the sanctwn sanctorum. Only Brahmins were allowed this privilege. In rural areas, even now, there is discrimination against lower caste members. We often hear of caste violence after lower caste members were disallowed by higher caste members to take out a marriage procession or funeral procession on the main street

***Lack of Unrestricted Choice of Occupation:*** Membership of the caste is hereditary and each caste had a traditionally assigned occupation. Regardless of the individual's aptitudes and skills he had to adopt the occupation of his caste. In the same way every occupation was linked to a specific caste. So each caste has one occupation and that occupation was the presence of that caste only. For example, only a Brahmin could become a priest because of his birth in a Brahmin family. Education was given on the basis of caste. Young members would be attached to older members to train them in the occupation skills of the caste. There was no universal and common education. However, sociologists have pointed out that inspite of such restrictions on occupations there were certain occupations like weaving, agriculture and military that were open to all castes.

In pre-modem times the economic relations between the various castes was in the form of the *jajmani* system. Each service caste performed a particular function for the landlords. They used to receive payment in kind and commonly on an annual basis. The service castes and the higher castes had a client-patron relationship. In modem times their relation has undergone a change.

***Endogamy:*** Endogamy refers to the marriage practice in which the members of a group marry from within the group members. Endogamy is an important characteristic of the caste system. In many castes there is endogamy at the subcaste level. For example, Iyers and Iyengars may not marry between each other even though both are Tamil Brahmins.

There are however exceptions to the rule. These exceptions pertain to hypergamy and hypogamy. When a higher caste man marries a low caste women it is called hypergamy and when a lower caste man marries a higher caste woman it is call hypogamy. Hypergamy is allowed whereas hypogamy is strictly forbidden. It is a matter of prestige for the lower caste family if their daughter had been accepted by a higher caste's man and family. An example of this practice is marriage between a male Nambudri and a Nair woman.

**Caste in other Religions**

Among the major religions of the world caste exists only in Hinduism. But in India adherents of virtually all religions seem to have caste- like divisions. The Muslims, the Christians, the Buddhists and Sikhs, seems to follow the principle of inclusion and hierarchy in different ways. Islam and Christianity believe in radical equality between its members. However, the existence of caste-like practices shows that in some aspects the social milieu in which a religion is practised

influences it more than its theology. Similar is the case in Sikhism and Buddhism also.

Caste-like differences may be observed in religions other than Hinduism. In Sikhism, there are groups like Jat Sikhs and Mazhabi Sikhs. They do not intermarry. In Islam four groups were identified that can be compared to castes: Syeds, Sheikhs, Pathans and Mughals. Syeds claim that they are descendants of Prophet Muhammad while Sheikhs claim that they are descendants of the tribe of Prophet Muhammad. Pathans and Mughals are considered to be the warrior class comparable to Kshatriyas in Hinduism. Other groups in Islam are based on professions they pursue like weavers butchers, water carriers, etc. These groups are considered lower in status than Syeds, Sheikhs, Pathans and Mughals. Most of these groups are endogamous. There is limited social intercourse between these members. However anyone from any social group, if competent in religious knowledge, can become a priest or *moulvi.*.

Christianity is also an egalitarian religion and has encouraged conversions of people from all castes during different periods of history. Many of these castes have retained their caste identities even after their conversion to Christianity and this has influenced their social behaviour. However, Islam and Christianity have no concept of pollution and purity, which is central to Hinduism. Hence these religions were less influenced by caste than Hinduism.

## Caste and Social Change

Though caste is considered a static system, it has undergone changes because of the forces of modem is at ion, as discussed below.

**Caste and Industrialisation**

The process of industrialization has affected traditional Indian society in a number of ways. It has particularly affected the caste system. The most significant change has been the gradual 'shift from caste categories to class categories, particularly in the urban areas. The traditional form of exchange of goods In Indian society was by the *jajmani* system. The Jajmani system was based on client-patron relations in which the lower casresprovided services to the upper caste members in exchange for annual payment in form of goods.

Industrial development has increased the use of inanimate sources of energy and increased the size of the market. The growth of industries increased the employed workers who exchanged their labour for wages. The site of production of goods changed from houses of the manufacturer to that of the factories which were owned by the capitalists; As industrialisation spread, the movement of workers from the primary and household sector to the senondary and formal sectors increased.

Industrial development changed the social and economic relations between the various castes. The services castes often found employment which changed their status and their incomes. Industries also brought individuals from different castes together at . the site of work and social distance between castes was not maintained here. Further workers in the industry were selected and promoted on the basis of skill and hard work, and not based on ascriptive factors like caste etc. Gradually etnployment in industries changed the relationship between caste, education and occupations. Inspite of these. changes, caste networks continue to affect the recruitment into industries and other modern

organisations. As a result the modern economic system is not totally free from the effects of caste.

**Caste System and Urbanisation**

Closely related to industrialisation is the social phenomenon of urbanisation which is the movement of people from rural areas to urban areas. Urban living promoted anonymity and formal relations between individuals. Major occupations in urban areas are related to the secondary and tertiary sectors. Employment opportunities in these sectors are based on the skills, hard work, education and training of the person and not on his/ her caste.

Social life in urban areas is also different from that in rural areas. Ritual purity and social distance can not be maintained. For example lio one can ask the person sitting next to her or him in the bus what her caste in. Similarly, no one knows the cook's caste in a hotel and thereforerules regarding cooking could not be followed. The residence of a person depends on the amount the person pays for rent are not his caste. All these factors have weakened the caste systemin urban areas.

**Caste and the Political System**

The Indian Constitution is based.on liberal values such as equality, liberty and fraternIty, secularism and citizenship. The basic unit for political participation is the individual. Caste system is based on values totally antithetical to these values. Inequality, segmentation, restricted choice of occupation are the values of the caste system. The Indian Constitution gives every individual the right to vote; right .to participate in elections. Some of the important articles that deal with equality and prevention of discrimination are Articles 14, 15, 16, and 17. All jobs are open to all members of

society provided. they are qualified and compete with others on an equal basis.

These factors had a large impact on the caste system and traditional roles and leaders. For some years after independence, the elite men mainly, belonging to the upper caste dominated politics, but by 1980s backward castes and dalits made their presence felt in the political arena. Democracy is a representative form of government and therefore increasing inclusion of these groups in the power structure has made Indian democracy stronger and at the same time democracy has weakened the caste system in its traditional form.

**Caste System and Social Movements**

Social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Dr. Ambedkar, Periyar, Narayana Guru and others have lead a number of social movements to remove the oppressive caste system.

There are refonnist and revolutionary types. Social movements Mahatma Gandhi, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Narayana Guru belonged to the first category who believed that the caste system can be changed slowly and from within the system. The reformist suggests that for reform in the caste system a change of heart among the high castes and provision of educational facilities for the lower castes is necessary. On the other hand, radicals like Ambedkar, Phule and Periyar believed that the caste system had to be abolished completely and its continuation in any form will lead to exploitation and oppression. They suggested the organisation of social movements, agitation and use of law to fight oppression of the caste system. These two types of movements influence the approach of many voluntary organisations even now when they have to decide how to deal with problems related to the caste

system.

**Caste and Ideology**

The Western enlightened ideas based on rationality and reason reached India during colonial period. Liberalism, Socialism, Marxism and Nationalism were the more prominent of these ideologies. During colonial era the British managed the education system. Most Indian intellectual elite were educated by this system and internalized these values. Many of them, through a variety of ways, tried to modernize the traditional Indian society.

**Caste and Modern Education**

Traditional education was ascriptive based while modem education is achievement oriented. Various castes provided training to the younger members mainly by making them apprentices to master craftsmen of the same caste.

Modem education, on the other hand, gives universal and scientific education so that they can have access to diverse occupational opportunities.

The modem education system inculcates values of equality, fraternity, liberty and social justice in the students. Further; students come together in modem schools for studying and interact freely with each other. The values imparted by the education system and their experience of interaction with students from different castes have weakened the hold of caste values on the. minds of the students.

In modem times education has become open but expensive. High quality education is not available to all, particularly the, poorer sections of the society, including most of the *set* ST population. Since they are

educationally deprived, they are not empowered by education. There is a need for the provision of quality education tor all so that these sections are empowered.

## Impact of Caste System on Indian Society

The caste system has weakened but it has certainly not vanished. It has been transformed and found new functions for itself in modem society. Now we shall see how the caste system has changed and adapted itself to modem sudety.

### Compartmentalization of Individual Life

The influence of caste is reduced in certain areas of the individual's life. Eating. habits and social interactions are areas where the influence of the caste system was high but is now minimal. But in other areas, like choice of bride or bridegroom for marriage and social networking caste still plays an important role. This is true mainly of the urban areas while in rural· areas the situation is different. Many of the traditional aspects of the caste system are prevalent there. The way caste influences social life differs from region to region.

### Decline of Caste in the Ritual Sphere

Ideas of impurity and purity are not given much importance by people today. Not many people believe that touching a low caste person or eating with him will pollute them. Therefore it can be said that the religious justification for caste system has reduced if not totally ended.

### Caste as a Social Network

Castes have become a basis for forming a network to gain resources. Caste associations are frequently used to get jobs, get promotions, access to goods and services,

to develop business networks and influence decision-making in govemment and elsewhere. The mobilisation of people takes place on the basis of caste to further caste interests. Sociologists have pointed out that even movements related to farmers' demands·which do not overtly seem to be caste related are based on the caste networks.

Earlier caste councils, which were recognised by the government and the people, used to have vast judicial power to control individual behaivor. But now these councils use informal power and informal enforcement to settle disputes.

**Caste Consciousness and Community Consciousness**

Caste is still the basis for defining and maintaining the identity of the person. Caste identity of the individual comes in conflict with the individual's identification with the larger community. The caste-based identities adversely affect the unity of the people and at times hinder the people from taking collective action. Further caste has played a role in adversely affecting the distribution of rewards of the community development programme. The dominant castes have benefited from the various development programmes at the cost of other castes. Sotial movements which had positive aims have also been affected. Bhoodhan movement meant to resolve community conflicts peacefully could not succeed because of struggle among various castes on the issue of resources distribution.

These experiences have lead many to conclude that a common community consciousness does not exist in Indian villages. What does exist is caste consciousness and caste identities. The concept of 'community' is a myth. As social worker you must be able to find ways in

which the development programmes you implement benefit the target populations.

**Caste Consciousness Leads to Violence**

Castes based social formations are conflict prone. This is a natural consequence of the intense caste consciousness and strong identification of caste members. with each other. Many violent incidents are 109al in nature and are caused by trivial incidents. A lower caste member is not allowed to sit on a horse during a marriage procession, the low caste members are disallowed to vote; lower caste members are not allowed entry into. the village or to travel on certain toads; low caste members are disallowed from participating in temple festivals; a girl is teased by men of other castes. These unjust practices in the past were passively accepted by the lower castes. However, now-a-days there is resistance to these practices by the lower castes due to the rising class-consciousness among them that leads to violence.

These violent incidents have their roots in the unequal conditions prevalent in the area such as unequal distribution of resources the need for the dominant castes to keep lower castes in their place the growing consciousness of the lower caste; about their low status and the need to respond to ihe-situation the apathy of the state machinery towards these sentiments.

**Caste has also Lead to Structural Violence**

Structural violence refers to violence in which pain is not directly inflicted on other but laws and rules are so formed that it hurts the dignity of the person and causes mental pain. Untouchability is the most virulent form of structural violence, which hurts the dignity of the person against whom it is practiced. It also makes every

day life hard for the person. Lower caste members are not allowed entry into certain common facilities like schools and temples and not allowed to use common resources. Lower caste woman are not allowed to draw water from the village well and they have to travel long distances to get water. Certain jobs like cooks in mid day scheme of the govemrnentare not given to dalits as it is believed that they are polluting the food. As mentioned earlier, the religious aspect of caste has declined but some people seem to justify untouchability by saying that the lower castes are physically unclean.

**Caste has Caused Problems in Modern Organisation**

Caste loyalties cause problems in modern organisations. Very often people are selected on the basis of caste rather than merit. This has had an adverse impact on the performance and productivity of the organisation. The presence of caste interferes in creating an esprit de corps in organisations. Just like the village communities· that are divided on the basis of'caste, modern organisations are also divided on the basis of caste.

**Caste has Interfered in Uniform Application of Laws and Rules**

Modem rules and laws are rationally formulated and apply to all citizens regardless of his or her social background except when exceptions are allowed by it. Such a universalistic application of laws is a major requirement hi a modem democracy. But caste considerations are not in conformity with universalism.

There are differences in the viewpoints of the upper castes and lower castes, on how the caste system is affecting them. According to the upper caste be view point, reservations and the rise of the lower castes' in different fields has put them in a disadvantageous

position. On the other hand the lower castes viewpoint is, that as upper castes occupy strategic positions in the society they are victimized. There is a continuous conflict between the top and the bottom views of castes. The politicians. make use of this to further their own interests. However in every caste category a dominant section has emerged which enjoys the available opportunities at the cost of others. Sociologists have identified some of the positive impact caste has had on Indian society.

It has promoted plurality in India and at the same time provided the social structure to integrate the society. Castes have different value system, different life styles, different occupations and subsequently different interests and this has led to political and cultural pluralism. Different value systems give rise to different opinions, which can ericourage a diversity of opinions. No single group can dominate the political and cultural field. Every grouphas to negotiate with· other groups so that their objectives are attained., Political scientists have said this condition contributes significantly to making Indian democracy active and vibrant.

It is also claimed that the caste system in its traditional fonn leads to stability in society. Kings and dynasties have come and gone but the village communities did not experience any major change. It is debatable whether the absence of change is a positive aspect. In any case historians have disputed the view that there has been no major change in Indian society down the centuries. Another advantage mentioned is that the caste system provided a person with social security as his occupation was fixed and in case of distress his fellow caste members would come to his rescue. But these advantages are mainly those that are found in a traditional society, not in a modern one.

## Conclusion

In this chapter we have studied the different aspects related to social stratification which is the division of society into groups, which are hierarchically placed, based on one or more criteria. In modern societies stratification is based on wealth, status and , power. The amount of wealth the individual possesses detennines which class he/ she belongs to; the prestige given to him! her position in society will determine his/ her status.; his/her position in organisations will determine how much power he/she has.

The two bases of stratification in India are that of class and caste. The changes in the caste system and its impact on Indian society have been discussed. The social worker's own personality may be influenced by these ideas and his/ her practice is influenced. by his/ her position in the society. The social worker's prejudices should not come in the way of his/ her practice. Secondly, in all his programmes he/she should keep in mind the caste and class factor and its influence on the clients.

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# 18

# The State as a Social Institution: Its Role and Impact On Other Institutions

*Sundara Babu, Gautam Prabu*

## Introduction

This chapter deals with the concept of the state as an institution, its impact on other societal institutions. It also provides basic information on many other concepts associated with the state and politics.

The modem state is a complex set of institutions, which are highly integrated and structured. The persons comprising the state are not treated as individuals but as citizens or voters. Since the laws provide them equality, all citizens are ideally speaking (and this is provided in our constitution as well) treated equally with rights and privileges. The state has built up a web of institutions to administer and govern. The government is composed of individuals and officials occupying these institutions who derive their authority from their office.

## State

A community or society politically organised under one independent government within a definite territory can be called a State. The state is a special institution, which serves the interest of the whole community, or a class of society. The state emerges at a definite stage

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of social development, and in order to understand the state, social evolution, in general, must be understood first. Without understanding the general laws of social development, the state and politics cannot be studied objectively.

**Population**

All states must have a population. No explicit or fixed figure can be considered as the ideal size of population. There is no rule or political practice governing the number of persons necessary to entitle a community to recognition as a State. Some writers in the past have, however, undertaken to lay down within broad lines certain principles, which should determine the size of the population, necessary for the existence of a State, and some have even assumed to fix exactly the minimum and the maximum number of inhabitants, but manifestly any such rule would be arbitrary.

**Territory**

Territory is another essential physical constituent of the State. Territory of the State consists not only ofa definite portion of land, but also includes water and air space within its boundary. It also extends in addition to a distance of three miles into the sea from its coast, an area called 'the territorial waters'. The state boundaries may be natural that is, they may be bodies of water, mountain ranges, and deserts, or artificial, like stones, trenches, walls etc. There is no rule or practice concerning the extent of territory necessary to constitute the home of a State, any more than there 'is, regarding the amount of population.

**Government**

A mere mass of people occupying a practical portion of territory does not constitute a State until the people

have organised themselves politically, and established a civil government. There must be some political agency that commands and regulates the governed who obeys. The government exercises the authority of the State. Government is a narrower term than the State, being only part of it. The State includes both the govemment and the governed. The government is the established form of political administration of a State.

**Sovereignty**

It means the supreme and ultimate power of the State by virtue of which it may command and enforce obedience. It is this, which distinguishes the State from all other associations and organisations. Sovereignty is characteristic of the State, not ofthe government, though the government on behalf of the State may exercise it. There can be no State without sovereignty.

**International Recognition**

In reality, international recognition is the outcome of the sovereignty of the State, not the condition of its existence. States are sometimes defined as those entities recognized by other States. A State recognizes another State when its government is convinced that the other State has the characteristic of a State. Recognition is the voluntary action of one State for another.

Recognition can be of two types: *de facto* and *de jure.*

*De facto* recognition means the State is recognized as existing in fact, but not necessarily in law. *De jure* recognition implies that the State is a rightful one, of legitimate origin and existence.

**Role of the State and Impact on other Institutions**

The State takes the responsibility to provide all the public goods such as education, health care, drinking

water, basic infrastructure in both rural and urban settings, and provide social security, etc.

In India, the Tenth Plan, in this emerging scenario, makes a distinct shift from an investment-oriented approach to setting a reform agenda designed to achieve the social targets through effective governance.

It relies on the mobilization of the energies of Central and State Governments, Panchayat Raj institutions and Non-Governmenta Organisations for the accomplishment of the clearly spelt out tasks of social development. Programs intended for the poor or the targeted groups must be delivered to them effectively. There are many radical changes in the style of functioning of Government and its agencies have been asked to bring about greater efficiency, transparency and accountability.

## Constitution and Law

The term *"law"* is applied to rules for the guidance of human conduct.

No group of people can live longel in peace and tranquility without such rules of conduct. Rules need not essentially require to have been written. These can be in the form of traditions and conventions as well.

The word law has been derived from the term *'lag'* which means something which lies fixed. So it follows that the 'law' in principle which is fixed or uniform or "generally followed". Gettell has classified the laws that govern the conduct of human beings under three categories: (i) moral laws (ii) social laws, and (iii) political laws.

The people generally obey the law because of (a) the force of the State, (b) the promotion of common good, or

(c) rule conforming habit. However, if we genuinely feel that a particular law is unjust, we should create public opinion against that law. Mahatma Gandhi has shown how the techniques of non-cooperation and civil iisobedience can be used effectively against autocratic regimes.

## Legislature, Executive and Judiciary

### Legislature

The legislature is the most important of the three organs of the government because it represents the people and tries to represent their hopes and aspirations in the shape of laws. Legislature is the official rule making body of a political system.

The Indian Constitution has adopted the parliamentary system of government, a system in which the executive is responsible to the legislatures constituted by the election.

The primary function of the legislature is to legislate both in the sense of scrutinizing the details of laws and in the sense of authorizing or legitimising the passage of laws.

Being a federal polity, legislative organs have been provided in our Constitution at the Union as well as the State.

### Executive

The executive is that part of the organisation of the government, which is concerned with the enforcement of the laws enacted by the legislature as well as general administration.

With the conversion of the modem state into welfare state, the functions of the executive have enormously expanded.

The functions which are performed by the executive in different parts of the world are the following:

a) Maintenance of law and order

b) Protection of country and maintenance of diplomatic relations

c) The enactment of the laws.

d) The chief executive enjoys the right to grant pardon, amnesty, reprieve, etc., to the persons punished by the law courts.

e) Miscellaneous functions like formulation of national plans for greater prosperity of the country, distribution of honours and titles to the persons who are distinguished in their respective fields or render meritorious services to the state.

**Judiciary**

The judiciary is the most. important organ of the government because it is through it that justice is realized as defined by law, both as between one private citizen and another and as between private citizens and members of government.

The term judiciary is generally applied to designate those officers of the government whose function is to apply the existing law to individual cases.

It is the responsibility of these officers to discover the relevant facts in any case and protect the innocent from injury by either the legislature or the executive branch of government.

The main functions of judiciary are: (a) administration of justice (b) protection of the rights and liberties (c) protection and interpretation of the constitution (d)

protection of federation, (e) the advisory role to the executive, etc.

## Citizenship, Rights and Duties

### Citizenship

In traditional States, most of the population ruled by the King or Emperor showed little awareness of, or interest in, those who governed them. Neither did they have any political rights nor influence. Normally only the dominant classes or more affiuent groups felt a sense of belonging to an overall political commUility.

In modern societies, by contrast, most people living within the borders of the political system are citizens, having common rights and duties and knowing them.selves to be part of a Nation. While there are some people who are political refugees or are 'state less' almost everyone in the world today is a member of a definite national political order.

### Rights

Rights are the social requirements of a social man or woman for the development ofhislher personality and society at large. There are two aspects of rights: personal and social. Rights have a social character and are given only to the p~ople living in society and working in the overall interest of society.

According to Green a right is a power of acting for hislher own ends ... secured to an individual by the community on the supposition that it contributes to the good of the community.

### Duties

There are no duties without rights and no rights without duties. A duty means 'an obligation imposed by law on

an officer or a private person. As such, duty presupposes that one is capable 'of knowing the rules. Infants, idiots and.animals are not supposed to know the rules and to act in accordance with them. However we attribute rights to infants, idiots and even animals.

## Democracy, Elite Theory and Power

### Democracy

The term democracy is derived from two Greek words *'demos'* which means people and *'kratta'* meaning the government. The boundaries of democracy have been widened, so as to add social and economic justice to the principle of political equality. Abraham Lincoln projected democracy as *"government of the people, for the people and by the people."* Democracy is not a mere form of government. It is also a form or condition of society as well as an order in which the ownership of property is widely and rather evenly distributed.

### Elite Theory

The elite theory was first developed by two Italian sociologists, namely, Vilfredo Pareto and G. Mosca.

Elite theory claims that the personal qualities of individuals separate the rulers from the ruled. The elite owe their position to the superiority of their persona! characteristics or attributes. For example, they may possess considerable organisational ability, a talent that Mosca believed to be basis for leadership. On the other hand, they may possess a high degree of cunning and intelligence, qualities that Pareto saw as one of the prerequisites of power.

Later versions of elite theory place less emphasis on the personal qualities of the powerful and more on the institutional framework of the society. They argue that

the hierarchical organisation of social institutions allows a minority to monopolize power.

Elite theory rejected the idea of communism as utopia and argues that an egalitarian society was an illusion. It saw Marxism as ideology rather than an objective analysis of society. Elite theory argues that all societies are divided into two main groups, a ruling minority, and the ruled and this situation is inevitable. According to elite theory, if the proletarian revolution occurs, it would merely result in the replacement of one ruling elite by another.

The economic infrastructwe, be it capitalist or communist, will not alter the inevitability of elite rule. Apart from the personal qualities of its members, an elite owes its power to its internal organisation. It fonns a united and cohesive minority in the face of an unorganised and fragmented mass. In Mosca's words, 'the power of the minority is irresistible as against each single individual in the majority'.

The elite takes major decisions, which affect society. Even in so-called democratic societies, these decisions will usually reflect the concerns of the elite rather than the wishes of the people. Elite theorists picture the majority as apathetic and unconcerned with the major issues of the day. The mass of the population is largely controlled and manipulated by the elite, passively accepting the propaganda, which justifies elite rule.

**Power**

Power means strength orthe capacity to control. It is described as the ability of an individual or group to fulfill its desires and implement its decisions and ideas. It involves the ability to influence as well as control the behaviour of others even against their will. N.P. power

is a multifaceted concept admitting various definitions. Some emphasize different bases of power (for e.g.: wealth, status, knowledge, charisma, force, authority); some others talk of different fonns of power, such as, influence, coercion or control; yet others discuss power from the point of view of its uses such as individual or community ends, political ends, economic ends etc.

In sum the concept of power involves a

a) Relational situation where power is exercised by one or other(s).

b) It is concerned with bringing about a consequence.

## Welfare State: Liberty, Equality, Justice

### Welfare State

The term welfare state was originally applied to Britain during the Second World War. After the war the term came into popular usage, as a convenient way of referring to the social and economic policy changes taking place, which according to those sponsoring them, would transform British society.

There were these main services provided by the Welfare State:

1) The direction and extension of a range of social services, including social security. The National Health Setvices, Education, Housing, Employment service and welfare services for elderly and disabled people and for deprived children.

2) The maintenance of full employment as the paramount aim and policy. ‘

3) A Program of Nationalization.

As a response to mass democracy, the welfare state can be viewed as stemming from demands for greater equality and recognition of social rights to welfare services and socio-economic security.

As in India, the picture of a 'democratic republic' which the preamble envisages is the democratic system not only from the political but also from the social standpoint. In other words, it envisages not only a democratic form of Government but also a democratic society, infused with the spirit of 'justice, liberty, equality and fraternity' .

This democratic republic which stands for the good of all the people is embodied in the concept of a 'Welfare State' which inspires the Directive Principles of State Policy.

**Liberty**

The idea cf liberty has been the most powerful weapon in the hands of the unarmed and it has defeated the strong enemies of dictators and imperialists. The term liberty is derived from the Latin word *liber* that means free. Sometimes it is identified with the absence of restraint-a negative meaning. Sometimes it is identified with the availability of certain socio-economic conditions in which man/woman may develop their personality-a positive meaning.

**Equality**

Equality does not mean identical treatment to all. It means proportional equalityequal among equals and inequality among unequals. The basis of treating equals and unequals should be rational and just.

Explaining the meaning of equality, Laski maintains that equality means the following.

1) The end of special privileges in the society

2) Adequate opportunities are laid open to all and each may develop his/ her personality.

3) All must have access to social benefits and no one should be restricted on the ground. The inequalities by birth or because of parent and hereditary causes are unreasonable.

**Justice**

In different social systems, there are different conceptions of justice. The main difficulty in defining justice is that it is not an independent concept. Justice is closely associated with the system of values and the behaviour of social systems. Every system is governed by certain norms and values and these in turn determine justice. With the change of time and circumstances values undergo change that brings a change in the concept of justice also.

**The Indian Scenario**

Sm independence, active participation of people in the national democratic process has articulated itself through mobilization of a plurality of political structures or political parties, which emerge as new forms of macro structures of social change and modernization in India.

The significance is directly socio-structural since their commitment is primarily to a legitimate access to sources of power.

A unique feature of political macro-structure in India has been the continuity of a single party (Congress) dominance in the sphere of political power, which was only partially broken in general elections of 1967.

This provides the historical setting for any analysis of political structure of India in relation to the process of modernization.

The political framework of modernization is essentially rooted in the changing sources of legitimation of authority and process of its diffusion and centricity in the social structure.

In a society having a traditional polity, source of power-is in the traditionally established and institutionalized offices of king, chieftains, or priest-rulers who have had access to this office by virtue of qualities ascribed to them.

The nonos, which form the basis of allocation of these political offices, are inequitably distributed on the hierarchical principle of caste or other similar status groups. The incumbents to. political office have an authoritarian character and conformity to political norms is arbitrary. In the sense that, the sphere of action, which may be truly be called 'political' or which has to do with policy formulation for the nation or the community as a whole is limited to a selected few, is also traditionally closed. In such a system authority has a hierarchical character and not consensual. It is undifferentiated from other roles of incumbencies vis-a-vis their role in power structure.

**Education**

The state provides the largest number of educational institutions in our country. The state in India, through its Constitution had laid "permanent provisions" of education for minorities, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Under the permanent provisions of the Indian constitution, No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained

by the state or receiving State aid, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them [Article 29(2)].

Further, all minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the fundamental right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice [Art. 30(1)] and the state shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language [Art. 30(2)].

Finally, it is the duty of the state to provide free and compulsory education (Art. 45.).The state shall endeavour to raise the level of nutrition and standard of living and to improve public health and to prohibit consumption ofliquor and intoxicating drugs except for medical purposes [Article 47].

## Nationalism: Religion, Caste and Class

### Nationalism

Nation-States are associated with the rise of Nationalism, which can be defined as a set of symbols and beliefs providing the sense of being part of a simple political community. Thus, individuals feel a sense of pride and belonging in being Indian, British, American, Canadian, or Russian.

Probably people have always felt some kind of identity with social groups of one form or another: their family, village, or religious community. Nationalism, however, made its appearance only with the development ofthe modern state.

**Culture and Religion**

The Indian state plays a significant role in safeguarding the religions. The unity and fraternity of the people of India, professing numerous faiths has been sought to be achieved by enshrining the ideals of a 'secular state' which means that the state protects all religions equally and does not itself impose a state religion.

This itself is one of the glowing achievement of Indian democracy when her neighbours such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Burma, uphold a particular religions as the state religion. In India on the other hand the state will neither establish a religion of its own nor confer any special patronage upon any particular religion. The state shall not compel any citizen to pay any taxes for the promotion or maintenance of any particular religion or religious institutions.

No religious instruction shall be provided in any educational institution wholly provided by state funds. Every person is guaranteed the freedom of conscience and the freedom to profess, practice, and propagate his own religion. Where a religious community is in the minority, the constitution goes further to enable it to preserve its culture and religious interest.

According to Article 29 of the Indian constitution, the state shall not impose upon it any culture other than the community's own culture.

Such community shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of its choice and the state shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against such an educational institution maintained by a minority community on the ground that it is under the management of a religious community [Art. 30].

**Caste and Politics**

Caste is gradually taking up new forms and functions, leaving its traditional ones. It has specially become more influential in the field of public life and politics. It is playing an important role in India in political matters. A brief discussion follows as to why and how these two institutions have come closer to each other and with what consequences.

The first and foremost cause of each entering the fields of the other is that social life is the root for both. Political relationships are essentially social relationships. It is a system of seeking and attaining social and economic dominance. The political and administrative structures of a country are merely the proj ections of the social system and social relationships existing in a particular phase of time. In a society where interactional pattern and institutional arrangements are dominantly casteridden, politics cannot but be influenced by caste.

According to Rajini Kothari 'those in India who complain of casteism in politics are merely looking for sort of politics which has no basis in society. They probably lack any clear conception of either the nature of politics or the nature of the caste system'. The nature of political democracy has brought caste and politics closer to each other. Politics is a competitive enterprize. Its purpose is the acquisition of power for the realization of certain goals, and its process is one of identifying and manipulating existing allegiance in order to mobilize and consolidate positions. Therefore, the core of politics is the organisation and mobilization of the masses towards some issues by a leader or a party.

Such mobilizations are done based on group considerations and group allegiances, for all the groups cannot be mobilized on one issue in one direction due

to the difference in the fundamental nature and interest.

Thus, caste, which has divided a society for centuries, serves as the best technique of group mobilization. The politicians find caste an extremely well articulated and flexible basis for organisation. Since power and prestige are no more being offered based on caste the lower caste people have naturally been prompted to accept political involvement as the other means out.

The people of all categories have tried to mobilize public support in their favor by taking caste as a basis for propaganda since it gives a readymade ground for such mobilization in Indian society. Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, and Bihar provide good examples of a rapid succession of various caste groups into factional network of politics, which provide the best channels of mobility.

**Class and Society**

Classes are those social groups, which occupies specific high and low position in a given society. Social classes arise from the consequence of a division of labor. They are made up of people of similar social status who regard one another as social equals. Each class is a sub-culture, with a set of attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviour norms, which differ from those of other classes.

Social classes are based on total social and economic position in the community, including wealth, income, occupation, education, self-identification, hereditary prestige, group participation, and recognition by others.

Class lines are not clearly drawn but represent points along a continuum of social status.

The exact size and membership of a given class is difficult to establish. Class sub-cultures prepare children to retain the status of their parents. The idea of Marx and Weber regarding class are discussed below followed by a review of the modern approaches to class analysis in sociology.

**KarlMarx**

For Marx, the term class has a number of different applications, but the essential aspects of Marx's general model of social class are clear:

a) Every society has to produce a surplus to feed, house and clothe dependent children, the sick and the elderly Class differences begin when one group of people claim resources that are not consumed for immediate survival as their private property.

b) Classes, therefore, are defined in terms of ownership ( or non-ownership) of productive property, which makes the taking of surplus possible. At different times in human history different forms .of property (e.g.: slaves, water, land, capital) have been crucial in shaping social relationships, but all class systems are characterized by two major classes. The most important class relationship according to Marx was that found in capitalism, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

**Max Weber**

Weber's analytical conception of class is regarded as the best and most influential alternative theory of class Unlike Marx, Weber emphasized other factors, which prompted inequality. In particular, he considered status or honour and prestige as a distinct variable.

He has emphasized the link between class status and power. He argues that a class is a category or a group of people who share similar' life chances'. Status achieved is an important factor in determining the class position. With Marx, he saw ownership and non-ownership as basic criterion, but Weber gives more importance to noneconomic factors.

Weber also differs from Marx in viewing bureaucracy as a rational and achieved system of power in modem societies. Weber's stress on a variety offactors intluencing opportunities and rewards has made his approach to the analysis of class and social stratification very influential in sociological theory.

## Civil Society, Community Organisations, Social Capital

### Civil Society

Broadly, civil society can be conceived as including all public political non-state activity occurring between government and family. Civil Society comprises all independent voluntary and private sector activities that include individuals and households, the media, business and civic institutions and organisations, etc. Civil society organisations have been responsible for advancing political freedom, safeguarding basic rights, enhancing civil institutions and furthering sodal development at a much lower cost than the government. These responsibilities are reflected in the activities of non-governmental organisations, social movements, community-based people's organisations, religious groups, peasants associations, consumer groups and trade unions. The civil society has a special role for those who are excluded from the formal structures of governance, such as women, the poor, and minorities

(ethnic, religious, racial), civil society institutions often welcome alternatives.

The stronger or more dense and vibrant the civil Society, the better the democracy functions. Civil Society is a precondition for democracy.

**Community Organisations**

The community based people's organisations are also important contributors to good civic governance. These organisations are defined as democratic organisations that represent the interest of their members and are accountable to them. The tradition to organize collectively the community based organisations to deal with community issues has a long history. It is the people themselves who initiate these organisations and formulate their programmes. Non-governmental organisations are commanding greater attention within civil society as vehicles for social service delivery, advocacy and empowerment.

**Social Capital**

Social capital promotes democratization in general, and democratic performance in particular. Social capital is the ability of people to work together for common purposes in groups and organisations. Social capital can be defined simply as the existence of a certain set of informal values or norms shared among members of the group that permit cooperation among them. Social capital involves features of social organisations such as networks, norms and social trust that facilitate cooperation and coordination for mutual benefit.

Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that would not be attainable in its absence. If one wishes to

promote democratic governance, one should support networks and. for instance, cooperative conununity development schemes.

## Local Governance and Public Opinion

### Local Self-Governance: Panchayati Raj

Panchayati Raj in the rural self-government system in India. Panchayati Raj system becomes very important in the Indian context where almost 80 percent of the people reside in rural areas. Panchayati Raj in India was inaugurated as a consequence of the recommendations of Balwanth Rai Mehta committee set up in 1957, to s-tudy the community development programme and national extension service launched in 1952 and 1953 respectively.

In 1992, the 73rd Constitutional Amendment was enacted, which gave Constitutional status to Panchayati Raj institutions. It also makes it obligatory on all the States to have the three-tier system at (a) the village level, (b) the intermediate level and (c) the district level.

### Public Opinion

Public opinion is said to be the basis of democracy. It is the link between the government and the people. The term public opinion is commonly used to denote the aggregate of views the people hold regarding matters that affect or interest them, their community and society. The people's conceptions of political personalities, institutions and ideologies matter in the formulation of opinion. In democracy the continuance and the fall of the governments depend upon public opinion.

Public opinion is created through means like mass media, political parties, pressure groups, elections,

debates in the legislature, educational institutions, public meetings etc. The press, radio, television and cinema are some of the several means of carrying political, social and religious ideas to the people. That is why a lot of emphasis is laid on freedom of press in a democracy.

## Conclusion

The political trends in India since independence have largely been a series of reconciliations like (a) the demands articulated by regional interest groups, (b) linguistic formation of states in the political realm, (c) emphasis on mixed economy In the sphere of economic policy, (d) ideology of secularism in religion and culture, and (e) neutrality in international relationship, etc. These are all reflections of predominantly reconciliatory pattern of political modernization in India.

The reconciliatory approach is also reflected in the adjustment between 'traditional institutions' in politics, caste associations, kinship groups and ethnic solidarities. They have adapted themselves to the needs of modem democratic political culture in large measure quite successfully and with fewer distortions.

Some maladjustment is however, natural in the process. However, so far, the reconciliatory orientation of Indian politics has succeeded in absorbing their shocks because of the natural elasticity of the Indian institutions and built-in tendency of tolerance in the cultural tradition of India. We may speculate that in future among the political protest movements threatening the political structure, reconciliatory orientation will triumph again and again. This might render the place of political modernisation of India slow but it will certainly minimise the cost of social transformation.

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# 19

# Personality Development

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## Introduction

This chapter gives an idea about the concept of personality and importance of studying personality for social work practice. It also throws light on the determinants of personality and the pertinence of personality development. The external appearance of personality has also been described in this chapter.

This chapter provides a comprehensive idea about personality development of an individual.

## Definition of Personality

Personality is a widely used word and a variety of meanings are attached to it. According to Allport (1937) there are at least fifty different meanings of the term. He indicates that "Personality" came originally from the Latin word "Persona". Allport also reports that "personality" is used in at least four distinct senses in the writings of Cicero. First, personality is regarded as an assemblage of personal qualities. In this sense personality belongs to the actor. Second, personality is regarded as the way a person appears to others. In this sense personality pertains to the mask. Third, personality represents the role a person plays in life; a professional, social, or political role such as characters in drama. Finally personality refers to

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qualities of distinction and dignity. It pertains to the star performer.

There are several definitions of personality. Allport (1937) classified these definitions in six categories. Out of these three important and popular definitions are given below:

**Personality as a Social Value**

Allport (1924) defined "personality as, individual's characteristic reaction to social stimuli and the quality of his adaptation to the social features of his environment."

According to Guthrie, "Personality is defined as those habits and habit systems of social importance that are stable and resistant to change."

Stranger (1961) has indicated two meanings of personality related to social values:

i) ***Personality as Stimulus value*** — This indicates that personality is the impact or impression of a person or personality over other person or persons, or how a person impresses the other in society. If a person impresses other persons fast and easily then his personality is considered impressive. It is well observed in daily life that if a person who has higher stimulus value or who impresses and attracts us easily, we often say that he/she has a nice personality. But this idea regarding personality is not scientific, because the views of different persons are quite different.

ii) ***Personality as a Response*** — Observing the limitation in the description of personality as a stimulus, personality was defined as response. Personality as a response has two definitions as

indicated by Guthrie and Allport. The benefit of defining personality in this way is that the study of personality becomes possible from an external stand point. This type of definition is also incomplete because personality represents not only a group of responses but it has stimulus value too.

**Personality as an Intervening Variable**

Allport (1937) defined personality as an intervening variable. According to him, "Personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustment to his environment".

According to Munn, (1953), Personality may be defined as the most characteristic integration of individual's structures, modes of behaviour, interest, attitudes, capacities, abilities and aptitudes.

**Traits of Personality**

Crutch and Cretchfied (1958) defined trait as a specific quality of a person by which he/she behaves evenly in all situations. The personality may be known by the act of comparison and by the act of observation. A person is observed to react promptly or vigorously or accurately or in all of these ways. These are the properties which are obstructions that come by way of analysis form totalities, the aspects or properties that we have just been considering are "traits". There are behaviour traits as well as somatic traits.

Allport defined personality traits on the following eight criteria:

i) The existence of traits is more than negligible. (ii) Traits are more generalized as compared with

habits. (iii) Traits are dynamic or at least determinative. (iv) Their existence can be established on the statistical and experiential basis. (v) The various traits of personality are independent of each other. (vi) Psychologically moral qualities are not personality traits (vii) the tasks and habits which are not according to or favourable to traits do not give proof of the existence of traits. (viii) Traits are unique and universal.

Allport, on the basis of a large scale analysis of human traits, proposed a trait theory of personality. Some of the conclusions regarding traits are as follows:

1) Personality traits can help selecting appropriate behaviour or obstruct behaviours.

2) Direct observation of traits is not possible but inference regarding them is possible.

3) Habits do not determine traits but traits determine the development of a new habit.

4) Traits guide and initiate behaviour.

5) According to Allport, some important traits are: punctuality, aggressiveness, cheerfulness, competitiveness, fancifulness, gregariousness and vigour.

6) The level of adjustment of normal persons can be compared with the help of common traits.

7) Allport named the group of traits as a syndrome.

8) Allport classified all traits in three major groups:

i) ***Cardinal Traits:*** These type of traits are more effective and perform the important functions of control of emotions. They are small in number.

ii) ***Central Traits:*** These traits contribute to the focus of person's behaviour. They are often considered as building blocks of personality.

iii) ***Secondary Traits:*** These traits are individual traits and common traits. The individual traits are considered as true symptoms. The common traits are found in many persons. They provide basis for the measurement of many individual traits.

R.B. Cattell conducted a number of studies in the field of individual traits. Cattell observed that the study of total 171 traits is necessary for the study of personality.

## Determinants of Personality

We find uniqueness in every person. Some persons are criminals and others law abiding citizens, some alcoholics and others teetotallers, some maladjusted and others well adjusted. There are certain principles underlying personality development and functioning, which enable us to understand the variation in the pattern of behaviour. They involve the influences of heredity and environment.

### A) Biological Factors

These factors include genetic factors and hormonal factors. Let us examine these factors in some details.

**Genetic Factors:** Each individual receives a genetic endowment from his parents which provides for physical equipment–muscle, glands, sense organs, nerves and so on. All these parts are essential for one's development into an adult human being. Heredity not only provides potentialities for development but is an important source of individual differences, as it influences the

determination of certain traits more than other. The physical features and various constitutional factors such as sensitivity, vigour, susceptibility to disease, and intelligence are most clearly influenced by heredity. Genetic factors may influence the overall functioning of the organism and lower the individual's resistance to physical disease. The most unique aspects of man's inheritance are reflected in the brain which is the most highly organized apparatus in the universe. The brain produces a fantastic communication network with tremendous capability for integrating the overall functioning of the human organism, for interpreting and 'storing' new experiences and for reasoning, imagining and problem solving.

**Hormonal Factors:** There are a number of hormonal factors which influence the development of personality. Some of the important ones are described below.

1) ***Endocrine Glands***

These glands secrete directly without any tube. The secretion of these glands is known as harmones which affect the personality.

i) *Pancreas Glands:* This gland is related to a tube of the deudenum. This gland secretes digestive juices. Insulin is secreted in the body by these cells, which neutralize blood sugar.

ii) *Thyroid Gland:* The secretion of this gland is called thyroxin which influences the rate of physical growth.

iii) *Parathyroid Gland:* The main function of this gland is to control the quantity of calcium which makes the development of bones and teeth smooth, if its secretion is smooth.

iv) *Adrenal Gland:* The secretion from this gland is called 'Aderin', which shapes personality. The secretion stimulates the blood supply and influences liver. As a result, fatigue is reduced and the wastes of the body are released.

v) *Pitutary Gland:* The harmone secreted from the anterior part of this gland controls the secretions of various glands and the secretion from its posterior part stimulates the petuterin muscle.

vi) *Gonad Gland:* The secretion from these glands is called gonadal harmones (Progestin, Androgens and Estrogens). Due to these secretions males have masculine traits and females have feminine qualities.

2) ***Physique and Health***

A person's worth increases by good physical structure. Also, if the physical structure is defective, the chances are high that he/she would suffer from a number of health problems.

3) ***Body Chemistry***

The various chemical changes taking place in different centres of brain and body have an important effect on a person's personality. If the chemical changes are not in proper order the person suffers from various problems. Thus due to deficiency of glycogen in the muscles a person will exhaust soon and will appear lazy, depressed, frustrated and irritated.

4) ***Maturation and Personality***

Maturation decides how and what a person will learn. The development of many personality traits depends upon learning. If the maturation is not smooth then his learning and personality will be adversely effected.

5) ***Genetic and Somatic Factors***

The characteristics of a child are often found to be like their parents. It is because of heredity of the child and the environment created by the guardians, in which the child is brought up. There are several studies of twins which show that personality development is effected by heredity. It is also observed that during pregnancy activeness of mother, her diet, fetus, requirements, emotional status of mother affect the personality of a new born child.

B) **Environmental Factors**

The psychological development of a person is constantly shaped by the forces in his or her environment. Even people with similar inheritance show different characteristics. The sociocultural environment influences the development of individuals even more dramatically through the learning of the language he speaks, the customs he follows, the values he believes in, and the competencies which he develops to deal with life's problems. We find that groups of people foster specific culture patterns by the systematic teaching of the younger members of their groups. Such practices tend to make all members of the group somewhat alike, or as Linton (1945) has put it, to establish, "the basic personality types."

According to Mead (1949) people reared in societies which do not sanction violence will settle their differences in nonviolent ways. In New Guinea two tribes of similar social origin, living in the same general geographical area, were found to have developed diametrically opposed characteristics : the Arapesh were a kindly, peaceful, cooperative people; the Mundugumor were warlike, suspicious, competitive and vengeful. These differences emerge in the social conditions.

Each individual belongs to a somewhat unique pattern of sub groups and experiences a unique pattern of interpersonal relationships. Participation in the socio-cultural environment may vary across individuals. It may be said that the socio cultural environment is the source of differences as well as commonalities in personality development. The environmental factors may be divided into two categories

i) Geographical Factors

ii) Social Factors

A brief description of Social factors are as follows :

1) **Parental Factors**

i) ***Importance of Mother:*** Certain studies conducted in this field point out that, out of all environmental factors, the person is affected most by his relations with mother during early period. Harlow (1966) conducted a study on baby monkeys and indicated that due to lonely early development the baby monkey fails to establish healthy social relations with its companions. Similar results were observed by Spitz (1949), and Yarrow (1963), in the studies conducted on human babies. Early maternal deprivation is found to be related to pathology in personality development.

ii) ***Importance of Father:*** Like mother the presence and absence of father affects the personality of a child. Mischel (1958) saw that the child's socialization and development was influence by the absence of father. In particular the father-child relationship influences the nature of future sexual relationship of the child.

iii) ***Other Family Members:*** It is observed that if the members of the family are affectionate to the child and help her to fulfill the requirements, teach her good habits, then such things definitely help the child to develop positive aspects in personality.

iv) ***Size of the Family:*** The size of the family also affects the development of personality. If there are more members in the family then language and other mental abilities of the child develop faster. Contrary to it, in the case of an only child in the family, due to more care, love and affection, the child becomes obstinate and pampered.

v) ***Economic status of the family:*** The economic condition of the family also affects the personality. The children of a poor family may develop a feeling of inferiority and insecurity. Similarly, due to lack of facilities and nutritious diet, their physical and mental development is arrested.

2) **School and Peer Groups**

The neighbourhood is an important factor affecting personality development. Children learn certain habits and behaviours from children of neighbourhood with whom they interact. Their intellectual and emotional development is also affected. After a few years the child goes to school and experiences patterns of adjustment within the school and community setting. The child in school is affected by teacher's behaviour and school environment. Child's self perception is often found significantly related to the quality of school experiences. Child's social and emotional development is shaped by the school atmosphere and peer group.

3) **Cultural Factors**

The culture to which one belongs is an important factor which affects the child's behaviour and development. There are cultural variations in different societies and the pattern of personality of children is shaped by the various features of culture. The pattern of child rearing, values, norms and incentives vary from culture to culture. Consisting of shared meanings and practices, different cultures help development of different traits of personality.

## Patterning of Development

There are three main levels of analysis to be taken into consideration for the study of development of an individual:

i) **Biological System:** The closely coordinated Physiological interactions within the body.

ii) **The Psychological System or Personality:** It involves the organized interaction of motives, abilities, assumptions, and defenses integrated around the self, and

iii) **Sociological or Group System:** It involves the interactions of the individual in his family or broader group contexts.

These three factors or levels of analysis are important to gain a complete view of the individual and his functioning. These factors play an important role in shaping the personality of an individual and affect the growth and development of personality.

Thus it is important to keep in mind that development or change in a person is always a patterned change. All the interactive component systems are involved in shaping the pattern of these changes.

**Development Schedule**

Human development is found to follow a definite schedule not only in the domain of physical and motor development but also in the domain of emotional, intellectual, and social development. Thus an infant crawls and sits up before she begins to walk; her early generalized emotional reactions become differentiated into love, humor, grief. The language behaviour also progresses from random vocalization to words which eventually become vehicles for thinking.

The process of development is regulated by the forces of maturation and learning. Maturational processes guide the development of our bodily structure and pave the way for learning, but what we can learn in any situation depends both on maturational readiness and on what we have learned in the past. It is also observed that each new phase of development is limited by previous development and, in turn, influences and remains a part of successive stages of development.

**Development Tasks**

The human development has been broadly divided into 6 major stages. At each stage maturational and social pressure impose certain specific tasks which the individual must master if she is to maintain normal course of development. When the various tasks are not mastered during the appropriate developmental period, the individual suffers from immaturities and incompetencies which persist and handicap her adjustment during later developmental stages.

The developmental tasks of six life stages, as indicated by Erikson (1950), Havighurst (1952), Kagon and Moss (1962), and Witmer and Kotinsky (1952) are described below:

**Personality Development and Adjustment:**

**Developmental Task of Different Life Stages**

**Infancy and Early Childhood Learning to walk and talk. Learning to take (0-6 years)** solid food and to control the elimination of body wastes. Achieving physiological stability. Developing a sense of trust in oneself and in others. Learning to relate oneself emotionally to parents, siblings, and other people. Forming an identification with one's own sex. Developing simple concepts of social and physical reality. Mastering simple safety rules. Learning to distinguish right from wrong and to respect rules and authority.

**Middle Childhood (6-12 years)** Gaining wider knowledge and understanding of the physical and social world. Building wholesome attitudes toward oneself. Learning an appropriate masculine or feminine social role. Developing conscience, morality, and a scale of values. Learning to read, write, and calculate, and learning other fundamental intellectual skills. Learning physical skills. Developing attitudes toward social groups and other institutions. Learning to win and maintain a place among one's age-mates. Learning to give and take and to share responsibility. Achieving increasing personal independence.

**Adolescence (12-18 years)** Developing self-confidence and a clear sense of identity. Accepting one's physique and adjusting to body changes. Achieving a masculine or feminine social role. Developing new and mature relations with age-mates. Achieving emotional independence from parents and other adults. Developing concern beyond oneself; achieving mature values, and social responsibility. Selecting and

preparing for an occupation. Preparing for marriage and family life. Learning to make choices and taking responsibility. Building a conscious value system in harmony with an adequate world picture.

**Early adulthood (18-35 years)**Completing formal education. Getting started in an occupation. Selecting and learning to live with a mate. Starting a family and providing for the material and psychological need of one's children. Finding a congenial social group. Taking on civic responsibility. Developing a satisfying philosophy of life.

**Middle Age (35-60 years)** Accepting greater civic and social responsibility. Achieving personal growth with one's mate and relating to one's mate as a person. Establishing a standard of living and developing adequate financial security for remaining years. Developing adult leisure-time activities and extending interests. Helping teen-age children become responsible and happy adults. Adjusting to aging parents. Accepting and adjusting to the physiological changes of middle age.

**Later Life** Adjusting to decreasing physical strength. Adjusting to retirement and reduced income, and establishing satisfactory living arrangements. Adjusting to the death of spouse or friends. Meeting social and civic obligations within one's ability. Establishing affiliation with one's own age group. Maintaining active interests and concern beyond oneself.

**Task common to all Periods** Developing and using one's physical, social, and emotional competencies. Accepting oneself and developing basic self-confidence. Accepting reality and building valid attitudes and values. Participating creatively and responsibly in family and other groups. Building rich linkages with one's world.

The most important pathways towards maturity are:

1) ***Dependence to Self-Direction:*** One of the pathways towards maturity is from dependency of fetus, infant and child to the independence of adult-hood. Growth toward independence and self direction is the development of an integrated frame of reference of adult responsibilities.

2) ***Pleasure to Reality:*** Freud indicated that the pleasure principle is fundamental in governing early behaviour. This thought was subordinated to the reality principle, the realization that we must learn to perceive and face reality if we are to meet our needs.

3) ***Ignorance to Knowledge:*** The human baby is born in a stage of total ignorance and soon starts acquiring information about herself and the surroundings. In due course of time, this information is organized into coherent pattern assumptions concerning reality, value and possibility, which provides him with a stable frame of reference for guiding her behaviour.

4) ***Incompetence to Competence:*** The entire period from infancy through adolescence is directed toward the mastery of intellectual, emotional, social and other competencies essential for adulthood.

5) ***Diffuse Sexuality to Heterosexuality:*** The sexual development is an important development in a person's growth towards maturity. At an early age, diffuse and generalized expressions of sexuality are found. During later childhood interests and emotional feelings are directed towards other members of the same sex. With the

advent of puberty, heterosexual differentiation progresses rapidly. However, maturity in sexual behaviour involves more than directing one's desires towards a member of the opposite sex.

6) ***Amoral to Moral:*** The newborn baby has no concept of good or bad; right or wrong; gradually she learns a pattern of value assumptions which operate as inner guides or control behaviour, we refer to as her conscience or super ego.

7) ***Self-centered to Other Centered:*** One of the most important pathways to maturity involves individual's gradual transition from exclusive preoccupation with himself and his needs to an understanding and acceptance of social responsibilities and an involvement in the human enterprise. This includes the ability to give love in one's family setting and to be concerned about and contribute to the welfare of one's group and of society in general.

**Variation in Development**

All human beings go through the same stages of growth but we observe variations in the traits that they develop. The term trait is used to refer to any distinguishable and relatively enduring characteristic of the individual. The variation in the traits may be illustrated as most people fall in the intermediate or average range of intelligence, while a few at one extreme are geniuses and a few at the other extreme are mentally retarded.

However, variation may occur from one individual to another in (a) the nature of a given physical trait, such as blood type and skin color, (b) the differentiation or extent to which a given trait is developed, (c) the

integration of traits or harmony among them, and (d) the over all pattern of traits, which we call personality. Variation within a definite range is considered normal; it is abnormal only when it becomes extreme enough to impair one's adaptive capacities seriously.

A number of factors are significant which affect a particular trait. The traits play a very important role in the development of an individual, if his position is very much above or below the average. The significance of a given trait depends on the pattern of all the traits.

## Personality as the External Appearance and Behaviour of the Individual

The external appearance of personality is related with the biological part of the human being. The bodily system is composed of fluids, bones, skin and musclar, connective and neural tissues. These components constitute the physiology of the organism.

There is plenty of evidence which shows the interdependence between 'mind' and 'body'. When the brain is injured or when small portions of it are removed, there is some disturbance in personality though often less than what one might expect. In addition to external appearance there is also a desire to create a favourable first impression on others. The first impression of a person gives others a clue to the personality of the observed individual. In addition, the first impression determines what others will expect of the individual, and their expectations, in turn, influence his behaviour.

A person's first impression may be based on physical appearence, facial features or expression, gestures, dress, name, nationality, race, what the person says

and how he says it, what he does and how he does it, or some other physical or psychological characteristic which is identified in the mind of the observer with certain personality types.

Sheldon describes the types of personality on the basis of external appearance as under:

i) ***Endomorphic:*** Identity to roundness, smoothness, softness, large trunk, delicate, tapering limbs.

ii) ***Mesomorphic:*** Tendency to heavy bones and muscles, squareness, ruggedness.

iii) ***Ectomorphic:*** Tendency to slenderness, straightness of limb, delicateness.

Each person is to be described with respect to his positions on each of the three scales. According to Sheldon A type is thus a particular combination of the position on these dimensions. It takes three scores to express each person's type and to describe him physically. Therefore, we can say that external appearance and behaviour of an individual is very important where the personality is concerned.

## Need for Studying Personality Development for Social Work Practice

Social work practice is a professional approach towards the solution of psychosocial and behavioural problems of human beings. It deals with all the aspects of human life including growth and development of personality. Some social scientists consider social work as a behavioural science. It is also accepted that services rendered by social workers will be fruitful only when the basic information about the problems, nature and level of psycho-sexual development is known

by the worker. The personality assessment tasks of the different stages of development must be known by the social worker for the diagnosis and treatment of psychosocial problems. Studying personality development is helpful for social work practitioners to develop their competence.

## Conclusion

The word 'personality' used by a common man is different from its meaning as a technical term. The common man uses the term 'personality' only to refer to the structure of individual. The term 'personality' originated from the Latin word 'persona' which means mask. In psychological literature personality is defined from different angles. The most appropriate definition has been given by Allport. People also use the term character, temperament and self, similar to personality, but they have different meanings. The development of personality begins from early infancy stage.

Every person is unique, therefore, there is a requirement to understand the factors which affect personality. Heredity and environment are some of the important determinants of the personality.

Three levels of analysis is involved in the study of development of an individuals' personality. They include biological system, psychological system and sociological or group system. There are different developmental tasks for the different stages of life. All human beings go through similar stages of growth but variations are also found.

The external appearance of personality is related to the biological part of a human being. Since social work deals with all the aspects of human life studying

personality development for social work practitioners is very relevant.

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# Determinants of Personality : Role of Heredity and Environment

* *B.D. Pandey*

## Introduction

The importance of personality increases as social life becomes more complex. A "pleasing" personality has a "marketable value" in a complex society and is highly prized and sought after. The term "personality" is derived from the Latin word 'persona', which means "Mask". Among the Greeks, actors used masks to hide their identity on the stage. This dramatic technique was later adopted by the Romans to whom persona denoted "as one appears to others", not as one actually is.

Various definitions of personality have been given by different psychologists. They define personality in such a way as to include motivational aspects as well as other outstanding characteristics. Of these, the most widely accepted is the short but all-inclusive definition proposed by Gordon W. Allport. According to him "personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psycho-physical systems that determine his unique adjustment to his environment."

## Role of Heredity in Personality Development

The personality pattern is founded on the individual's hereditary endowment, but it is not inherited. It is

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the product of learning during the course of prolonged social relationships with people both within and outside the home. As Anderson has pointed out, personality is organized around nodal points or experiences which have received specific emphasis.

At the moment of conception each new human being receives a genetic inheritance which provides all the potentialities for his behaviour and development throughout his life time. This endowment includes potentialities for an individual's bodily equipment, for the development of specific skills, abilities and kinds of behaviour and for patterns of growth and change throughout a predictable life cycle.

**The Mechanics of Heredity**

At Fertilization, the male and Female germ cells unite to form a fertilized ovum containing about 46 chromosomes, half from each parent. The chromosomes are minute, threadlike structures containing many hundreds of ultramicroscopic particles called 'genes', which are the real carriers of a person's heredity. Together, the chromosomes probably contain from 10 to 15 thousand genes, of them a complex molecule consisting of thousands of atoms in special arrangements. The genes carry the blueprint for an individual's development and direct his growth from a one-celled unit to an adult. Within this inherited structure, lie the potentialities for behaviour.

**Role of Heredity**

The personality pattern is inwardly determined by and closely associated with the maturation of physical and mental characteristics which constitute the individual's hereditary endowment. Although social and other environmental factors affect the form a

personality pattern takes, it is not instilled or controlled from without but evolves from the potentials within the individual. The principal raw materials of personality-physique, intelligence and temperament are the results of heredity. How a person will develop depends on the environmental influences within which a person grows.

The significance of hereditary foundations in determining the personality pattern has been stressed by many researchers. It is generally held that personality is formed from the interaction of significant figures (first the mother, later the father and siblings, later extra familial figures) with the child. The child brings to this interaction biological constitution, a set of needs and intellectual capacities which determine the way in which a person is acted upon by the significant figures in her environment.

In the course of interaction of hereditary and environmental factors, the individual selects from his environment what fits his needs and rejects what does not. Thus personality pattern develops through interactions with the environment which an individual himself has initiated.

One reason for stressing the role of heredity in the development of personality is to recognize the fact that personality pattern is subject to limitations. A person who inherits a low level of intelligence, for example, cannot, even under the most favourable environmental conditions, develop a personality pattern that will lead to adequate personal and social adjustment, than a person with high level of adjustment. Thus heredity sets limits to a person's development.

Furthermore, recognition of the limitations imposed by heredity underlines the fact that people are not totally free to choose and develop the kind of personality pattern they want. Using intelligence again as an illustration it may be said that a person with a low-grade intelligence cannot develop the personality pattern of a leader even though he wants to do so and even though he has a strong motivation to try to develop the personality traits essential for leadership.

## Role of Environment in Personality Development

No trait is so dependent on heredity that it would not require certain minimal environmental conditions for its development. This is true even of physical traits and certainly much more so of intellectual, social and emotional ones. At any given moment an individual is the product of countless interactions between his genetic endowment and physical and sociocultural environment. By physical environment we refer to the natural world surrounding the individual: Climate, terrain, food supplies, disease germs and so on. By sociocultural environment we mean the world of people, customs, values and man-made objects.

### Physical Environment

People of the earth live under diverse conditions of climate, terrain and natural resources. Some live in dense jungles and others on barren deserts, some live on high mountains and others on flat prairie lands. Some live where it is extremely cold and others where it is oppressively hot, some live where it rains most of the time and others where there is chronic drought. In some places food and other resources are plentiful, in others they are so scarce that most of the

individual's life must be spent in eking out a bare subsistence. Some areas are infested with disease and other hazards to physical safety, others are relatively free to disease and danger.

**Climate and Terrain**

People inhabiting areas where conditions of climate or terrain are unfavourable tend to undergo adaptive physiological changes. For example, the circulatory system of the Eskimo tends to lie deep within a protective fatty layer which conserves his body heat.

**Scarcity, Disease and Other Unfavourable Conditions**

Even today millions of people live in areas where disease is rife and food supplies are inadequate. Such conditions take a tremendous toll in reduced physical vigor, bodily damage and loss of life. Because adverse physical conditions influence the way a group lives, we may assume that they also exert some effect, at least indirectly, on the personality development of individual members. However, the precise effect is difficult to assess, for again we typically find cultural factors complicating the total situation.

It becomes very difficult to evaluate the effect of physical environment on individual and group differences in development. Except in cases where unfavourable conditions lead to actual bodily damage, as in malnutrition and disease, the role of the physical environment seems a less important than that of the sociocultural environment.

**Socio-cultural Environment**

In much the same sense that man receives a genetic heritage which is the end product of countless million years of evolutionary history, so he receives a

sociocultural heritage which is the end product of many thousands of years of social evolution. This heritage varies dramatically from one social group to another, but the various cultures of the world have enough in common to enable us to speak meaningfully of "human culture". Every group, for example, has its language, family and social structure, customs, values, music and art. These "institutions" are characteristically human and tend to be transmitted by similar means in every society. Sometimes the instruction is deliberate, but just as often it is not. Following are the chief means by which the sociocultural environment exerts its influence on individual development.

i) ***Group Membership and Instruction***

Both deliberately and unconsciously, each society teaches its concepts, values and accepted behaviours to its children. This instruction is largely accomplished by the social institutions such as home, school and temple or their equivalents. Thus systematic instruction, together with the examples set by adults or other "models" tend to make for some degree of uniformity and to establish what may be called the basic personality type of the particular society.

The individual's basic personality structure is affected not only by the larger social group but also by the various subgroups to which one belongs–groups based upon his family membership, religion, occupation, social class, age and sex. Each subgroup tends to foster certain values, beliefs and approved behaviour patterns which may in turn be subject to the restrictions imposed by society as a whole. The fact that each individual belongs to somewhat different type of subgroup tends to produce individual differences, just as common membership in the larger

cultural group makes everyone somewhat alike.

The groups with which an individual identifies, or with which he would like to be identified, are called 'reference groups'–for it is in reference to the norms and values of that group that he sets his goals, models his behaviour and evaluates his worth. Sometimes reference groups from which the individual is excluded have greater influence on the person.

ii) ***Status and Role***

In every social structure there are a variety of distinguishable positions - doctor, teacher, carpenter, parent, student, child and so forth - each of which contributes in some way to the total group functioning and is accorded a certain 'social status'. Status brings with it both privileges and responsibilities. For example, the medical doctor has the privilege of practicing medicine and also is held in high regard by other members of society. In return, he is expected to follow the ethical code of profession. If he fails to do so, he may have his medical license revoked and be relegated to an inferior social standing.

To clarify what is expected of a person with a given position and status, society establishes various roles for its members to play, each associated with a certain pattern of expected behaviour. Thus the role of an army officer calls for loyalty, decisiveness, courage and resourcefulness. Each person of the society, young or old, tends to develop the skills, behaviour and values that his role seems to demand. If he deviates too far from what is expected him, he is likely to run into difficulties in his social relationships.

The extent to which role expectations can influence personality development is well illustrated by Margaret

Mead's study (1949) of the Tchambuli, a New Guinea tribe in which the sex roles are practically the reverse of ours. Women are supposed to earn the living, handle business transactions, take the initiative in courtship, and in general, act as head of the family. Men on the other hand, are expected to be coquettish, graceful, prone to gossip, good homemakers and interested in dancing and theatricals. The established roles for men and women among the Tchambuli, obviously tend to channel personality development along lines very different from those in our culture.

iii) ***Interpersonal Relationships***

Man is a social animal and much of his personality development reflects his experiences with other people. In many societies a certain pattern of interpersonal relationships may predominate over others – for example, the norm may be for competition or cooperation, hostility or friendliness. In general, however, interpersonal relationships contribute to individuality rather than similarity of development, for no two of us have exactly the same acquaintances nor do we have an identical relationship with the people we do know in common. Even parents relate to each of their children in somewhat different ways. The experiences of love and hate, of friendship and distrust, of shared experience and misunderstanding that characterize our associations with other people are in each case unique.

Although we have many kinds of interpersonal relationships in the course of our lives, those that have the greatest influence in shaping our development are those with our parents and with members of our peer groups. Apart from that many other types of interpersonal relationships – with brothers and sisters,

grandparents, teachers, neighbours – may play a significant part in shaping personality. Even a chance meeting with someone may change the direction of our lives.

## Role of Learning in Personality Development

Learning, in its various forms, especially conditioning, imitation and training, or learning under the guidance and direction of another, plays a prime role in the development of personality pattern. Attitude toward self, characteristic modes of responding to people and situations, attitudes toward the assumption of socially approved roles and methods of personal and social adjustment, including the use of defence mechanism, are learned through repetition and are reinforced by the satisfaction they bring. Gradually, the self concept develops, the learned responses become habitual, constituting the "traits" in the individual's personality pattern.

Social pressures within and outside the home determine what traits will be incorporated into the pattern. If a boy is encouraged to be aggressive for example, because aggressiveness is considered a sex-appropriate trait for males, he will learn to react to people and things in an aggressive way. If on the other hand, aggressiveness wins social disapproval or does not being satisfaction; the person will try out other methods of adjustment until he finds one that meets his needs. He will then repeat it until it becomes a habitual form of behaviour.

Knowing that learning plays a role in the development of personality pattern, it is important for two reasons. First it tells us that control can be exercised to

ensure that the individual will develop the kind of personality pattern that will lead to good personal and social adjustment.

Second, it tells us that unhealthy self-concepts and socially unacceptable patterns of adjustment can be changed and modified. As in all learning the sooner a change or modification is attempted, the easier it will be.

## Process of Socialisation and its Role in Personality Development

The role of socialisation in the development of human personality may be shown by citing the two cases of Anna and Isabelle. Anna, an illegitimate child, was caused to be kept all alone in an upstairs room. When removed from the room at the age of nearly six years, Anna could not talk, walk or do anything, that showed intelligence. She was expressionless and indifferent to everything. She could not make any move on her own behalf. This shows that in the absence of socialisation the purely biological resources are too poor to contribute to the development of a complete personality. Communicative contact is the core of socialisation.

Isabelle was found at the age of six and half years. Like Anna she was an illegitimate child and had been kept in isolation for that reason. When found she was apparently utterly unaware of relationship of any kind. Her behaviour was comparable to that of a child of six months. Later attempts were made to teach her to speak. At first she seemed hopeless but later she responded, and ultimately reached the normal level of development by the time she was eight and a half years old.

Isabel's case shows that isolation upto the age of six with failure to acquire any form of speech does not preclude the subsequent acquisition of it. But what would be the maximum age at which a person could remain isolated and still retain the capacity for full cultural acquisition is hard to say. Both these cases, however, show the role of socialization in personality development.

**Meaning of Socialisation**

Human society is not an external phenomenon but exists solely in the minds of its members. The human infant comes into the world as a biological organism with animal needs. He is gradually moulded into a social being and he learns social ways of acting and feeling. Without this process of moulding the society could not continue itself, nor could culture exist, nor could the individual become a person. This process of moulding is called 'socialisation'. It is through the process of socialisation that an individual becomes a social person and attains personality.

Socialisation involves inducting the individual into the social and cultural world, of making him a particular member in society and its various groups and inducting him to accept the norms and values of that society. Socialisation is a matter of learning that enables the learner to perform social roles.

**Agencies of Socialisation**

Socialisation turns a child into a useful member of society and gives him social maturity. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to know as to who socialises with the child. There are two sources of child's socialisation. The first includes those who have authority over her, the second are those who are

similar to the child. The first category may include parents, teachers, elderly persons and the state. The second one includes peer groups, friends and fellows in the club. Briefly the main agencies of socialization are the following.

**Primary Agencies**

i) ***The Family***

The parents or family constitute the first agency for the socialisation of the child. They are not only closely related to the child but physically also they are nearer to him than others. From the parents children learn language. They are taught societal morality. They start respecting persons in authority. In the family a child learns a number of civic virtues. The family therefore, is rightly called **"the cradle of social virtues"**. A child gets her first lesson in cooperation, tolerance, self sacrifice, love and affection in the family. The environment of a family influences almost all aspects of growth of a child.

ii) ***Neighbourhood***

The neighbourhood is the second important agency of socialisation. Good neighbourhood can make a child to grow as a positive person and responsible citizen.

iii) ***Peer Group or the Play Mates***

The peer group and friends also constitute an important agency of socialisation. The relationship between the child and her playmates is one of equality. As stated above, the child acquires co-operative morality and some of the informal aspects of culture like fashion, fads, crazes, modes of gratification and forbidden knowledge. The knowledge of these things is necessary from the social point of view.

iv) ***The School***

The school is also a very important agency of socialisation. In the school the child gets education which moulds the ideas and attitudes. Proper or adequate education can make the child a good citizen, while a bad education can turn him into a criminal. Education is of great importance for the process of socialisation. A well planned system of education can produce competent people.

**Secondary Agencies of Socialization**

All the above mentioned agencies are known as primary agencies of socialisation. There are few other agencies of socialisation which are known as secondary agencies of socialisation, They include

i) ***Religion***

Religion has been an important factor in society. In the early history of societies religion provided a bond of unity. Though in modern society the importance of religion has diminished, yet it continues to mould our beliefs and ways of life. The child sees his parents going to the temple and performing religious ceremonies, and listens to religious sermons which may determine the course of life and shaped his ideas.

ii) ***The State***

The state is an authoritarian agency of socialisation. It makes law for the people and lays down the modes of conduct expected of them. The people have compulsorily to obey these laws. If they fail to adjust their behaviour in accordance with the law of the state, they may be punished for such failures. Thus the state also moulds a person's behaviour and personality.

## Relative Importance of Heredity and Environment

Today, there is ample evidence that the form a child's personality pattern will take, depends not solely on the training methods used or the kind of environment in which the person grows, but also on the hereditary potentials a person brings into the world with him.

### Conditions Affecting Interaction of Heredity and Environment

An individual's potential at the time of birth affects other people and the potentials themselves are affected by the relationships the individual has with significant people during early years of this life. The moulding of the personality pattern is thus a far more complex process than was previously believed and many more elements are involved than would be true if the newborn infant were "merely a plastic blob of protoplasm".

The development is a function of interaction of the significant others with the biological constitution and others potentials. In this interaction, significant people try to mould the child's personality into a culturally approved pattern. How they handle the child's basic drives determine what sort of a person the child will be.

The attitudes and behaviours of parents, siblings, peers, relatives and other people towards the child will also affect the interaction pattern and thus influence the moulding of personality. A child who has learned to be aggressive at home will instigate relationships with people outside the home which are characterized by aggressive behaviour. By contrast, the child who comes from a home where aggression

is kept to a minimum will have friendly, cooperative interactions with outsiders.

**Relative Importance of Heredity and Environment**

The relative importance of heredity and environment in the moulding of personality pattern depends on at least three variables — the trait that is affected, the feature of the environment that is brought to bear on the developing trait and the scope and intensity of environmental forces. Some traits are relatively stable. They vary little, regardless of environmental influences. Others are unstable and easily influenced by environmental conditions. Even the same trait may in some people, be primarily the result of hereditary conditions, while in others, it is the product of environmental conditions. One person may be retiring and reclusive because of inborn qualities, while another may become so because of conflict with environment.

Thus, it is apparent that, in some traits, training outweighs the influence of heredity, while in others, the reverse is true. In general, however, the more directly a trait is bound to structural inheritance, the less it can be modified and changed by environmental influences.

The kind and intensity of environmental influences likewise affect the degree to which different traits will change. Whether the environmental influences are physiological, intellectual or emotional will determine how much they can change different traits. Structural characteristics are usually more stable than traits that are more functional in nature.

**Value of Knowing Relative Importance of Heredity and Environment**

Which plays a more important role in personality development, heredity or environment ? The question cannot be answered in one word. For certain aspects of personality pattern, heredity is more important and for others environment. Also, it is the point influence of the two that is crucial rather than their separate effects.

For practical as well as theoretical reasons it would be extremely useful to be able to determine which influence is the more powerful. One practical application of such knowledge which has been suggested by Jersild is "If children differ, by reason of their innate characteristics, in their tendency to be sensitive, to become hurt, to be yielding or to be defiant, to acquire attitudes of shame, to tolerate much or little pain and frustration, then we might assume that they differ in their innate tendencies to grow up as neurotic or healthy - minded individuals".

The relative importance of the two influences on personality can not be determined once and for all because they may reinforce one another in their effect or they may conflict. The influence of the environment depends not on the environment alone but also on the person's hereditary endowment.

## Moulding of Personality

The belief that personality pattern is moulded early in life is not new. In the early part of 20th century, Freud emphasized the importance of the early years of life in determining the form the personality pattern would take during adult life. His theory was based on evidence that many of his patients who suffered from

personality disturbances had unhappy childhood experiences. These unhappy experiences, Freud postulated, came from the frustration of some of their natural impulses.

Bartemeier has pointed out that unfavourable early experiences have a profound effect on personality because the personality pattern is less fully organized than it will be later. It may be noted that the damage from early experiences need not be permanent.

**Why Moulding Begins Early**

Moulding of personality pattern begins early in postnatal life because the capacity to learn develops early and is ready to function before the baby reaches her first birthday. What happens in the early years of life, what kind of people the growing child is associated with, what they expect of him and how they try to enforce their expectations – all influence the developing personality and determine what sort of a person she will grow up to be.

**How the Personality Pattern is Moulded**

The cultural group sets the pattern for the approved basic personality and expects every member of the group to conform to it. Personality is shaped and changed by the interactions with the culture in which the individual lives.

In the cultures where values are relatively static, the approved basic personality pattern likewise remains relatively static. Where values change frequently and radically, there will also be changes in the approved basic personality pattern. This, of course, does not mean changes in the total pattern but rather in certain aspects of it.

### Sources of Moulding

In the moulding of the personality, the attitudes, feelings and behaviour patterns of the young are shaped first in the home and later reinforced or changed in the school, the peer group, and the community at large.

The 'family', as the child's first social environment and as the social group with which she has the most frequent and closest contacts, is the most important source of personality moulding. Some other important sources are the home, school, teachers, peer group, media, religion, occupation, etc.

### Moulding Techniques

Two methods of learning are dominant in moulding the personality pattern to conform the culturally approved standards: first, learning through guidance and control of the behaviour by another, and second, learning through limitation of the beliefs, attitudes and behaviour patterns of another. The first is outer directed method of learning and is commonly referred to as 'child-training'. The second is self-initiated or inner-directed and is known as 'identification'.

It is impossible to say which plays the more important role in the moulding of personality pattern – child training or identification. The relative effectiveness of the two learning methods varies from one person to another and from one age to another. Furthermore, as has been pointed out, no two people react the same way.

## Conclusion

In this chapter we explained the determinants of personality. A brief idea has also been given regarding moulding of personality.

The development of personality depends upon a lot of factors. The factors of heredity, environment, learning and process of socialization are the important determinants of personality. Heredity of the genetic basis is a very important determinant of personality because the principal raw material of personality such as physique, intelligence and temperament are to a large extent dependent on the genetic endowment of a person. Environment is also a very important determinant of personality development. Physical environment, climate and terrain are important among the factors which affect one's personality development.

Learning plays a very important role in the development of personality. It is important for two reasons. First, it tells us that control can be exercised to ensure that the individual will develop the kind of personality pattern that may lead to good personal and social adjustment. Second it tells us that unhealthy and socially unacceptable patterns of adjustment can be changed and modified.

Socialization of an individual is very important for the development of personality. The agencies of socialization i.e. family, neighbourhood, peer group, school, religion, state and others helps individuals to develop healthy personality.

The question, which plays a more important role in personality development – heredity or environment has, to date, remained unanswered. There is evidence that heredity is more important is some areas of personality pattern while environment is more important in others. In reality the two jointly shape one's personality.

Studies show that personality moulding begins early in life and that the early years are critical ones –

once the foundations are laid, environmental influences become less important with each passing year.

Environmental sources of personality moulding include the family, school, peer group, mass media, religion and occupation. The relative importance of these moulding sources varies from one age group to another and from one person to another.

Two kinds of learning are responsible for personality moulding. The first is outer directed learning and is known as child training. The second is inner-directed and is called identification.

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# 21

# Different Stages of Human Development

* *Hannah Anandaraj*

## Introduction

Human development characteristically passes through different stages. These stages are orderly and sequentially linked with the preceding and succeeding stages. Features unique to each stage, change from stage to stage. They also vary from person to person thus making us unique in our own way. For some of us, these factors may move on smoothly while others may experience ups and downs. These factors and the way they are established in each person mark the foundation of the human personality. Let us familiarize ourselves with some important concepts which are used in analyzing the journey of life.

1) ***Growth:*** It refers to the increase in size, number of cells and it is quantitative improvement. It is not based on what the person or organism learns but only on maturation.

2) ***Maturation:*** It refers to those changes which primarily reveal on unfolding of genetically endowed physical capacities of the organism. Like a bud opens and blossoms into a flower, maturation brings out the full potential. It is not dependent on any special training or environment.

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3) ***Development:*** It can be defined as a progressive series of orderly, coherent changes leading towards the goal of maturity (Hurlock, 1964). It means qualitative changes which are directed towards maturation. Development is considered as a function of or a product of maturation and learning. Development follows an observable pattern which can be predicted. Researchers have identified two principles of development. They are:

***Cephalo-caudal principle:*** This states that development spreads over the body from head to foot. Changes in structure and function can first be observed in the head, then trunk and finally, the legs.

***Proximodistal principle:*** According to this principle, development proceeds from near to far, from the midpoint of the body to the extremities.

**Stages of development**

Very broadly the stages of development may be categorized in two main types:

A) Prenatal development

B) Postnatal development.

Prenatal development includes all the changes that take place in the womb of the mother. Therefore it is also called "intra-uterine development" where the uterus is the environment. Postnatal development on the other hand, refers to all the stages that follow after the birth till the very end of life.

## Prenatal Development

The development of a person begins much before his/ her birth and the stage of development before birth is

prenatal development stage. The sperm or spermatozoan from father unites with a cell called egg or ovum in the mother. The sperm enters into the layers of walls surrounding the egg and unites with it. This process is called **fertilization** or conception. As a result a single cell is produced which is called zygote and this is how life begins – as a single cell which cannot even be seen with eyes takes up the journey of development finally to become a complete person! Don't you think it is wonderfully intricate and a beautiful marvel of creation?

Prenatal development covers the period from fertilization to birth. It comprises three stages:

1) The period of the zygote: from fertilization to end of two weeks.

2) Period of the embryo: 2 weeks to 2 lunar months.

3) Period of the fetus: end of 2 months till birth.

i) ***The period of zygote:*** It continues to move down the ovarian tube or oviduct to the uterus. For 4-5 days it floats freely in the uterine cavity. Around the $10^{th}$ day after fertilization the zygote digs into the wall of the uterus and attaches itself firmly, a process called implantation. The wall of the uterus envelops it. Rapid mitotic cell division takes place and the single cell zygote after repeated divisions resembles a ball with two layers of cells.

ii) ***The period of the embryo:*** It extends from 2 weeks to 2 months. During this time the embryo is like a miniature human being. Cell differentiation takes place, that is, from one cell, different types of cells arise. External features such as head, face, hands, fingers, legs can be clearly seen and interior organs such as heart

lungs and brain are formed. The embryo turns within the uterus and the heart beat can be heard. The first twelve weeks are very crucial because, it is during this period, the important organs are formed.

iii) ***The third stage is the period of the fetus:*** It extends from the beginning of the third month till birth. The body proportions increase as growth continues. Activity of the fetus can be felt. All the internal organs are formed and by 5$^{th}$ month they assume actual proportions. Between 2-4$^{th}$ month the nervous system develops. On completion of 9 months or 270 days, the fetus is ready for birth.

***Influences during Prenatal stage:*** There are several factors which affect the development during the prenatal stage. These factors are collectively called as teratogens.

1) ***Maternal Nutrition:*** In order to grow, the fetus needs nutrients which in turn come from the mother. Mother's dietary intake must be balanced. Care must be given to include vitamins and minerals (such as calcium, phosphate, iron) water, proteins, fats and not carbohydrates alone. Vegetables, green leaves, seasonal fruits, pulses and cereals in addition to milk, eggs and meat or fish provide a diet adequate for the baby and the mother.

2) ***Maternal age:*** Between the ages of 21 to 29 years is the ideal age of the mother to have children. Below this bracket the mother is too immature physiologically and psychologically with a high risk of infant death. Beyond 30, risk of incidence of mental retardation and other genetic abnormalities is very high.

3) ***Rest and exercise of the mother:*** These are essential specially during pregnancy. When the mother is tired and over worked the fetal activity increases and beyond limits it can cause still birth or irritability of the child. At the same time mother must have adequate exercise.

4) ***Rh blood group:*** Majority of us are Rh+ while some have Rh- blood group. If the mother is Rh- and the fetus is Rh+ then it is an incompatible condition. The mother must be aware of it and at the time of delivery, if precautions are not adequate then complication such as jaundice can occur and may result in infant death.

5) ***Addictions:*** If the mother is addicted to alcohol, cigarettes or drugs the waste material is passed onto the fetus. Risk of irritability, low birth weight or prematurity, even still birth or child being born with addictions are very high.

6) ***Maternal diseases:*** The diseases of the mother can significantly affect the fetus. Specially during the initial critical times during pregnancy. German measles or Rubella can cause deafness, mental retardation or even heart trouble. AIDS, Syphilis or other sexually transmitted diseases can cause miscarriage.

7) ***Maternal stress:*** When the mother has emotional problems, tensions and anxieties, blood supply to the fetus is not adequate, but is diverted. Therefore growth is hindered. This also can result in prematurity, still birth or the child being irritable.

Prenatal development comes to an end with the onset of the birth process. Birth can be normal and spontaneous or assisted. The fetus may suffer

difficulties and complication, specially lack of oxygen or anoxia. In case of complication assistance is required as in assisted birth such as instrumental birth or caesarian section. In such assisted birth care must be ensured for the health of the new born.

## Infancy

The steady prenatal development faces an end and a shock at the time of birth. The fetus is now in a drastically different environment and further development depends on how well he/she can adjust. Normal new born lets out a lusty cry which signals that the newborn now breaths on its own. The lungs that have been inactive get filled and that makes the baby cry. However, if there is any delay in the birth cry, it means that the baby is not breathing. This delay can affect the oxygen supply to the brain and if not restarted, the child may be retarded or even die. The weight of the new born must be noted. Average birth weight is around 2.5 kg below which, it is called low birth weight. Consequently the newborn has to struggle much more to reach normalcy and face life.

During this stage, adjusting to the new non-uterine environment becomes the major goal or focus in the life of the neonate. Adjusting to room temperature, breathing independently, sucking and swallowing the milk, elimination of body waste are prime areas that the new born needs to master. The newborn goes through a wake-sleep cycle. It consists of wakefulness and activity for about 50 to 60 minutes followed by sleep for three to four hours.

### Characteristics of Infancy

Infancy is the shortest of all developmental stages. Since the environment changes are drastic, the infant

needs to make radical adjustment. There is a slight weight loss during infancy which is also considered as a plateau in development or stagnation. Infants' adjustment is also an indication or a preview to future development. There are several hazards or dangers facing the infant. These hazards are physical and psychological in nature. Getting adjusted to the new environmental conditions such as respiratory, digestive and vascular functions themselves become a threat for the infant.

## Babyhood

Babyhood is the stage that follows infancy and extends between two weeks to two years. The characteristics of babyhood are as follows.

1) Development during babyhood is the foundation for the development during the entire life span.

2) During babyhood rapid physical and intellectual development takes place as evidenced by increase in height, weight and body proportions.

3) Increased independence and individuality mark babyhood.

4) Socialisation begins during babyhood as the baby shows increasing desire to be a part of the social group of the family and extend the basic relationship with the mother or mother substitute to others as well.

5) Sex-role typing begins during babyhood. Boys and girls are dressed sex appropriately and are treated in subtly different ways. Culturally relevant sex-appropriate clothes, games, behaviour or even interactions are gradually brought in.

6) There are hazards faced by a baby which may be physical or psychological. Physical hazards such as in illness, accidents and psychological hazards can interfere with positive development of the baby.

During babyhood, the baby is expected to learn to walk by two years, to take solid foods, to gain partial control over elimination, learn the foundation of receptive and expressive speech and to emotionally relate to parents and others.

***Physical Development:*** Rapid growth takes place during babyhood. Height and weight increase. The birth weight is doubled by four months and tripled by one year. On an average the height of the baby at four months is 23 to 24 inches and at one year 28 to 30 inches and by two years 32 to 34 inches. Social smile which is a response to recognizing a face is the first clear milestone which happens around 2 months. Also, the baby can roll over from side to back at 2 months and from back to side at 4 months. At 6 months, it can roll over completely. The baby begins to pull the body to a sitting positions and sits up without support around 8 months. Hands and palm scoop up an object which is called palmers scoop, around 5 months. Around 9 months it can use the fingers in a pincer-grip to pick up even fine objects.

The baby hitches or moves in a sitting position around six months, crawls and creeps around 8 months. Walks on all fours, pulls up and stands by 10 months. He/she learns to stand with support by 11 months and without support, for longer time around a year. Also he/she learns to walk with support initially and without support around 14 months. These milestones, which indicate movement, are also called as motor development. The motor skills of babyhood are not

integrated initially but when they are integrated later, they are of importance to the baby and it's developing personality.

***Speech Development:*** As the baby develops, the important bridge into the world of other is also developed in the form of speech which aids communication. It has two aspects : receptive speech to understand what others are communicating and expressive speech to make oneself understood. The baby begins to babble or produces several sounds. Then she moves on to the stage of monosyllables (eg: Ma,Ma,Da,Da.Na,Na etc.) which gives way to two-syllables stage. Before two years, the baby speaks with words made of two syllables formed in a sentence which typically has no grammar.

***Emotional and Social Development:*** Babyhood emotions such as joy, affection, curiosity, fear and anger are often expressed explosively and are out of proportion to the stimuli. They are also short lived. These emotions get conditioned or established much more in later years.

Beginning with a social smile babies learn to respond to the social environment and are the foundations of the social skills valued greatly in later years.

***Play Development:*** Play activities may be classified on the basis of the content of play, what the child does. In terms of content, the play activity may be sense pleasure play, skill play, dramatic play, ritual and competitive games. The second classification of play is in terms of the social character of play that is, who is the child playing with and the nature of their relationship. Under this play with adult, solitary play, parallel play, associative play and cooperative play are the different types.

***Personality Development:*** The personality of the individual already begins to take shape. The core of the personality, namely the self concept is formed. Other personality traits are strengthened or weakened depending on interaction with environment which are called as quantitative changes. The roots of these can be observed during babyhood.

***Hazards in Babyhood:*** There are several hazards the baby needs to overcome. Physical hazards range from mortality as in cot or crib death, due to various illnesses, accidents or malnutrition.

Psychological hazards include delay in motor or speech development and their subsequent disadvantages. Delay in development hinders social relation and in turn becomes a threat to emotional development.

Social hazards are lack of opportunities and experiences to learn to become social. Hazards in personality development result because self concept is largely a mirror image of what babies believe significant people in their lives think of them. Unfavourable attitudes reflected in resentfulness, negativism or withdrawal behaviour from parents and others, therefore, can cause damages to the developing personality.

## Early Childhood

Childhood extends from 2 to 12 years and is generally divided as early and late childhood. Early childhood can be taken to range from the completion of 2 years to 6 years. In this section, the skills acquired by the child, speech development and play development, personality development are outlined. Further the hazards during early childhood in various developmental areas are discussed. Happiness during

childhood is derived from parental acceptance and ways of extending acceptance are presented.

Early childhood is also called as preschool stage. The young child is eager to gain control over knowledge about the environment. He/she tries to explore the environment, hence this stage is called the exploratory stage. Every object or situation holds such wonder for the young child that he/she is full of questions about what, why and how—giving rise to the name 'questioning age'. They tend to imitate others usually the adults around them. Thus this age is called the 'imitative age'. Their play activity includes a great deal of creativity and imagination, so this stage also earns the additional name 'creative age'.

**Physical Development**

Compared to the rapid physical development in babyhood, there is a slow down. Body proportions are evened out and the head heavy look is lost. Weight gain of about 2 Kg per year and an additional 3 inches of height are gained on an average. Milk teeth are lost and the chubbiness of babyhood is replaced by a gaunt look. Because of all these developments the child looks rather unattractive.

**Skills of Early Childhood**

The young children learn and master a variety of skills because their immense curiosity gets them to manipulate and learn; they feel no inhibition or fear of ridicule as older children would; in addition, their bodies are pliable and fingers dexterous and they are 'teachable'– an essential quality for learning skills. Depending on the environmental opportunities and the family background children learn a variety of skills.

The hand skills of self feeding and dressing become perfect during childhood. Bathing, dressing, combing hair or even finer motor skills required for tying shoe laces are all learnt. Catching and throwing a ball, use of scissors, painting, colouring, use of crayons, drawing all become a part of early childhood years.

With the foundational skill of walking firmly established, young children move onto additional skills. Hopping, skipping, jumping, running, climbing up and down the stairs show the progress made by the child. Cycling, swimming, skating, walking on walls are all activities enjoyed greatly by children at this stage. Handedness is established and the child now shows a clear left or right hand preference by the end of early childhood.

**Speech Development**

Both receptive and expressive communication improve as babbling of babyhood and crying are largely reduced. Normal speech development gains significant strides where they learn proper pronunciation, making of sentences (even though with poor grammar) and building of vocabulary. Also the content of speech takes a turn. From talking about self, self interests and self needs the child moves on to socialized speech around six years wherein others and their concerns are spoken of.

**Emotional Development**

Emotions during early childhood are intense with frequent emotional outbursts. These are associated with temper tantrums, intense fears or jealousies and can be traced to the cause of long and tiring play and too little food intake.

**Play**

The beginning of early childhood finds children playing extensively with toys but slowly they grow out of it towards the completion of this stage. The number of toys or play equipment, the opportunities for manipulation, well developed motor skills, creativity, higher IQ—all these factors or their lack influence the pattern of playing. Play includes a great deal of imitation and dramatizing. For example, young children behave like mothers, teachers and others. The imaginative play often merges reality and fantasy and is enjoyed by young children.

**Relationship with Significant Others**

***Parental relationship:*** Children experience it with their father and mother or parent-substitute. Poor relationships lead to devastating effects since young children depend on parents to a great extent. Besides the security of the child is centered around the parents. Therefore, poor relationship with parents, or their absence or death can severely traumatize the young child and affect the developing personality.

***Sibling relationship:*** The child progressively moves on to independence and is no longer the 'baby'. Siblings often start frictions when a young child wants his/her way. This is called sibling rivalry. However, siblings may also enjoy a good relationship. Specially when the older children serve as role models for the young children to learn socially approved and sex appropriate behaviour through imitation.

**Personality Development**

Shaping of the self concept which is the core of personality takes place within the family. Because the social world of the child is the parents, siblings

and relatives who stay with the child and what they feel about the child is mirrored and the child accepts that as the self. Peer members too have an effect on the self concept which stems from their attitude towards the child which may reinforce and establish or contradict and damage the influence the family has on the child.

**Hazards of Early Childhood**

Unlike earlier stages, physical hazards such as illness, accidents or awkwardness have physical as well as psychological repercussions. Mortality rate reduces steeply as compared to earlier phases. Young children are highly susceptible to infections and illnesses. With improved health care facilities generally illnesses are taken care of. Accidents of everyday such as cuts, bruises, falls or burns are common and are more common among boys than girls. Serious or prolonged illness restricts the child and deprives him/her of opportunities and hence affects him/her psychologically by affecting adjustments made by the child.

A preschooler who frequently experiences negative or unpleasant emotions such as anger with few pleasant emotions, faces major emotional hazards of developing a negative disposition. Early in childhood children must learn to establish an emotional linkage between themselves and significant others in their environment called as 'empathic complex'. Failure to establish empathic complex becomes yet another emotional hazard. Children need to establish a warm and stable relationship with the mother, which is then extended to other relationships.

There are also several situations, which threaten the degree of social adjustment of the child. Such situation arise from:

a) Speech or behaviour of the child, if unpopular, then he/she is isolated and lacks the opportunity to learn in the peer group situation.

b) Children placed under strong pressure to play in a sex appropriate way may over do and become rejected.

c) Young children, who face unpleasant social situations because of their age, sex or race, shun all social relations in order to protect themselves.

d) Those children who play extensively with imaginary playmates or pets, tend to be dominating. This may result in social maladjustment.

e) Children who have too many playmates all the time, do not learn how to handle the situation when they are alone and hence become lonely.

**Moral Development**

Around early childhood the young ones learn approved and unapproved behaviour. They must be trained appropriately thus aiding moral development. It is based on:

1) Parents who teach children right from wrong must be consistent, otherwise the child gets confused.

2) A mistake must not be appreciated, approved or smiled upon – it reinforces learning of wrong behaviour.

3) Too much punishment wrecks havoc with the child. Praise, awards and rewards for good behaviour and rare and consistent punishment develop moral fiber.

4) The system must not be authoritarian but based on love and acceptance of the child.

Parents who teach the children right from wrong must be consistent. Children get confused when adults teach them that what was wrong yesterday is considered right today, and hence over looked. Inconsistency between two adults also confuse children. If the mistake of the child is punished by parents but approved and appreciated by others, specially peers, then the child has a positive attitude towards wrong behaviour. Often delinquency arises out of such behaviour. Therefore not only the mistake, but also the attitude towards it needs to be checked.

**Happiness**

A child who is happy develops to be a well adjusted person. To a great extent, parents must take responsibility for accepting the child, a key factor in happiness. They need to ensure that acceptance is perceived by the child. It is done through the following ways:

1) Parents must accept the child, regardless of the looks, timing of birth, sex, or his/her strengths and weaknesses. They must warmly welcome the child in their midst and make him/her feel wanted.

2) Parents must provide the basic needs of the child. Proper food and nutrition helps the child to feel accepted and wanted. Keeping him/her clean and away from dangers such as electric shock, fire, accidents etc by providing a safe environment translate as acceptance in the mind of a young child.

3) Parents must take time out and spend with the child. Involving in the child's activities and enhancing the opportunities provided to grow and

develop are important ways of extending acceptance to the child.

4) Parents must talk to the child making eye contact. When talked to, the child not only learns the language but feels psychologically secure and accepted.

5) Encouragement, specially when the child is fast picking up motor and speech skills makes the child feel happy and accepted.

6) Age appropriate, interest based responsibilities must be shared with the child. A child's help when taken to water a plant or clean the house; the child gains acceptance and feels part of the social group of family.

7) Demonstrating affection by a hug or a kiss or picking up the child in addition to feeling accepted, helps the child to feel connected.

8) Parents must take time to teach the child right from wrong, acceptable from unacceptable behaviour. This entire process is called disciplining the child. In order to discipline, parents must explain and show the correct behaviour. Also they must be consistent – between themselves and between two points of time. Frequent punishment would take away the effect and desensitize the child. This should only be a last resort.

Punishment should always be proportionate to the mistake and must be just. The child must know why he/she is being punished.

## Late Childhood

The period of late childhood ranges from 6 years to the attainment of sexual maturity, around 12-13 years. During this stage children develop marked negativism and because of their desire for independence seldom obey the parents. The child begins going to school and learns the rudiments of knowledge essential for successful adult life. The peer group assumes great significance and children of this age 'crowd together or 'gang up', thus earning the name 'gang age'.

### Developmental Tasks

The peer members accepting the older child is an important aspect. Within the peer relationship the older child learns several social skills, which as developmental tasks, provide happiness when successful or frustration if failed.

The older child's accomplishments during this stage include the followings.

- Learns to get along with age mates.
- Develops the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic.
- Develops concepts necessary for everyday living.
- Develops a conscience, a sense of morality and values.
- Develops attitude towards social groups and institutions.
- Learns physical skills necessary for ordinary games.
- Begins to develop appropriate masculine or feminine social roles.

**Physical Development**

There is relatively uniform but slow physical development. The weight gain is almost even throughout late childhood and the child gains 2-3 inches every year. Body proportions are more elongated with long arms and legs giving an awkward appearance. Face also becomes angular with the loss of fat. Teeth that begin to fall during the sixth year are all replaced with permanent teeth except for the wisdom teeth.

**Skills of Late Childhood**

Children develop a numbers of skills during this stage. These skills also differ from boys to girls.

- Self help skills of eating, dressing, bathing grooming become almost as adept as that of an adult, with very little concentration required.
- Social skills include helping others. Cleaning and helping in daily activities at home and helping teacher at school, sharing responsibilities with age mates at play are important achievements of the child.
- School skills of writing, reading, drawing, painting, clay modeling, crayoning become more proficient.
- Play skills such as throwing and catching the ball, bicycling, skating and swimming are developed. Fine motor skills of painting and needlework are well developed among girls while boys achieve gross motor skills of throwing a ball, kicking football or jumping.

**Speech Improvement**

Older children are increasingly aware of speech as a tool for being accepted by their peer group members.

Therefore speech is consciously improved from immature, unacceptable ways of communication such as crying and gesturing which are avoided. Proper pronunciation and grammar are learnt. Children take interest in telling jokes or narrating events or riddles. Parents and teachers also contribute to speech improvement by encouraging them. Radio and television serve as models for speech. There is marked improvement in vocabulary as names of colours, numbers, money concepts, time concepts are included. Secret codes used by the gang often become part of older child's communication pattern.

**Emotions During Late Childhood**

Older children learn to control emotional outbursts as these are looked down upon by peer members, as immature and inappropriate behaviour. Happy and pleasant expressions on the other hand are expressed freely as seen in laughing, giggling or jumping. While the child tends to curtail expressions of negative emotions, he/she may show moodiness or resort to sulking. In expressing emotions, sex appropriateness can be noticed. Boys tend to show anger or curiosity while girls experience fears, worries and feelings of affection.

**Social Development**

The older child shows strong desire to be an accepted member of the peer group. Staying at home or playing with siblings are disliked by them. The gangs are not delinquent groups but play groups. Their main activity is to play games, sports or simply chatting. The gangs are also strictly segregated, that is, members of a gang often come from the same sex. Those who are accepted by the gang members gain social status and feel self confident while the opposite is true of those who are rejected.

### *Play activities*

Play for the older child is not a mere amusement, it is the chief instrument of socializing which provides opportunities for social skills. Various games, sports or activities such as collecting items (shells, stamps and pictures) are enjoyed. While these activities may be used, acceptance and popularity are the social goals of play.

### *Improvement of understanding*

The older child is now in a stage where concepts become specific and concrete. They reflect a stage of cognitive development termed as 'concrete operations'. The school plays an important role in building, improving and clarifying concepts. The child begins to understand social dimensions in concepts – types of groups, differences, similarities etc are perceived by the child.

### Moral Behaviour

The code of conduct and morality learnt at home is now extended to the social group. The child makes a conscious choice to be part of the peer group. Moral code is developed on the basis of general rather than specific situations. Discipline also helps in this process. Use of rewards, punishment and consistent application of rules enable the child to develop moral behaviour.

### Personality Development

The older child enters the school and the social horizon is broadened beyond family members. Now the child views himself/herself not only through the eyes of parents but also teachers, classmates and peers .Thus the child's self concept, mirrored by people around is revised: child's personality traits also undergo changes.

### Hazards in Late Childhood

The child is susceptible to many physical and psychological hazards. They include illness and accidents which are the physical hazards encountered by older children. Improved medicare takes care of several illnesses but accidents are a major cause of death among older children. Children who experience lack of peer acceptance are dissatisfied leading to personality maladjustments in later life.

### Happiness in Late Childhood

The older child experiences happiness from several sources. Play time is eagerly awaited. But for occasional difficulties, if the home atmosphere is relaxed, then the child loves the family and derives satisfaction from them, an added source of happiness. Social acceptance becomes a major factor in establishing happiness in late childhood.

## Adolescence

Adolescence literally means 'to grow to maturity'. It is an intermediary stage between childhood and adulthood characteristically possessing qualities of both stages, although not fully in either of them. The age range is from 12-19 years. It is the threshold to adulthood. There are rapid physical changes taking place including sexual maturity which is attained during adolescence. Consequently there are also psychological and social changes. Adolescence is a crucial stage for the person. In addition, it usually encounters problems of different kinds. Adolescents are very sensitive. This must be understood and handled with utmost responsibility. The developmental tasks for adolescents are as follows.

- Coming to terms with ones own body and accepting the changes.
- Achieving new and more mature relations with age mates of both sexes.
- Selecting and training for a career.
- Desiring, accepting and achieving socially responsible behaviour.
- Achieving emotional and economic independence.
- Gaining self identity.

**Physical Changes**

The most important change that takes place during adolescence is sexual maturity which occurs at *puberty*. The body prepares for it for about two years (prepubescence or prepuberty) followed by adjusting and becoming fully functional over another two years (post pubescence/post puberty). Changes in height, weight are rapid referred to as 'growth spurt'. Puberty marks 'menarche' or beginning of the menstrual cycle among the girls and nocturnal emissions among the boys. The changes during puberty are both internal and external. Internally the endocrine system produces hormones which trigger the reproductive cycle. Chief among them are Estrogen and Progesterone among females and Androgens and Testosterone among males. External changes include secondary sexual characteristics such as facial hair (growth of beard and moustache) among the males and development of breasts among the females. Consequently, the body form assumes the adult figure and voice changes are accompanied.

**Emotionality and Social Behaviour**

Stanley Hall had termed adolescence as the stage full of 'storm and stress'. The hormones, the growth spurt and the reproductive maturity all these are not merely physical for they also have an emotional impact. The emotional pattern of the adolescent is called 'heightened emotionality' wherein the person is irritable, moody, irrational or feels intensely. However, maturity sets in as adolescence makes way for adulthood and the person learns to adjust appropriately.

The peer group influence increases. The adolescent begins to notice and take interest in the opposite sex. Making friends and adjusting to new social situations in school, search for career are learnt during this time. Great deal of interest is shown in personal grooming, looks and clothes. Adolescents also ponder over several philosophical issues and try to find an answer to questions such as "Who am I? What is the purpose of life?", The search for identity when it takes a meaningful turn, enables the adolescent to adjust well and in contrast, in identity, crisis leads to confusion and diffidence in future.

**Moral Development**

By adolescence, the mechanism of moral code should be developed. Morality must be rooted in internal control and not external agencies such as fear, punishment and social consequences. While these factors deter the adolescent he/she learns to decide on his/her own.

**Hazards in Adolescence**

While illness rates may be low, accidents and conflicts leading to suicide are high. Psychological hazards

arise out of inability to make the transition into maturity. Social disapproval is still a major source of hazard specially with the opposite sex.

**Happiness**

Adolescents are happy based on their social and family adjustments. Choosing and training for a career contributes to a happy state of mind. If the career aspirations are realistic and achievable, then the adolescents have reasons to be well adjusted and happy.

## Adulthood

Adulthood is the stage where growth is complete and the person assumes various responsibilities. Starting around 18 years, it extends till middle age which is around 45 years. The developmental tasks for this stage of life are as follows:

Like all earlier stages adult too has certain developmental tasks, except they are referred to as 'Vital roles". All of us occupy a 'status', a position, socially recognized and regularized. For example, the status of being a son, an officer or/and a captain. According to the status one occupies, one needs to perform certain duties or fulfil certain responsibilities, which are termed as 'roles'. A role is the dynamic side of the status. Taking the example further, the son takes care of the parents or the captain leads the team. The roles of the adult are so important that they are called as vital roles and each adult performs these roles. These roles include the role of a worker, a spouse and a parent.

**Role of Worker**

Having selected and trained for a career during adolescence, the adult takes up the important task of

getting a job and settling in it. As one settles, one experiences job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Proportionate to the job satisfaction (also called as vocational adjustment) one will find adjustment in life. The vocational adjustment depends on the following factors.

- Reasons why the job was selected
- Preparation for working
- Training and qualification
- Experience and expertise, skill in performance
- Personal interest
- Willingness to learn and adjust 'the attitude'
- Money

If these factors are more or less balanced, then the adult is vocationally adjusted. Not only for the person, but also for the family, adjustment is required. For example if he is a travelling executive away on long tours, the family must find a way of adjusting to the circumstances. It is found that one who balances the financial demands, is often well adjusted as an adult.

**Marriage Partner**

Taking up the responsibility of a spouse and fulfilling this role greatly contributes to a person's life, happiness and adjustment. Marital adjustment depends mainly on the following factors:

- Age at marriage
- Type of marriage—arranged or love marriage
- Courtship or prior knowledge about the partner

- Similarities/differences in backgrounds
- Sharing of interests
- Willingness to make the marriage work and having a positive attitude

Marriages are made in heaven says the proverb. But the couple must work at keeping it healthy on earth! Success in marriage must be achieved in several aspects or areas. Basically both partners need to be satisfied in marriage. Marital faithfulness and trust establishes the foundation in marriage. Communication between the partners is a key area. Further, a loving respect for each other and mutual desire for harmony between husband and wife become crucial. Besides, the couple need to adapt to each other's interests, work demands and personality. Another area is sexual satisfaction. Handling of money, spending and saving, if not done in a mature manner can cause havoc in marriage. Adjustment in these areas can truly make marriage a source of happiness.

**Parental Role**

As the family grows and children are added, one must realize that it involves great responsibility. Adjustment to parenthood depends on several factors including the desire for children, number of children, time when they are born, sex of children, spacing between children, ability to support them, child rearing practices used by parents, acceptance of children.

Children can contribute greatly to the emotional well being of parents if brought up with loving care provided with overall acceptance. The parental role must be played with commitment and creativity. Adjustment to parenthood may become elusive if children are rebellious, sick or uncaring. Those who are childless

by choice, although enjoy greater freedom, forfeit the joys of child's affection and companionship.

## Middle Age

Middle age is an intermediary stage between adulthood and old age. Beginning around 45 years it ends when old age begins. It is a period of transition from adulthood to old age. It is characterized by achievements, professional and otherwise. It is a time when life is evaluated by introspection. It is called Empty nest period, as children leave home. Many observers view it as a time of stress, often termed as 'Middle age' crises.

The developmental tasks of the middle aged adult are centered around success in career, adjusting well in marriage and finding satisfaction in children. At work the person attains great achievements and experiences a climax. Depending on the foundations, the marriage may be shaken up or strengthened. The relationship with children assumes a new dimension as they too start early adult life.

### Physical Changes

With active reproductive stage behind them, men and women undergo the experience of a physical decline. Women go through menopause, the end of menstural cycle. As a result, she cannot have children any more. With the decline in hormones leading to *menopause* in women several other features appear. Weight gain around the abdomen, joint pains, changes in appearance with grey hairs and sagging muscles, problems with teeth and vision, slow down the pace of life. Men too experience reduced sexual drive and motivation, hence they may question their own virility. As the youthfulness begins to fade away refocusing

the relationship between husband and wife become essential.

**Emotional Changes**

The drastic physical changes brought in by reduced hormones, lead to emotional ups and downs. Periods of moodiness, loneliness or blues affect the middle age adult. The feelings of reduced function, unattractiveness and the like cause negative feelings and stress which if left uncared for, can escalate to full blown crisis situation. Emotional stability can be achieved in meaningful work, interests and relationships. Frequently people turn to religion and God for peace, strength and meaning.

**Social Changes**

During middle age social activities and responsibilities assume increased significance. Children and their families are a source of satisfaction. Friends and peer group members are very important in helping one realize he/she is not alone.

Happiness comes from accepting the journey of life with its many twists and turns. Developing and experiencing career goals and achieving them, renewed family intimacy and social contributions provide added value to the person.

## Old Age

While it is true that a person can feel and behave very old age 45, another one at age 85 may lead an active life enjoying good health. Old age, often referred to as the evening of life, begins around 65 years. The old person is called as senior citizen. Old age is a period of decline in physical strength and social participation. It is not welcomed unlike other phases

of life. The adjustment of older people is often poor. The problems of old age stem from disability, diseases, dependence and death.

**Physical Changes**

As strength declines , the various organs and organ systems slow down. Diabetes, heart conditions, osteoporosis and such diseases are common during old age. Disabilities in walking, seeing, hearing etc restrict the person in several ways. These disabilities make the person dependent on others.

**Psychological Changes**

An old person is often isolated. The disease and disabilities produce a strong feeling of inadequacy and the dependence makes the person feel worse. They are given to depression and moodiness. Death of the spouse plunges the person into despair making him/her feel totally at a loss. Memory fails the old person which creates further problems. Fear of death can be a dominant emotion. Worries about whether he/she would be invalid, a burden to others is very common.

**Social Changes**

Older people retire often from work. Their busy life suddenly comes to a halt. Re-employment possibilities may not be bright enough. Thus, the old person finds too much time at hand, with too little work and reduced mobility very frustrating. Redirecting and remodeling the entire life style with meaningful activities become necessary. The peer group members are no longer accessible due to various reasons. The social status of a widow or widower is not a pleasant one either. Dependent on others for even small things,

mobility, money and moorings, the social life of the old person shrinks drastically.

As an individual he/she needs to take personal responsibility for self that is a milestone. The developmental tasks become the individual life and existence, rather than the others in the social circle.

Happiness in old age is centered around children and their welfare. Simple events and memories, shared love and concern, provide feelings of satisfaction to the old person.

## Conclusion

In this chapter we have outlined the stages of human development, prenatal stage, infancy, babyhood, early and late childhood, adolescence, adulthood, middle age and old age. In each stage we have examined the characteristics, the milestones, the physical and psychosocial development. Sources of happiness are also mentioned.

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# 22

# Theories of Personality

* *D.P. Singh*

## Introduction

As mentioned earlier, the present chapter will briefly describe only a few of the theories of personality which are relevant to the practice of professional social work. After having gone through the preceding units, you must have realized by now that the term personality has many meanings. It is a reasonably distinct sub field of psychology that comprises theory, research and assessment about personality. However, even within psychology there is disagreement about the meaning of the term. In fact, there are as many different meanings of the term personality as there are psychologists who have tried to define it.

In this chapter, we would try to gain understanding of the views offered by Carl Rogers who looks at personality in terms of self – an organized, permanent, subjectively perceived entity, which is at the very heart of all our experiences.

We would also study Erik Erikson who is of the view that life proceeds in terms of a series of psycho social crises, which he termed as developmental milestones or stages. A person's personality is a function of the outcome of the way such crises are resolved.

Abraham Maslow's humanistic theory would also be touched upon, which explains human behaviour in

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terms of individual's tendency to seek personal goals. In this system, as one's desire is satisfied, another surfaces to take its place. When a person satisfies this one, still another clamours for satisfaction.

B.F. Skinner is yet another prolific psychologist who has provided the foundation for a science of behaviour based on the premise that nearly all our behaviour is directly governed by environmental contingencies of reinforcement. That is, much of our behaviour is either learned or modified by the process of learning.

But none the less, the most fundamental conception of human personality has been that of Sigmund Freud. He is considered as the father of psychoanalytic thought. He described the structure of personality as composed of three elements the id, ego and super ego. You would study his theory in detail in another unit.

## Erik Erikson: A Psychosocial Theory of Personality

In order to understand how Erik Erikson has worked to elaborate and extend the structure of psycho-analysis and how he has reformulated its principles for understanding the modern world, one has to first understand the concept of psychoanalysis as given by Sigmund Freud. It is because Erikson himself, persistently maintained that his contributions to the understanding of human development are nothing more than a systematic extension of Freud's conception of psychosexual development.

Erikson actually has attempted to bridge the gap between Freudian theory of psycho sexual development and present day knowledge about the role of social factors in personality development.

Though he is committed to the biological and sexual foundations of personality like Freud, yet he expanded or socialized Freud's schedule of development by introducing eight stages of development. He emphasizes the importance of interaction between biological and social factors in the development of personality. The stages are shown in Fig.-1.

Let us now learn about Erikson's theoretical formulations by considering the various stages in human life.

1) **Infancy: Basic Trust Versus Mistrust-Hope**

The first psychosocial stage in the Eriksonian scheme corresponds to Freud's Oral stage and it extends through approximately the first year of life. The earliest basic trust is established during this stage and it is demonstrated by the infant in the capacity to sleep peacefully, to take nourishment comfortably and to excrete relaxfully. Each day as his wakeful hours increase, the infant becomes more familiar with sensual experiences. Situations of comfort and people responsible for these comforts become familiar and identifiable to him.

Through the continuity, consistency and sameness of these experiences with others, the infant learns to rely on them and to trust them. Simultaneously, if the parents display a divergent pattern of these experiences, may be in the ways of caring for the infant or in their role as the parents or demonstrate a conflicting value system, it creates an atmosphere of ambiguity for the infant, resulting in feelings of mistrust.

*Hope* is the first psychosocial strength or virtue, which is gained by the infant from successful resolution of

the Trust-verses-Mistrust conflict, during this stage.

2) **Early Childhood: Autonomy Versus Shame and Doubt**

This period coincides with Freud's Anal stage and roughly spans the second and third years of life. During this stage, the child learns what is expected of her, what the child's obligations and privileges are and what limitations are placed upon her. The child's striving for new and activity-oriented experiences places a demand for self-control as well as a demand for the acceptance of control from others. A sense of self-control provides the child with a lasting feeling of autonomy, good will and pride ; however, a sense of loss of self control can cause a lasting feeling of shame and doubt in him.

The virtue of *will* emerges during this stage. Will is the ever-increasing psychosocial strength to make free-choices, to decide and to exercise self-restraint. The child learns from itself and from others what is expected and what is not. Will is responsible for the child's gradual acceptance of lawfulness and necessity.

3) **Play Age: Initiative Versus Guilt**

This period corresponds to Freud's Phallic stage extending roughly from age four to entry into formal school. This is when the child's social world challenges her to be active, to master new skills, and to win approval by being productive. This is the age when child's facility for language and motor skills make possible associations with the peers and older children and thus allow participation in a variety of social games. During this stage a child begins to feel that he or she is counted as a person and that life has a purpose for him. It is an age of initiative, an age of

expanding mastery and responsibility. Autonomy combines with initiative to give the child a quality of pursuing, planning and determination of achieving tasks and goals. However, a feeling of guilt may haunt him if his goals and tasks are not accomplished.

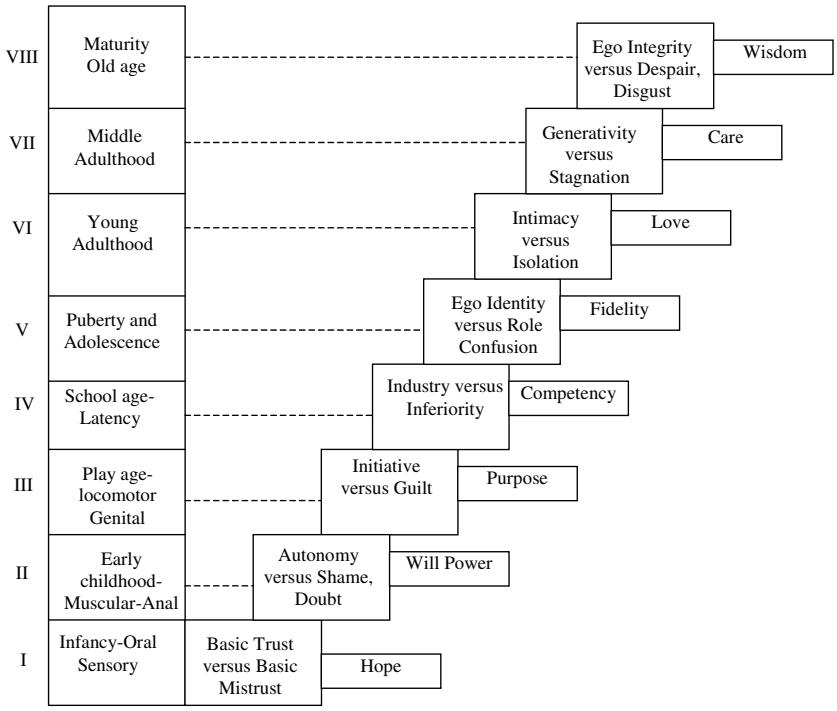


**Fig. :** Erikson's chart of the eight stages of psychosocial development. *(Adapted from Childhood and Society, by Erik H. Erikson, 1963 a.p. 273)*

*Purpose* is the virtue or the main psychosocial strength that emerges during this stage. The child's major activity during this stage is playing. The virtue of purpose results from play, explorations, attempts, failures, and experimentation with toys. The child learns what the purpose of things and begins to

understand, the connection between the inner and outer world. Thus an imaginative and uninhibited play is vital for the child's development.

4) **School Age: Industry Versus Inferiority**

This period corresponds to the Latency Period in Freudian theory and extends from about 6 to 11 years of age. Here for the first time the child is expected to learn the rudimentary skills of culture like reading, writing, cooperating with others etc. via formal education. This period is associated with the child's increased power of reasoning and self discipline, as well as the ability to relate to peers according to prescribed rules. During this period, the child develops a sense of industry when it begins to understand the technology of his culture through attending school. That is to say that his work includes many and varied forms such as attending school, doing chores at home, assuming responsibility, studying music, learning manual skills as well as participating in skillful games and sports. The hazard of this stage is that the child may develop a sense of inferiority or incompetence if she is unable to master the tasks that are undertaken or that are set for it by her teachers and parents.

The virtue of *competence* emerges during this stage as one applies oneself to work and to completing tasks.

5) **Adolescence: Identity Versus Role Confusion**

This period is regarded as highly significant in the individual's psychosocial development. Now he is not a child and not yet an adult. This period extends roughly from 12 or 13 years to about 20 years of age. During this age, the adolescent is confronted with various social demands and role changes that are essential for meeting the challenges of adulthood. It

is the time for making vocational plans. He becomes aware of his inherent characteristics such as his likes and dislikes, anticipated goals of future and the strength and purpose to control one's own destiny. It is during this period that one defines what one is at present and what one wants to be in future. Because of the transition from childhood to adulthood, the adolescent during this stage of identity formation is likely to suffer more deeply than ever before or ever again from a confusion of roles or identity confusion. This state can cause one to feel isolated, empty, anxious or indecisive. The adolescents may feel that society is pushing them to make decisions, thus they may become even more resistant. The adolescent's behaviour is inconsistent and unpredictable during this chaotic state. During this period one may also develop a negative identity, a sense of possessing a set of potentially bad or unworthy characteristics.

During this stage the virtue of *fidelity* develops. Although now sexually mature and in many ways responsible, he or she is not yet adequately prepared to become a parent. On one hand, one is expected to assimilate oneself into an adult pattern of life while on the other hand, one is denied the sexual freedom of an adult. The behaviour shuttles back and forth. During this difficult period, the youth seeks inner knowledge and understanding of himself or herself and attempts to formulate a set of values. The particular set of values that emerges is what Erikson called fidelity. Fidelity is the foundation upon which a continuous sense of identity is formed.

6) **Young Adulthood : Intimacy Versus Isolation**

This stage marks the formal beginning of adult life. This is generally the period when a person becomes involved in courtship, marriage and early family life.

It extends from late adolescence until adulthood i.e. from 20 years to roughly 24 years. Now the person is ready for social as well as sexual intimacy with another person. Now he orients himself or herself toward, "settling down" in life. This is the time when one requires someone to love and to have sexual relations and with whom one can share a trusting relationship.

The hazard of this stage is isolation, which is the avoidance of relationships because one is unwilling to commit to intimacy. The virtue of *love* comes into being during this stage. In addition to the romantic and erotic qualities, Erikson regards love as the ability to commit oneself to others, showing an attitude of care, respect and responsibility.

7) **Middle Adulthood: Generativity Versus Stagnation**

This period corresponds to the middle years of life i.e. from 25 years to 65 years of age. Generativity occurs when a person begins to show concern not only for the welfare of the upcoming generation but also for the nature of the society in which that generation will live and work. Main concerns are the generating of progeny, products, ideas and so forth. When generativity is weak or not given expression, the personality takes on a sense of stagnation. The virtue of *care* develops during this stage which is expressed in one's concern for others.

8) **Maturity: Integrity Versus Despair**

This stage can best be described as a state which is reached by one after having taken care of things and people, products and ideas, and having adapted to the experiences of successes and failures of life. There is a definite shift in a person's attention from future to past life. This is a time often beset with numerous

demands such as adjustment to deteriorating physical strength and health, to retirement and reduced income, to the death of spouse and close friends, and the need to establish new affiliations with one's age group. This stage is marked by the summation, integration and evaluation of all the preceding stages of human development. The essential counterpart of integrity is despair over a series of unfulfilled opportunities and missed directions of individual's life cycle. He or she may realize that it is far too late to start all over again. He or she has a hidden fear of death, a feeling of irrevocable failure and an incessant preoccupation with what might have been.

*Wisdom* is the virtue that develops out of the encounter of integrity and despair. Erikson believes that only during old age does true maturity and a practical sense of "the wisdom of the ages" comes into being.

## Carl Rogers: A Phenomenological Theory of Personality

Carl Rogers' self-theory of personality is primarily based on his approach known as *client-centred therapy*. He stresses the importance of individual who determines his own fate. There are two basic concepts that are regarded as the basis upon which his whole theory rests. These are (a) the organism and (b) the self.

The organism is the centre of all experiences that keeps taking place within the individual at a particular moment. These experiences include everything potentially available to one's awareness that is going on within the organism at that moment. The totality of these experiences constitutes the *phenomenal field*. The phenomenal field is not identical with the field

of consciousness. At a given moment, it is made up of conscious or symbolized and unconscious or unsymbolized experiences. The phenomenal field is individual's frame of reference that can only be known to the person only. According to Rogers behaviour of a person depends upon the phenomenal field (which is the subjective reality) and not upon the external conditions. An individual's perceptions and experiences constitute not only his or her own reality but also form the basis of his or her actions. One responds to events in accordance with how one perceives and interprets them.

For example, a thirsty person lost in the desert will run as eagerly to a pool of water that is a mirage as to a real pool. Similarly two persons observing an identical set of events may later recall two very different outcomes, which is often the case with eye witness accounts of the unidentified flying objects and traffic accidents etc. Thus a person tends to check his or her symbolized experiences against that of the world outside in his own way. This testing of reality provides one with dependable knowledge of the world so that one is able to behave realistically. However, some experiences may remain untested or are inadequately tested, which may cause one to behave unrealistically. Apparently the person, therefore, must have some conception of an external reality, otherwise he or she could not perform the act of testing an inner picture of reality against an outer one.

Let us explain this a little further with the help of another example. Suppose a person wishes to put salt in his food and in front of him are two identical jars, one that contains salt and the other containing pepper. The person believes that the jar with larger holes in

its lid contains salt but not being quite sure of it, he keeps the contents in the jar on his hand. If the particles are white rather than black, he becomes sure that it is salt. A cautious person may, even after that, put a little on his tongue, believing that it may not be white pepper, instead of salt. Thus, the point to be noted here is that one is testing his or her ideas against a variety of sensory data. The test consists of checking less certain information against more direct knowledge. In this case the final test is taste that defines it to be salt. Out of the process of perceiving experiences, attaching meanings to them and testing them with the outside reality, there emerges a portion of the phenomenal field which gradually becomes differentiated and is called *self*. The self can best be thought of as the concept of I, me and myself. In addition to this concept of self (also called real self) there is an *ideal self* which represents what one thinks one ought to be and would like to be. The ideal self represents the self-concept that the individual would like to possess. It is quite close to the notion of superego in Freudian theory.

The significance of these concepts of organism and self becomes more clear in Rogers' discussion of congruence and incongruence between the self as perceived and the actual experiences of the organism. When the symbolized or conscious experiences that constitute the self faithfully mirror the experiences of the organism, the person is said to be adjusted, mature, and fully functioning. While on the other hand, if there is no congruence with the experiences of self and organism, the individual feels threatened and anxious. Such a person behaves defensively and is rigid.

Thus we see that Roger's theory puts emphasis on the continuity of growth. The person continuously strives to develop a self. He incorporates only those experiences into his frame of reference which he thinks are appropriate for him and rejects those which are not appropriate. Therefore personality development, in Rogerian scheme there is a reciprocal relationship between the ways a person views his experiences and his actual social and inter-personal experiences.

## Abraham Maslow: A Humanistic Theory of Personality

Maslow was a humanist who believed that man can work out a better world for mankind as well as for himself. His approach to understand human personality is different from behaviourism as given by B.F. Skinner (discussed later) and psychoanalysis. He depicted human being as a "wanting animal" who rarely reaches a state of complete satisfaction. It is characteristic of human life that people almost always desire something. If one desire is satisfied, another surfaces and so on. Maslow consistently argued that lower order needs must at least be satisfied before an individual can become aware of the higher order needs. He proposed that in general, human desires/needs are innate and they are arranged in a hierarchy. He developed his own system of needs and categorized them into two categories.

a) Deficit Needs and

b) Growth Needs

The deficit needs include sex, sleep, protection from extreme temperature and sensory stimulation. These needs are most basic, powerful and obvious of all human beings for their physical survival. In the second

category come the needs for safety, needs of belongingness and love, the esteem needs and the need for self-actualization.

Now let's examine each of Maslow's need categories in a little detail, in accordance of their order i.e. from lower to higher.

1) ***Physiological Needs:*** As pointed out earlier these are directly concerned with the biological maintenance of the organism and must be gratified at some minimal level. An individual who fails to satisfy this set of basic needs won't be able to move upwards to satisfy the higher level needs. For instance, a chronically hungry person will never strive to compose music or join politics or construct theories to build a new world order. Without a doubt, the physiological needs are crucial to the understanding of human behaviour. Many autobiographies and experiments chronicled in the history show the devastating effects on behaviour produced by lack of food or water. For example, in the Nazi concentration camps of World War II, it was common for prisoners subjected to prolonged deprivation and torture, to relinquish their moral standards and steal food from each other.

2) ***Safety Needs:*** When the physiological needs are successfully fulfilled then safety needs become the dominant force in the personality of the individual. Safety needs are many and are mainly concerned with maintaining order and security. The primary motivating force here is to ensure a reasonable degree of certainty, order, structure and predictability in one's environment. Maslow suggested that these needs are most readily observed in infants and young children because of

their relative helplessness and dependence on adults. For example, children, respond fearfully if they are suddenly dropped or startled by loud noise or flashing lights. Eventually education and experience neutrialize such dangers.

Nonetheless, the safety needs also exert active influence beyond the stage of childhood. The preference for a job with security and financial protection, having a bank account, purchasing a building/house and investment in insurance or medical facilities or unemployment or old age may be regarded as motivated by making the future safe.

3) ***Belongingness and Love Needs:*** These needs institute the third ladder in the Maslow's scheme of human needs and emerge only when the first ladder and second ladder needs are satisfied. These needs emphasize the basic psychological nature of human beings to identify with group life. These are the needs of making intimate relationships with other members of society, being an accepted member of an organization and to have a family. In the absence of group membership, a person will have a feeling of loneliness, social ostracism, friendlessness and rejection. Maslow rejected the Freudian notion that love and affection are derived from sexual instincts. He was of the view that love is not synonymous to sex but a mature love involves healthy loving relationship between two persons. Being loved and accepted is instrumental to healthy feelings of worth. Not being loved generates futility, emptiness and hostility.

4) ***Self-Esteem Needs:*** When one's needs for being loved and loving others have been reasonably

satisfied, the need for self-esteem emerges. These needs are divided into two groups : (a) Self-respect, self-regard and self-evaluation

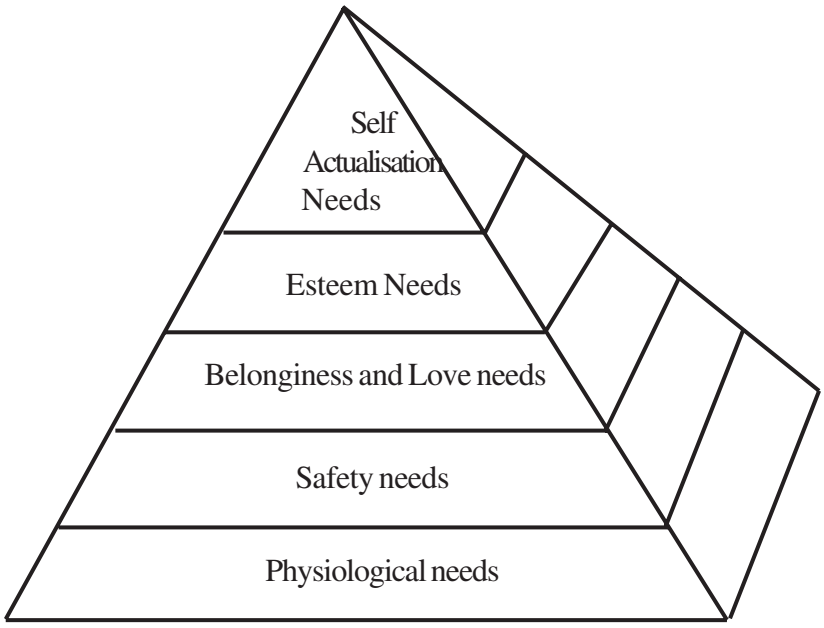


**Fig. : Maslow's Need-Hierarchy**

(b) Esteem and respect from others. The first group includes such things as desire for competence, confidence, personal strength, adequacy, achievement, independence and freedom. An individual needs to know that he or she is worth while – capable of mastering tasks and challenges in life. The second group includes prestige, recognition, acceptance, attention, status, fame, reputation and appreciation. In this case, people need to be appreciated for what they can do, i.e. they must experience feelings of worth because their competence is recognized and valued by significant others.

5) ***Self-Actualization Needs:*** Finally, if all the foregoing needs are sufficiently satisfied, the need for self-actualization comes to the fore. Maslow characterized self-actualization as the desire to become everything that one is capable of becoming. One wants to attain perfection. It is to reach the peak of one's potential. Self actualization is only possible if the basic needs at lower levels are met to the degree that they neither distract nor consume all the available energy. The person should not be worried about his or her survival needs. He or she should feel satisfied with his/her social relations in family, society and job.

Thus we need to keep in mind that Maslow's needs occur in an order. One seeks self-esteem only after one's love and belongingness needs are satisfied. And one seeks love only when he or she feels secure and safe. On the opposite side of it, one quickly goes back to a lower level from the upper level, if the needs of lower level are suddenly jeopardized. For example, let us consider a lady who, thinking her love needs are in good order, busies herself with becoming a business tycoon. Suddenly and unexpectedly, her husband leaves her. In such a situation, what she does is that she casts aside all aspects of self-esteem (in this case business) and becomes consumed in an effort to regain her husband i.e. to satisfy her love needs. Once this relationship is restored or a suitable alternative developed, she is free to concern herself with the business world.

## B.F. Skinner: A Behaviouristic-Learning Theoretical Approach to Personality

Before turning to Skinner's theory, it may be useful to contrast its general qualities with those of the

theories considered earlier. Each of the theory covered earlier has placed considered emphasis on structural concepts. Sigmund Freud (You would study in another unit) used structural concepts such as id, ego, and super ego ; Erikson used concepts like the developmental milestones; Roger used concepts such as self and ideal self and Maslow's emphasis is on the basic needs of human beings for explaining their behaviour.

Skinner's approach famously called behavioural approach to personality places considerable emphasis on the concepts of process and situational specificity. In summary, because the theory is based on assumptions that are different from other theories, the formal properties of this theory are different from those already studied.

The basis of Skinner's operant conditioning process is that behaviour is controlled through the manipulations of rewards and punishments in the environment. The key structural unit for the behavioural approach is the *response*. The nature of a response may range from a simple reflex like salivation to food to a complex piece of behaviour like solution to an arithmetic sum. In Skinnerian scheme, the response represents an external, observable piece of behaviour that can be related to environmental events. There is a distinction between responses elicited by known stimuli and the response that can not be associated with any stimuli. The responses in the later category are emitted by the organism and they are in the biological nature. For example, the dog walks, runs; the bird flies; the monkey somersaults and swings from tree to tree; the human baby smiles, cries and babbles. Such responses are called *operants*. Skinner was of the view that stimuli in the environment do not force the organism

to behave or incite into action but the initial cause of behaviourism lies in the organism itself. The operants are emitted by the organism himself and there are no environmental stimuli for the operant behaviour; it simply occurs.

The essence of operant conditioning relies on the fact that, all other things being equal, reinforced behaviour tends to be repeated. The concept of reinforcement occupies a key role in Skinner's theory. According to Skinner a *reinforcer* is an event (stimulus) that follows a response and increases the probability of its occurrence. If a dog is picking up a ball, which is a piece of operant behaviour, and the response is followed by a reinforcer such as a pat or any other reward, the probability of dog's picking the ball is increased. Thus, a reinforcer strengthens the behaviour it follows. According to Skinner, while some stimuli appear to be reinforcing the behaviour of all animals certain stimuli serve as reinforcers for some animals only. It is important to note here that a reinforcer is defined by its effect on behaviour i.e. an increase in the probability of a response and is not defined just theoretically. Quite often, it is difficult to know precisely what will serve as a reinforcer for behaviour, as it may vary from individual to individual or from organism to organism.

So the focus of this approach is on the qualities of responses and their relationship to the rates and the time-intervals at which they are reinforced. The time and rate relationships of reinforcers is also referred to as *schedules of reinforcement*. To study these time-rate relationships, Skinner developed a simple apparatus, commonly known as Skinner's box. In this box, few stimuli and behaviours/responses (like a rat's pressing a bar or a pigeon pecking a disc) are observed in an objective way. It is here that one can best

observe the elementary laws of behaviour. According to Skinner, behaviour can be best understood when it is controlled. Behaviour can be controlled through the choice of responses that are reinforced and the rate at which they are reinforced. The schedules of reinforcement can be used on a particular *time interval* or a particular *response interval*. In a time interval schedule, the reinforcement appears after a certain period, say one minute, regardless of the number of responses made by the organism. That is to say that after every one minute, the rat or the pigeon in the Box gets food. In response interval schedule, also referred to as response ratio schedule, reinforcement appears after a certain number of responses having been made. That is, when the rat after pressing the bar ten times in the box gets food.

Thus reinforcements need not be given after every response, but can instead be given only on certain occasions. The reinforcements can be given on a regular or a fixed basis – always at a certain number of responses, or they can be given on a variable basis – sometimes after a minute and sometimes after two minutes, or sometimes after a few responses and sometimes after many responses.

Like this, the complex behaviour is shaped through a process of successive approximations. That is, complex behaviours are developed by reinforcing pieces of behaviour that resemble the final form of behaviour one wants to practice. Let us explain it with the help of an example.

Suppose we wish to shape behaviour of an untrained pigeon in the Skinner Box to make him learn to peck at a particular disc. We may do the shaping of the behaviour of the bird through a process of successive approximations. That is, instead of waiting until the

pigeon makes a full and correct pecking response, we would first reinforce some bit of the pigeon's behaviour that resembles the final form of pecking at the disc. Therefore, we would give the pigeon reinforcement when he merely turns slightly in the direction of the disc. Once a definite tendency to turn toward the disc establishes, we would hold further reinforcement until the pigeon makes a definite movement toward the disc. It is done by reinforcing those responses that make the pigeon come closer and closer to the disc and then those responses that bring his beak near the disc. Like this, we would finally be able to induce the pigeon to peck the disc.

In a similar way, complex behaviours in humans may be developed through the process of successive approximation. While most of the emphasis in such type of learning is on the use of positive reinforcement such as food, money or praise, Skinner also emphasizes the importance of negative inforcers. *A positive* reinforcer serves to strengthen or maintain the response whereas *negative reinforcers* are those unpleasant stimuli which the learner will readily terminate if given the opportunity to do so. For example, criticism, disapproval and condemnation by the peer group are viewed as negative reinforcers. A negative reinforcer sometimes is confused with a *punisher* but the two are different. While a negative reinforcer precedes the response and forces its occurrence to terminate the unpleasant condition, the punishment follows the response and decreases the likelihood of the recurrence of the response. For example, if disapproval or condemnation follows immediately after the behaviour, punishment has taken place whereas if disapproval or scolding is directed at an individual in an effort to force behaviour to occur, and the resultant behaviour terminates this condition of

scolding and disapproval, then negative reinforcement is said to have been used.

Thus we see that, as the Skinner's theory is most concerned with behavioural change, learning and modification, it is most relevant to application in the area of personality development.

## Conclusion

In this chapter, you have been familiarized with the overview of four personality theories given by Erikson, Rogers, Maslow and Skinner.

Erikson has outlined a sequence of eight stages in the human life cycle. Each stage is accompanied by a crisis, that is, a turning point in the individual's life that arises from physiological maturation and social demands made upon the person at that stage. Each psychosocial crisis includes both a positive and a negative component. The successful resolution of each crisis is associated with a psychosocial strength or virtue.

The self is the most important construct in Roger's theory of personality. The self is a differentiated portion of individual's phenomenal or perceptual field–the totality of experiences. The self consists of the conscious perceptions and values of the "I" and "me". The ideal self represents the self-concept that the individual would most like to possess. A person is said to be adjusted, mature and fully functioning when the conscious experiences that constitutes the self, mirrors the experiences of the organism. That is to say that to be adjusted, there should be a match between the subjective reality (the phenomenal field) and the external reality (the world as it is). While the opposite

of it (incongruence between self and organism) makes an individual feel threatened and anxious.

Abraham Maslow's theory of personality is based on a hierarchy of needs. The needs at lowest ladders of hierarchy which are most compelling are the physiological needs followed by needs for safety. The third set of needs are the belongings and love needs. The esteem needs representing our needs for self-esteem and for esteem from others are at the fourth level of this hierarchy. The highest level needs in Maslow's scheme are the needs for self-actualization.

B. F. Skinner's view of the growth and development of human personality lay emphasis on the schedules of reinforcement. Reinforcements can be negative as well as positive. Through the judicious use of reinforcers, final form of behaviour can be produced, as is done by the animal trainers. The theory is based on the assumption that human behaviour can be manipulated through the environmental conditions.

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# 23

# Psychosexual Development: Freudian Concept

* *Tomy Philip*

## Introduction

The theory of psychosexual development, also known as theory of libidinal development, is one of the earliest theories explaining how personality develops in human beings. This theory owes its credence to the findings of Sigmund Freud's clinical research with emotionally disturbed people. The theory of psychosexual development, however, is an integral part of the psychodynamic personality theory proposed by Freud. Freud is often considered the first psychological theorist to have emphasized the developmental aspects of personality and the decisive role of the early experiences during infancy and childhood in laying down the basic character structure of an adult person.

According to Freud, the individual passes through a series of dynamically differentiated developmental stages during the life span, which are characterized by distinct modes of functioning. The theory proposes that mishaps during different stages, especially during the early childhood, play an important role in the etiology of psychological problems including mental disorders. Based on his early research with emotionally disturbed persons, Freud found that the symptoms of mental problems during adulthood are related to frustrations of the erotic instinct. Such frustrations

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often occur as early as the first year of life and continue through the entire childhood stage. Freud was thus led to believe that children showed manifestations of sexual urges and that any theory of personality must take infantile sexuality into account.

## Concept of Sexuality

According to Freud, sex is the most important life instinct in an individual. According to him sex instinct is centered around a number of bodily needs that give rise to erotic wishes. Each of these wishes has its source in a different bodily region referred to as erogenous zones. An erogenous zone is a part of the skin or mucous membrane that is extremely sensitive to irritation and which when manipulated in a certain way removes the irritation and produces pleasurable feelings and experiences. The lips and mouth, anal region, and the sex organs are examples of erogenous zones. Thus, sucking produces oral pleasure, elimination anal pleasure, and rubbing genital pleasure. In brief, Freud regarded the sexual instinct as a psychophysiological process, which has both mental and physical manifestations. He used the term libido to refer to the force by which the sexual instinct is represented in the mind.

In essence Freud used the term sexuality to refer to the erotic life of the individual. According to him, sexuality is not a matter for adults alone but also infantile. It is all-pervasive and covers all those activities and sensations that are pleasurable and afford sensual gratification. Freud noted that infants were capable of erotic activity from birth onward. The earliest manifestations of infantile sexuality arise in relation to bodily functions such as feeding and elimination of body wastes. Of all the concepts of Freud, the concepts he advanced with regard to the

erotic life of infants and young children aroused severe criticism from different corners.

## Psychosexual Developmental Stages

Personality development takes place through constant activation of the life instinct. Sex being the most important life instinct in an individual, engagement in different erotic activities is a must to activate the life instinct. Sex is a biological instinct, which needs to be gratified. When present it creates tension and when met with, it leads to satisfaction. The earliest manifestations of sexuality arise in relation to bodily functions, which are basically nonsexual, such as feeding and elimination of body wastes. Each individual passes through a series of stages during the first five years of life, following which for a period of five or six years the dynamics become more or less stabilized. With the advent of adolescence, the dynamics erupt again and then gradually settle down as an adolescent moves into the stage of adulthood. For Freud, the first five years of life are decisive for the formation of personality.

Each stage of psychosexual development is defined in terms of the mode of reaction of a particular zone of the body. During the first 18 months of life of a new born baby, the mouth works as the principal region of dynamic activity. Hence this stage is called *oral stage*. The oral stage is followed by deriving pleasure around the eliminative functions, it is therefore, called the *anal stage*. This lasts for another 18 months and is succeeded by the *phallic stage* in which the sex organs become the leading erogenous zones. During these stages, the mucous membrane of the mouth, anus and external genitalia become the focus of child's erotic life depending on the stage of development. At

the close of the fifth year, the child goes into *latency period*, where the sexual urges are held in a state of repression. With the onset of adolescence the pregenital impulses are reactivated and the person passes into the *genital stage* of development. Let us learn in detail about these stages.

**Oral Stage**

This stage lasts up to eighteen months from the birth of a child. The principal source of pleasure derived by the child during this stage is that of sucking. Sucking involves both tactual stimulation of mouth as well as swallowing. Later when the teeth erupt the mouth is used by the child for biting and chewing. Since the child is primarily concerned about seeking pleasure, she needs immediate gratification of the needs. The need of the infant in seeking pleasure is adequately met with by sucking the breast of the mother as the erotic drive is localized in the mouth. Since gratification of needs at this stage depends on mother, she becomes the first love object for the child. Feeding at the mother's breast is the most important activity, both physiologically and psychologically for the young child. For this reason, psychoanalysis refers to the period from birth to about eight months as the oral sucking period. With the development of teeth, the child enters a new stage of her development called oral biting stage. During the oral biting stage, the mode of deriving pleasure become modified. Its sources are biting as well as sucking and swallowing. It is held that the two modes of oral activity i.e. sucking and swallowing and biting/chewing are the prototypes for many later personality traits that develop.

**Anal Stage**

This stage starts when the child is around one and a half years old and ends when she is three years of age. During the initial part of anal stage there is pleasurable sensation of excretion and later there is erotic stimulation of the anal mucosa through retention of feces. This stage is divided into two sub stages i.e. the **anal expulsive period** and the **anal retention period**. The anal expulsive phase overlaps with the closing stages of oral period. Here the mode of deriving pleasure for the child is the expulsion of feces. The expulsion of the feces removes discomfort and produces a feeling of relief. When toilet training is initiated, the child has her first experience with the external regulation of an instinctual impulse. The child has to learn to postpone the pleasure that comes from relieving anal tensions. During the anal retention period, the child is expected to accede to the demands of toilet training. The child has to learn to derive pleasure from retention than expulsion. Depending upon the particular method of toilet training used by the mother and her feelings concerning defecation, the consequences of toilet training have far reaching effects upon the formation of specific personality traits and values.

**Phallic Stage**

This stage begins when the child becomes three years old and continues until the child is five years. During this stage rudiments of sex can be seen in the child. Child plays with its genitals and relieves tension and derives pleasure. Erotic activity is initially linked both psychologically and physically with the activities and sensations associated with urination. Urination is an important activity as it helps the child to consolidate its gender identity. A boy understands that he is a

boy; similarly a girl understands that she is a girl initially from the process of urination.

During the phallic stage development sexual feelings associated with the functioning of genital organs come into focus. The pleasures of playing with the genitals and the fantasy life of the child set the stage for the appearance of Oedipus and Electra complexes in boys and girls, respectively. The Oedipus complex is named after the Greek king of Thebes who killed his father and married his mother. Oedipus complex consists of a sexual attachment for the parent of the opposite sex and a hostile feeling for the parent of the same sex. The boy wants to possess his mother and remove his father. According to Electra complex girl wants to possess her father and displace the mother. These feelings express themselves in the child's fantasies during the act of masturbation. The emergence of the Oedipus and Electra complexes are considered to be is the chief events of the phallic stage.

In Oedipus complex a boy has incestuous craving for the mother and a growing resentment toward the father. He imagines that his father is going to harm him. Threats from a resentful and punitive father may confirm this fear. His fears concerning what the father may do to him is centered on his genital organs as it is the source of his attachment to the mother. He fears that the father will remove it. This fear of castration helps a child to resolve his Oedipus complex, as he does not want to lose his genitals. Castration anxiety induces a repression of the sexual desire for the mother and hostility toward the father. It also helps to bring about identification with his father. By identifying with his father the male child converts his erotic feelings for the mother into harmless affection for the mother. Oedipus complex seems to represent the climax of the development of infantile sexuality.

In Electra complex, a girl child exchanges her love object, the mother, for a new object, the father. This takes place in a girl when she discovers that she is less equipped than a boy, as she does not possess a protruding sex organ, the penis. She holds her mother responsible for this and starts hating her for having brought her into the world less equipped than a boy. She transfers her love to the father because he has the valued organ, which she aspires to share with him. However her love for the father is mixed with a feeling of envy because he possesses what she lacks. Penis envy is the counterpart of castration anxiety in boys. A girl resolves her incestuous attachment for her father by recognizing the realistic barriers that prevent her from gratifying her sexual desire for the father. According to Freud, the differences in resolution of Oedipus and Electra complexes are the basis for many psychological differences between the sexes.

**Latency Stage**

According to Freud, at the close of fifth year infantile sexuality is gradually repressed both because of the fear of the social consequences and because of the realization that the love object is unattainable. During the period of about 5 or 6 years the child is not consciously concerned with sexual matters. As the literal meaning of the word 'latency' suggests, sexual urges are hidden during this stage. Child's active interest turns increasingly outward. During this period, the sexual urges are diverted into recreational, academic and social pursuits. The child learns to behave in society and acquires her ideals. Eroticism is overtly manifested in the form of attachment to parents and friends. Interest in the opposite sex is at the lowest ebb. The child spends all her energy to excel and prove herself. Child's energy is diverted

towards developing a *sense of competence*. During this stage of development a child's sexual urges are subordinated to the intellectual pursuits. Psychoanalysis has very little to say about personality development following the phallic stage. It, however, does analyzes the genital stage of development.

### Genital Stage

This stage begins with the onset of adolescence. During genital stage sexual feelings reappear with new intensity and in more mature form. As a result self-love of the child gets channelized into genuine heterosexual relationships. Sexual attraction, socialization, group activities, vocational planning and preparations for marrying and raising a family begin to manifest. By the end of adolescence these concerns become fairly well established. The person becomes transformed from a pleasure seeking, self-loving infant into a reality oriented, socialized adult. The principal biological function of the genital stage is that of reproduction.

## Fixation

Fixation can be defined as the persistent attachment of the sexual instinct to a particular phase of pregenital development. It can happen in any of the psychosexual developmental stages except the last one. In the course of development, it is expected that the child makes natural transition from one stage to the next at the end of a particular stage. Child's ability to forgo her attachment for the love object during a particular developmental stage for another promised but not guaranteed love object is a necessary condition for development of a healthy personality. Freud concluded that fixation adversely affects personality development. It may be noted that the behavioural manifestations

of fixation vary according to the stage of psychosexual development in which fixation takes place. For example, a child's inability to forgo mother as a love object during the oral stage leads to development of such behavioural manifestations like thumb sucking, alcoholism, smoking etc. These behavioural patterns help the individual to continue the erotic attachment with the love object of oral stage whereby he continues to derive pleasure from stimulation of the erogenous zone of lips and mouth. Similarly fixation can happen during anal, phallic and latency stages as well.

## Significance of Psychosexual Stages for the Development of Personality

Many of our personality traits and behaviour patterns are rooted in the stages of psychosexual development. Psychoanalysis considers adult behaviour as the product of the infantile psychosexual stages. According to Freud, individuals subsume sex energy into their behaviour through the psychological processes of displacement, sublimation, and reaction formation. For example the sexual fantasies of an adult are looked on as a continuation of phallic genitality. Similarly overcleanliness or overemphasis on order and punctuality is considered as reaction formation against the anal stage of infantile psychosexuality. The process of psychosexual genesis is one of dialectical growth. It can lead to development of normal or abnormal behaviour depending upon the experiences of the individual during different psychosexual developmental stages.

### Personality Traits Developed During Oral Stage

Oral stage activities of sucking and swallowing are the prototypes for many character traits that develop during subsequent years in one's life. Pleasure derived

from oral incorporation may be displaced to other modes of incorporation such as the pleasure gained from acquiring knowledge or possessions. Biting or oral aggression may be displaced in the form of sarcasm and argumentativeness. By displacements and sublimations of various kinds, as well as by defenses against the primitive oral impulses, these prototypic modes of oral functioning provide the basis for the development of vast networks of interests, attitudes and character traits.

Since the oral stage occurs at a time when the infant is completely dependent on mother for sustenance the feelings of dependency arise during this period. If she succeeds in fulfilling the needs of the child at this point, dependency leads to acquiring the virtue of hope. Feeling of hope is characterized by the belief that the needs will be taken care of properly by its mother. This belief helps the child to enter into a trusting, warm relationship with its mother, which ultimately leads to optimism in life. A nurturing and warm bond between mother and the child during this period sets the stage for trusting and affectionate relationship with others in later life. Rejection by mother or undue frustration experienced by the child resulting from non-fulfillment of his needs can lead to pessimism and mistrust in later life. It is in the oral phase that a child's attachment to crucial people in his environment and his feelings of love or hate toward these people develop. If a fundamentally warm relationship between mother and child has been established during this period, the stage will be set for the development of trusting and affectionate ties with others in later life.

If optimism is typical of individuals strongly fixated in the oral sucking period, pessimism is the trait of

individuals who have never properly resolved the frustrations of the oral biting stage. In extreme cases this pessimism may go completely out of normal bounds and become psychological depression. Thus even within the first year some of the important characteristics of personality are established.

**Personality Traits Developed During Anal Stage**

According to psychoanalysis, ego development is complete during the anal stage. As a result sense of reality overbears pleasure seeking in the child. Maternal care in combination with the conflicts surrounding toilet training alters the direction of pleasure seeking for the child. Compulsive neatness seen in some individuals is often seen as a form of regression to the anal stage. Depending upon the particular method of toilet training used by the mother and her feelings concerning defecation, the consequences of this training may have far reaching effects upon the formation of specific personality traits. If the mother is very strict and repressive in her methods of child rearing, the child may hold back its feces and become constipated. If this mode of reaction generalizes to other ways of behaving, the child will develop a retentive character. It will become obstinate and stingy in its character. Instead, if the child vents its rage by expelling feces at the most inappropriate times, expulsive traits like cruelty, destructiveness, temper tantrums, disorderliness etc. are developed. Thus the basis for a large number of behaviour traits is laid down during the anal stage.

Toilet training is an important activity as it leads to development of values and traits in an individual. The child learns to bring the erotic gratification resulting from defecation to social control. Normal continuations of the anal expulsive period include an interest in the

bowels, bowel habits, and daily bowel movements. Some people are so concerned with the bowels that this interest becomes central to their individual personalities. Failure at the resolution of anal conflicts leads to constellation of character traits, which are called *anal character*. Anal character is characterized by traits like excessive devotion to details, and unevenness of character leading to easy anger outbursts.

**Personality Traits Developed During Phallic Stage**

The behaviour of the child during phallic stage is marked to a great extent by the operation of the Oedipus complex. Although it is modified after the age of five, it remains a vital force in the personality throughout life. Attitudes toward the opposite sex and toward people in authority are largely conditioned by the Oedipus complex. Repression of Oedipus complex causes the superego to undergo its final development. According to Freud, the differences in the resolution of Oedipus and Electra complexes are the bases for differences in male and female personalities in later life. Freud considered females to be weak, dependent and inferior basically because of the development of penis envy and the associated psychodynamics. This view is criticized worldwide, and the criticism was led by Karen Horney, another influential psychoanalyst.

Of all the psychosexual developmental stages, phallic stage is the most eventful one. Developments in this stage influence the personality markedly. The transition from Oedipal strivings to adult sexuality is a prerequisite of normal development. Failure to resolve Oedipus complex is seen as the nucleus of adult neurosis. According to Freud, neuroses are characterized by an unconscious clinging to the Oedipal tendencies. How the child emerges from the Oedipus

situation exerts a profound influence on the development of character and personality.

**Personality Traits Developed During Latency and Genital Stages**

Freud was much preoccupied with the forms of infantile sexuality and its influence on the psychological development of a person. As a result Freud has not written much on how the courses of development during these two stages relate to personality. Psychoanalysis has not given much emphasis on these two stages in comparison to the first three stages of development.

Developments in latency stage help the child to acquire a *sense of competency and industry*. Competency feelings and industriousness develop as a result of the benefits reaped by the child from diverting its urges to various nonsexual activities like recreational, academic and social pursuits. With the diversion of a child's active interest to these activities, it gets an opportunity to excel, prove herself and be creative.

Genital stage, which begins roughly with the onset of adolescence, is a period when group activities, vocational planning and preparations for family life take prominence. By the end of adolescence, these socialized, altruistic feelings become fairly well established. The person becomes transformed from a pleasure seeking, narcissistic infant into a reality oriented, socialized adult.

## Conclusion

The theory of psychosexual development proposed by Sigmund Freud is one of the most prominent psychoanalytic theories of personality. This theory looks

at psychological development of individuals over five different stages. In this unit we have tried to understand the different psychosexual stages of development and how these stages influence the course of personality development. We have also learned about the concepts of sexuality and fixation.

As we have learned in this unit, the individual passes through a series of dynamically differentiated stages during the life span, which play a decisive role in the formation of personality. These stages are called oral, anal, phallic, latent and genital stages. During each of these stages the individual engages in a variety of erotic activities that stimulate and satisfy life instinct. We have seen in detail the erogenous zones in each stage of development and the nature of erotic activity engaged by the child in the different stages.

While discussing the significance of these stages for the development of personality we have noted that individuals subsume sex energy into their behaviour through the psychological processes of continuation, displacement, sublimation and reaction formation. We have also seen that the process of psychosexual genesis is one that involves dialectical growth. It can lead to development of normal or abnormal pattern of behaviour depending upon the experiences the individual had during the different psychosexual developmental stages. As explained with the help of examples, development of abnormal behaviour is considered to be shaped by the nature of mishap that happens during a given developmental stage.

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# 24

# Relevance of Psychology in Social Work Practice

* *Richa Chaudhary*

## Introduction

Psychology and social work are two different disciplines. Psychology is predominantly academic in its approach while social work is predominantly applied in its orientation. But despite such differences, they are so closely related to each other and it becomes quite often impossible to think of their distinct existence and practice in many respects. Psychology incepted much earlier to social work and provided many fundamental concepts and theories for developing tools and techniques for social work. Both these disciplines deal with components of human personality, human nature and needs, human abilities, behavior and problems. Both have their own ways of tackling human problems, whether physical, mental or social, but in many respects they are more or less similar. Methodologies of helping people in both disciplines involve similar tools and techniques to a considerable degree. It is therefore, but natural to know about the interdisciplinary relationship of these two profession-oriented disciplines.

## Introduction to Psychology

Many of the fundamental assumptions, concepts, principles, theories, methods, techniques and tools of

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social work are based and derived from psychology since human welfare and development are the ultimate aims of social work. Psychology is the science that studies the behavior of man and is the outcome of theories and practical experiments pertaining to different components and factors having an influence on the individual's personality and behaviour patterns. We will take up some of the quite commonly used concepts, tools and techniques in psychology relevant for social work practice.

The word *Psychology* has been derived from Greek literature and is a combination of two words i.e. 'Psyche' and 'Logos' which mean 'soul' and 'the study of'. It shows that initially Psychology was perceived as a study of the soul or spirit. The word *soul* was vaguely used and interpreted in many ways. Later the word mind replaced the term soul. With the passage of time, the nature of psychology has undergone many changes. Its methodology has changed from sheer speculation to a scientific approach and it is today considered a science that studies the mind, consciousness and behaviour of human beings. Behaviour has a comprehensive meaning and includes all types of behaviour of all living organisms. Psychology has thus passed through different stages starting with pure speculation to a discipline with scientific rigour and specific research methods. Psychology is now considered as the science of behaviour.

## Psychological Schools

| | **Schools** | **Contributors** | **Subject Matter** | **Basic Premise** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1) | Behavioural 1913 – present | John B. Watson Ivan Pavlov | Effect of environment on the overt behaviour | Only observable events (stimulus-response relation) of human and animals can be studied scientifically. |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2) | Psycho analytic (1900-present) | Sigmund Freud<br>Carl Jung<br>Alfred Adler | Unconscious determination of behaviour | Unconscious motives and experience in early life govern personality and mental disorder. |
| 3) | Humanistic (1950-present) | Carl Rogers<br>Abraham Maslow | Unique aspects of human experience | Human beings are free rational beings with the potential for personal growth, and they are fundamentally different from animals. |
| 4) | Cognitive (1950-recent) | Jean Piaget<br>Noam Chomsky<br>Herbert Simon | Thought; Mental processes | Human behaviour cannot be fully understood without examining how people acquire, store and process information. |
| 5) | Biological (1950-present) | James Olds<br>Roger Sperry | Physiological bases of behaviour in humans and animals | An organism's functioning can be explained in terms of the bodily structures and biochemical processes that underlie behaviour |

## Definition of Psychology

Definitions of psychology have been changing with its evolution and development. The focus of psychology has been changing and accordingly new definitions have been formulated. Some of the popular definitions are given below:-

1) Psychology is the science of the activities of the individual in relation to the environment[1]

— Woodworth

2) Psychology may be defined as the science that studies the behaviour of man and other animals.[2]

— Hilgard

3) J.B. Watson has defined psychology as positive science of behaviour.

4) Psychology is the study of human nature[3].

— Boring

5) Psychology deals with response to any and every kind of situation that life presents. By responses or behaviour is meant all forms of processes, adjustment, activities and expressions of the organism[4].

— Skinner

6) Psychology is the positive science of the conduct of living creatures[5].

James Drever has defined psychology as the positive science which studies the behaviour of man and animal.

The above definitions reveal that psychology is a science: it is a positive science of the activities of individual and human beings and other animals: it is a science of behaviour in relation to the environment: it is a science of human nature, it deals with responses to any situation that life presents and expressions of organism and psychology studies and explains conscious, subconscious and unconscious responses.

## Usefulness of Psychology to Social Work Practice

Psychology deals with human behaviour, emotions and projections. It also deals with some of the factors responsible in the formation of behaviour patterns. We know about the individual's development through psychology. Cognition, learning and memory are core subject matters for psychology. Knowledge of socialization process is dependent upon psychology. We get to know about social process from psychology. The individual's reactions and behaviour, to a great extent, are based upon projections, which is a psychological phenomenon. Psychology studies the interaction pattern between heredity and environment and explain to us the reasons for aware of individual differences in physical and mental traits and abilities.

During social work practice we seek the help of psychology to understand and analyse human behaviour. When a social worker makes an effort to bring about a change in personality through functioning or behaviour modification he has to look for help from psychology. In resolving problems related to adjustment, psychology helps social work. The method of social case work of social work profession is dependent on psychology. Group work derives many social, psychological elements to be used in practice for group strengthening and betterment, from psychology. Social psychology studies group morale, leadership qualities and traits, behaviours of crowds and audiences which are useful in group work and to some extent, in community organisation.

Psychology provides considerable help in the field of social work practice, like individual and family case work (for example, modification in individual's

personality); diagnosing and treatment planning for problem of children related to schooling; individual's adjustment with primary and secondary groups, physical and mental patients' accommodation with medical requirements and adjustment with others; understanding, diagnosing and modifying group behaviour and developing leadership qualities; ego analysis and strengthening and understanding defensive reactions (mechanisms) of individuals and counselling and guidance for enhancement in positive adjustment and fulfilment of needs of individual and society.

## Social Work and Human Behaviour

An understanding of human behaviour is essential for the profession of social work in order to deal with psychosomatic or socio-economic problems faced by people. The social worker has to understand the behavioural pattern of the clientele at the individual, group or community levels in order to help them. Client-positive behaviour like cooperation, free dialogue or conversation, participation, assistance, coordination, and an interest and willingness to resolve problems help the social worker to make a proper diagnosis of the problem and plan an action for treatment. Negative behaviour like unwillingness, non-cooperation, escapism, isolation, hiding facts and biases etc., create trouble and impediments to the successful practice of social work profession. During case work, a social worker has to handle his client along with the parents, siblings, other family members, neighbours, friends, school mates, colleagues and others who have some influence on the client. The behavioural interaction pattern of all these have to be kept in mind. Though in casework the focus is on the individual, the actions of others play a significant role. Need for love and

affection in a client can only be fulfilled if his/her parents are affectionate to him/her. A teacher can teach well in class if the students are willing to learn and have patience. A group worker may help a group in its formation and harmonious functioning if its members act in a cooperative, and democratic manner. In community organization, the behaviour of community people, community leaders, existing organisational personnel and others who in some way or the other influence the community, play an important role in helping the organization work in the desired direction. The nature of their behaviour determines the quality and quantity of the community worker's role and function. Behaviour exposing biases, cultural, social or religious difference, professional or economic reservations, political rivalries and unequal resource distribution may create hurdles in the community work.

Though it is a difficult task to have an indepth understanding of the behaviour of individuals, the social worker should make an effort to know it in order to be more successful in attaining the goals and objectives pertaining to the client.

## General Psychology

The branch of psychology which deals with the psychological aspects of a normal human being is known as general psychology. In general psychology we focus on concepts, theories and methods related to heredity and environment, growth and maturation, physiological bases of behaviour, sensation, perception and attention, feelings and emotions, learning, remembering and forgetting, thinking and reasoning, intelligence and personality including individual differences, aptitudes and reaction time.

Some of the above concepts used in general psychology are explained below.

Biological inheritance is derived from genes located in chromosomes. There are 46 chromosomes. A child gets 23 chromosomes from each parent but the large number of possible arrangements and combinations of the genes causes members of even the same family to differ sharply in hereditary constitution. That is why each person is unique. The wide gaps in ability are to be attributed to heredity. Differences in physique, intelligence and aptitude are more affected by inheritance than are social behaviour and personality traits. However, the relative role of heredity and environment in some of the above characteristics is still debated among psychologists.

The term *maturation* denotes a state of development as well as a process. A certain level of maturation is necessary in the individual before a given behaviour can appear.

*Sense organs* receive impressions from stimuli which are energy changes in the environment. Stimuli received by the receptors, i.e. the sense organs, are communicated by the nervous system to the affectors (muscles and glands). Impressions from the receptors are carried to the affectors through pathways in the connecting mechanism, the central nervous system. The most important part of the nervous system is the brain. Functions like movement, speech, sight, learning, taste and smell have been located in specific areas of the brain. Complex functions like perception, memory and learning involve the entire brain and are not localised.

*Feelings* are complexes of sensation. Feelings vary from person to person and preferences depend on factors

such as age, sex and training. Emotions are feelings which involve force and tension. Emotions have an emergency value and prepare the body for action. The ability to control emotions is desirable. Emotions may be controlled by manipulating the stimuli which initiate them.

*Motives* are drives. Motives range from inborn organic tensions to complex acquired needs. Hunger, thirst, sex, rest and sleep are most important organic needs. Motives develop conflict. When conflicts are severe and persistent one may need a counsellor's help to resolve the difficulties.

*Learning* is the result of focused physical and mental activities which leads to new and changed responses. The usual condition for learning is a state of need and high motivation. It proceeds through a trial and error period to a final selection of the appropriate responses. Satisfaction or reduction in need which follows the effective response is called *reinforcement*. In human learning the goal is important. Efficient learning is added by careful planning, instruction and through insight development. *Habits* are sequences of behaviour and automatic. Many habits are maladaptive and they may be eliminated through a variety of devices. For learning, some motivation or drive is necessary. Curiosity and interest facilitate learning. They may be measured in relation to personal lives have a direct application to everyday life. A good student makes use of outlines, notes, rules, tables etc. and avoids studying when fatigued or bored.

Remembering and forgetting refer to the effect which the passing of time has on some thing learned earlier. Aspects of memory are classified under four heads (i) Fixation or the act of learning itself, (ii) Retention or the storing of the impression, (iii) Recall and (iv)

Recognition. Theories of forgetting have attributed memory loss to (i) passive decay and (ii) interference with the old by the new.

Thinking is behaviour which is often implicit and hidden and in which symbols like images, ideas and concepts are ordinarily employed. Thinking is not confined to the head but may involve the whole body. Though the brain is primary in thinking and reasoning, muscular activity during thought indicates that many parts of the brain is involved.

The experimental psychologist measures the facts of behaviour and expresses the results in statistical terms. These statistics serve to summarize a set of scores in succinct form. The important aspect of mental measurement is concerned with the relations among traits.

Intelligent behaviour may be abstract, mechanical or social. The abstract is concerned with the ability to deal with symbols: the mechanical, with the manipulation of physical objects such as tools, machines etc. and the social with the skills in personal and social affairs.

People differ from one another in physical, mental and personal characteristics. There is considerable variation among the traits within an individual. Sex differences show that at maturity, by and large, men are stronger and heavier than women but the difference in respect of mental ability is insignificant. Differences in temperamental and emotional traits are far greater within either sex than aptitude traits. Aptitude examinations measure present competence as well as estimate potential ability. On the basis of standard aptitude tests, psychological and social work counsellors provide valid information to their clients

for probable success in the working field of the person.

Personality includes attributes like physique, appearance, intelligence aptitudes and characteristic of social behaviour. Personality traits are not similar to abilities. Personality is revealed in the typical ways in which the individual reacts to his surroundings. Personality traits become character traits when given a moral or ethical interpretation. From birth to maturity, the personality is shaped by society within the limits imposed by biological factors. Normality is the behaviour which is tolerated by society.

The *reaction time* is the time taken by the organism to respond to the stimuli. There are specific instruments in psychology to measure reaction time. These are useful in identifying persons for specific occupations which require high degree of alertness and attention.

## Child Psychology

Child Psychology is the branch of psychology which deals with the childhood of a human being. Psychologists consider a human as a child till the age of 12 years. From 12 to 18 years human beings are considered adolescents. The development of a human being from the moment of conception to the attainment of the age 18 years is the subject matter of child psychology. The total childhood and adolescence of an individual has been divided into five categories i.e. pre-natal period, infancy, babyhood, childhood and adolescence. The first period is from conception to birth. The second one is from birth to fifteen days, the third one is from fifteen days to two years, the fourth one is from two years to eleven years and the last one is eleven years to eighteen years. Another categorisation is as follows— (i) Prenatal (from conception to birth), (ii) Oral (birth to one year),

(iii) Anal (one year to three year), (iv) Oedipal (three year to six year,) (v) Latency (six year to eleven year), (vi) Adolescence. Child psychology deals with stages of growth, development and maturation, environmental influences on growth and development and psycho-social interactions between the child and other members of primary and secondary social groups and the society. An individual is constantly changing from conception till death. Throughout childhood and adolescent years, a child develops his physical and mental structure. Development is a continuous process and changes in the individual may not be always visible. Changes are rapid in childhood. All developmental changes are not of the same nature. They influence the process of growing up in different ways. Changes during development have been divided into four major groups: (i) Changes in size: Changes in size can be observed in physical growth but they can be also observed in mental growth. During normal growth height, weight and circumference of a child increase. Internal organs and structures such as the heart, intestine and stomach grow larger to meet the increasing needs of the body. The child's vocabulary, ability to reason, remember and perceive, and the creative imagination expand during growth years, (ii) The changes in proportion: A child's physical development is not confined to changes in size of the body but also of other organs proportionately. Mental development in childhood is also apparent. The interests of a child change from concentration on himself to other children and in adolescence to the opposite sex, (iii) Disappearance of old features: The third important change which takes place in the development of the individual is the disappearance of certain features. As the child grows older his thymus gland located in the chest disappears, the pineal gland at the base of the

brain, baby hair, and baby teeth also disappear. Mental traits like bobbing, different forms of speech, impulsive action, creeping and crawling and sensory keenness in regard to taste and smell gradually disappear, (iv) Acquisition of new features: Many new physical and mental features are acquired through learning but some of them are the result of maturing or unfolding of native traits not fully developed at birth. The physical features include, among others, teething, growth of hair, characteristics related with reproduction etc. Mental traits include curiosity about sex matters, sex urge, knowledge, moral standards, religious beliefs, knowledge of language and neurotic tendencies.

Development is not a uniform process. It is extremely rapid during the prenatal period. From fertilization to birth, increase in weight is estimated at 11,000,000 times and from birth to maturity the increase is 22 times. From three to six years the growth rate continues to be rapid though not as rapid as in the preceding three years. The development follows a pattern and occurs in orderly fashion. Each stage is the outcome of the one preceding it and a pre-requisite of the one following it. From four to sixteen weeks, the body gains control of his/her twelve loco-motor muscles. From sixteen to twenty eight weeks, the child acquires control over the muscles which support the head and can move the arms. The child then begins to reach out for things. From twenty eight to forty weeks the child gains control of his/her trunk and hands. This helps in sitting, grasping, transferring and manipulating objects. From forty to fifty two weeks, he/she extends the ability to control his legs and feet, four fingers and thumb. He can now stand upright, poke, and pluck. During the second year, he walks and runs; articulates words and phrases, acquires bowel and bladder control and develops a rudimentary

sense of personal identity and of personal possession. During the third year he speaks in sentences and uses verbs as tools of thought. He displays a propensity to understand his environment and to comply with cultural demands. During the fourth year he asks innumerable questions, perceives analogies and displays a tendency to generalise and conceptualise. In the routine of home life he is nearly independent. At the age of five years a child is well matured in motor control.

Development follows a pattern of specific phases of development. Development proceeds from general to specific responses. Individual differences in rate of development remain constant. Development occurs at different rates for different parts of the body. Most traits are co-related in development. Each developmental phase has characteristic traits. Development may be predicted. Many forms of problem behaviour are normal behaviour for the age in which they occur. Every individual passes through each major stage of development.

By now, we have familiarised ourselves with different tasks and characteristics of infancy and childhood (Birth to six years). Now we will consider the tasks of middle childhood that last from six to twelve years. These are as follows :

i) Learning physical skills necessary for ordinary games.

ii) Building wholesome attitudes towards oneself as a growing organism.

iii) Learning to get along with age mates.

iv) Learning an appropriate sex role.

v) Developing fundamental skills in reading, writing and calculating.

vi) Developing concepts necessary for everyday living.

vii) Developing conscience, morality and a scale of values.

viii) Achieving personal independence.

ix) Developing attitudes towards social groups and institutions.

During adolescence (11-18 years) the child behaves inconsistently. Sometimes he behaves like a child and sometimes like a grown up person. He suffers from internal conflict between social values and sexual freedom. Studies show that several characteristics of different stages appear in this period of life. Adolescents need freedom in many respects and do not appreciate the interventions of others in their affairs. Adolescents are attracted to the opposite sex but they try to hide this feeling and show that they are not interested in the opposite sex. The significant changes in body are rapid development of muscles, increase in weight and height, rapid development in glands, appearance of public hair and enlargement of breasts, menstruation in girls, semen in boys, pubic hair etc. The intelligence reaches an average level at the end of this stage and acceptability and projection capability of ego develop considerably, but the decision-making ability lags behind. In some adolescents, agitation appears and they look tired. Emotional tension is also an important feature of this period. The basic needs of this stage are a balanced diet, ten hours sleep, recognition and encouragement.

## Developmental Psychology

Developmental psychology studies and describes physical, mental emotional and behavioural changes which happen with changes in age. Physical and behavioural changes occur more rapidly in the early years of life and mental and social traits and abilities develop quicker in later ages of life. Many psychologists use child psychology as a synonym for developmental psychology. Child psychology includes a study of all those basic elements which are responsible for human personality development during childhood while the same approach after childhood may be considered as developmental psychology. Contrary to this view, other psychologists argue that the development of a human being is not over after childhood and in many respects, the individual's abilities and traits increase and decrease in later phases of life.

You have gone through the main features of child psychology in the previous sub-unit 'Child Psychology: Here we will take up salient features of the development between childhood and the old age. You have become aware of stages of childhood i.e. (i) Pre-natal, (ii) Oral, (iii) Anal, (iv) Oedipal (Phallic), (v) Latency and (vi) Adolescence and about stages of life after adolescence. The span of life between adolescence and old age has been divided into three main categories i.e. (i) Pre maturity (between 18 years to 25 years), (ii) Maturity (between 25 years to 45 years) and (iii) old age (above 45 years). During pre-maturity, individuals develop maximum physical strength, vigour and emotional control. The basic needs of this stage are a balanced diet, regular physical exercise, recognition and favour of elders etc. During maturity he remains somewhat static in his physical and mental abilities but goes on learning, adapting

and developing skills and knowledge requisite to his job, profession or social norms and attains the desired possible status. The basic needs of this stage are for the sustainability of physical strength regular exercise, love and affection of spouse and family members and care. In old age, a decline of physical and mental abilities takes place. Physical strength and vigour diminishes, organs of body weaken and gradually different inabilities develop. Auditory, visual, eating and digestive execratory organs gradually become weak. Memory loss and incoherence in physical and mental activities becomes apparent. Anxieties and worries about future life increase. Insecurity regarding income and health develop during old age. Menopause occurs in females in the initial years of this period. Individuals in old age need appropriate reading material, visual equipment, clubs and forums for exchanging views, economic and social security, a nutritious diet, medical facilities etc. Difficult situations of this last stage are death of own child, death of spouse, severe and prolonged illness of close family members and extreme poverty.

## Clinical Psychology

The complexity of modern life is affecting members of society. It has become difficult for many of us to adjust to the new social setting. We need help for proper adjustment with our social components. Clinical psychology provides assistance to us for better adjustment. Clinical psychology also deals with those aspects which are related to some type of deviancy. It is also concerned with the enhancement and betterment of community life and prevention of mental disorders. Clinical psychology associates itself with problems like maladjustment between employee and employer, generational gap and poor individual

relationship within groups. Many times the scope of clinical psychology overlaps with the scope of counselling psychology, psychiatry and social work.

For scanning the nature of clinical psychology we should consider activities of clinical psychologists. Counsellors, psychiatrists and social workers use psychological concepts in helping people to adjust. They differentiate themselves from clinical psychologists on the basis of the focus of the problem. Vocational counselling is concerned with an individual's adjustment with his job and likewise educational counselling is concerned with the adjustment of the individual with the educational setting. There is much overlapping between clinical psychology and psychiatry. Both deal with broad characteristics of mental illness or personality disturbance. They differ in respect of training of practitioners and the approach to problems. A clinical psychologist is trained to approach mental disturbance by examining earlier experiences and learning while the psychiatrist approach these disorders by considering them as specific diseases and by applying appropriate treatments. Even then, in many cases psychiatrists and clinical psychologists use similar approaches to solve the problem. Clinical psychologists usually deal with the individual case. They may extend their concern to the family, secondary group and community which affect the individual's adjustment to the environment. They observe ongoing behaviour and the living situation of the people to help the individual. Clinical psychology and practice of medicine have an important relationship with each other and that is why clinicians call them patients in a medical setting while in a non-medical setting they are called clients. A large number of clinical psychologists work in a medical setting in co-operation with psychiatrists and other physicians. The role of clinical psychologists

is not confined to only mentally ill persons. They also work with people not seriously maladjusted. They take an interest in mental health as well as deviant behaviour. When a clinical psychologist works with a mental patient, he applies abnormal psychology. But they also work for schools, industries and communities and deal exclusively with human problems of a normal nature.

Community health programmes aim at prevention as well as cure of mental problems. Clinical psychologists identify factors which may lead to mental problems and take steps for their prevention. The knowledge of psycho-pathology is significant for clinical psychologists. Though there is overlapping between clinical psychology and counselling psychology, they have different approaches. Counselling is basically concerned with decisions and choices of individuals whereas clinical psychology is concerned with the specific and difficult problems of the individual.

Clinical psychology and social work profession have a close relationship as they both help the individual to solve his/her problems related to adjustment, deviance and psycho-somatic ailments. In social work we deal with the individual's ego strengthening, insight development, perception and decision making etc. Clinical psychology also deals with these aspects but its approach is more in-depth, wide and has a psychoanalytical base. Adjustment problems between individuals, individual and group and individual and community are handled by both professions. In clinical psychology, greater stress is given to the individual's personality traits and his/her responses to social factors whereas in social work more emphasis is given to social factors and components. In extreme cases of mental disorders the help of psychiatrists is required

and clinical psychologists only assist them. The social worker refers such cases either to a psychiatrist or clinical psychologists with the case history record of the patient

## Conclusion

This chapter provided you the introductory understanding of the relevance of psychology to social work practice. It also provided you a basic knowledge of general psychology and human behaviour as well as developmental psychology, child psychology and clinical psychology.

General psychology deals with psychological aspects of a normal human being. It studies concepts and methods etc. related to heredity and environment, physical and mental growth and development and personality traits pertaining to normal human beings.

Child psychology studies the psycho-somatic development of human beings since conception to the age of 18 years. Childhood has been divided into six stages or period of life known as (i) Pre-natal (Fertilisation to birth), (ii) Oral (0-one year), (iii) Anal (one to three years), (iv) Oedipal (three to six years), (v) Latency (six to twelve years) and (vi) Adolescence.

Development psychology studies human characteristics after adolescence to the end of life. It has been divided into three major periods known as (i) Pre-maturity (18 to 25 years), (ii) Maturity (25 to 45 years) and (iii) Old age (45 years to the end of life).

Clinical psychology deals with adjustment problems of human beings and also with those aspects which refer to deviancy, healthier community life and prevention of mental disorders.

You may observe that many of the fundamental assumptions, concepts, principles, theories, methods, techniques and tools of social work are based and derived from psychology. Psychology has been defined as the positive science of human behaviour. Human behaviour pattern influences interaction between the client and the worker and the procedural steps and methodology of psychology help in the process of interaction. A basic knowledge of psychology as provided in this chapter will help you as a practitioner of social work. Such knowledge is a pre-requisite to social work profession because it will enable you to understand the behaviour of the individual and provide the necessary concepts and tools to help the individual cope with the problems in life.

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# 25

# Basic Psychological Concepts in Human Behaviour

* *Gayatri*

## Introduction

It is well known that society is formed by human beings. Psychologists study human beings, psychological components and their influence on human behaviour. Here we are concerned with some of the most significant psychological concepts being used in studying human behaviour.

An attitude is a person's tendency to respond to an object and situations. Anything desirable to a person is value. Prejudice is also an attitude. Prejudice predisposes a person to think, perceive, feel and act in favourable or unfovourable ways towards a group or its members.

Learning is the process by which we organise our responses into 'new behaviour'. Learning demands the formation of associations between stimuli and responses. Learning can be defined as a permanent change that occurs as a result of practice and experience. There are two types of memory: when we try to remember names or dates that is "word or verbal memory' and when we try to remember the technique of driving a car after an interval of several years, that is muscular or motor memory. Word or verbal memory requires more brain traces and utilises more nerve pathways than the muscular or motor

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memory. There are four aspects of memory i.e. (i) Fixation or acquisition, (ii) Retention, (iii) Recall and (iv) Recognition.

Perception is that organizing process by which we come to know of objects in their appropriate identity, as tree, man, building and so on. Social perception of others is initially based on the information that we obtain about them.

A stereotype is often the result of a prejudiced attitude and may be defined as a fixed set of greatly simplified beliefs or ideas held by the members of a group.

Motivation is that psychological internal state which tends to initiate and to sustain activity.

In this unit let us discuss briefly some of these basic psychological concepts.

## Attitude and Value

### Nature

An attitude is a hypothetical construct which influences a person's behaviour when he/she controls objects and situations related to that attitude. An attitude consists of three parts (i) The affective component (how much a person likes or dislikes the attitude object), (ii) The cognitive (thinking, memory, judgment etc.) component (what a person believes about the attitude object) and (iii) The behavioural component (how the person acts towards the attitude object). Our like or dislike of something has much to do with determining our behaviour towards that something. We tend to approach, seek out, or be associated with things we like; we avoid, shun, or reject things we do not like. Attitude is simply an expression of how much we like or dislike various

things. The attitude represents our evaluation and preferences towards a wide variety of attitude objects. The attitude is based on information. For example, people who favour the capital punishment typically see it as a deterrent to crime and a just punishment. People who oppose it, typically see the capital punishment as a barbarian practice that does not deter crime.

Since we can not have all the information on any particular attitude object, our attitude is always open to revision. We have ample opportunities in life for attitude change. Attitude can be formed about many things. The object of attitude can be entities (a lecture, a shop), people (the prime minister, the teacher, the friend) or abstract concepts (delivery, human rights, fellowship) and so on. Any thing that arouses evaluative feelings is an object of attitude. Attitude is different from belief or opinion. Belief is cognition or thought about the characteristic of object. Suppose your friend expresses a favourable attitude towards a candidate for prime ministership; this attitude is probably associated with a number of specific beliefs about the candidate such as the candidate having a sound social security policy; his/her willingness work for poor people and developing a harmonious relationship with neighbouring countries and so on. Belief or opinion is assessed by how likely that is to be true. Our evaluative feelings about belief contribute to our attitude. An attitude is often a summary of the evaluation made of different aspects of the attitude object. The scientific study of attitude requires measurement. There are many techniques to measure attitude. The most common method of measuring attitude is the attitude scale.

**Influence of Attitudinal Change**

The formation and change of attitudes in daily life is part of the ongoing process of living. Attitude formation and change occurs in the context of existing inter-personal relationships, group memberships and particular situations; they span various time periods. Sometimes the extent of attitude change is extreme. The mass media often dramatizes such change when it is coercively-induced. An extreme change of attitude does not always require coercion. It is possible to identify the basic units involved in the attitude change process. The basic unit involved in an attitude change sequence is very similar to that involved in a social influence. Social influence can be described as an agent making an intervention towards some focal person; attitude change minimally involves a source sending a message toward some focal person.

The basic sequence in attitude change involves a source sending a message to a receiver in order to determine the position held before the message was sent to him. The form of an attitude-change sequence is virtually identical to the form of an influence sequence. The characteristics of the source that effect attitude change have high credibility and attractiveness. Attractiveness can be physical attractiveness, perceived liking or similarity to the receiver. Suggestion, appeals to fear, and one-sided versus two-sided messages are characteristics of the message that affect attitude change.

All receivers do not respond in the same way to any given message. Some are more easily influenced than others. The impact of a message on a particular receiver depends upon how different the message is from the receiver's position and his defensive

experience pertaining to its position. Attitudes are reputed to guide behaviour but sometimes there is no link between people's attitude and their behaviour. Attitudes, under certain conditions, may predict behaviour. Among such conditions. a correspondence between the measure of attitude and the behaviour that is observed, the presence of direct experience in the formation of the attitude, and the relevance of the attitude issue to the person whose behaviour is being observed, are prominent.

Values make our lives meaningful and give a sense of direction. A value may be anything that is desirable to a person. When value is socially conditioned and arises in interaction with others, it is known *as want*. There is a sense in which a value may be antecedent to a want and direct the course of a want, as for instance, when we want things because they have social value, or because they are prestige bearers. A person's set of values refers to the intentions and presuppositions by which he lives. These presuppositions and intentions serve as directive influences for one's behaviour. In this way they render a person's life relatively coherent and meaningful. This can be observed in hierarchically arranged values with one value taking precedence over another. The relationship between one's value hierarchy and his total personality is yet to be explored. While we make efforts to understand one's value hierarchy we come to know one as a better person. A person's value hierarchy is more integrated and his personality is more organized when he lives by habits and behaves inconsistently.

A child's actions are conditioned by the dominant values of his family. These values are moral, religious, social etc. The family's value system serves as a

relatively clear guide to present and future conduct to the growing child. When a child comes into contact with norms and attitudes different from those of his family, he feels his value challenged. Values have a strong motivational character as they resemble wants and needs. Although they are unquestionably influenced by the expectations and norms of society, they also vary from person to person. This variation is reflected in their response to social stimulation. Norms are expressions of the dominant standard existing in a group. Values are both universal in a group and unique in an individual. They are universal because all members of a group behave in accordance with their dictates. They are unique in the sense that every individual assimilates them in accordance with his own perceptual system.

A person perceives himself and others in the light of the value system. Studies show that the individual, motivated by a theoretical value system, devotes himself to abstract philosophical, logical or scientific pursuits. He is motivated by the need for knowledge. The political man is driven by the need for power over others. The economic man is impelled by the need for material gain. The social man is motivated by sympathy and the need to relate himself positively to others. The aesthetic person finds satisfaction in sensuous experience such as beauty, symmetry and harmony. Attitudes are learned in interaction with values. Attitudes and values are, to a great extent, inseparable aspects of human behaviour. They guide the individual in his/her adjustment to social reality. Attitudes and values frame a person's social behaviour and his/her personality.

## Prejudice

Prejudice is an attitude which predisposes an individual to think perceive, feel and act in favourable or unfavourable ways towards a group or its members. Whether or not a prejudiced person will really behave in accordance with his attitude depends upon circumstances and other factors. The term prejudice stresses the perceptual, cognitive and emotional content of person's internal feelings, predispositions and experiences. It does not necessarily imply that behaviour is congruent with such experience.

The word prejudice is derived from the Latin word 'Prejudicium': 'Pre' means before and 'Judicium' means judgment. Prejudice refers to positive or negative evaluations or judgments of members of a group that are based primarily on the fact of their membership in the group and not necessarily because of particular characteristics of individual members. It is quite often defined as a negative attitude towards the members of some social, ethnic or religious group.

### Characteristics of Prejudice

i) Since prejudice is a type of attitude, it has to be acquired. A newborn child does not have a negative or positive prejudice towards people from other cast. As he comes to know about people's caste, class or religion, prejudice develops.

ii) Prejudice has an emotional tone. If the prejudice is favourable then one shows love and affection towards people of that class or caste. A person's unfavourable prejudice towards people of other ethnic group or religion comes out in the form of hostility, hate and anger.

iii) Prejudice is directed towards the group as a whole. The target of a prejudice is not an individual but the whole group. In spite of having some good qualities, any person or member of a particular group would be shown a particular type of prejudice by members of other groups.

iv) Prejudice is based on rigid generalization. Rigidity is found in prejudice and it is based on inflexible generalization. Even after receiving authentic information one does not change his/her prejudice.

v) Prejudice is not related to reality. Whether prejudice is favorable or unfavourable, it is not related to reality. It is based on our traditions and customs.

There are five main theories of prejudice (i) Social learning theory which deals with a particular individual's prejudice and locates the cause in the prejudiced person's learning experiences with parents, friends and teachers etc., (ii) Cognitive theory which emphasizes the cognitive processes such as categorization, salience, and schemes that contribute to prejudice, (iii) Motivational theory which looks for the origins of prejudice in the prejudiced person's personality, (iv) Social identity theory which analyses how people categorize the social world into ingroups and outgroups and gain self-esteem based on the statues of relevant outgroups, (v) Group conflict theory which combines the origin and the process of development of prejudice in a particular society, culture and group.

The factors that help to maintain prejudice operate on three levels i.e (i) Social structure, (ii) Individual personality dynamics and (iii) Culture. Factors in social structure are (a) Conformity to the norms of prejudice;

(b) Interaction pattern; (c) Leadership support and (d) Environmental support. Individual personality dynamics include (a) Frustration, aggression and making scapegoats, (b) Economic and status gains (c) Personality needs and (d) The authoritarian personality. The cultural factors include (a) Values and norms; (b) Socialization of the child and (c) Ingroup Vs outgroup membership.

**Effect of Prejudice in Social Behaviour**

The effect of prejudice is both positive and negative. The positive effects of prejudice are as follows: (i) It helps a person satisfy his suppressed desire; (ii) It helps a person to get rid of his frustration by being aggressive towards other groups, (iii) With the help of prejudice the group may develop a feeling of superiority which helps in satisfying the need for prestige.

Negative effect of prejudice are: (i) Prejudice result in social conflict; (ii) It is the cause of social disorganization and (iii) It creates problems for national integration.

## Learning

Learning is that process which is the result of directed physical and mental activity leading to new or changed responses. The usual antecedent condition for learning is a single trial or it may come after many hours spent in fruitless endeavor. The length of the trial and error period depends on the difficulty of the task, the maturity of the learner and the skill, understanding and experience needed for the task. The trial period ends when the correct or right response occurs. The right response is that which closes the deal, ends the search or solves the problems. Reinforcement occurs when a response is satisfying. Once the correct

sequence act has been established as a result of reinforcement, smoothness and skills are gained though repetition or exercise. Repetition provides a chance to reinforce what is learned and helps in better operation It also strengthens the selected responses until they become well established habits.

**Types**

Multiple response learning is related to human beings and its nature is quite complex. There are three main types of multiple response human learning i.e (i) Sensory motor learning, (ii) Verbal learning and (iii) Concept learning. We will briefly take up the salient features of each.

In the field of human learning, sensory motor learning provides assistance to mirror drawing and pursuit learning. In this special learning, muscular actions are significant. These muscular actions are controlled by sense organs. Acquired human skills in different fields are included under this type of learning, for example, bicycling, playing on a piano, working on machines, flying aircrafts etc.

A major part of human behaviour comes under verbal learning. Comparatively the amount of verbal learning is much more than sensory motor learning. For the experimental study of verbal learning, meaningful words have been used. There are four main techniques of presentation of verbal material i.e. free-recall, serial learning and recall, paired associate and verbal discrimination procedure.

Concept learning is the most complex aspect of human learning. It is related with such verbal reactions in which things belonging to one category are known by one generalised name. Concept learning is very

important for thinking. After concept formation any stimulant or stimulant group is known by one name. For example after concept learning we call a particular species of fruit 'mango' and the other ' banana'. Though each mango or each banana may differ from each other, yet they are known by a generalised name because of many common characteristics. Concept is a process of differentiation between common characteristics and relations among objects, persons and events. From the beginning of the thinking process in a child concept learning begins taking place in his/ her mind. It develops in the mind of the child with his/ her contacts with new things. Concept learning is influenced by the process of perception, analysis, comparison, abstract thinking and generalization.

**Factors Promoting Learning**

i) Various psychological factors and elements are necessary for learning. These elements are mainly different types of motivation, reward, punishment, knowledge of result, competition etc. These elements generate the energy of reinforcement during learning. Learning and motivation are closely related. All living beings possess physical needs like hunger, thirst, sleep, sex, etc. As distinct from animals, human beings possess some strong social motives and that is why they are more influenced by rewards such as honour, fame and praise than physical motivation. Experiments show that rewards influence learning. When a hungry cat gets food as reward, she easily learns to go through the right path. In the field of learning the effect of punishment has also been studied. The electric shock as a punishment has been used in such experiments and it has been found that faults are corrected after punishment. A

knowledge of results also affects the learning process. When the learner knows that he/she would get something his/her learning rapidly progresses. Competition also contribute to the speed of learning. When there is competition among learners the learning process accelerates. In this situation the learner thinks that he/she will be honoured in the society for his/her quick learning. We can say that competition and a feeling of honour promote learning.

ii) Physiological factors are quite significant in the learning process. The physiological conditions of the learner affect his learning. Fully developed body parts, healthy body and mental maturity promote the learning process.

iii) Environmental factors also make a significant contribution to the learning process.

The season, the temperature, the light or sound and the air contribute a lot to the learning process.

**Factors Impeding Learning**

Indifference, frustration, depression, social withdrawal, rewardlessness, severe punishment, unawareness of result, unhealthy competition, malnutrition, inefficiency and inactivity of glands, aging, fatigue, drug addiction, a broken family, criminal social groups, severe poverty, improper rearing, lack of proper educational and vocational training facilities, unavailability of healthy recreational opportunities and facilities, intolerable temperatures, bad ventilation, loud sounds, drinking water and inadequate or insufficient diet etc. impede multiple response human learning.

## Memory

Memory is remembering what has previously been learned. Mental processes like emotion, perception, thinking and imagination are known to be involved in this process as well. After learning or experiencing any subject or event the process of memory begins. According to our needs we bring this process into our conscious, recognise and express it in our responses. All these mental stages are a part of memory. Some psychologists consider memory as a physiological phenomenon rather a psychological one. These psychologists say that the memory is reproductive. Those who consider memory as a psychological phenomenon state that the memory of certain events is easier than others.

The first requisite element for memory is the assembling of facts and events which are to be taught under the learning process initially. The process of *learning* is the first necessary element of memory. The second element is the *retention* of those facts and events which have been learned. This is the organization of learned subjects. The third element is to bring those facts and events which are retained in mind after learning under the *recall process*. The fourth element is the *recognition* of those facts and events which have been retained in our mind after learning and recall them to recognize them in their true form.

### Types

Psychologists have described various types of memory. Given below are two popular categories of memory:

I) The first category contains four types of memory i.e. (i) Sensory register, (ii) Short term memory (STM), (iii) Rehearsal and (iv) Long term memory (LTM).

The storage function of the sensory channels is called sensory register. Most of the information briefly held in the sensory register is lost; what has been briefly stored simply decays from the register. We pay attention to and recognise some of the information in the sensory register; and when we do this, the attended to information is passed on to short term memory for further processing. Experiments show that the visual sensory register holds information for upto about one second, while the auditory register holds information somewhat longer, upto 4 -5 seconds.

Short term memory is the memory that holds information received from sensory register for up to about 30 seconds. The length of the retention depends on many factors. Since the capacity of STM is so small much information stored here is lost as it is re-placed by other incoming items of information. Before it is lost, some of the information can be retrieved and used. We rapidly scan through STM when searching for an item of information. We examine everything in STM when we try to retrieve an item from it. Scanning process continues until all items of STM have been examined. Some of the information in STM is neither lost nor retrieved but passed along to the next memory stage – Long Term Memory – through rehearsal.

The process of rehearsal consists of keeping items of information at the centre of attention, perhaps by repeating them silently or aloud. The more an item is rehearsed, the more likely it is to be part of long term memory. The Sheer amount of rehearsal may be less important than the ways in which the information is rehearsed. Just going over and over what is to be remembered does not succeed in transferring it to long term memory. Elaborative rehearsal is more likely to succeed. Elaborative rehearsal involves giving the

material, organisation and meaning as it is being rehearsed.

Long Term Memory (LTM) may last for days, months, years or even a life time. The storage capacity of LTM has no known time. Once information is stored in LTM, it is there for good; we seem to forget it is there because we have trouble, retrieving or getting access to what has been stored. We forget because of the confusion and interference produced by new things learned and put into LTM. LTM contains words, sentences, ideas, concepts and life experiences.

The second category also consists of four types of memory i.e. (i) Habit Memory, (ii) True Memory, (iii) Immediate Memory and (iv) Prolonged Memory.

Habit memory depends on noting any subject matter without understanding it. In this memory we do not use the process of remembering on the basis of thinking or logic. This type of memory has been considered physical memory instead of mental memory, and has no place for wisdom or reality.

True memory is just opposite of habit memory. In this memory we bring subject matter into our memory after understanding it well. In true memory the process of remembering depends on thinking and logic. This is mental memory with an appropriate place for intellect and reality. Some psychologists do not agree with the division of memory on physical and mental grounds and advocate in favour of their inter-relationship.

When any subject matter is repeated just after visualising or hearing, that is called immediate memory. Immediate memory is different from long term memory. Immediate memory is temporary. Studies show that immediate memory develops with age. It

develops somewhat quicker in adolescence. The result of immediate memory may be known on the basis of words and numbers. Immediate memory indicates memory extension and this memory extension may be related to vision and audition. When words and numbers are shown, the immediate memory is called immediate vision memory extension and when words and numbers are audited the immediate memory is called immediate audition memory extension.

Prolonged memory is the opposite of immediate memory and its nature is sustainable. In prolonged memory we use the learned material again after a definite time-interval for our purpose. Remembering lessons before examination and writing them in the answer book at the time of the examination, after recognising them, is a form of prolonged memory.

## Perception

Perception is that organising process by which we come to know objects in their appropriate identity, as trees, men, buildings, machines and so on. Perception does not operate like an adding machine: impressions are not cumulative; rather, the mind interprets and integrates what it receives. We do not see the same thing in a picture, and report the same accident differentially depending on our age, sex, intelligence, experience etc. A distinction is often made between sensation and perception on the ground that sensation is the primary response of the sense organs, whereas perception is the meaningful apprehension of the stimulus object. This distinction is theoretical with very little practical value. The processes of sensation and perception are not separated in experience. We never have pure sensations of colour or form or sound distinct from associations with objects and other

experiences. If some one mentions the Taj Mahal at Agra, our nod of recognition will probably include a visual image of the building supplemented by memories of things seen there. Odour of medicine reminds us of a hospital ward and a sweet taste may call to mind experiences of a dinner party. In response to the term cricket many people report feeling as though they are bowling or batting. Perception in these cases differs somewhat from imagination. In fact, imagination is really perception, in which there is a minimum sensory control. Perception is a mediating process antecedent to the final response. What we perceive depends in part on the nature of the stimulus and to an even greater degree on ourselves, so that perception becomes the comprehension of a present situation in the light of past experience.

The main characteristics of perception are unity and organisation of feelings and emotions; attention and selection; fixation and persistency; learning and past experiences etc. Attention precedes perception and determines its character. Attention is a process of give and take with the environment. It is an active behaviour. We are said to be attentive when our sense organ activity is focused upon some defined stimulus: sounds in the street, changes in the weather, a cricket match, a lecture etc.

Perception is determined by internal personal conditions and external social situations. Motives, emotions, familiarity, attitudes, values and adjustment are the main internal factors which influence perception. The organization of stimulus, the similarity in stimulus, closeness in stimulus, elements of figure and context, influence perceptions. The presence of others or a group also influences perception.

**Types**

There are two main types of perception i.e. (i) Depth perception, (ii) Movement perception.

Depth perception is related to the linear perspective, clearness, interposition, shadows, gradients of texture and movement of objects, closure or away from the fixation point.

Movement perception is related to the type of motion (i) Apparent motion and (ii) Real motion. The apparent motion may be autokinetic or induced.

**Social Perception**

Social perception is a subject matter of social cognition. Our social perception of others is initially based on the information we obtain about them and inferences (attributions) we make about the causes of their behaviour. Our social perceptions are grounded in our observation of others: their physical characteristics and their behaviour in particular settings. Our observation provides the information i.e. converted into meaningful inferences by our cognitive framework. At a minimum, this process involves placing the information into cognitive categories related to other categories. We can make simple inferences from minimum data or combine rich sets of information into overall impressions. We can also make inferences about the causes of other people's behaviour as well as our own behaviour. Despite the smoothness in the working of the process, it has no guarantee of accuracy or the possibility of comparability with the observations of others. Social perception processes determine how we react to others and how we see ourselves. The cognitive framework simplifies the process of forming impressions of others. Many of the factors involved in

making attributions about others also play a role in the process of forming self attribution. Social facilitation occurs most readily where the presence of the other is motivating.

Conformity pressures can create situations in which the information obtained from personal modes conflicts with the information obtained from social modes. Conformity can also occur in response to the requests of an authority figure and to rules governing behaviour.

## Stereotype

A stereotype is a fixed set of greatly simplified beliefs or idea which are held generally by the members of a group or by people. One caste or race may have a set of ideas about another caste or race. We have stereotyped ideas about various religious, ethnic or sex groups. Stereotype refers to certain physical aspects of some people; for example a tall and high-necked women may be looked upon as a beautiful women or a broad shouldered tall black person may be regarded as a cruel person. Stereotypes are highly generalized beliefs shared by the members of a group. They may be either based on some objective or on few observed instances. It has been considered as a concept that leads to false classification and feelings of like and dislike, approval or disapproval. Stereotype is a form of typification with three characteristics (i) People identify a category of persons according to certain attributes, (ii) People agree in attributing sets of traits or characteristics to the category of persons and (iii) People attribute the characteristics to any person belonging to the category.

The main characteristics of a stereotype are : (i) A stereotype is a mental picture or image. A stereotype is a mental picture of a class or a group on the basis

of which we assign some characteristics to the members of that group, (ii) A stereotype includes a widely agreed belief about a group of people also. For instances most people believe that teachers are idealist, politicians are opportunist and so on, (iii) A stereotype involves gross and exaggerated generalisation. It develops on the basis of the experience of a few people of any group, (iv) Generally no change takes place in a stereotype. It does not change in spite of exposure to new information or contradictory information and (v) A stereotype can either be positive or negative. It is related to prejudice.

Stereotypes are not innate but are acquired. The factors responsible for the formation of stereotypes are (i) Partial experience and knowledge, (ii) Socialisation, (iii) Social and cultural factors, (iv) Imitation and (v) Tradition and folklore.

Stereotypes have an important role to play in social life as they influence our social interaction. We evaluate and interact with other people on their basis. The main functions of stereotypes are (i) to make social behaviour meaningful, (ii) to control social behaviour, (iii) to predict social behaviour and (iv) to help us in commercial advertisements. Stereotypes influence our social interaction as well as interfere with our functioning.

## Motivation

Motivation refers to the driving and pulling forces which result in persistent behaviour directed towards a particular goal. Motives are inferences from observations of behaviour. They are powerful tools for the explanation of behaviour and they allow us to make predictions about future behaviour.

Physical needs like hunger, thirst, rest, sex etc. of human beings are basic needs and they are hereditary. The internal energy generated by the human being in the course of several actions to satisfy his/her physical needs that helps him/her to achieve the goal, is called drive.

Theories of motivation include drive theories, incentive theories, the opponent process theories and optimal-level theories. Drive theories state that behaviour is pushed towards goals by internal states within the person. Incentive theories stress the ability of goals to pull behaviour towards them. The opponent process theory is a hedonistic theory as it says that we are motivated to seek goals which make us feel good and avoid goals that create displeasure. This theory also says that many emotional motivating states are followed by opposing or opposite states. Optimal level theories are hedonistic theories which say that behaviour is directed towards seeking an optimal level of arousal or a balanced homeostatic state in internal physiological processes.

Biological motives such as hunger, thirst and sex have their origin in the physiological state of the body. These motives can be aroused by departures from the balanced or homeostatic levels of bodily processes, for instance by certain hormones or by sensory stimuli. Hunger motivation may be initiated when the blood level or the rate of use of nutrient substances falls below a certain threshold.

Sexual motivation depends to a large degree, on sex hormones. These hormones organise the brain and body during the developmental stage so that they have male or female characteristics. The activation of sexual motivation in humans is controlled more by external stimuli and learning than by sex hormones.

Sleep, adjustment with temperature and environmental /atmospheric conditions, freedom from discomfort/pain and excretory pressure are other forms of physical motivation.

Social motives are acquired motives such as the need for achievement, need for power, and human aggression which are learned/acquired motives that involve other people. The need for achievement is a motive to accomplish things and to be successful in performing tasks. People in need of high achievement prefer to work on moderately challenging and risky tasks which promise success and tasks where their performance can be compared with the performance of others. They are persistent in their work, seek more challenging tasks when they are successful and like to work in situations where they have some control over the outcome. Some women in need of high achievement may not display the characteristic behaviours mentioned above. The level of achievement motivation in a society can sometimes be related to its economic growth.

Power motivation is a social motive in which the goals are to influence, control, persuade, lead, cajole, charm others and enhance one's reputation. The behavioural expression of power motivation takes many forms. Popular among them are impulsive and aggressive action, participation in competitive sports, the joining of organisations, the collection of possessions, the choice of occupations which have a high impact on others. Among men it also takes the form of drinking and sexual domination over women. A special form of power motivation is characteristic of people who express their power motivation by exploiting others in a deceptive and unscrupulous fashion. Hostile aggression is the behaviour which

has as its goal the harming of another living being who is motivated to avoid such harm. Among the environmental and social causes of hostile aggression are intense and arbitrarily imposed frustration, insults, compliance with social pressures and unpleasant environmental conditions such as high temperatures, intense noise, crowding etc. Social learning, classical and instrumental conditioning are ways in which the tendency to aggress against others can be learned. Under some conditions, punishment, catharsis, the presence of non-aggressive models or the induction of responses incompatible with aggression may serve to lessen aggressive behaviour.

The course of motivation does not run smoothly. Things happen that prevent us from reaching the goals towards which we are driven or pulled. The term frustration refers to the blocking of behaviour which is directed towards a goal. There are many ways in which motives can be frustrated. Conflict among simultaneously aroused motives is the most important reason why goals are not reached. If motives are blocked, emotional feelings and behaviour are affected. A person who cannot achieve his/her goal feels depressed, fearful, anxious, guilty or angry. He/she becomes unable to derive pleasure from living. There are many sources of frustration. Among them, environmental forces that block motive fulfilment, personal inadequacies that make it impossible to reach goals and conflicts between and among motives, are worth mentioning. Environmental frustration is caused by physical obstacles or resistance like lack of money, a locked door or people (parents, teachers, police officers etc.) preventing one from achieving the goal.

Factors that have an influence on an individual's physiological and social growth or development, affect

his/her motivation. Proper genetic characteristics, a good diet, comfortable environmental conditions, a harmonious and cooperative social environment etc. help develop healthy motivation. Improper genetic ingredients, malnutrition, communal/criminal or unorganised social groups are obstacles to healthy motivation.

## Conclusion

In this chapter we have learned some of the basic psychological concepts of human behaviour such as attitude, value, prejudice, learning, memory, perception, stereotype, and motivation.

An attitude is a hypothetical construct which influences a person's behaviour when he/she controls objects and situations related to that attitude. An attitude consists of three parts: (i) The affective component (how much a person likes or dislikes the attitude object), (ii) The cognitive (thinking, memory learning and judgment) components (what a person believes about the attitude object) and (iii) The behavioural component (How the person acts towards the attitude object).

A value maybe anything that is desirable to a person. A person's set of values refers to the presuppositions by which he/she lives. Values have a strong motivational character as they resemble wants and needs. Values are both universal in a group and unique in an individual.

Prejudice is an attitude which predisposes an individual to think, perceive, feel and act in favourable or unfavourable ways towards a group or its members.

Learning is that process which is the result of directed

physical and mental activity leading to new or changed responses. The usual antecedent condition for learning is a state of need or a high level of motivation. Learning proceeds through a trial and error period to a final selection of the appropriate response. Learning is most frequently thought of as that process which, as a result of training and experience, leads to new or changed responses.

Memory consists in remembering what has previously been learned. Memory is the knowledge of an event or fact, of which in the meantime, we have not been thinking with the additional consciousness that we have thought or experienced before.

Perception is that organizing process by which we come to know objects in their appropriate identity, as trees, men, buildings, machines and so on. Social perceptions is a subject matter of social cognition. Our social perception of other is initially based on the information we obtain about them and inferences (attributions) we make about the causes for their behaviour. Our social perceptions are based on our observation of others.

A stereotype is a fixed set of simplified beliefs or ideas which are held generally by the members of a group or by people. Motivation refers to the driving and pulling forces which result in persistent behaviour directed towards particular goals. Motives are inferences from observation of behaviour.

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# Defence Mechanism

* *Gayatri*

## Introduction

All of us, quite often, face environmental or personal obstacles in life which cause anxiety and lead to stress. Psychologists have given different names to stress such as frustration, conflict, pressure etc. To protect ourselves against anxiety and stress, our ego sets up mechanisms which are known as defence mechanisms. Defence mechanisms are unrealistic and operate at the unconscious level. While one uses such a mechanism one is unaware of it. Defence mechanisms are not healthy methods to cope with anxiety and stress as they are an unrealistic approach to problems. If defence mechanisms are used frequently, they lead to serious psychological disorders. The severity of stress depends on individual personality, situations, contexts, duration, importance, multiplicity of need, strength and quantity of conflicting forces, eminence of anticipated stress, unfamiliarity or suddenness of the problem, perception of a problem, degree of threat, stress tolerance of the individual and external resources and supports etc. We experience stress in our life when we face circumstances like death of spouse or a close family member or close friend, marital separation or reconciliation, imprisonment, personal injury, illness, marriage, retirement, sex difficulties, pregnancy, new comer in family, change in financial state, business readjustment, change in job or work pattern, change

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in the responsibilities at work, mortgage or loan, difference with spouse or head of the family, beloved's leaving home, trouble with in-laws, outstanding personal achievement, attachment or detachment with job or wife, joining or leaving school, change in living conditions and residences or schools, change in personal habits, trouble with boss, change in religion, recreational and social activities, vacation and social gathering etc.

## Types of Defence Mechanisms

Psychologists have classified different defence mechanisms in a number of ways. Some of them put defence mechanisms in five or six main categories while others extend them up to 17-18 categories. Defence mechanisms are learned and designed to tackle self devaluation, anxiety and hurt and operate automatically at habitual levels. They typically involve measures of self deception and distortion. Defence mechanisms are usually exercised in combination instead of singly and quite often they are combined with task oriented behaviour. To a great extent they are necessary to soften failure, alleviate anxiety and hurt and protect feelings of significance adequacy and worth. Normally, they are adjustive reactions but sometimes they seriously interfere with the effective resolution of stress. Defence mechanisms may feature in a negative or a positive form.

The following is a list of the main types of defence mechanisms:

i) Projection

ii) Reaction formation

iii) Regression

iv) Repression

v) Rationalisation

vi) Denial of reality

vii) Fantasy

viii) Displacement

ix) Emotional Insulation

x) Intellectualisation (Isolation)

xi) Undoing

xii) Identification

xiii) Introjections

xiv) Compensation

xv) Acting out

xvi) Selective forgetting

xvii) Negativism

xviii) Sublimation

## Different Defence Mechanisms

Now we will take up different types of defence mechanisms along with their features.

i) **Projection**

In projection, others are seen responsible for one's own shortcoming, mistake, misdeed, unacceptable impulses, thoughts and desires. Projection is the most common tendency being observed in human behaviour for ego protection. If a student fails in an examination he/she attributes it to poor teaching or the unfair

behaviour of the teacher. Truants and delinquents blame their parents for their negligence, rejection or underestimation of their problems. Fate and bad luck are commonly used projections. Many times lifeless objects are blamed. If a small boy falls off a cycle he may attack it by kicking it. If a player slips he may return to the spot as if that was the cause of his slip.

In extreme cases a person may be convinced that others are conspiring against him and develop delusions of persecution. Other reactions of projective mechanism include the individual's attribution of his own unacceptable desires to others. This tendency is common among those who follow a strict code of moral values. For example if a man is attracted to a girl he may insist that the girl is behaving seductively towards him. Consequently the girl becomes the offender while the man remains conveniently pure, unaware of his own unacceptable inclinations.

ii) **Reaction Formation**

When an individual protects himself from dangerous desire developing of a conscious attitude and behaviour patterns opposite to repression, he uses reaction formation. In this situation one conceals hate with love, cruelty with kindness, sexual promiscuity with moralistic sexual attitude and behaviour. Thus he creates hurdles or barriers that reinforce his repression. His real desires and feelings are kept from conscious awareness. Reaction formation helps the individual to maintain his adjustment with socially accepted behaviour and avoid awareness of fear of self devaluating desires. One does not have a conscious control in this mechanism resulting in exaggerated and rigid fears of beliefs.

iii) **Regression**

Regression is a defence mechanism in which one performs reverted behaviour. The decline in attention of parents towards an elder child due to a new addition to the family may result in the elder one reverting to bed wetting and other infantile behaviour to draw parental attention. Becoming independent from a state of dependency is not so easy in life; that is why during severe stresses or difficult challenges one retreats to a somewhat immature level of adjustment. In regression an individual retreats from reality and may exhibit behavior which is not normally expected from that person.

iv) **Repression**

When a person excludes painful thoughts from his conscious awareness he uses repression. Very often it has been considered as selective forgetting but it is selective remembering. The matter one represses and refuses to include in the conscious awareness is not really forgotten. In case a person sees the accidental sudden demise of beloved friend or family member, this painful experience may be excluded from his conscious self leading him to become amnesic to this experience. Repression occurs without the conscious intention or awareness of the person. In suppression, the person consciously takes the decision not to express the feeling or to think about the disturbing event. Repression is a significant self defence mechanism through which the ego is being protected from sudden traumatic experiences till it becomes desensitized to the shock. This mechanism helps the shocked person to control desires which are not acceptable to him or dangerous for his self. At the same time it alleviates anxiety which is associated with such dangerous and unacceptable desire.

Repression may combine with other defence mechanisms in varying degrees. When the repression mechanism fails, the ego tries more maladaptive defences.

v) **Rationalisation**

When a person justifies his maladaptive behaviour by false logic or ascribes it to noble motives which do not inspire it, it is called rationalization.. Rationalisation mechanism has two main defective values i.e.

a) It helps to justify particular specific behaviour and

b) Contributes to soften disappointment related with unattained goals.

While using rationalisation mechanism one thinks logically and offers socially approved reasons in order to justify one's behaviour. Though one knows that his action is immoral and unreasonable, he has an insuperable urge to rationalise it to prove to himself and to others that his action is reasonable, commonly accepted, and full of conventional morality. One may use rationalisation to often his disappointment soften in case of the unfulfilment of his usually unacceptable desires. A popular example of rationalisation is the "sour grapes" reaction. The fox who was unable to reach a cluster of delicious grapes, decided that he did not want them after all because they were probably sour. Similarly many times students justify their below standard performance on the ground that they have disassociated themselves from the competitive rat race of society. Sometimes, failure to achieve a particular goal will end up in describing the goal itself as worthless. It is difficult to say where an objective consideration or reality ends and rationalisation

begins. The following forms of behaviour indicate rationalisation:

a) Search for reasons to justify behaviour,

b) Inability to recognise inconsistencies or contradictions and

c) To become upset if one's reasoning is not accepted or questioned.

Halt for a short while and check your familiarity with the contents you have gone through so far.

Now we are ready to be acquainted with other defence mechanisms.

vi) **Denial of reality**

Denial of reality is the most primitive self defence mechanism and this is perhaps the simplest one. In this, the person ignores or refuses to acknowledge reality which is not acceptable or agreeable to him. If a person is feeling the stress of an unpleasant topic he may turn away from that. Other features of this mechanism are to faint when confronted with a traumatic situation, deny criticism to show that he is engaged with other work and has no time to deal with problems related to marital life, child rearing or job situations etc. Such defensive reaction under extreme conditions gives temporary relief from the full impact of the traumatic situation.

vii) **Fantasy**

When a person meets his needs or achieves any goal only in the imagination to overcome frustation, his ego exercises *fantasy* defence mechanism. An

unrealistic wish to be considered as a great leader, or a famous cricketer or an athlete or film actor with highly admirable performances are some of the features of fantasy. Using this mechanism one considers oneself capable, powerful and respected. Fantasies provide some compensatory gratification to the individual and work as a preventive measure.

viii) **Displacement**

In *displacement* the person shifts his feelings of hostility and anxiety from the person who is the real cause to another person. Very often displacement is used in difficult emotional situations. Unpleasant experiences at work place leading to irritation and a quarrel with spouse at home is an example of displacement. Some times the person engages himself in exaggerated self accusation and feels severe guilt and self devaluation. Such reaction protects the individual from expressing dangerous hostility getting into a state of depression or contemplating any suicidal actions.

Displacement becomes extremely complex and deviant when it passes through a process of symbolic association. Swearing is commonly used as a means of ventilating pent-up feelings. Destructive criticism and gossip are disguised methods of expressing hostility.

ix) **Emotional Insulation**

People face several disappointments and frustrations in life and consequently they develop a capability to keep their anticipations confined. They do not become over-hopeful and carefully keep away from premature immature celebrations. This is emotional insulation. The person who looks forward to a prestigious position may not let himself become to excited or enthusiastic

for fear that it may not materialize. In an extreme situation where frustration is prolonged, the person may lose hope and adopt a confined way of life. Such a personality protects itself from the bitterness of sustained frustration by developing a passive attitude and rejecting any healthy out lets. To some extent emotional insulation is a significant means of protection against non-essential disappointment. In life we often take chances and actively participate in some risky activities using emotional insulation mechanism as a protective and preventive measure against the repetition of previous pain. The use of this defence mechanism, reduces the individual's rigorous and healthy participation in life.

x) **Intellectualisation (Isolation)**

This defence mechanism is related to both emotional insulation and rationalization. One may divest stress, avoid a stressful emotional reaction and feel comfortable, by offering a rational explanation (intellectualizstion). Very often we reduce our pain when a close friend or relative dies by saying that he lived a full life or died painlessly. To reduce our own guilt feelings one may see shortcoming in others. Intellectualisation may be used in excessively stressful as well as mildly by stressful situations in life.

We shall now take up other types of defence mechanisms.

xi) **Undoing (Atonement)**

Undoing mechanism is used to make socially unacceptable acts, feelings, expressions and thoughts, ineffective. To apologise for mistakes, bear punishment, confess or express regret for any past disapproved act are various forms of undoing. The undoing mechanism

develops in persons in early life during the process of socialization. In early life one learns that through apologising or being punished for any antisocial behaviour one's misdeeds can be overlooked and forgotten. In this early stage of life one develops methods of atoning for misdeeds. Such methods provide an unhealthy protection to ego for the time being. An unfaithful husband giving expensive gifts to his wife, or an unethical person giving huge donations for a religious cause, are examples of atonement. Provision of confession and commitment to forgiveness in different religions helps the person to come get rid of his guilty feelings and make a new start. Undoing defence mechanism operates at an unconscious level. The individual reduces his feeling of guilt by amending his act, without a conscious awareness of the purpose of the action.

xii) **Identification**

Identification may operate as a defence mechanism by increasing feelings of worth and protecting the individual against self devaluation. The process takes shape during childhood when a child identifies his elders as models. The growing child becomes aware of how he is being evaluated by others, depend on his family and other members of the primary group. When a child reaches adolescence or adulthood his identification capability enhances and covers a wide range of persons and groups. While on the one hand society evaluates the individual in the light of his group membership, on the other hand, the individual also evaluates himself in the same light. Often employees identify with the power and prestige of the company in which they are employed and students with the college they attend. By doing so, to some extent, they fulfill their desire of being a party to the

power and prestige of the group they belong to. Identification is significant for those who feel basically inferior and need support.

xiii) **Introjection**

Introjection and identification are interrelated. Introjection as a defence mechanism involves the acceptance of the other's values and norms as one's own even when they are the opposite of one's previous assumptions. After a change in the form of government people introject values and beliefs of the new government as a protective measure to themselves and avoid behaviour that may result in social rejection or humiliation. When a person changes his religion he accepts the values and faith of the new religion. Introjection may lead to maladaptive behaviour and has also been understood as identification with the aggressor. It is a defence reaction involving the concept that if one can not win over his enemy he should join him.

xiv) **Compensation**

When a person feels inferior or in adequate because of some real or imagined personal short-coming or weakness or any setback and failure in life, he reacts in his defence through compensation. Such a reaction may take any form and may be constructive task oriented or deliberate. Overcoming a physical handicap through sustained effort and exercise is an example of compensation. The compensatory reaction or behaviour may be a deciding factor for success in life. Mostly compensatory behaviour is indirect. People make an effort to draw attention away from a defect or a weakness. Often a physically unattractive person may develop a pleasing personality or a physically weak person may become good scholar instead of becoming

an athlete. All compensatory reactions are not desirable. Sometimes frustrated and neglected persons develop bad eating habits. Insecure children behave in such a way that they may get more attention from parents or family members. Sometimes people criticize others to bring them down to their own level. In extreme situations a person may involve himself in any antisocial behaviour or develop an eccentricity unconsciously make in order to attention.

xv) **Acting out**

Through acting out reactions a person reduces his anxiety and tension associated with a dangerous desire by allowing its expression. If a person feels that he has been mistreated by somebody or discriminated against he may become physically violent against the person he considers responsible for it. Acting out may be observed in cases where there is damage or destruction to property. Many of us in our life, experience active stress or conflict raising tension and anxiety to such a level that almost any action as a remedy is welcome. Many a times, acting out does not serve the purpose fully as it reduces tension and anxiety only for a few moments. Acting out is not possible in some circumstances as often people act not according to their own values but according to social values.

xvi) **Selective Forgetting**

Escaping from or avoiding undesired or painful by forgetting them is selective forgetting mechanism. In this mechanism important facts or concepts disappear from one's attention. This mechanism does not have any adverse effect as it happens in the normal course of forgetting. This selective forgetting disappears and the person's memory comes back to its visual form after the expiry of the difficult situation.

xvii) **Negativism**

The expression of a flat refusal of any incident comes under this defence mechanism though it is not considered to be healthy. Such a procedural situation arises when the person is unable to fight conflict directly. It normally happens in the work place. A person using this defence mechanism, may refuse to help in any conflict situation if he or she is approached at the time of the conflict. This happens because of the fear of failure.

xviii) **Sublimation**

In case of failure to get satisfaction directly for any emotion one may make an effort to get satisfaction through socially accepted means. This process is known as sublimation. Due to social factors and other inhibitions, direct and easy sexual satisfaction is not possible and it may be suppressed. If suppressed feeelings are not either connected or ventilated they may cause mental disorders. The provision of socially accepted means of ventilation or channelisation for suppressed feelings is sublimation. A short tempered person may channelise his unwanted emotions of temperament through engaging himself in heavy physical labour like cultivation, gardening, woodwork, etc. Sometimes through the sublimation mechanism, a person reacts positively and channelises his suppressed feelings in to work of art, literature or science etc. Sublimation is a self generated process.

## Conclusion

To protect ourselves against anxiety and stress our ego sets up mechanisms which are known as defence mechanisms. They are unrealistic and operate at the unconscious level. They are usually exercised in

combination. They soften failure, alleviate anxiety and deprivation and work as protection from feelings of inadequacy. Normally they are adjustive reactions and may be positive or negative.

We have gone through a number of such defence mechanisms. Understanding such defence mechanisms may help you in the practice of social work especially for problem-solving and counselling. Let us relook these defence mechanisms.

Putting the blame or difficulties on the other person is projection. Blocking harmful desire from being expressed by exaggerating the opposite attitude and type of behaviour is reaction formation. Retreating to earlier developmental level involving less mature responses and lower level aspiration is regression. Preventing painful thoughts from entering one's consciousness is repression. Attempting to prove one's behaviour justifiable and rational to be worthy for self and society is rationalisation. Denial of reality is protecting one's self from an unpleasant reality by a refusal to perceive or face it. Gratifying frustrated desires by imaginary achievements is fantasy. Discharging pent-up feelings like hostility on objects less dangerous than those which initially aroused the emotions is displacement. Reducing ego involvement and withdrawing into passivity to protect one self from hurt is emotional insulation. Cutting-off affective charge from hurtful situations or separating incompatible attitudes by the logic-tight compartments is intellectualisation. Atoning for and thus counteracting immoral desires or acts is undoing. Increasing feelings of worth by identifying self with person or institutions of illustrious standing is identification. Incorporating external values and standards into the ego structure so that the individual

is not at their mercy is introjection. Covering up weakness in one area and by emphasizing desirable traits in another by over-gratification is compensation. Reducing anxiety aroused by hidden or dangerous desirable by permitting their expression is acting out. Escaping from or avoiding undesired or painful thoughts through forgetting them is selective forgetting mechanism. Expression of a flat refusal of any incident or any action is negativism. Sublimation is the attempt to get satisfaction in directly for an emotion by other socially accepted means.

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# 27

# Normality and Abnormality

* *Jayanti Mohapatra*

## Introduction

All of us have experienced problems at some or the other time of our life, but different people react and cope with it in different ways. With rapid industrialization and globalization many people suffer from problems like anxiety and depression though everybody suffering with these problems do not seek professional medical support. We have developed certain ways of thinking and talking about behaviour that seem normal but the concepts we use for scientifically studying human behaviour need to be free from all subjective feelings of appropriateness which is generally attached to certain human behaviours and activities. Let us now examine the concepts related to abnormal behaviour.

## What is Abnormal Psychology?

Psychology and psychiatry have a long history of debate about the interrelated areas of normality and abnormality. Abnormal psychology is that branch of psychology which deals with abnormal behaviour. The literal meaning termed deviation from normal. You must be wondering as to which behaviour can be abnormal behaviour. Abnormal behaviour cannot be defined as a single component in a human being; rather it is a complex of several characteristics which

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are interlinked. Abnormality is usually determined by the presence of several characteristics at one time. The definition of abnormal behaviour takes into account the characteristics of infrequent occurrence, violation of norms, personal distress, dysfunction and unexpectedness of behaviour. Let us understand these concepts:

1) **Infrequent Occurrence:** Majority of people show average behaviour as concerned with any event in life. Those people who deviate from the average show extreme tendencies. But frequency cannot be considered as the sole criterion for determination of abnormal behaviour.

2) **Violation of Norms:** This approach is based on social norms and cultural values that guide behaviour in particular situations. If the behaviour of a particular individual violates social norms, threatens or makes others anxious, it can be considered as abnormal behaviour. Abnormality is a deviation of behaviour in higher degree from the accepted social norms. A word of caution in this characteristic is that the social norms vary across cultures. A social norm of one culture may be a violation of norm in others. This concept alone is too broad as criminals and prostitutes violate social norms but they are not necessarily studied within the domain of abnormal psychology.

3) **Personal Distress:** A behaviour can be considered abnormal if it creates distress in the person experiencing it. For example a regular and heavy consumer of alchohol may realize his habit to be unhealthy and wish to discontinue his habit. This behaviour can be identified as abnormal. The personal distress model is not self sufficient because people decide and report on how much

they are suffering. Also the levels of distress vary in different people.

4) **Dysfunctions:** Dysfunction or disability considers a person to be abnormal if his emotions, actions, or thoughts interfere with his ability to lead a normal life in the society. For example substance abuse disorders caused by abnormal drug use hamper a person's work performance.

5) **Unexpectedness:** This characteristic takes into account the unexpected occurrence of a behaviour.

Each of the standards discussed here helps in defining abnormality. A core feature of all abnormal behaviour is that it is **maladaptive.** The abnormal behaviour makes it difficult for a person to cope with the demands of day-to-day life. Being normal and abnormal is not based on very rigid criteria. They are the states of mind which every individual experiences. According to a psychologist "..... behaviour is abnormal, a manifestation of mental disorder, if it is both persistent and in serious degree contrary to the continued well-being of the individual and /or that of the human community of which the individual is a member." It is also important to note that to a certain extent definitions of abnormality are culturally based. For example talking to oneself may be considered as an abnormal behaviour but certain Polynesian countries and South American societies consider it to be a gift of special status from the deities.

## Causes of Abnormality

You must now be interested to know as to what causes the problems discussed above. The current views of abnormal behaviour tend to be an integration

of several paradigms. ***A paradigm is a set of basic assumptions that together define how to conceptualize studies and interpret data.*** The choice of a paradigm has some very important consequences in which abnormal behaviour is defined. Let us study these paradigms:

1) **Biological Paradigm:** This view holds that mental disorders are caused by biological or bodily processes. This paradigm is also called as the medical model. Individuals working with this paradigm assume that answers to abnormal behaviour lie within the body. Let us take an example Both researches and theory support that anxiety disorders may stem from a defect within the autonomic nervous system that causes a person to be easily aroused or heredity probably predisposes an individual to develop schizophrenia. For the past many years biological research has made great progress in elucidating brain behaviour relationship but still it is not sufficient to say that the biological paradigm answers all the questions of abnormal psychology.

2) **The psychoanalytic Paradigm:** Originally developed by Sigmund Freud this paradigm assumes unconscious conflicts to be the reason of abnormal behaviour. Freud particularly emphasized that intense anxiety can be caused by forbidden impulses for sex or aggression. The Freudian view also gives importance to guilt generated by superego in response to these impulses. The ego is caught in between id and superego which forces a person to adopt rigid defense mechanisms and inflexible behaviours.

3) **Behavioural Paradigm:** The behavioural paradigm considers maladaptive behaviour as the result of

failure in learning required for adaptive behaviour and learning ineffective responses to those behaviours.

4) **Cognitive Paradigm:** This paradigm considers that the interpretations made by people are central to the understanding of abnormal behaviour. These interpretations are based on the type of underlying experiences and schemas which people have.

Keeping the above mentioned paradigms or perspectives let us sum up the causes of abnormal behaviour. The causes of abnormal behaviour can be classified an under:

1) **Biological Factors:** Various biological factors like genetic defects, dysfunction in the endocrine system, brain dysfunction, may together or individually become the cause of abnormal behaviour. Research has found that disorders like schizophrenia and manic-depressive psychoses are genetically transmitted. In the same way many other factors like extreme physical deprivation may also lead to psychological abnormality.

2) **Psychological Factors:** The role of psychological factors in causing abnormality is indirect hence it is difficult to measure. But various psychological factors like relationship with parents during childhood, their attitude towards socialization, peer group etc. may develop faulty identity, over-pessimism, overindulgence or over-protectiveness in an individual.

3) **Socio-cultural Factors:** This factor is constantly being explored because not much specific evidence

has been found. But rapid urbanisation, social changes, changes in work culture etc. are making individuals more prone to anxiety, stress and depression. These factors thus contribute to the onset of abnormal behaviour.

## Assessment of Psychological Disorders

Several modes of assessment are used by a psychologist for describing a patient in the best possible way. The two main approaches of assessment are psychological and biological assessment.

1) **Psychological Assessment:** Psychological assessment includes interviews, which can be both structured and open in nature. Psychological tests like self report personality inventories, intelligence tests are structured while Projective Tests like Rorschach Ink Blot Test, Thematic Apperception test are open tests. Other than these observation method is also a useful method for assessing an individual.

2) **Biological Assessment:** This type of Assessment involves imaging techniques like CT Scan, PET Scan(Positron Emission Tomography) etc. which help to see various structures of the brain. Also neuropsychological tests are used to find brain defects by the variations in response to the psychological tests like Tactile Performance Test — Time Category Test, Speech Sounds Perception Test etc. Biological Assessment also includes psychophysical measurements such as pulse rate, heart rate, skin conductance etc.

### Classification of Psychological Disorders

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) of Mental Disorders developed by the American Psychiatric

Association includes a classification system which has been given in this box. This classifies the disorders based on the symptoms.

**DSM IV Classification System**

**Disorders Usually First Diagnosed in Infancy, Childhood or Adolescence**

Mental retardation — cognitive or intellectual ability which is below the norm for one's age group

Learning Disorders

Motor Skill Disorders — disorders related to activities that involve physical movement of parts of the body like eye-hand coordination or other motor activities

Communicative Disorders — disorders related to exchange of information

Attention — Deficit and Disruptive Disorders — disorders related to focussing attention

Feeding and Eating Disorders of Infancy

Other Disorders of Infancy, Childhood or Adolescence — The disorders in this category refers to: improper mental development, blocks related to learning like dyslexia, slow learners etc, improper eye-hand coordination, speaking disorders, eating disorders etc.

Delirium, Dementia and Amnestic and other Cognitive Disorders

Delirium which means improper speaking

Dementia or forgetting

Amnestic Disorders or problem of sleeping

Other Cognitive Disorders

Mental Disorders due to General mental condition not elsewhere classified

Substance related Disorders

Alcohol and substance abuse — People who use drugs as sedatives or for changing their mental state like Caffeine Related Disorders, Cannabis-related, Cocaine-related, Hallucinogen-related, Inhalant-related, Nicotine-related, Opium-related Disorders

**Schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders**

Schizophrenia, which means that the person has a problem in focussing or has split thinking. In this disorder the person is not able to pay attention to one topic at a time which hampers his/her performance.

**Mood Disorder —** These are disorders of emotion which need immediate medical attention.

Depressive Disorders — This is different from depressed mood. These include dissatisfaction and anxiety disturbance of sleep and motor functions, loss of interest, feelings of guilt, difficulty in concentration etc. which lead to various illness like fatigue, inability to clear thinking, feeling of worthlessness etc.

Bipolar Disorders — The individual experiences wide swings in mood from depression to elated mood in varying degrees.

**Anxiety Disorders**

Any disorder that produce free floating fear with no easily identifiable source.

Panic Disorder without Agoraphobia

Panic Disorder with agoraphobia

These phobias are unrealistic fears which a person develops at any point of time like Specific Phobia and Social Phobia

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Acute Stress Disorder

Generalised Anxiety Disorder.

Somatoform Disorders: These disorders refer to physical problems for along period with no organic basis.

Somatisation Disorder: In this disorder the common complaints are headaches, fatigue, nausea, abdominal pain and vague body pains etc. These person believe that they are sick, narrate long history to support it and take lot of medicines

Undifferentiated Somatoform Disorder

Conversion Disorder: People suffering from this disorder exhibit symptoms of deficits affecting motor or sensory function that suggests medical conditions like paralysis, loss of voice selective hearing etc.

Hypochondriasis: These people have an obsessive concern about the disease and are preoccupied with their body organs.

Body Dismorphic Disorder

**Factitious Disorders**

Dissociative Disorders involve feelings of alienation, large memory gaps etc. Dissociative Amnesia involves selective memory loss not due to any visible indication of organic changes.

Dissociative Fugue involves unexpected travel away from home and assumption of a new identity. The person may suddenly wake up and find oneself in an unknown place. Multiple personality Disorder — it involves disorders related to existence of two or more than two types of personality in one person of which the person is not always aware of.

Sexual and Gender Identity Disorders — These disorders are related to the normal sexual functioning of an individual which are related to Sexual Dysfunction, Sexual Desire Disorders, Sexual Arousal disorders, Orgasmic Disorders, Sexual Pain Disorders, Paraphilias, Gender Identity Disorders. These often result in blocks which form due to some undesired incidents in the childhood etc.

**Eating Disorders**

These disorders are related to eating like overeating or not eating at all

Anorexia Nervosa which is prolonged refusal to eat adequate amounts of food, Bulimia Nervosa which is followed by deliberate purging using either vomiting or laxatives.

**Sleep Disorders**

Primary Sleep Disorders, Dyssomnias, Parasomnias

**Impulse Control Disorders not Elsewhere Classified**

Intermittent Explosive Disorder, Kleptomania (unconscious stealing) , Pyromania (undue fear of Fire), Pathological Gambling etc.

**Adjustment Disorders**

**Personality Disorders**

Paranoid (pervasive, delusional thoughts, distrust, envy, jealousy), Schizoid, Schizotypal, Antisocial, Borderline, Histrionic, Narcissistic (individual who is in love with his/her self look), Avoidant, Dependent, Obsessive-Compulsive (persistent, unwanted and unshakable thoughts or irresistible habitual repeated actions.)

## Mental Disorders in Adults

*Mr. X is working in a firm where he is involved with public dealing. He is shy person and gets nervous especially if he has to talk with ladies. While dealing with ladies he used to feel a number of symptoms like wet hands, dryness of throat, lump in the stomach. To avoid this anxiety he unconsciously developed a number of problems like severe headache or pain in the stomach. He was advised rest and also asked to consult a psychologist by his physician as there were no other physiological disorders.*

This is a particular case of anxiety. But anxiety can take serious form if not addressed and treated properly. In this section of this lesson we will read some of the psychological disorders within the field of abnormal psychology. You must have read the classification according to the DSM-IV manual in the previous pages. It is not possible to study about all of them in detail hence we will focus on:

- Anxiety Disorders
- Personality Disorders
- Schizophrenia

### Anxiety Disorders

Anxiety can be described as a general feeling of dread or apprehension followed by physiological reactions like increased heart rate ,sweating, tense muscles

etc. Anxiety differs from fear in one respect and that is fear has a cause and once that cause is removed, fear subsides whereas anxiety is less clearly linked to specific events and thus tends to be more pervasive and less responsive to changes in the environment. Anxiety disorders are diagnosed in the presence of subjective experienced feeling of anxiety. According to DSM-IV there are six categories of anxiety which are phobias, panic disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder. The different forms of anxiety disorders involve a range of symptoms like frequently experienced anxiety, worry, fear etc. Sometimes many of the symptoms are similar in various disorders. We will read first about phobias.

1) ***Phobia:*** Phobia can be defined as a disrupting fear-mediated avoidance that is out of proportion to the danger posed by a particular object or situation and is recognized by the sufferer as groundless, for example, extreme fear of heights, closed places, animals etc. The phobias have been categorised like the most common claustrophobia which is fear of closed places. The term phobia implies that the individual is suffering from severe distress and social/ occupational impairment.

2) ***Panic disorder:*** Have you ever had an experience where for no apparent reason you suddenly felt an intense apprehension and tension that caused your heart to pound rapidly, sweating of your palms or trembling? If your answer is yes then you have probably experienced panic. Panic disorder is characterized by attacks of terror and intense fear not justified by situation. The attacks produce physiological symptoms such as dizziness,

increased heart palpitation, trembling, shortness of breath etc. It also produces psychological symptoms such as fear of dying or going crazy.

3) ***Obsessive-compulsive disorder:*** It is marked by recurrent obsessions and compulsions that create distress and have a serious effect on a person's life. For example, repeated washing of hands. In this type of disorder a person's profound sense of anxiety is reflected in persistent and unwanted, irresistible, habitual, repeated action. Obsessions are persisting thoughts or ideas and compulsions are intentional behaviours or mental activities performed in response to these obsessions. Some common compulsions are hand washing, touching, counting etc.

4) ***Post traumatic stress-disorder:*** People who have experienced a profoundly traumatic event such as an assault or war often exhibit a range of distressing symptoms as an aftermath to that event. This disorder is characterised by flashbacks and recurrent thoughts of a traumatic and stressful event. This disorder has a number of symptoms such as nightmares, avoiding thoughts, exaggerated startled response such as screaming, when tapped at the back. This can last a lifetime too.

5) ***Generalised Anxiety disorder:*** Generalized Anxiety disorder is a chronic state of anxiety so pervasive that it is often referred as "free-floating anxiety". The psychological symptoms of generalized anxiety disorder includes a persistent state of apprehension, worry about some danger, poor concentration, indecisiveness, mild depression, sensitiveness to criticism, upset stomach, dryness of mouth, fatigue etc. People

on routine jobs and night duties such as security personnel and policemen sometimes suffer from this condition.

**Personality disorders:** It is characterized by continuous maladaptive style of thinking , feeling and behaving which disturb the normal functioning of an individual's life. For example, a person with a dependent personality disorder will always be submissive and will show clinging behaviour. This person will not be able to take any decision for himself/herself and always show excessive need to be taken care of. An individual with histrionic personality disorder will display excessive emotionality and always show attention seeking behaviour. Another major form of personality disorder is antisocial personality disorder. It is marked by irresponsible and socially disruptive behaviour like stealing and destroying property. Antisocial individuals do not take the initiative for getting themselves treated.

**Schizophrenia:** Schizophrenia is one of the most severe and disabling of all mental disorders characterized by extreme disruptions of perceptions, thoughts, emotions and behaviour. Schizophrenic disorders are distinguished from other disorders primarily by the extreme disturbances in thinking that cause people to behave in maladaptive ways. Individuals with schizophrenia often suffer from false beliefs or delusions and hallucinations which means perception without stimulus. The thinking process of a schizophrenic is loss of control on associative thinking like while talking about a close relation and then suddenly talking about a story or any other event without any continuation or preface. People having schizophrenia have difficulty in keeping their mental thoughts together.

The primary symptoms of schizophrenia are

- disturbances of thoughts – most of the patients show marked differences in their contents of thoughts like delusions, incoherence of ideas etc.
- disturbances of perception – disturbed perception may result in changes in how the body feels or feeling of separation from his/her body (depersonalization).
- disturbances in emotional expression – Another major symptom is disturbance in expressing or incorrect expression. The patient may show flat or blunted expression with no facial expressions. Incorrect expression may result in laughing over the death of a loved one or crying over some happy news.
- disturbances in speech – Abnormal speech patterns like not uttering a sound for hours or days together (mutism ) or repeating the verbatim which is called as echolalia.
- social withdrawal – Schizophrenics show an inclination to withdraw from the company of others. They tend to be isolated and emotionally detached from friends and family members.
- diminished motivation – Marked diminished motivation is also seen in the persons suffering with schizophrenia.

The three main subtypes of schizophrenia are paranoid, catatonic and disorganized. The major symptoms of **paranoids** are delusions and auditory hallucinations. They are tense, suspicious and guarded. They may feel people are trying to harm them or planning against them. The **Catatonic** face motor immobility, rigid

posture or excessive motor activity including parrot like repetition of an action or anybody's saying. The catatonics may assume a peculiar posture for long periods of time. The symptoms of disorganized schizophrenia are disorganized speech, bizarre behaviour and inappropriate effect. This may be characterized by poor contact with reality, disheveled appearance and bizarre behaviour such as laughing at inappropriate times.

**Therapy**

Various forms of therapies are available for psychological disorders. For treating the psychological disorders psychotherapy is a known and successful therapy. The psychotherapeutic process revolves around the relationship between the therapist and the patient. It involves verbal and nonverbal communication. One point of caution in this therapy is that it should be practised only by a person who has had proper training in it. The interaction between the therapist and the patient is a confidential and dynamic relationship. These therapies aim at changing the maladaptive behaviours of the individual which helps him/her in adjusting to the social environment. There are three phases of the therapy, that is, the initial phase, the middle phase and the terminal phase. The initial phase involves interview of the patient and moves towards developing rapport with him/her. The middle phase follows this phase which involves the therapeutic approach. It involves relearning and experiencing, psychotherapeutic relationship and motivations and expectations. The therapy ends with a successful termination process and demand follow-up action on a periodical basis.

Now let us talk about different types of therapies:

***Bio-medical therapy:*** People who are trained medically treat mental illness equivalent to physical illness. Hence they also treat them medically. Some of the therapies which are used for the treatment of psychological disorders are Insulin coma therapy in the case of schizophrenia, Electro Convulsive Therapy (ECT) in which a mild electric current passes through the brain of the patient which produces convulsions. Drug treatment is also used in the case of schizophrenia, mania, depression and anxiety. These drugs are known as psychotropic or antipsychotic drugs.

***Psychodynamic therapies:*** The psychodynamic therapy is based on the psychoanalytic perspective. The main thought behind this perspective is that the psychological problems result from childhood experiences. The different techniques used by the psychotherapist are free association where the patient is asked to say whatever comes to his/her mind which is later on analysed, analysis of dreams, transference analysis which means that the patient react to the therapist as they did with significant others in their life.

***Behaviour therapy:*** This therapy is based upon the principles of learning. The techniques of behaviour therapy which are used are systematic desensitization, aversion therapy, assertiveness therapy, modeling technique and bio-feedback.

***Cognitive therapy:*** This therapy lays a great stress on recognising and changing negative thoughts and maladaptive beliefs. One of the two therapies is Beck's therapy which helps an individual to recognise one's negative thoughts and interpretation. The other therapy is Rational Emotive Therapy which tries to change the maladaptive thoughts by restructuring the self evaluation and belief system.

## Conclusion

We have discussed in this chapter about the various types and concepts related to abnormal behaviour.

Abnormality is usually determined by the presence of several characteristics at one time. The definition of abnormal behaviour takes into account the characteristics of infrequent occurrence, violation of norms, personal distress, dysfunction and unexpectedness of behaviour. We have also studied the various paradigms to study the cause of abnormal behaviour and the methods adopted for assessing the normality of behaviour. In the last section of this chapter we have studied some abnormal disorders in adults like anxiety disorders, personality disorders and schizophrenia. We have learnt about the primary symptoms of schizophrenia and the various subtypes of schizophrenia.

Various forms of therapies are available for psychological disorders. For treating the psychological disorders, psychotherapy is a known and successful therapy which revolves around the relationship between the therapist and the patient. There are five different types of therapies Bio-medical therapy- People who are trained medically treat mental illness equivalent to physical illness. Some of the therapies which are used for the treatment of psychological disorders are Insulin coma, Electro Convulsive Therapy (ECT), Drug treatment. The psychodynamic therapy is based on the psychoanalytic perspective. The different techniques used by the psychotherapist are free association, analysis of dreams, Transference analysis etc. Behavior therapy is based upon the principles of learning. The techniques of behaviour therapy are systematic desensitization, aversion therapy,

assertiveness therapy, modeling technique and bio-feedback. Cognitive Therapy lays a great stress on recognising and changing negative thoughts and maladaptive beliefs.

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# 28

# Basic Concepts of Social Psychology

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## Introduction

Social psychology attempts to understand an individual's thoughts and behaviour in interaction with others.

Social psychologists focus on factors that shape the actions and thoughts of the individual human being within different social settings. They are mainly concerned with understanding the wide range of conditions and circumstances that shape the social behaviour and thought of individuals, their actions, feelings, beliefs, memories and influences with respect to other persons. A large number of different factors play an important role in this regard. Factors influencing and responsible for social interaction and behaviour may be either biological, cognitive, ecological, and cultural characteristics and behaviour patterns of other people. Social psychologists study all these aspects carefully with the help of different tools and techniques of modern scientific research methodology, draw inferences from their findings and develop theories pertaining to them.

## Nature and Scope of Social Psychology

In order to understand the relevance and importance of social psychology for social workers one should

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know the nature and scope of social psychology. Social psychology has been defined by different social psychologists and their definitions clarify its nature and scope. Let us go through some of the definitions of social psychology.

i) Social Psychology may be broadly defined as a science of the behaviour of the individual in society (Krech D. and Richard Cutchfield).

ii) The primary concern of the sociology is group behaviour, and that of social psychology is the behaviour of the individual in the group situation (Otto Klienberg)

iii) Social psychology is the scientific field that seeks to understand the nature and causes of individual behaviour and thoughts in social situations (Rober Barons and Donn Byrne).

iv) Social psychology is the scientific study of the influence process. It attempts to understand, explain and predict how the presence of another person, a group of people and environmental factors influence a person's thoughts and behaviour (G.W. Allport)

Social psychology is the study of persons in their interactions with one another with reference to the effects of this interplay on the individual's thoughts, feelings, emotions and habits. Social psychology is concerned with the ways in which a person's conduct and dispositions are influenced by the conduct and dispositions of other people. Social psychology is a branch of psychology, which aims at understanding one's thinking and interaction with others. It describes factors that shape and formulate the actions and thoughts of indidividuals within different social settings.

Social psychologists are mainly concerned with understanding the wide range of situations that structure the social behaviour and thoughts of individuals - their actions, feelings, habits, memories and influence with respect to other persons. A number of different factors play a vital role in this regard. Factors affecting social interaction may be divided in to five categories.

i) The actions and characteristics of others — what others say and do;

ii) Basic cognitive processes such as memory and reasoning that underline our thoughts, ideas and judgments about others;

iii) Ecological variables — direct and indirect influences of the physical environment such as temperature, privacy, crowding and related factors;

iv) The cultural context in which social behaviour and thought occur and

v) Biological factors and processes that are relevant to social behaviour, including certain aspects of our genetic inheritance[1].

Let us try to clarify the nature and importance of the above mentioned factors in shaping social thought and social behaviour.

- Suppose you are talking to a friend and somebody else suddenly joins you both;
- You are in a line to purchase an application form for admission and suddenly another person cuts into line in front of you;
- After your speech, some one in the audience remarks 'it was a wonderful speech'.

**Would these actions of others influence your behaviour and thought? You will find that these actions of other people have a definite impact on your thought and behaviour and therefore it is a truth that quite often we feel affected by the actions of other persons. We are also quite often influenced by the visible characteristics and appearance of others.**

**Cognitive processes** like memory, inference and judgment etc. should be carefully considered in order to understand aspects of social behaviour.

For example, we feel irritated when a friend comes late and says only 'sorry' for it. But if the friend explains the reason for coming late, we become less annoyed and cool down. If he is a habitual latecomer we may not believe his explanation. But if the friend comes late for the first time, we may accept his explanation. Your reaction in this situation is dependent on your memory pertaining to your friend's past behaviour and involves your inferences concerning the explanation.

**Ecological variables** and physical environment also influence our thoughts and behaviour. Studies show that in full moonlight people are more prone to be wild and impulsive than at other times; in hot and steamy weather we become more aggressive and irritated than in cool and comfortable weather. A noisy, polluted and crowded environment impacts on our performance and social behaviour. Physical environment influences our feelings, emotions, thoughts and behaviour.

**Social and cultural** norms and taboos strongly influence our behaviour and thought. choice of a partner for marriage, one's ideas on number of issues and the expression of emotional reactions depend on socio-

cultural factors. Cultural factors have become more significant and important for modern social psychologists.

**Biological processes and genetic factors** influence our social behaviour. Many social psychologists believe that our performances, behaviour, emotional reactions, values and attitudes are influenced by our biological inheritance. Social psychologists assume that every aspect of social behaviour is open to change. For example, millions of people have inherited poor vision problem but they correct this by the use of lenses.

## Leadership and Role of a Leader in a Group

Leadership is a social phenomenon that exists throughout the world. It is seen in one form or the other in every sphere of life. Leadership is a process of influencing the activities of the group for the achievement of set organizational targets. The group member who exerts more positive influence over others is a leader. Any effort of a group member to influence the behaviour of one or more group members is an attempt at leadership. The member of the group who is more open to risky options, influences other members and hence performs leadership functions. The term leadership has three main attributes:

i) An attribute of position,

ii) A characteristic of a person,

iii) A category of behaviour.

These refer to a person who possesses certain qualities, occupies a certain position and behaves in a certain way. An individual who is in a leadership

position tries to influence the group and the group, in turn, allows itself to be influenced by him. Apart from influencing the group members, a leader communicates with other groups on behalf of his group and serves as a channel of information. Leadership is a behaviour that affects the behaviour of other people more than their behaviour affects that of the leader. Some common **behavioural characteristics** of leaders are as follows:

i) ***Intelligence*** **—** Quite often a leader whether he has been nominated or elected is more intelligent than a common group member,

ii) ***Dominance*** **—** A leader dominates others and influences members of the group.

iii) ***Adjustment*** **—** A leader is more capable than others in adjusting with the group he leads.

iv) ***Non-conformity*** **—** A leader is comparatively more independent and free of group pressures and is able to use his ability to take decisions without depending on others. He is more concerned with group solidarity than others. While expressing non-conforming ideas and behaviour, the leader maintains the cohesiveness of the group.

v) ***Social distance*** **—** The leader avoids closeness and intimacy with group members. He maintains social and psychological distance from other members of the group. This is normally found in work group situation.

vi) ***Ability to inspire others*** **—** This is considered an innate quality, a kind of an internal 'charisma' and not something that can be learnt.

vii) ***Problem-solving capacity*** — The leader has the patience and ability to look at the problem from various angles and resolve it.

viii) ***Emotional maturity*** — Emotional stability and maturity are significant ingredients of an effective leadership. Emotional maturity is reflected in a stable adjustment with life situations and a calm, cool and calculated reaction to unfavourable circumstances. A leader accepts both success and failure in a balanced manner. The leader is a self-confident, open-minded and rational person and functions calmly even when there are differences and opposition. He enjoys a balanced outlook towards life and the world. The leader is a warm, sensitive and kind person without malice.

(ix) ***Ability to understand human behaviour*** — The leader understands the needs, desires and behaviour of his group members and respects them as individuals. He supports the emotions and feelings of the group members and obstructs their ego-threatening actions.

x) ***Verbal assertiveness*** — The leader is a good orator and confident of his views and opinions. He communicates his opinions honestly and in a straightforward manner.

xi) ***Willingness to take risks*** — A good leader accepts new challenges. He bears full responsibility for failure and does not blame others for it. He is able to overcome frustration and defeat.

xii) **Dedication to organisational goals** — The leader is a person dedicated and committed to the

objectives and goals of the organisation. He makes his followers aware of the organizational mission and objectives and motivates them to work for attaining the same.

xiii) ***Compromise*** — Resolving differences is an important function of leadership. The leader achieves it by utilizing the processes of compromise and consensus.

**Types of Leadership**

Psychologists have offered different classifications of leadership. Bogardus (1940) has described five types of leadership: (i) Direct and indirect, (ii) Partisan and scientific, (iii) Social, executive and mental leadership, (iv) Autocratic, charismatic, paternal and democratic and (v) Prophet, Saint, Expert and Boss.

- A direct leader keeps direct contact with the group and remains in touch with the members. He listens to their problems in a face-to-face situation. Indirect leaders influence the thoughts of followers through their propounded concepts, theories and guidelines. Under this category we include scientists, authors and philosophers etc.

- A partisan leader favours his group and does not accept the weaknesses of his group members. Politicians and religious leaders are examples of a partisan leadership. A scientific leader appraises the group's performance critically. He discusses both the positive and negative aspects of the group's performance.

- A social functions publicly for his group. The mental leader requires a peaceful and private atmosphere. Social workers are mental leaders. Executive leadership is a combination of social

and mental leadership. A executive leader possesses the qualities of a social worker and at the same time capability to influence the thoughts of his group.

- An autocratic leader holds absolute power and formulates plans and policies for the group himself. He does not require any justification for either rewarding or punishing any group member. A charismatic leader possesses a God gifted personality. His appeal is emotional and he helps the recipient group to resolve the problem. A paternal leader is a like a fatherly figure. Members of the group respect the leader as a father. A democratic leader discusses all aspects of the group functioning with his members and power in the group is decentralised.

- A prophet is of representative of a supernatural power and his followers believe that he possesses the strength and power of God. The expert leader acts as a consultant. He acts as a commentator, critic and resource person in an organisation at the time of planning and policy formulation.

    i) A political leader embodies the qualities of various types of leaders described above. He works as a policy maker, ideologist, entrepreneur and sometimes, as a charismatic person. A political leader makes an effort to gain honour, dignity, status and wealth for himself, his friends and the people whom he represents.

    ii) A bureaucrat is one who occupies the higher level positions in the administrative hierarchy in any organisation.

iii) A diplomat is a representative of a country in some other country. He functions in accordance with the policies and programmes of his native country.

iv) A reformer is an idealistic leader who observes the evils of the social order and an makes effort to remove them.

v) A theorist is confined only to theories and seek the help of logic to support theories.

Lippitt and Whites have listed three types of leadership:

i) Authoritarian ii) Democratic and

iii) Laissez-faire leadership.

i) An Authoritarian leader keeps full control in his hands and shoulders full responsibility for his actions. He assumes that his leadership is due to the authority conferred upon him either by his position, knowledge, strength or power.

ii) A democratic leader provides an opportunity to all members for exchanging views on any matter pertaining to the group. The leader only moderates the decisions of the group members, and accepts responsibility for the results.

iii) In laissez-faire leadership, the leader delegates his authority to members for planning, motivating, controlling and shouldering responsibility of their own actions. He only acts as a liaison between the group and external forces. He provides the requisite material and information to group members. He behaves in the group just like a common member. This type of leadership may be observed in research laboratories where researchers are free to take decisions and conduct

research. In university or colleges, the head of the department only assigns to the teachers, the courses to be taught by them and does not interfere in their teaching methodology.

To be a successful leader one should possess certain traits and qualities. A leader should have a desire to achieve, ambition, energy, tenacity and initiative. He should be trustworthy, reliable and open-hearted. A willingness to exercise influence over others to achieve shared goals, self-confidence and trust in one's own abilities are necessary for a good leader. Intelligence and ability to integrate and interpret various pieces of information account a lot for good leadership. A good leader should be creative, an original thinker and flexible towards changing situational requirements. He should also be an expert and adequately aware of the group's activities and relevant technical matters.

**Role of Leader in a Group**

The role of the leader in a group depends upon the nature, requirement and potentiality of the group as well as the type of leadership. A boss type of leader can function well in an organisation with a hierarchical arrangement of functionaries and members. A charismatic leader may play his role more influentially in a religious group of faithful members. A democratic leader may be more effective in a group with a decentralised power structure. A reformer plays an effective role in guiding and launching movements for a struggle against social evils like alcoholism, untouchability, communal disharmony, and human rights abuse, etc.

By and large, a leader plays the following roles:

i) ***As a planner and policy maker*** — The role of a leader as the policy maker and planner is very

important. He has to develop an appropriate policy, plan, programme and activity either by himself or through a dialogue and discussion with the group members. This may be based on guidelines and orders of the organisational heads or suggestions from the group members. He should be goal-oriented and enable the smooth functioning of the group.

ii) ***As an executive*** — A leader shoulders the responsibility of executing the policies of the group and he assigns responsibilities for different tasks to group members.

iii) ***As an expert*** — The leader as a specialist in a certain field, provides technical assistance and advice to the group.

iv) ***As a representative*** — In a situation where members of the group are not in position to deal directly with other groups or people outside the group, the leader assumes the role of representative of the group in its external relations.

v) ***As a purveyor of reward and punishment*** — A leader offers reward for desirable action and punishment for undesired behaviour among the members of the group.

vi) ***As a controller of internal relations*** — The group leader governs specific details of the group structure and functions as the controller of internal group relations.

vii) ***As an arbitrator and mediator*** — The leader may play the role of a conciliator and judge to resolve intra-group conflict. He has the power to

reduce or encourage activities of members in the group.

viii) ***As an exemplar or role model*** — Sometimes the leader becomes a model of behaviour for the group members indicating to them what they should be and what they should do.

ix) ***As the symbol of the group*** — Sometimes the leader provides cognitive focus for group unity such as the Royal family of Great Britain.

x) ***As the substitute for individual responsibility*** — Sometimes the leader plays a role for the individual member relieving him of his responsibility for a personal decision or act that he wishes to avoid. The leader frees the individual from the compulsion of decision-making.

xi) ***As an ideologist*** — In some circumstances the leader furnishes the ideology of the group and serves as the source of beliefs, values and norms of the individual members.

xii) ***As a father figure*** — The leader may be an ideal object of identification for group members.

xiii) ***As a scapegoat*** — The leader may serve as a target for the aggression of the disappointed, frustrated and disillusioned group.

The roles of the leader described above may be considered further as primary and ancillary roles. The primary roles includes the role of an executive, policy maker, planner, expert, external group representative, controller and guide of internal relations, purveyor of reward and punishment, arbitrator and mediator. The ancillary roles includes

role of an exemplar, external symbol of a group, substitute for individual responsibility, ideologist, father figure and scapegoat.

## Crowd and its Characteristics

Quite often we use the word crowd for any type of gathering of people. Usually we assume that the gathering of people to purchase a ticket for a cinema at the ticket window, people coming out of the cinema hall when the show is over, school children coming out of classes and school gates on the closure of school and people assembled and sitting in a hall are a crowd. But these situations do not qualify to be called as crowds though they may become crowds. The only common element of the crowd in these gatherings is that they are unorganised groups. The psychology of crowd as a field of social psychology came up in the last two decades of the nineteenth century when psychologists in France undertook related studies.

A crowd is a gathering of a large number of persons on account of a matter of common concern. When a considerable number of individuals respond to some common object within a limited space collectively, their presence is considered as a crowd. A crowd is a transitory, contiguous group, it is unorganised and formed for some common interest. A crowd is a group of individuals, temporarily experimenting a unity of feeling and action, owing to the fact that their attention is concentrated on the same object, ideal and material. Mental unity is the essential and fundamental characteristic of a crowd. A crowd happens to be more primitive than the normal individual member of the crowd.

A crowd has been classified in various ways by different social psychologists. First of all a crowd has been divided into two groups:

i) Audience: The audience is a passive crowd. A passive crowd includes a gathering for worship in a religious place (Gurudwara, Temple, Church and Mosque); a gathering to listen to the speech of any leader and gathering of people to see a film or a circus.

ii) Active crowd. An active crowd can take four forms: (a) Escape-panics in an organised and/or unorganised crowd, (b) Acquisitive, (c) Expressive and (d) Aggressive that is manifest in Lynching, Terrorization and Riots.

**In an escape crowd**, emotion plays a significant role. Any active crowd may be converted into an escape crowd with the interruption of an outside force. Any crowd active in destruction and loot gets converted into an escape crowd when the police beat them or explode tear gas shells or begin firing in the air. In this situation the crowd becomes a fear-flight crowd. This fear-flight crowd may be of two types i.e. (i) Organised and (ii) Unorganised. In the unorganised fear-flight crowd, its members get scattered and run away in different directions. In this situation the members of the crowd are concerned with saving only their own lives without taking care of anybody else. In the organised fear-flight crowd, the crowd remains organised while running away out of a panic situation. In such a situation the crowed faces the outside force for a short while and then gets scattered because of a persistent attack on it.

On the railway ticket window, rationing shops, ticket windows of cinema halls we observe crowd where

people push each other to get a ticket or rations on knowing that there is shortage of tickets or rations in proportion to the demand. This type of crowd is known as an **acquisitive crowd**.

When members of the crowd express their emotions openly and celebrate the occasion, the crowd is known an **expressive crowd**. Groups of singers and dancers and twisting of boys and girls in a band come within the purview of the expressive crowd.

In an **aggressive crowd**, the members of the crowd become too much emotional and act with hatred to harm the other. This type of crowd may be involved in loot, murder, destruction, arson, lynching, sexual abuse and rioting etc. The situation is known as a riot when two violent groups brutally attack each other. A terrorist crowd can easily harm governmental and private properties and may set fire to buses, trains or any building and openly loot markets. A lynching crowd is a type of attacking crowd and may go to the extent of killing any person to attain its goal.

**Characteristics of Crowd**

Some important characteristics of a crowd are as follows:

i) ***Gathering*** **—** This is the most important characteristic of the crowd. In a crowd, people gather at a place in large numbers and remain there for sometime. If members of the crowd continue moving here and there, a crowd can not be formed.

ii) ***Polarisation*** **—** Members of the crowd concentrate themselves on the focal point of the incident or

object. For example, in a road accident people gathered around the wounded person pay attention towards the accident victim. All take an interest in knowing how and why it happened, etc.

iii) ***Transitoriness*** **—** Instability is a basic nature of the crowd. The crowd remains together till it has polarisation. When polarisation is over, people disappear and there is no crowd. It is difficult to find out who were the members of the crowd, as it is unstable. For example, there is no gathering after disappearance and removal of vehicle and accident victim in a road accident. Crowd may remain for a few hours but not for a few days.

iv) ***Unorganised*** **—** Crowd neither has predetermined objective nor it is preplanned. It does not have any prefixed leader or member. Crowd does not have any formality or any type of organisation. It has no prefixed rule and regulation for its formation. Crowd does not have any pattern. Crowd, though, may be fully provoked.

v) ***Common emotion*** **—** Majority of the members of the crowd have same emotion. All members of the crowd take an active part in the common sloganeering.

vi) ***Mutual influence*** **—** Individuals in the crowd influence behaviour of each other. One member of the crowd gets excited on seeing another excited member. Individuals follow the behaviour of others in the crowd. Due to this mutual influence they have more receptiveness towards suggestion.

vii) ***Spatial distribution*** — The area in which crowd is spread is its limit and spatial distribution. Crowd is confined to a limited field or place and therefore we cannot call people scattered in the whole city a crowd.

viii) ***Mass strength*** — Members of the crowd feel mass strength observing huge gathering with them. Since one member of the crowd gets excited following another's excitement, that member may feel mass strength. In a crowd individual does not have his/her own distinct existence and behaves according to the mass behaviour. It is often found that a physically weak person comes forward to beat a healthier person in the crowd.

## Mob and Mob Psychology

A mob is a form of crowd. When a crowd becomes aggressive and violent it turns into a mob. A mob consists of people in an aggressive mood. A mob may commit rape, murder, manhandling, arson, loot, riot etc. In a mob the atmosphere is highly charged. The members of the mob loose a sense of proper behaviour and reasoning.

People in a mob behave only on the basis of their emotions. They happen to be in a highly excited mood. People in a mob shout in a loud voice. In a mob the members run around one another and push each other. They engage in unwanted activity and imitate each others behaviour.

Sometimes people gather on the basis of rumors. If a student has been beaten by a shopkeeper in no time many students gather at the shop to show their solidarity, although they may not be connected with

the incident. A mob's members do not listen to reason. The behaviour of members in a mob follows a single track. They do not listen to the arguments of the other party. They are not interested in ascertaining the facts or the truth. It is difficult to change their thinking by logic, argument or reasoning. They go on doing what they have set out to do. Few people by the tactful method succeed in making other people in mob aware of reason of their actions.

The mob is generally composed of people with low social, cultural, economic and educational levels. Leaders play a significant role in provoking the emotions of the members of a mob. They excite them to behave aggressively.

## Public Opinion: Impact and Relevance to Society

Public opinion is the common opinion of people in society. Though individuals have different opinions regarding issues and matters either concerned with them or society, they come to a common point of agreement. They develop a common perceptive through an exchange of views, interactions, projections and criticism. Public opinion is the outcome of this whole process.

Public opinion consists of the opinions held by the public at a certain time. Public opinion is made up of the ideas of the masses and judgments operative in a community. They are stable for a considerable time and well formulated. Public opinion simply refers to the mass of ideas on a given issue expressed by the people. Public opinion consists of opinions held by the people of a small or large community about a particular problem at a certain time. It is not necessary for the

public opinion to be the opinion of all members of the society, but it should be a opinion of a majority of the people. Members of the group or community take it seriously. Public opinion is not static and changes with the situation and time.

**Characteristics of Public Opinion**

i) Public opinion always relates to a common subject matter or issues concerning society instead of an individual's or group's interest.

ii) Public opinion is a widely accepted decision of a majority of the people of a particular society.

iii) Public opinion is not formed by any particular individual. It emerges from the collaborative opinion of the people of any society.

iv) Public opinion is an outcome of a social process and emerges through interpersonal interactions of people in a society.

v) It is not necessary that public opinion be logical. It may be logical or illogical.

vi) Public opinion influences even those people of society who do not agree with it, as it is the opinion of a majority of people.

vii) Often public opinion is an indicator of social culture. Public opinion grows up, expands and depends on the faiths, ideals, assumptions, values, sentiments and past experiences of society.

viii) Public opinion may be influenced by some distinguished, honoured, rich and powerful person of society. Such a personality influences aims, interests and life style of the people of the society.

ix) Quite often public opinion seems to be related to a particular problem or issue at a particular time.

x) Public opinion pertaining to any issue does not remain the same for a long time and thus it is not stable in nature. It changes with the change in time and situation. It changes on the basis of need of society.

xi) Often public opinion emerges after a wide discussion on the issue or the problem.

xii) Public opinion pertaining to customs, stereotypes and traditions of the community tend to be more constant. Propaganda, projection and extension make it dynamic.

**Impact and Relevance to Society**

Public opinion has been significant for society since ancient times. It has an important place in modern society. Public opinion is even more significant and important in a large society as compared to a small group or community. The present period is an era of democracy and public opinion has a significant place in the present social order. Democracy cannot function effectively in the absence of public opinion.

Democracy is meaningful only in case of acceptability of public opinion. The strength and power of public opinion is inherent in its acceptance. The concurrence of the people to any law that is to be implemented in society is essential for its effectiveness. Public opinion does not always help the government and people but it controls them. The importance of public opinion is inherent in it power to control. Public opinion controls the feelings, emotions and action of even the influential personalities in society. Public opinion is

relevant for the government as the public is *a live fact* of large size. Ignorance of such a *live fact* may result in disaster. A government should function with its people's concurrence on different issues. It may be troublesome for a government to keep people in large numbers unconcerned about its activities. The form of the government in any society depends upon public opinion.

Public opinion is important for the evaluation and appraisal of the working of the government. The shortcomings of the rules and regulations framed by the government can only be judged by the people and not by the government itself. Public opinion, in this respect, becomes quite relevant to society. Public opinion influences the functioning and decision of the people and the government and therefore it has a definite impact on society.

Public opinion educates both the people and the government and enables them to reach a commonly agreed point of solution of the problems in society. Public opinion influences the socialisation of individuals, their thinking and behaviour, as it sets widely accepted norms of behaviour.

Public opinion provides an opportunity to individuals and institutions to frame, develop and moderate their functioning in accordance with society. Any individual or institution, whether religious, educational, social, cultural, economic or political — existing in society, cannot function smoothly by ignoring public opinion. Ignorance of public opinion may make them incapable of achieving their goals and, in an extreme situation, may be disasterous. Since public opinion influences individuals, groups and institutions by shaping their thinking and action, it has a definite relevance for society.

Public opinion is more important in a society ruled by a monarch or a dictator. People enjoy enough freedom in a democracy but in a monarchy or a dictatorship they are bound to obey the orders of rulers, with insignificant intervention in their functioning.

## Propaganda: Methods and Implications

The importance of propaganda in the modern world is increasing rapidly. It has become a part of our daily life. Politicians, traders, governments, educationists, spiritual leaders, social reformers and specialists of different professions use propaganda as a tool to reach out to a large number of people. Through propaganda they gain people's favor. Propaganda is a process and a method, which brings about a change in thought, faith and attitude of individuals and groups through persuasive devices. Propaganda is more or less deliberately planned. It uses symbols, mainly through suggestion and related psychological techniques, with a view to alter and control opinions and ideas and bring about a change in pre-determined actions. It is an organised and systematic attempt of a person or a group to influence public opinion and attitudes towards life styles. Through the use of suggestion, it controls the attitude and, consequently, actions of a group of individuals. It simply attempts to influence people's attitudes and opinions and thereby their actions in a desired direction. Propaganda does not depend on facts and logic.

Propaganda may be classified as

i) Conversionary propaganda

ii) Divisionary propaganda and

iii) Consolidatory propaganda

In conversionary propaganda an effort is made to let people understand and then bring about a change in value, thought, attitude and behaviour. This type of propaganda is quite often used in the field of advertising. Divisionary propaganda is based on the 'divide and rule' policy and is used by the political parties or nations at the time of war. In consolidatory propaganda efforts are made to provoke and consolidate popular thoughts, values, attitudes etc. It is being used to bring peace and harmony in society during a period of war.

Propaganda is always motivated by some objective and such objective is related to the people towards whom the propaganda is directed. A propagandist uses different types of symbols for achieving his/her objectives. Advertisers and traders use symbolic words to popularize their products. Political parties have their own symbols to attract the voters. Direction has an important place in propaganda. It has been observed that propaganda may become in-effective if used repeatedly.

**Methods of Propaganda**

Various methods of propaganda are in practice. A propagandist may make a **suggestion** in his favour through **projection, demonstration, oration** and **narration.** These methods are applied through different techniques and media. The popular techniques are:

i) Name-calling device, (ii) Testimonial device, (iii) Glittering generality device, (iv) Card staking device, (v) Plain Folk device, (vi) Chamber of horrors device, (vii) Transfer device and (viii) Bandwagon device.

In **name calling device** the propagandist uses famous names for his supporters and followers and notorious

or non-famous names for his opponents. In **testimonial device the** names of eminent and great personalities are associated with the propaganda material. In **glittering generality device** the propagandist uses justice, unity and friendship etc. to provoke a favourable emotion in the masses. In **card staking device** a propagandist hides the truth and propagates or puts false facts before the public. Dodging and misleading are commonly used tactics of this device. Political parties often use this device during elections. In **plain folk device** the propagandist tries to prove that he is also a unit of the society like others. He behaves in a manner that attracts people and they consider him their well wisher. In **chamber of horrors device** the propagandist provokes emotion of horror and guaranties the security of people. In **transfer device** the propagandist associates his propaganda material with the supernatural power to gain the concurrence of the public in favour of his policies and in **bandwagon device** the propagandist appeals by highlighting that everybody is saying what he is saying.

The popular media or tools of using these techniques are as follows:

i) ***Press and publications*** **—** This is a popular media for propaganda. Through printed matters like newspapers, magazines, booklets, bulletins and brochure etc. the propagandist creates favourable attitude for himself or his ideas in the public. Quite often people read a newspaper of their own liking and develop an attitude in accordance with the views of the newspaper they favour. People believe more in printed matter than in spoken matter. The print media allays or removes anxieties of people.

ii) ***Meeting and speech*** — In a meeting, the propagandist presents his views before the public. This method becomes more successful if the personality of the speaker is attractive and impressive. The public gathers for the meeting with some pre-conceived views about the speaker. The art and ability of presentation influence the mind of the audience.

iii) ***Cultural programme, drama, theatre*** — Through cultural programmes, drama and theatre people are influenced in favour of certain products or views.

iv) ***Radio*** — This is a widely used powerful medium of publicity in modern society. It spreads news throughout the world within seconds.

v) ***Television*** — Television is a modern audio-visual method of effective propaganda. It is somewhat costly for the people of a developing country and therefore does not cover the range that the radio covers.

vi) ***Cinema is also an audio*** — visual medium of publicity. It is a powerful and cheap medium of propaganda. Low-income group people enjoy it largely.

vii) ***Loud speaker*** — Loud speakers are used for publicity directly among people living in their homes, engaged in their jobs or going on the road.

viii) ***Demonstration and procession*** — Political parties often organise demonstrations and processions to publicise their views in public,

ix) ***Rumour*** — Through rumour people may be influenced easily for a short while. It results in changing the opinion of the masses in a critical situation.

x) Dance and music groups, concerts, puppet shows, wall writings, hoardings, posters, folk lore, slogans, magic shows, circus etc. are some other media of propaganda in society.

**Implications**

Propaganda is a method of making suggestions to people and influence them in favour of certain political, social, religious, cultural or economic institution or views or products. Propaganda may make people aware of a certain view of any person or a product of some manufacturing establishment. Sometimes propaganda leads people to adopt harmful suggestions. Powerful propaganda diverts people's minds from logical perception and decision making. Sometimes people become victims of its glamour and adopt undesirable views.

## Relevance and Importance of Social Psychology for Social Workers

By now you would be aware of the nature and tasks of social psychology. We will now discuss the relevance and importance of social psychology for social workers. For this, please recall the linkages that we have drawn up between social work and psychology in Unit 1. As you know, social workers use different methods of social work in various fields of practice to solve the individual's or group's psychosocial and/or psychosomatic problems. Some times, social work practice aims at the socio-economic development of the individual, group or community. Social work

profession helps individuals and/or groups achieve a positive adjustment with their environment. Here environment includes human and social environment, physical environment, psychological environment and ecological environment.

Factors responsible for a particular human behaviour in a particular social setting when brought to the notice of a social worker by the social psychologist help social workers to plan and execute their actions. A social worker has to always keep in mind the problem, behaviour pattern and thoughts of his client in the social setting in cases where the social worker has to diagnose the case or provide treatment to the client. The client's thought and behaviour quite often influence the diagnosis and treatment process and persuade the social worker to modify them accordingly:

- At the time of interviewing the client, the social worker should be conscious of the undesired presence of anyone else, as that may make the client unwilling to expose the reality or truth to the worker. The feeling of privacy in the kind of environment created – both physical and social – is vital for a frank sharing of indepth or intimate details of the situation under study.

- When members of the group are engaged in their group activities an outsider drops in, the activity of the group ceases for a short while and the social worker has to make arrangements for accommodating the new-comer in the group.

- Excessive bossiness of a leader in a group often disturbs harmonious and smooth group interaction. A social group worker has to be careful of such a tendency in any group member for its proper

functioning. Such a tendency may become an impediment to community organisation also. Planning and functioning of community work may be influenced by that, and hence should be taken care of.

- While handling the case of a truant student in a school setting, a social worker has to take into consideration the behaviour and reactions of his peers, authorities and teachers of the school. Their behaviour towards the student may be the cause of truancy. The student may feel uncomfortable in the school atmosphere resulting in his absence from classes.

- The behaviour of a doctor or hospital functionaries influences the patient's response to medical advice. Their rough and impatient attitude to the patient and his disease may cause an unwillingness on the patient's part to follow medical advice. The client may neglect and avoid requisite medical instructions. The social worker has to keep in mind the behaviour of the medical and para - medical staff of the clinic and hospital towards a patient and his family, while helping the patient co-operate with medical personnel.

- In an industrial setting, while a social worker is expected to help the workers to adjust with their employer or seniors, he has to give consideration to the latter's behaviour and thoughts.

- In a family setting, a social worker has to pay adequate attention to the behaviour and thoughts of siblings, parents and other family members of the client as they all influence the thought and behaviour of the client.

- Differences in age, sex, caste, race, religion, education, occupation, income, physical and mental ability, ecological and physical variables and socio-cultural values and ethics, influence the thoughts and behaviour of the individual and therefore all these, should be given due consideration at the time of planning, diagnosing and treating the client.

- Propaganda, public opinion and crowd etc. also influence the individual's behaviour pattern and thoughts. These components of social psychology should also be taken into consideration at the time of social work practice.

## Conclusion

Social psychology attempts to understand, explain and predict how the presence of another, a group of people and environmental factors, influence a person's thought and behaviour.

A social worker has to be careful of the thoughts and behaviour of his clients as they influence diagnosis and treatment.

In this chapter, we have gone through some of the most essential social psychological concepts which are required for social work practice. These are summarized as below:

Leadership is a process of influencing the activities of the group to achieve set organisational targets. The main characteristics of a leader are intelligence, dominance, non-conformity, social distance, verbal assertiveness and dedication to organisational goals.

Crowd is a gathering of a considerable number of

persons around a centre of common attention.

Crowd has been divided into two groups i.e. (i) audience and (ii) active crowd. Gathering, polarisation, transitoriness, common emotion and spatial distribution are main characteristics of the crowd.

Mob is a form of a crowd. When a crowd becomes aggressive it is called a mob. People in a mob behave only on the basis of emotions. They become irritated and excited easily.

Public opinion is the common opinion of people in society. It is the opinion of the majority of people in a society. Public opinion is not static but changes with the situation and time. Public opinion is more important in a democratic society. Public opinion influences individuals, groups and institutions in shaping their thinking and action.

The process and method to bring about a change in thoughts, faiths and attitudes of individuals and groups through persuasive devices is propaganda. Propaganda has been classified into three major groups i.e. (i) conversionary, (ii) divisionary and (iii) consolidatory propaganda. There are various tools of propaganda and media prevalent in the modern world. Radio, television, cinema, newspaper, loudspeakers, cultural programmes, demonstrations and processions are popular means of propaganda.

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