

# **COURSE GUIDE**

## **PAD 251 INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This material review is designed to assist you in order to have an adequate understanding on the course PAD 251 entitled Introduction to Social Psychology. The activities of this course are embedded in the time table such as writing and submission of assignments, studying the course, allocation of assessment scores, examinations and other relevant information are contained in this course guide. All these have been carefully written to enable you achieve the learning outcome of the course.

You are highly welcome to the study of PAD 251 (Introduction to Social Psychology). This course guide will help you to be familiar with the content of the course. Essentially, efforts are made for you to understand the meaning of social psychology and how you will understand attitude and behaviors of individuals in your respected communities. The course is arranged in line with NOUN guideline.

The course is divided into five modules. Consequently, there are altogether 25 units that the course is comprised of. There is a logical connection among the units whereby each unit is built on the preceding one in knowledge and depth like a chain. All the units are equally relevant and none will be skipped so that there will be a logical graduation from one unit to another. This will help you digest and recalled all the lessons in each unit.

## **COURSE GUIDE**

This course aims to give you an understanding of the definitions of social psychology, what social psychology is, approaches to the study of social behaviour. In this course, areas to be focuses shall include human interaction, its manifestations, causes, consequences and the various psychological processes involved in it. As a branch of psychology that deal with social context, effort will be made to look at how we think and behave toward the people around us and how our feelings, thoughts, and behaviours are influenced by those people. Consequently, you are encouraged to dedicate ample time on each study unit for a successful completion.

## **MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By the end of this course, you will be able to Define social psychology; Explain the nature and scope of social psychology; understand how Social Psychology Applies Scientific Methods of Study; have indepth knowledge on how Social Psychology Studies Individuals' Thought, Feeling and Behaviour. At the end of the study, you will also be able to

analyze the system of Social Psychology on Individuals' Behaviour in Social Contexts.

## **SUMMARY**

Social psychology is a field which analyses our thoughts, feelings and behaviour toward the people around us. It also explains how others have an influence on our behaviour in the social context. Thus, social psychology concentrates on studying the interactions of individuals with other individuals and society. Social psychologists investigate human social behaviour at various levels. Primarily, these levels are intrapersonal social behaviours, interactions between individuals, interactions between individual and group and interactions between group and group.

However, the course will in no doubt prepare you for the challenges you will encounter in the field of social psychology. In other words, you are expected to make the best out of this course by reading through all its contents, paying attention to learning outcomes of each unit and attempting all the Self-Assessment Exercises for you to be able to come in a fly colour. This course material is your tool to achieve the desired result.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES**

In your Self-Assessment Exercises, you will find all the details of the works you must do for submission. The marks you score for these SAEs count towards the final marks you obtained for this course. There are two (2) SAEs for this course, with each unit having at least one (1) SAEs. These SAEs are systematically meant to guide you in order to understand the course in detail.

In tackling the Self-Assessment Exercises, you are advised to be honest to yourself in attempting the exercises; you are expected to apply information, knowledge and skills and techniques gathered during the course.

## **COURSE MATERIALS**

The course is divided into 5 modules which are made up of 25 units. The following are the unit summary in the table below.

<b>Module 1</b>	
Unit 1	Social Psychology
Unit 2	Definitions of Intelligence
Unit 3	Social Cognition

Unit 4	Social Perception
Unit 5	Impression Formation and Impression Management
<b>Module 2</b>	
Unit 1	Understanding some Important Factors in Person Perception and Impression Formation
Unit 2	Attitude
Unit 3	Persuasion
Unit 4	Stereotype
Unit 5	Prejudice and Discrimination
<b>Module 3</b>	
Unit 1	Interpersonal attraction and close relationships
Unit 2	Social Influence
Unit 3	Personality behaviour: Motives and Responding to an Emergency
Unit 4	Behaviour Modification
Unit 5	Behaviour-Genetic Influences and Environmental Influences
<b>Module 4</b>	
Unit 1	Perspectives and Causes of Aggression
Unit 2	Aggression in Long Term relationship and prevention and control of aggression
Unit 3	Groups and Individuals
Unit 4	Understanding and Attributing Causes to other's behaviour
Unit 5	Socialisation
<b>Module 5</b>	
Unit 1	Theories of Attribution
Unit 2	Conformity
Unit 3	Compliance
Unit 4	Obedience
Unit 5	Research as a route to increased Knowledge

**MAIN  
COURSE**

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**MODULE 1**

- Unit 1 Social Psychology
- Unit 2 Definitions of Intelligence
- Unit 3 Social Cognition
- Unit 4 Social Perception
- Unit 5 Impression Formation and Impression Management

**UNIT 1 SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY****Unit Structure**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
  - 1.3 Definition
    - 1.3.1 Scientific Nature of Social Psychology
    - 1.3.2 Individual Behaviour
    - 1.3.3 Causes of Social Behaviour and Thought
    - 1.3.4 History of Social Psychology
- 1.4 Social Psychology on Cutting Edge
  - 1.4.1 Cognition and Behaviour
- 1.4.2 Social Neuroscience
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 References/Further Reading/Web Recourses
- 1.7 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents

**1.1 Introduction**

Human beings are essentially social beings. We stay with other and our actions, thoughts, and feelings are affected by the presence of others. At the same time we influence the behaviour of other individuals. This consists of large amount of human behaviour. Social psychology is a discipline that tries to understand the human social behaviour. As is the case with psychology, even social psychology has a past which is less than 100 years. This course will help you to learn and answer many questions. You will learn theoretical perspectives in various areas of social psychology. You will understand that the scope of social psychology is wide and it is ever widening. Social cognition, social perceptions, attitudes, self, stereotype, prejudice and discrimination, interpersonal attraction, close relations, social influence, pro-social behaviour, aggression, group and individuals, applications of social psychology, and many more are the topics of social psychology. Most of the important topics are covered in this course. This course will equip you to understand social behaviour and will also motivate you to work

in the area of social psychology and to become social psychologist. Social psychologists consider that much of human behavior is both a response and a stimulus to the behavior of others. What a person does is at least determined in part and often to a great extent by what other people are doing or what he or she thinks they expect to do. At the same time what he does helps to determine what others do. Therefore, the discipline of social psychology essentially studies how people influence, and are influenced by other people. Now let ask ourselves, is there any one that understand the word social psychology? How does social psychology influences individual life? What are the causes of social behavior? We will significantly discuss all of these and see how our behavior is influence with one another.



## 1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to understand:

- The scientific nature of Social Psychology
- Causes of social behaviour and thought.
- Understand current trends in the study of Social Psychology such as role of cognition, social neuroscience, social diversity, etc.



## 1.3 Concept of Social Psychology

Defining any field is a very difficult task. So is the case with social psychology. Here are some examples:

Myers and Spencer (2006) define social psychology as the “scientific study of how people think about, influence, and relate to one another”.

According to Gordon Allport (1954) social psychology is best defined as the discipline that uses scientific methods in “an attempt to understand and explain how the thought, feeling and behavior of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of other human beings”.

Barron and Byrne (2007) defined social psychology as “the scientific field that seeks to understand the nature and cause of individual behaviour and thought in social situations”.

### 1.3.1 Scientific Nature of Social Psychology

For many students, the word science means physics, chemistry biology, genetics, etc. They and many others would wonder whether social psychology is science. To understand the scientific nature of social

psychology, we need to understand what we mean by science. In reality science is not a label for certain fields of advanced studies in natural sciences. It has set of values and methodology. Accuracy, objectivity, scepticism, and openmindedness are the values of science. The data collection, analysis and inferences are drawn in most error-free manner. The collection of data and interpretation is as free as possible from the human biases. Only those scientific conclusions are accepted that have been proved time and again. The views are open to change, no matter how strong they are. The principles that are determinants of science are Empiricism; Objectivity; Parsimony; and Converging evidence. Empiricism means human experience, so the scientific enquiry should be human experience and not beyond and without it. Parsimony means simple explanations are preferred over complex (also known as Occam's Rezor). Considering all these parameters, science differs from the non science.

### **1.3.2 Individual Behaviour**

The social thoughts and actions are taken by individuals. They might be influenced by the society. But the thought and actions are of the individuals, and not groups. The social psychology has a very strong focus on individuals, and tries to understand the behaviour of individuals. It also tries to understand various environmental influences on social thought and actions, viz., Culture, social norms, etc. Still the focus of the social psychology enquiry is individual.

### **1.3.3 Causes of Social Behaviour and Thought**

Human social behaviour and thoughts are caused by many things. Social psychology would try to understand them. Let's see some of the important ones:

#### **Actions and Characteristics of Other Persons**

We are affected by various actions of others. For example, you are standing in the queue for a local train ticket and somebody tries to break the queue. In no time, you would get upset with the person and shout at him. This and many other instances would help you to understand that your behaviour is affected by the actions of other individuals. Similarly, certain characteristics of people also change your behaviour. For example, you are waiting at bus-stop, and you realize that a blind man wants to cross a road. You would quickly move ahead and help him. These and many other physical psychological and social characteristics of people are responsible for our actions.

## **1. Cognitive Process**

Our thinking determines what we do in social circumstances. This is studied in the area of social cognitions. Cognition is our thinking process. Our behaviour is determined by what we think. That is one reason why two people do not respond to the same situation identically. Since two different people think differently about the situations and social realities, they respond differently

## **2. Environment**

The physical world around us to a great extent determines our behaviour. Researchers have shown that the temperature is negatively related with individual aggression and irritability. Similar types of questions are also asked in social psychology.

## **3. Cultural Context**

The culture in which we stay or are born and brought up determines our behaviour. Culture is sum of values, beliefs, practices, art, language, etc. Every culture has a different belief and value system. For example, our decisions would depend on whether we belong to individualistic culture or collectivistic culture. For instance, marriage would be decided by individual in individualistic cultures and they are decided by a process of mutual agreement among the family members in collectivistic cultures.

## **4. Biological Factors**

The biological factors influence our social behaviour. They can be understood as physiological factors and neurological factors, genetic factors, and evolutionary factors. The physiological factors contain hormones, functions of various glands, immune system, motor system, etc. The neurological factors include the brain structures, the neural cells (neurons), the neurotransmitters, etc. The genetic factor would contain the study of influence of genes on human behaviour. The evolutionary psychology focuses on explaining the social behaviour as a function of process of evolution.

## **5. Physiological and Neurological Factors**

These factors focus on the physiological and neural substrates of social psychological processes of mind. Typically, it studies the impact of brain and biology on social behaviour. Brain waves (electroencephalography, EEG), fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging), measures of skin conductance (galvanic skin response, GSR),

cardiovascular measures (heart rate, HR; BPM; HRV; vasomotor activity), muscle activity (electromyography, EMG), changes in pupil diameter with thought and emotion (pupillometry) and eye movements, etc., are commonly used methods of measurement in this area. The details of neuroscience are provided in the next section.

## **6. Behaviour Genetics**

Behaviour genetics approach is used in social psychology to understand variation in social behaviour of human beings as a function of two components: genetic and environmental. The research methods used are family studies, twin studies, and adoption studies. Family studies are based on the idea that children share 50 percent of their genes with each parent. If genes have to influence social behaviour, the trait in question must run in families. Twin Studies: Monozygotic twins share 100% genetic information, whereas dizygotic share 50% (similar to non-twin siblings). Similarities and differences between them indicate the genetic and environmental influence. Adoption Studies: The sibling reared in the same family should show similar social behaviour similar to the behaviour of siblings reared apart (because of adoptions most of the times), such a behaviour indicates the influence of environment.

### **1.3.4 History of Social Psychology**

Social psychology has an interesting history. It can be traced back to 1895 when Le Bon theorized crowd behaviour. Triplett's (1897) experiment on "social facilitation" effects, Ross and McDougall's (1908) first textbook of social psychology, were the early events. Social psychology started as "Experimental" science. Sherif (1936) studies on development of norms, Lewin's field theory (1935), and Lewin, Lippitt, and White's (1939) three leadership styles test were early important studies. Lewin trained many famous social psychologists, like, Festinger, Schachter, Deutsch, Kelley, Thibault, etc. Three Influential Gestalt Psychologists are Kurt Lewin, Solomon Asch, Fritz Heider.

The World War II was a major event in the history of social psychology. Many social psychologists fled Europe and went to USA. They have started working in the auspicious funding atmosphere. The topics they chose were related to American problems, e.g., to combat moral warfare strategies during the time of war. Then studies by Milgram on obedience, Festinger studies on cognitive dissonance and social comparisons, Heider's work on balance theory and attribution theory dominated 1940's and late 1950's. In the decade of 1960's Stereotyping and Prejudice, School Desegregation, Aggression, Altruism, Bystander Intervention, Interpersonal Relations, Attraction, became topics of modern research. The decade of 1970's saw the emergence of

KahnemanTversky model of heuristics, models of schemas and increasing cognitive trends.

There are many other disciplines that have emerged in the social psychology. Evolutionary social psychology, neuroscience perspective in social psychology, studies on implicit processes, cross-cultural research, are the new methods that lead to the development of modern social psychology. The history of social psychology also teaches us interesting lessons. Because of the World War II, most of the social psychology initially developed in USA. Most of the social psychologists at the time were white, men, upper-middle class, Americans dealing with the problems of America. So the field initially was subservient to American social problems. In last three decades the picture is changing. Social constructivism, and feminism have also made a mark in changing this picture. Similarly, in India, social psychologist, partly, have studied phenomenon that cannot be considered as science because of their political, religious preferences. Indeed, science and religion are two different epistemological views, and both can't be done together. On the positive note, Indian psychologist have also studied issues of poverty, discrimination, deprivation, religious tensions, gender issues, etc.

### **Self-Assessment Exercises 1**

1. What is Social psychology?
2. What makes social psychology a Science?

## **1.4 Social Psychology on Cutting Edge**

Social psychology is ever developing science. Various journals of social psychology publish research done in this area: some of them are Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, Journal of Applied Social Psychology, are some examples. In this section, we would discuss current trends, the cutting edge of Social Psychology.

### **1.4.1 Cognition and Behaviour**

Couple of decades back, cognition and behaviourism were considered as two different kinds of things in psychology. But it no longer exists. Cognition and behaviour are currently considered as intimately linked and related approaches. Present research findings are clearly indicating that the cognition and behaviour need to be considered as strongly linked with each other.



### 1.4.2 Social Neuroscience

Social neuroscience is merging of two different fields: social psychology and neuroscience. In fact, now specialist journals are being published in this area, eg, Social Neuroscience. This interdisciplinary field is devoted to understanding how biological systems execute social processes and behaviour. It uses concepts and methods from biological sciences to understand and purify theories of social thought, behaviour and processes. The MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imagery), fMRI (Functional MRI), PET (Positron Emission Tomography) are commonly used techniques in this science. Typically, when people engage in social activities, their biological parameters are measured. For example, Ito and Urland (2003) asked white students to indicate ethnicity (black / white) and gender (Male / Female) of the photograph shown while measuring their event related brain potential. Results shown that initially attention was paid to ethnicity and then to gender. Other social factors (presence of other members) activated brain later. This indicates that people consider ethnicity and gender as important factors and paid attention first.

#### Self-Assessment Exercise 2

1. Discuss three determinants of social behaviour.



### 1.5 Summary

This unit has provided an introduction to various aspects of social psychology. We studied the definition of Social Psychology. While doing so we have understood the scientific nature of social psychology. We know that the focus of social psychology is on individual behaviour. We have also learned the various causes of social behaviour and thought. While discussing the current trends in social psychology we have discussed issues like cognition and behaviour, social neuroscience, role of implicit process, and social diversity. This will help you understand the rest of the chapters in social psychology.



### 1.6 References/Further Reading/web recourses

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## 1.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

### Answers to SAEs 1

1. Social psychology is best defined as the discipline that uses scientific methods in “an attempt to understand and explain how the thought, feeling and behavior of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of other human beings”.

2. Social psychology is such an exciting science precisely because it tackles issues that are so familiar and so relevant to our everyday life. Humans are “social animals.” Like bees and deer, we live together in groups. Social psychology however, has a set of values and methodology. Accuracy, objectivity, scepticism, and openmindedness are the values of science.

### Answers to SAEs 2

1.

i) **Biological Factors:** The biological factors influence our social behaviour. They can be understood as physiological factors and neurological factors, genetic factors, and evolutionary factors.

ii) **Cultural Context:** The culture in which we stay or are born and brought up determines our behaviour. Culture is sum of values, beliefs, practices, art, language, etc. Every culture has a different belief and value system. For example, our decisions would depend on whether we belong to individualistic culture or collectivistic culture. For instance, marriage would be decided by individual in individualistic cultures and they are decided by a process of mutual agreement among the family members in collectivistic cultures.

iii) **Environment:** The physical world around us to a great extent determines our behaviour. Researchers have shown that the temperature is negatively related with individual aggression and irritability. Similar types of questions are also asked in social psychology.

## UNIT 2 DEFINITION OF INTELLIGENCE

### Unit Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Outcomes
  - 2.3 Meaning of Intelligence
- 2.4 Intelligence in the Early Days
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 References/Further Reading/ Wed Recourses
- 2.7 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercises(s) within the contents



### 2.1 Introduction

We have provided an introduction to various aspects of social psychology in unit one. We studied the definition of Social Psychology. While doing so we understood the scientific nature of social psychology. Consequently, in this unit, we will discuss how psychologists develop and test their theories. The unit also served to introduce us to other units in this course. We can now identify and explain steps in the scientific methodology. Furthermore, we shall study another unit that you are likely to find relevant and interesting: Definitions of Intelligence. We will now consider conceptual clarification. Let us look at what other content you should learn in this unit as itemized in the learning outcome below. For us to clearly understand what we are, what is intelligence and how intelligence help us to discover individual competence within the circle of psychology or social psychology.



### 2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss what intelligence is all about from the perspective of the layman;
- Define the concept of intelligence
- Explain the concept of intelligence quotient.



### 2.3 Meaning of Intelligence

However, of all the words used by professionals, no other word seems to be clear when we hear it, and yet is so difficult to define, as intelligence.

There is massive research on the development of a child. Such research generates explanations on the definition of intelligence which for Piaget (1950) is 'the concept of growth'. The concept of growth has been taken up by the environmentalists who claim that intelligence is not determined by heredity but by the type of environmental interaction in the history of early childhood. It is important for you to note that the type of environment and interaction will shape and determine a child's adult intelligence. But you must remember that all children, given the same history of environmental interaction, will attain the same level of intelligence in adult life.

The definition of intelligence based on the growth theory does not explain completely why there are some amounts of individual differences in cognitive behaviour. By implication, intelligence is also determined by heredity. Of recent; prominent radical sociologists argued that the definition of intelligence is a social-class based one. They argued further that the differences in the social class origins of individuals compelled them to undergo differential environmental changes and hence differential levels of intelligent behaviour in later life. Had there been no differences in the class structures of societies, they argued then, the emphasis given on intelligence will most probably disappear as everybody will manifest the same level of intelligent behaviour eventually. Also recently, there has been emphasis in the understanding of the definition of intelligence from psychological experiment and research evidence where the importance of parental attitudes toward education and of the home-background factors has been established. For example, Mukherjee (1972) showed that while attitudes towards mathematics and previous experience in mathematics explained most of the transferred task variance, intelligence was the least important factor in terms of the task explained.

It is generally agreed that many degrees of intelligence exist, that even an imbecile exhibits some manifestations of intelligent behaviour. But when we refer to an intelligent person, we mean only someone who is at the upper end of the distribution of Intelligence Quotient scores. Such an individual is one who exceeds a hypothetical cut-off point separating intelligent individuals from the general run of humans. Thus, although creativity undoubtedly varies along a continuum, only the rare individual who makes a singularly original (unusual) and significant contribution to art, science, literature, philosophy, government, and so forth, can be called a creative person. Note that a creative person is by definition a much rarer individual than the intelligent person. Thousands of intelligent individuals exist for everyone who is truly creative.

It is 'something' that is called intelligence. Intelligence is therefore a kind of mental or cognitive ability which comes to play in problem

solving. Intelligence is also referred to as the reasoning ability of individuals. These reasoning abilities are of many types, for example understanding relations, comprehension of series, drawing analogies, completing patterns on the basis of symmetry and meaningful asymmetry, permutations and combinations, drawing inferences, understanding logic, deductive and inductive, verbal ability, and so on.

Consequently, if we observe events and behaviour which are concrete things as they can be recorded and measured. Let us cite an example so that you can have a clear understanding. We observe the difference between individuals of the same background, same chronological age and same previous history of learning in one problems-solving. If one individual solves the problem more quickly than the other thereby implying that the former individual has something to a greater degree than the latter.

We can therefore say that intelligence is a cluster of psychological traits. If valid instruments exist to measure these traits, then intelligence can as well be measured. Any trait or characteristic which is a continuum (continuous in nature) is amenable to statistical techniques leading to factor analysis. Thus, when an experienced motor-car driver wants to negotiate a corner, he skips gear easily and the [mal function is still the same. The same technique is used by stenographers, textile workers, who usually produce more than their fellows., we say the former individual is more intelligent.

According to Ryle (1952), there is no kind of performance or behaviour which can be described without qualification as 'intelligence'. Confronted with such diversity in the nature of intelligence behaviour, it is not surprising that psychologists have often failed to agree on a comprehensive definition. Years ago, the editors of *Journal of Educational Psychology*, London, invited seventeen leading scholars to express their opinions on the nature of intelligence. While they achieved some agreement, nearly seventeen different definitions of intelligence emerged from this symposium (Thorndike, 1951). Some of these definitions are:

The ability to carry on abstract thinking (Terman, 1910). The capacity to acquire capacity (Woodrow) The power of good responses from the point of truth or fact (Thorndike, 1927). Vernon (1950) classified the description of intelligence as biological, psychological or operational. Freeman (1936) classified descriptions of intelligence into those emphasizing:

1. Power of adaptation to the environment;
2. Capacity for learning;
3. Ability for abstract thinking. Let us carry on our discussion

Although modern psychologists know much more about mental abilities, the difficulty is far from resolved. One possible solution is to create a broad definition that addresses the complexity of the word 'intelligence'. Wechsler (1975) is one psychologist who has attempted such a definition. He believes that intelligence is the capacity to understand the world and the resourcefulness to cope with its challenges. Much earlier, Wechsler (1958) suggested that intelligence is 'the capacity to act purposefully, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with the environment'. By these broad standards, people act intelligently when they learn from past experiences, seek effective solutions to everyday problems, and adapt to the world around them. Wechsler's definitions provide a useful overview of the meaning of intelligence, but difficulties still persist. For instance, the issue of value judgment remains. Although Wechsler used broad terms-coping, resourcefulness, and rationality - they, all the same, imply particular values. You must remember that in any given culture different circumstances demand different types of coping and resourcefulness. Clearly, what is required of the ambitious distance learner undergraduate student is different from what is demanded of the child whose unemployed parents have been living in impoverished conditions for over a decade. We have many of such children in Nigeria particularly, and developing countries in general.

### **Self-Assessment Exercises1**

1. With the aid of example, what do you understand by intelligence?
2. Itemise two things that determine child's intelligence.

## **2.4 Intelligence in the Early Days**

Undoubtedly, 'intelligence' is a concept of theory and Educational practice. Intelligence remains a major concern of psychology. Intelligence is an abstract noun. The early days of this century witnessed little usage of the term intelligence in psychology or in the classroom. According to Spencer and Galton, there is an important general ability which is super-ordinate to and distinct from special abilities. Burt equally accepted the theory of a general cognitive capacity that is probably dependent upon the number, complexity or connection of the organization of the nerve cells in the cerebral context. There was the technique of factor analysis which was introduced by Pearson at a time when Alfred Binet in France was working with French children of different pre-school and school ages to arrive at some answers explaining the underlying factors of the different performances of children at home and in school. The importance of the general ability

was strongly recognized in Britain and Europe while in the USA, it was questioned. The emphasis here was laid on the breakdown of the specific abilities explaining different types of activities and the performance of these activities.

### 2.4.1 Intelligence Quotient

The Concept of Intelligence Quotient (IQ) is the result obtained when an individual's mental age (MA) is divided by his/ her chronological age (that is biological age) and multiplied by 100. Mental age refers to an individual's level of intellectual development. Alfred Binet (1905) was credited with the first successful attempt to measure intelligence. He was asked by the French government to investigate the causes of retardation in the schools of Paris. Through a sampling process he identified the questions that would be solved easily by the children. From there, he developed the concept of units on MA. Average MA scores correspond to chronological age (CA). A bright child's MA is above his CA; while a dull child has an MA below his CA. Thus, the index of brightness is the IQ which indicates how an individual scores relative to others of comparable age. Note that Alfred Binet was called the father of intelligence testing. The Binet scale was later revised and named the Stanford-Binet scale.

#### Self-Assessment Exercise2

Define intelligence quotient.



### 2.5 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt how the layman describes intelligence, how psychologists define intelligence and what we mean by intelligence quotient. For example, the layman sees intelligence as the ability to do things correctly, while to the psychologists, intelligence is a psychological construct which implies the ability to carry on abstract thinking, the power of adaptation to the environment, and capacity for learning amongst others.



### 2.6 References/Further Reading/web Recourses

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## 2.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

### Answer to SAEs1

i. Intelligence is therefore a kind of mental or cognitive ability which comes to play in problem solving. Intelligence is also referred to as the reasoning ability of individuals. These reasoning abilities are of many types, for example understanding relations, comprehension of series, drawing analogies, completing patterns on the basis of symmetry and meaningful asymmetry, permutations and combinations, drawing inferences, understanding logic, deductive and inductive, verbal ability, and so on.

ii. Environment and interaction determine a child's intelligence.

### Answers to SAEs2

Intelligence Quotient is the result obtained when an individual's mental age is divided by his/ her chronological age (that is biological age) and multiplied by 100. Mental age refers to an individual's level of intellectual development.

## UNIT 3 SOCIAL COGNITION

### Unit Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcomes
  - 3.3 Meaning of Social Cognition
  - 3.4 Schemas
    - 3.4.1 Mental Framework for Organizing and Using Social Information
    - 3.4.2 The Impact of Schemas on Social Cognition: Attention, Encoding, and Retrieval
    - 3.4.3 Priming
    - 3.4.3 Heuristics: Reducing Efforts in Social Cognition
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 References/FurtherReading/ Web Recourses
- 3.7 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercise within the contents



### 3.1 Introduction

In unit two, you have learnt how the layman describes intelligence, how psychologists define intelligence and what we mean by intelligence quotient. Social cognition refers to the ways in which individuals interpret, analyze, remember, and use information about social world. Similarly, social cognition studies the ways in which social information is processed by people, particularly encoding, storage, retrieval, and application to social situations. It means application of knowledge and methods of cognitive psychology and information processing theory to the field of social psychology. For example, if we want to buy a new mobile in a buy-back offer, then we neither meticulously mathematically calculate the exact price of the old and new mobile nor we do any probability calculations to maximizing our profits. We simply have a rough estimate of the prices and accept bargains more or less around that price. We can understand few interesting things about our mind from this example. (a) One, we have frameworks developed from the past experience (often called as ‘schema’) regarding selling and buying and we propose a lower price to buy and higher price to sell than our expectations. (b) Two, the mental processes we carry out are faster, automatic and very quick. (c) Third, at the same time these mental frameworks are prone to systematic errors and biases in decisions we make. In this chapter we shall discuss some of these aspects of social information processing. Now, what is social cognition in social psychology? Who can tell us what is schema is all about? we will

gradually discuss other aspect of social cognition within the content of social psychology.



### 3.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the meaning of social cognition.
- Understand what schemes are and how they influence us.
- Know the concept of priming.
- Acquire knowledge about heuristics, its types and ways in which they influence us



### 3.3 Meaning of Social Cognition

Social cognition is the way in which people process, remember, and use information in social contexts to explain and predict their own behavior and that of others. Children's social cognition may be influenced by multiple factors, both external and internal to the child. Social cognition refers to the ways in which individuals interpret, analyze, remember, and use information about social world. In the current study, two aspects of social cognition were examined: Theory of Mind and Emotion Understanding. The measures used to collect social cognition and linguistic data were not parent- or teacher-reports, but based on direct assessment of the children through two standardized tests, the Test of Emotion Comprehension and the ToM Storybooks. Theory of mind (TOM), is the ability to infer mental states to self and others, has been a pervasive research theme across many disciplines including developmental, educational, neuro, and social psychology, social neuroscience and speech therapy.

Relationships among the variables showed a complex pattern. Overall, maternal education and linguistic competence showed a systematic effect on social cognition; the linguistic competence mediated the effect of maternal education. In children who had experienced centre-base care in the first 3 years of life, the effect of maternal education disappeared, supporting the protective role of centre-base care for children with less educated mothers. The children with native and foreign parents did not significantly differ on the social cognition tasks. Limits of the study, possible educational outcomes and future research lines were discussed.

#### Self-Assessment Exercises1

1. What is social cognition?
2. What does the acronym ToM signify?



### 3.4 Schemas

Schemas are mental frameworks centering on specific theme that help us to organize social information. There are various types of schemas. "Self schema" is for organizing knowledge about our-self knowledge. Schemas for other individuals are "person schema". Schema for social roles are called "role schemas" and Schemas for events or situations are called "event schema" (event script). Therefore, Schemas are mental frameworks centering on specific theme that help us to organize social information.

While discussing the social schema we would study three aspects of schema: (i) Effect of schema on social cognition; (ii) effect of priming; and (iii) schema persistence.

#### 3.4.1 Impact of Schemas on Social Cognition: Attention, Encoding, and Retrieval

Schemas influence social cognition by acting upon three basic cognitive processes. They are attention, encoding and retrieval. Attention is cognitive process of focusing on specific information while ignoring other things. Encoding is storing this information in memory. Retrieval refers to the processes of recalling the information stored in memory and using it.

1. **Attention:** Schemas work as mechanism that helps individuals to focus attention on specific aspects of environment. The stimulus that is coherent with schemas is more easily noticed than the stimulus that is not fitting with the schemas one hold (unless the information has high strength of attracting information). E.g., while watching a cricket match we quickly notice happenings on the ground as compared to the noise in the stadium.
2. **Encoding:** Information that is consistent with schemas is more likely to be saved in the long-term memory than the one that is less relevant. We remember easily the instances when people have agreed with us than when they have disagreed. In contrast, we also remember some instances, which do not at all fit in the schemas. For example, if you go to the government office and your work is done in five minutes, most probably you will not forget the instance, because it was contradictory to your expectations.
3. **Retrieval:** The relationship between schemas and retrieval is a complex issue. Some researchers have shown that information that is consistent with schemas is better retrieved. Others have shown that the information inconsistent with the schemas are more easily stored and retrieved.

### 3.4.2 Priming

We have large number of schemas. Out of them specific schema is used for interpreting social information. Priming is one of the mechanisms that influence the selection of schema. Priming refers to the events or stimulus that increases the availability of the specific type of information in the memory or consciousness as compared to other type of information. Usually, stronger schemas are used for processing. But priming can also have an impact on the activation of certain schemas. For example, you had fight with your boss when you came out of the office. While walking on road, somebody bangs you, and before he says anything you get extremely angry with him. This is because you have schema of aggressively interpreting social information that is activated. Studies on the effectiveness of priming have suggested that the effect of priming last for years together.

**Priming:** Events or stimulus that increases the availability of the specific type of information in the memory or consciousness.

### 3.4.3 Heuristics: Reducing Efforts in Social Cognition

Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman have carried out series of experiments to demonstrate that human beings use mental short-cuts to make sense of the world under conditions of uncertainty. They proved that individuals do not think rationally while making judgments. They make systematic errors and biases in their inferences. They argued that human beings use heuristics because they cannot manage information. This is known as information overload. Human cognitive system can process limited amount of information at a given point of time. When the information is more than it could be processed, we fail to process all information. This is called as information overload.

Information Overload is a situation when the information for processing is more than the ability of our cognitive system.

We use smart tactics under conditions of information overload and manage this information. These tactics are known as heuristics. Heuristics are simple rules of thumb or mental shortcuts that help us to make complex decisions and drawing inferences in speedy and efficient way. They reduce our mental efforts. Tversky and Kahneman have demonstrated the use of three heuristics.

They are:

1. Representativeness Heuristics,
2. Availability Heuristics, and
3. Anchoring and Adjustment Heuristics.

Heuristics may help us in making correct judgments. But Tversky and Kahneman have viewed them as potential sources of errors in our thinking. Kahneman was awarded Nobel Prize in Economics in 1992 for this work (Tversky died on 2 June, 1996 and Nobel is not given posthumously). Now we will discuss each of these heuristics

Heuristics are rules of thumb or mental shortcuts that people use to make decisions and draw inferences rapidly and with reduced efforts when the cognitive system is overloaded with information.

### 3.5.1 Representativeness Heuristics

Have a look at following example gives by Tversky and Kahneman: Linda is 31 yrs, single, outspoken, and very bright. She majored in philosophy in college. As a student, she was deeply concerned with discrimination and other social issues, and participated in anti-nuclear demonstrations. Which statement is more likely?

a. Jacinta is a bank teller. b. Jacinta is a bank teller and active in the feminist movement.

Most of you would answer 'B', that is 'Jacinta is a bank teller and active in the feminist movement.' In reality, 'A' is more likely than 'B'. Because 'B' (bank tellers who are feminist activist) is a subset of set 'A' (bank tellers). We know that probability of subset is always less than (or at the most equal to) the probability of set.

Why did we make this error? It happened because we used something called as 'representativeness heuristics'. When likelihood of an event is judged on the basis of the extent that it represents the essential features of the parent population or of its generating process is called as representativeness heuristics. When an individual is similar to a typical member of a given group, then he/she is judged to be more likely a member of that group. The heuristic is useful in inductive reasoning.

### 3.5.2 Availability Heuristics

The availability heuristic is a phenomenon in which people predict the frequency of an event, or a proportion within a population, based on how easily an example can be brought to mind. There are situations in which people assess the frequency of a class or the probability of an event by the ease with which instances or occurrences can be brought to mind. E.g., one may assess the risk of heart attack among middle-aged people by recalling such occurrences among one's acquaintances. Availability is a useful clue for assessing frequency or probability. Kahneman and Tversky asked participants to judge whether letter 'K' would appear more frequently at 1st place or 3rd place in all English language words. Many answered 1st place. This simply happened

because you can think of many words that begin with letter 'K' than that have letter 'K' in the third position (Tversky and Kahneman, 1974).

Availability heuristics may lead to errors in decisions and judgments. A person argues that cigarette smoking is not unhealthy because he knows somebody who smoked three packs of cigarettes a day and lived 100 years. That case could simply be an unusual case that does not represent health of smokers in general.

### 3.3.3 Anchoring and Adjustment Heuristics

Anchoring and adjustment is a heuristic that influences the way people intuitively assess probabilities. While assessing the probability of an event, people start with an implicitly suggested reference point (anchor) and make adjustments to it to reach their estimate. A person begins with a first approximation (anchor) and then make adjustments to that number based on additional information.

#### Self-Assessment Exercise2

3. List and explain any aspects of schema.



### 3.5 Summary

This unit has discussed some of the issues related to social cognition. Initially we have discussed Social Schemas and their impact of social thought. We have also discussed various other aspects of social schemas. Then we have discussed heuristics and biases in social cognition. We have studied the three heuristics that influence our social judgments and decision making.



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### 3.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

#### Answer to SAEs1

- i. Social cognition refers to the ways in which individuals interpret, analyze, remember, and use information about social world.
- ii. TOM: Stand for Theory of mind. It is the **ability to infer mental states to self and others**, it has been a pervasive research theme across many disciplines including developmental, educational, neuro, and social psychology, social neuroscience and speech therapy.

#### Answers to SAEs 2

- i. Impact of Schemas on Social Cognition: Schemas influence social cognition by acting upon three basic cognitive processes. They are attention, encoding and retrieval. Attention is cognitive process of focusing on specific information while ignoring other things. Encoding is storing this information in memory. Retrieval refers to the processes of recalling the information stored in memory and using it.
- ii. Priming: Priming is one of the mechanisms that influence the selection of schema. Priming refers to the events or stimulus that increases the availability of the specific type of information in the memory or consciousness as compared to other type of information. Usually, stronger schemas are used for processing. But priming can also have an impact on the activation of certain schemas. For instance, you had fight with your boss when you came out of the office.

## UNIT 4 SOCIAL PERCEPTION

### Unit Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcomes
  - 4.3 Concept of Social Perception
- 4.4 Different Channels of Verbal Communication
  - 4.4.1 Darwin's theory of Universal Facial Expression of Emotion
- Self-Assessment Exercise
- 4.6 Summary
- 4.7 References/Further Reading/ Web Recourses
- 4.8 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercise



### 4.1 Introduction

It is a well documented fact that human beings are social animals whose survival is contingent on their ability to interact with others. Naturally, human beings are predisposed to knowing about others' personalities which enables them to deal with them amicably. Social psychology is the discipline that deals with a scientific analysis of human behavior. It tries to explain how the thoughts, feelings and behaviors of individuals are influenced by presence of others. It examines how our experience is understood in terms of the social influences and relationships vis-a-vis the cultural groups to which we belong.

When humans meander through the social milieu, they are constantly bombarded with variety of information through the various senses. Social perception is, that part of perception that allows us to understand the individuals and groups of our social world, and thus is an element of social cognition.



### 4.2 Learning Outcomes

Dear students! In the previous units you have studied about the field of social psychology and other related topics. Just to refresh your memory social psychology incorporates the study of attitudes and perceptions, persuasion, and typical behaviors of people in their relationships with others. Social cognition is a mental process by which we attend to, store, remember, and use information about other people and the social world. In this unit you will be studying about the mental process called social perception which is one aspect of social cognition.

After the completion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Define social perception.
2. Identify the different channels of nonverbal communication.
3. Explain Darwin's theory of universal facial expressions of emotion.



### 4.3 Concept of Social Perception

Social perception and cognition are mental processes that help us to collect and remember information about others, and to make inferences and judgments based on that information. Social perception is defined as the study of how we form impressions of and make inferences about other people. In order to know about other people, we depend on information gained from their physical appearance, and verbal and nonverbal communication. Missing information are filled in by using an implicit personality theory: If a person is observed to have one particular trait, we assume that he or she has other traits related to this observed one. These assumptions help us to categorize people and then infer additional facts and predict behavior. An implicit personality theory is a type of schema people use to group various kinds of personality traits together. Like other schemas, using these theories help us form well-developed impressions of other people quickly.

Social perceptions are also interlinked with self-perceptions. Both are influenced by self-motives. Society has the desire to achieve beneficial outcomes for the self and to maintain a positive self-image. Just as you prejudge the people you come across in society, you are being judged by them. As it is natural for humans to want to make a good impression on people, your self-perceptions almost mirror other's social perceptions (Turner & Richard, 2017).

According to David Krech and Richard S. Crutchfield there are two major determinants of perception, structural factors and functional factors. By structural factors we mean those factors driving solely from the nature of the physical stimuli and the natural effects they evoke in the nervous system of the individual. Thus, for the Gestalt psychologist, perceptual organizations are determined primarily by the psychological events occurring in the nervous system of the individual in direct reaction to the stimulation by the physical objects. Sensory factors are independent of the perceiving individual's needs and personality. The functional factors of perceptual organization are those, which derive primarily from the needs, moods, past experience and memory of the individual. All functional factors in perception are social in the usual sense of the term.



Social perception is one important component of social competence and successful social life. Being competent in social perception includes three domains of competence: (1) knowing that other people have thoughts, beliefs, emotions, intentions, desires, and the like, (2) being able to “read” other people’s inner states based on their words, behavior, facial expression and the like, and (3) adjusting one’s actions based on those “readings”. That is, a socially competent person can make note of other people’s facial expressions, tone of voice, posture, gestures, words, and the like, and on the basis of these clues, make reasonably accurate judgments about that person’s state of mind, emotions, and intentions. Socially competent people then use these inferences about other people’s inner states to make good decisions about how to behave socially. Thus socially competent people must have knowledge of social rules, roles, routines, and scripts in their social lives. Furthermore, they must make use of this knowledge and of these scripts in their decision making and acting. They also have a concern for other people and make it a habit to adjust their behavior based on the needs of others. Finally, they have the confidence needed to interact socially and accept the vulnerability associated with potential rejection (Lindzey & Aronson, 2002).

Researchers have confirmed the fact that first impressions are important. Studies show that first impressions are easily formed, difficult to change, and have a long-lasting influence. Rather than absorbing each piece of new information about an individual in a vacuum, it is common for people to invoke a preexisting prototype or schema based on some aspect of the person, modifying it with specific information about the particular individual to arrive at an overall first impression. One term for this process is schema-plus-correction. It can be dangerous because it allows people to infer many things from a very limited amount of information, which partially explains why first impressions are often wrong.

If there is no special reason to think negatively about a person, one's first impression of that person will normally be positive, as people tend to give others the benefit of doubt. However, people are especially attentive to negative factors, and if these are present, they will outweigh the positive ones in generating impressions. One reason first impressions are so indelible is that people have a tendency to interpret new information about a person in a light that will reinforce their first impression. They also tend to remember the first impression, or overall schema, better than any subsequent corrections. Thus if a person whom one thinks of as competent makes a mistake, it will tend to be overlooked and eventually forgotten, and the original impression is the one that will prevail. Conversely, one will tend to forget or undervalue good work performed by someone initially judged to be incompetent. In

addition, people often treat each other in ways that tend to elicit behavior that conforms to their impressions of each other.

#### **4.3.1 Stereotypes:**

Stereotypes are beliefs about people based on their membership in a particular group. Stereotypes can be positive, negative, or neutral. Stereotypes based on gender, ethnicity, or occupation are common in many societies.

Stereotypes have several important functions:

1. They allow people to quickly process new information about an event or person.
2. They organize people's past experiences.
3. They help people to meaningfully assess differences between individuals and groups.
4. They help people to make predictions about other people's behavior.

Nevertheless stereotypes can lead to distortions of reality for several reasons:

- a. They cause people to exaggerate differences among groups.
- b. They lead people to focus selectively on information that agrees with the stereotype and ignore information that disagrees with it.
- c. They tend to make people see other groups as overly homogenous, even though people can easily see that the groups they belong to are heterogeneous.

#### **Self-Assessment Exercises1**

1. What do we mean by Social perception?
2. Identify and explain different types of nonverbal communication

#### **4.4 Different Channels of Nonverbal Communication**

Nonverbal communication is one of the many interesting topics studied by social psychology. Social psychologists view it as an essential element of social perception. Although there are many other forms of nonverbal communication, the term usually means conveying thoughts and/or feelings without words using body language or sounds as the medium. Nonverbal communication can be defined as the way in which people communicate, intentionally or unintentionally, without words. The main channels of nonverbal communication are facial expressions, eye contact, body movements, posture and touching (Chaube, 2014).

Nonverbal communication takes place in every social setting, though

often it is not recognized for what it is or for what it means. It makes up a substantial portion of our communicative experience. Much research has been undertaken in recent years to analyze different kinds of nonverbal communication, and much of this research has addressed issues of interpersonal and intergender communication, addressing questions of interpersonal attraction, flirting, interactions in business situations, comparisons of male versus female interpretations of nonverbal behavior, and so on (Aronson, Wilson & Akert, 2008).

Many of us associate facial expression and gestures with nonverbal communication, but these are not the only two types involved. There are, in fact, eight different types of nonverbal communication.

- 1) **Facial Expression:** This makes up the largest proportion of nonverbal communication. Large amounts of information can be conveyed through a smile or frown. The facial expressions for happiness, sadness, anger, and fear are similar across cultures throughout the world.
- 2) **Gestures:** Common gestures include pointing, waving, and using fingers, etc. You can tell a person's attitude by the way they walk or by the way they stand. Same goes for gestures.
- 3) **Paralinguistics:** This includes factors such as tone of voice, loudness, inflection, and pitch. Tone of voice can be powerful. The same sentence said in different tones can convey different messages. A strong tone of voice may indicate approval or enthusiasm, whereas the same sentence said with a hesitant tone of voice may convey disapproval or lack of interest. Vocal Behaviors such as pitch, inflection, volume, rate, filler words, pronunciation, articulation, accent, and silence, often reveal considerable information about others.
- 4) **Body Language and Posture** A person's posture and movement can also convey a great deal of information. Arm crossing or leg-crossing conveys different meanings depending on the context and the person interpreting them. Body language is very subtle, and may not be very definitive.
- 5) **Proxemics:** This refers to personal space. The amount of space a person requires depends on each individual's preference, but also depends on the situation and other people involved in the situation. -The Use of Space- The only time you really notice this one is when we particularly need the space. For instance, being in a crowded elevator or being in a overly crowded house party. A lot of times when a person is upset they just need their space to calm down.
- 6) **Eye Gaze:** Looking, staring, and blinking are all considered types of eye gaze. Looking at another person can indicate a range of emotions including hostility, interest, or attraction. - Eye

behaviors- plays a role in several important types of relational interaction.

- 7) **Haptics** This refers to communicating through touch. Haptics is especially important in infancy and early childhood. -Touch is one of our five senses, but, every touch has a different kind of meaning to it and when nonverbally communicating - its something you need to know. Five major areas of touching is : affectionate touch, caregiving touch, power and control touch, aggressive touch, ritualistic touch.
- 8) **Appearance** Our choice of color, clothing, hairstyles, and other factors affecting our appearance are considered a means of nonverbal communication.

Even Chronemics which implies the way we use time or the way we give time to others makes for a nonverbal behavior. It is indicative of two important relational messages, one concerning value and the other concerning power.

#### 4.4.1 Darwin's Theory of Universal Facial Expressions of Emotion

How do we convey our emotions to others? One obvious way we have of doing this is by making specific facial expressions. We smile when we are happy, we frown when angry, and we may appear tearful when sad. It is remarkable that relatively small movements of the facial musculature can alter dramatically the emotion which we display to others. Our ability to both make and recognise different facial expressions is an indication of an extremely vital social skill. Investigators from a number of fields of psychology have been interested in facial expressions of emotion. Social psychologists studying person perception have often focused on the face. Recent research is examining the relative weight given to the face as compared to other sources of information, the relationship between encoding and decoding, and individual differences.

Charles Darwin was the first to suggest that the main facial expressions are universal. In "The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals" (1872), he examined the facial behaviour of nonhuman primates in order to find out about the origins of expressions in man. He chose this comparison with primates for they were the closest relatives to the ancestors of man and had to be therefore similar to them. According to his belief in the principles of evolution, they could therefore give a clue about the origins and development of facial movements. His findings were based on his own observations as well as on the observations of zookeepers. The result was that some facial expressions of nonhuman primates are similar to those of man including the expressions of anger, happiness and sadness. Although they share these expressions, they do

not always have the same function in primate and man. For example, is the expression of happiness in man a development of the grimace that monkeys have used to signalise fear.

It interesting to note that he not only described the various different emotional expressions in man and animals in detail, but also attempted to explain the reason for the association of a particular expression with a specific emotion, for example why we blush when we are embarrassed, or why we make a characteristic mouth movement when disgusted. He provided evidence that facial expressions of emotion are universal, i.e., that facial expressions for specific emotions are similar in many different cultures and that human emotional expressions are universal -- that all humans encode and decode expressions in the same way. Modern research suggests that Darwin was right for the six major emotional expressions: anger, happiness, surprise, fear, disgust, and sadness.

1. Face—reveals current moods/feelings.
2. Eye contact—reveals friendliness, shyness, aggression.
3. Body language (position, posture, movement) — reveals emotional states, status, cultural emblems.
4. Touching—reveals affection, interest, dominance, caring, threat and aggression.

Further, he investigated the functions of facial expressions. He concluded that facial expressions in nonhuman primates represent, like in man, feelings. Mimic, as a means of communication is essential for a species in order to regulate the social interaction within the group. By facial expressions and sounds, animals indicate if they feel attracted to each other or if they feel hostility toward each other. Additionally, Darwin investigated the determinants of facial expressions and defined them along certain universal principles. The first is the principle of serviceable associated habits meaning that behaviour performed consciously in order to survive becomes unconscious with a certain state of mind. Behaviour like fleeing from an enemy is then associated with fear. Unconscious performance develops by habit when fear or anger arouse. The second principle is the principle of antithesis meaning that when certain states of mind produce habitual, serviceable actions, the opposite state of mind leads to a strong tendency to produce opposite action although they are not of use.

Although facial expressions are a prime source of nonverbal communication, they may sometimes be hard to interpret accurately because people may display affect blends, facial expressions where one part of the face registers one emotion and another part registers a different emotion. The fact that people sometimes try to appear less emotional than they are also makes decoding difficult. Culture also

influences emotional expression; display rules that are unique to each culture dictate when different nonverbal behaviors are appropriate to display.

As Darwin observed, all humans, regardless of race, use the same muscle contractions and facial movements for simple and complex emotions. These observations lend themselves to the theory that individuals who were better able to communicate through expression were more likely to reproduce and pass on their genes. Darwin further explored the facial expressions of primates and other mammals to prove the evolutionary connections between the species. Most notable are the similarities between humans and primates like the similarities between the expression of simple emotions in human and chimpanzee infants. It is now known through more in-depth evolutionary analysis that chimpanzees are the most closely related species to humans.

Over the past two decades, emotion researchers have uncovered convincing data to support Darwin's contention that there are facial expressions with "universal" meanings. Studies have found that human facial structure results in the most telling facial expressions of any species. The presence of eyebrows, more visible white in the eyes, more pronounced lips and additional muscles in the faces has expanded the repertoire of expressions humans can make to articulate more complex emotions, such as love and disappointment. On the other hand, other species can only communicate simple emotions and often must use other body parts to fully express themselves. Therefore, the use of emotional expression was crucial to the development of the more complex communication that is characteristic of Homo sapiens.

Although nonverbal behavior and implicit personality theories provide a guide to understanding others, there is still substantial ambiguity about why people act the way they do. Attribution theory describes the way in which people explain the causes of their own and other people's behavior.

### Self-Assessment Exercise2

1. Identify the factors that influence the facial expression of emotions.

-  **4.5 Summary**

Social perception refers to the processes through which we use available information to form impressions of other people, to assess what they are like. Social perceptions can obviously be flawed - even skilled observers can misperceive, misjudge, and reach the wrong conclusions. Once we form wrong impressions, they are likely to persist. Just as we form

impressions about others, they also form impressions about us. At some point, most of us try to influence the impressions others hold of us. We use self-presentation and impression management tactics. We often try to simplify the complex flow of incoming information by putting people into useful categories. We pay attention to some stimuli while ignoring others. These classifications help to specify how various objects or events are related or similar to each other.

Nonverbal communication refers to the communication and interpretation of information by any means other than language. Nonverbal communication includes communication through any behavioral or expressive channel of communication such as facial expression, bodily movements, vocal tone and pitch, and many other channels. Nonverbal communication involves cues related to the communication (also referred to as the encoding or sending) of information as well as the interpretation (or the decoding or receiving) of information. The communication and interpretation of nonverbal behavior draws on tacit, implicit knowledge that all human beings possess. Such communication is often subtle, uncontrollable, and spontaneous, rapidly and unconsciously communicated and interpreted, and provides a great deal of information regarding affective states.

In *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, first published in 1872, Darwin argued that emotional expressions are adaptive responses; they communicate internal states, send out signals that enemies are present and have a powerful survival value for many species. Darwin's primary interest was in describing facial expressions and demonstrating that they are linked to the same emotions in all human cultures.



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#### 4.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

##### Answer to SAE1

i. Social perception is defined as the study of how we form impressions of and make inferences about other people. In order to know about other people, we depend on information gained from their physical appearance, and verbal and nonverbal communication

ii. The types of nonverbal communication are;

- 1) **Facial Expression:** This makes up the largest proportion of nonverbal communication. Large amounts of information can be conveyed through a smile or frown.
- 2) **Gestures:** Common gestures include pointing, waving, and using fingers, etc. You can tell a person's attitude by the way they walk or by the way they stand. Same goes for gestures.
- 3) **Paralinguistics:** This includes factors such as tone of voice, loudness, inflection, and pitch. Tone of voice can be powerful. The same sentence said in different tones can convey different messages.
- 4) **Body Language and Posture** A person's posture and movement can also convey a great deal of information. Arm crossing or leg-crossing conveys different meanings depending on the context and the person interpreting them.
- 5) **Proxemics:** This refers to personal space. The amount of space a person requires depends on each individual's preference, but also depends on the situation and other people involved in the situation.
- 6) **Eye Gaze:** Looking, staring, and blinking are all considered types of eye gaze. Looking at another person can indicate a range of emotions including hostility, interest, or attraction.
- 7) **Haptics** This refers to communicating through touch. Haptics is especially important in infancy and early childhood. -Touch is one of our five senses, but, every touch has a different kind of meaning to it and when nonverbally communicating - its something you need to know.
- 8) **Appearance** Our choice of color, clothing, hairstyles, and other factors affecting our appearance are considered a means of nonverbal communication.



**Answers to SAEs 2**

Factors that influence the facial expression of emotions are;

- a. Anger
- b. Happiness
- c. Surprise
- d. Fear
- e. Disgust, and
- f. Sadness

## UNIT 5 IMPRESSION FORMATION AND IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

### Unit Structure

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Learning Outcomes
- 5.3 Conceptualizing Impression Formation and Impression Management
  - 5.3.1 Solomon Research on Central and Peripheral Traits in Impression Formation
  - 5.3.2 Formation of First Impression and the Role of Schema in shaping First Impression
- 5.4 Cognitive Approach to Impression Formation
  - 5.4.1 Impression Management
- 5.5 Summary
- 5.6 References/FurtherReading/ Web Resources
- 5.7 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercises within the contents



### 5.1 Introduction

Impression formation and impression management are interrelated topics having considerable practical significance in our everyday life. We very quickly form impression of people whom we meet. We also make attempts to create favourable impression on others, so as to gain considerable advantage from them, such as an interview, assignment, getting our work done, etc. We also attempt to influence how others would perceive us and form impressions about us. In this unit we will discuss how impressions are formed and how we influence other's impression about us.



### 5.2 Learning Outcomes

After studying this unit, you should be in a position to:

- Understand the process of impression formation.
- Comprehend the classic studies of Solomon Asch on impression formation.
- Know as to how quickly our first impressions are formed.
- Understand the cognitive approach to impression formation.
- Know the various tactics of impression management.



### 5.3 Understanding Impression Formation and Impression Management

**Impression Formation:** Impression formation deals with the processes involved in the formation of impression about others. Impression Formation is the process through which we develop our beliefs and evaluations of other people. It refers to the process through which we combine diverse information about other persons into a united impression of them. Forming impressions about others is an elaborate cognitive process. The initial or first impressions about others are very important. It is rightly said that the “First impression is the last impression”. The initial impressions we make on others will generally shape the course of our future relations with them in important ways. Once an impression is formed, it is generally resistant to change. Thus, it is necessary to be careful on first dates, interviews and other situations in which we will meet others for the first time. Large number of research studies have shown that first impression do seem to exert a lasting effect on both, social thought and social behaviour (Rosenbaum & Levin, 1968).

**Impression Management:** It is also called as self-presentation. It deals with the various methods and efforts that individuals use to produce a favorable impression about himself/herself on others. We often attempt to influence others by projecting ourselves in ways which will present us in a favorable light. We often behave, act, dress and express ourselves in ways that produce favorable impressions on others. Impression Management is a skillful activity. Research on impression management has shown that people who can perform impression management successfully are often successful in many situations as they help others to form positive and good impressions about themselves.

#### 5.3.1 Solomon ash Research on Central and Peripheral Traits in Impression Formation

Solomon Asch (1946) did pioneering studies in the areas of Impression formation. He was heavily influenced by the work of Gestalt Psychologists, who believed that “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts”. Like Gestalt Psychologists, Solomon Asch held the view that we do not form impression simply by adding together all of the traits we observe in other persons. Rather, we perceive these traits in relation to one another, so that the traits cease to exist individually and become, instead, part of an integrated, dynamic whole. Asch studied impression formation by using a simple method. He gave individuals lists of traits supposedly possessed by a stranger, and then asked them to indicate their impression of this person by checking the traits on a long list that

they felt fit with their impression of the stranger.

In one of his study participants were given the following two lists.

1. Intelligent - skilful – industrious - warm – determined – practical - cautious.
2. Intelligent – skilful - industrious - cold - determined – practical - cautious.

The above lists differed only with respect to two words: warm and cold. Thus, if people form impressions merely by adding together individual traits, the impression formed by persons exposed to these lists would not differ very much. The results of his study revealed that persons who read the list containing “warm” were much more likely to view the stranger as generous, happy, good natured, sociable, popular, and altruistic than were people who read the list containing “cold.” According to Asch, the words “warm” and “cold” described central traits -- ones that strongly shaped overall impressions of the stranger and coloured the other adjectives in the lists. Asch obtained additional support for this view by substituting the words “polite” and “blunt” for “warm” and “cold.” When he did this, the effects on participant’s impressions of the stranger were far weaker; “polite” and “blunt”, it appeared, were not central words with a strong impact on first impressions. Thus, Central traits have a stronger impact on our impressions than Peripheral Traits (Levy&Richter, 1963).

Furthermore, Asch varied not the content but the order of adjectives of each list. For example

1. One group read the following list. “Intelligent - industrious – impulsive critical- stubborn - envious”
2. Another – group read: “Envious - stubborn - critical – impulsive - industrious - intelligent.”

In the above list the only difference was in the order of the words on the two lists. Yet, again, there were larger differences in the impression formed by participants. For example, while 32 per cent of those who read the first list described the stranger as happy, only 5 per cent of those who read the second list did so. Similarly, while 52 per cent of those who read the first list described him as humorous, only 21 per cent of those who read the second list used this adjective.

Himmelfarb and Senn (1969) replicated the studies of Solomon Ash, and found that central traits affect not only our ratings of others, but also influences our behavior. On the basis of many studies such as these, Asch and other researchers concluded that:

- i) Forming impressions of others involve more than simply adding together individual traits.
- ii) Our perceptions of others are more than the sum of information

- (Traits) we know about others.
- iii) Individual Traits are evaluated in relation to other known Traits, and develop an overall picture where all the traits fit together consistently.
  - iv) Impression formation is a coherent, unified and integrated process in which we take a wholistic and a global view of the various traits possessed by an individual.

### 5.3.2 Formation of First Impression and The Role of Schema in Shaping First Impression

We have a general tendency to quickly form first impressions about others. These first impressions, about others, are formed quickly and without any mental effort. Recent research on impression formation has revealed that we not only form first impressions of others quickly, but also that these impressions play a strong role in our overt actions, including the important behaviour of choosing between candidates for political office. Research studies by Willis (2006) have revealed that when shown faces of strangers (male and female) individuals form first impressions of these people rapidly. In fact even exposure times of one-tenth of a second are sufficient, and increasing exposure times do not change the first impressions significantly. Thus, we form impressions of others very quickly and often on the basis of limited amounts of information (e.g. their facial appearance). This has considerable practical significance in our interpersonal relationships, business meeting and other professional relationships.

**Implicit Personality Theories:** Schemas that Shape First Impressions: Implicit personality theories are beliefs about what traits or characteristics are assumed to go together. For example, if someone describes a person as “helpful” and “kind” we would also assume him/her to be sincere. Similarly, if our friend describes a stranger as “practical” and “intelligent” person, we would also assume him/her to be ambitious. This is largely due to the schema we hold about people and or events. For e.g., in many societies, it is assumed that “what is beautiful is good” – that people who are attractive also possess other positive traits, such as good social skills and interest in enjoying good times and good things in life. Large number of research studies, especially those related to birth order and personality reveal that our impressions of others are often strongly shaped by our beliefs about what traits or characteristics go together. These beliefs are often so strong that we will sometimes bend our perceptions of other people to be consistent with them. We often form impressions of others that reflect our implicit beliefs more than their actual traits.



### Self-Assessment Exercises1

1. Write short note on the following:
  - a. Impression formation
  - b. Impression Management
2. Discuss the research studies of Solomon Asch on Impression Formation

### 5.4 Cognitive Approach to Impression Formation

The term cognitive means perception, thinking, reasoning and other related mental processes. Impression formation is a cognitive process in which we combine available information about others into a weighted average in which each piece of information about another person is weighted in terms of its relative importance. The various factors that influence the relative weight age are as follows.

1. **The Sources of Input:** The information from sources we trust or admire is weighted more heavily than information from sources we distrust (Rosenbaum and Levin, 1969).
2. **Positive and Negative Nature of Information:** We tend to weight negative information about others more heavily than positive information.
3. **Unusual or Extreme Behaviour:** The information that describes behaviour or traits that are unusual or extreme are more valued and weighted.
4. **Primacy Effect:** Information received first tends to be weighted more heavily than information received later.

Modern investigators have attempted to understand impression formation in terms of the basic knowledge of Social Cognition i.e., the ways in which we notice, store, remember and integrate social information. According to cognitive view our basic ideas about how impressions are formed and changed is influenced by two factors: Exemplars of the trait and mental summaries that are abstracted from repeated observations of other's behaviours. We would discuss each of these briefly.

**1. Exemplars:** It refers to concrete examples of behaviour other have performed that are consistent with a given traits. According to this view when we make judgements about others, we recall examples of their behaviour and base our judgement (and our impressions) on these. For e.g., we may recall that during our first meeting with person, how he/she was rude, made criticism about others, and did not co-operate with sick person who was with us. We will recall all these pieces of

information and conclude that this person possesses the trait of “inconsideration.”

**2. Abstractions:** It refers to mental summaries that are abstracted from repeated observations of other’s behaviour. According to this view when we make judgement about others we simply bring our previously formed abstractions to mind, and then use these as the basis for our impressions and our decisions. If we have previously judged a person to be unfriendly, pessimistic, etc., we will combine these traits into an impression of this individual.

A large number of research evidence (Gollob, 1968) supports the view that concrete examples of behaviour and mental abstractions play a role in impression formation. The nature of impressions considerably shifts as we gain increasing experience with others.

## 5.5 Impression Management

Impression Management is also called as self-presentation. It can be defined as our efforts to produce favorable impressions on others. Impression Management is a skillful activity. Research studies (Schlenker 1980, Wayne and Liden, 1995) have demonstrated that people who can perform impression management successfully often gain important advantages in many situations such as getting their work done, job promotions, increased popularity ratings, etc.

**Impression Management: Some Basic Tactics:** The two broad tactics of impression management are as follows:

- a) Self-enhancement: It can be defined as efforts to boost our own self-image. There are many tactics of self-enhancement. One important tactic of self-enhancement is to improve our appearance. This can be done in following ways:
  - i. Changes in dress.
  - ii. Personal grooming (use of cosmetic, hairstyle, use of perfume).
  - iii. Use of various props (such as eye glasses).
  - iv. Judicious use of nonverbal cues.

Some additional tactics of self-enhancement includes:

- i) Efforts to describe one in positive terms,
- ii) Explaining how they overcame difficult obstacles, and
- iii) How they faced certain challenges, which are not common, etc.

Research studies indicate that all the above techniques work under some or other conditions. Brief summaries of some research studies using self-enhancement as an impression management technique are as follows:

1. Women who dress in a professional manner (business suit or dress, subdued jewellery) are often evaluated more favorably for

- management positions than women who dress in a more traditionally feminine manner (Forsythe, Drake, and Cox, 1985).
2. It has also been found that eyeglasses encourage impression of intelligence, while long hair for women or beards for men tend to reduce such impression (Terry and Krantz, 1993).
  3. Wearing perfume or cologne can enhance first impression provided this particular grooming aid is not overdone (Zajonc, 2005).

Most of these efforts to improve personal appearance are not potentially dangerous to the persons who use them. However, one types of effort to enhance personal appearance -- developing a suntan -- is potentially harmful (Broadstok Borland and Gason, 1991). Other tactics of self-enhancement pose different kinds of risks. For instance, recent research by Sharp and Getz (1996) indicates that one reason why at least some young people consume alcohol is that it gives them the right "image." In other words, they engage in such behaviour partly for purpose of impression management. Research finding (Sharp and Getz, 1996) offer support for the view that some people do drink alcohol as a tactic of impression management to help look good in the eyes of others.

- b) **Other-enhancement:** It refers to efforts on our part to make the target person feel good in our presence. There are many ways in which we can enhance other's self-esteem. Some of these are as follows:
1. Flattery – heaping praise on target person even if they don't deserve it.
  2. Expressing agreement with their views.
  3. Showing a high degree of interest in them.
  4. Doing small favours for them.
  5. Expressing liking for them, either verbally or nonverbally (Wayne and Ferris, 1990).

A large body of research evidence suggests that efforts to engage in impression management are highly useful. It has been found that impression management can influence important judgments based on impression of others. Research studies by Wayne and Linden (1995) have demonstrated that impression management is a useful tactic during the first six weeks on the job. They found that the greater the extent to which the new employees engaged in other-enhancement (supervisor-focused) tactics of impression management, the more their supervisors viewed them as similar to themselves. Further, the more the employees engaged in self-enhancement tactic, the more their supervisors liked them. Most important, increased liking and feeling of similarity were strong predictors of performance ratings; the more supervisors liked their subordinates and felt similar to them, the higher they rated their performance.



These findings and those of many other studies (e.g., Wayne and Kacmar, 1991; Paulhus, Bruce, and Trapnell, 1995) indicate that impression management tactics often do succeed in enhancing the appeal of persons who use them.

### Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Discuss two factors that influence the formation of impressions with reference to cognitive perspective.



### 5.5 Summary

In this unit, students were taught the process of impression formation, comprehend the classic studies of Solomon Asch on impression formation, students were also taught how quickly our first impressions are formed. In addition, the unit also explained how our impressions of others develop. After we have had more experience with people, however, our impressions shift towards consisting mainly of abstractions mental summaries of their behaviour on many occasions. However, existing evidence indicates that information does not occur in a cognitive vacuum. On the contrary, mental framework representing our previous experience in many social situations, and basic cognitive processes relating to the storage, recall, and integrating of social information, play a role in it.



### 5.6 References/Further Reading/Web Resources

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## 5.7 Possible Answers To SAE

### Answers SAEs 1

**1a. Impression Formation:** Impression formation deals with the processes involved in the formation of impression about others. Impression Formation is the process through which we develop our beliefs and evaluations of other people.

**b. Impression Management:** It deals with the various methods and efforts that individuals use to produce a favorable impression about him/her on others. We often attempt to influence others by projecting ourselves in ways which will present us in a favorable light.

2. Solomon Asch studied impression formation by using a simple method. He gave individuals lists of traits supposedly possessed by a stranger, and then asked them to indicate their impression of this person by checking the traits on a long list that they felt fit with their impression of the stranger.

### Answers to SAEs 2

Two factors that influenced how impressions are formed and changed:

**a. Exemplars:** It refers to concrete examples of behaviour other have performed that are consistent with a given traits. According to this view when we make judgements about others, we recall examples of their behaviour and base our judgement (and our impressions) on these. For e.g., we may recall that during our first meeting with person, how he/she was rude, made criticism about others, and did not co-operate with sick person who was with us.

**b. Abstractions:** It refers to mental summaries that are abstracted from repeated observations of other's behaviour. According to this view when we make judgement about others we simply bring our previously formed abstractions to mind, and then use these as the basis for our impressions and our decisions. If we have previously judged a person to be unfriendly, pessimistic, etc., we will combine these traits into an impression of this individual.

## MODULE 2

Unit 1	Understanding some Important Factors in Person Perception and Impression Formation
Unit 2	Attitude
Unit 3	Persuasion
Unit 4	Stereotype
Unit 5	Prejudice and Discrimination

### UNIT 1 UNDERSTANDING SOME IMPORTANT FACTORS IN PERSON PERCEPTION AND IMPRESSION FORMATION

#### Unit structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
  - 1.3 Person Perception
  - 1.4 Important Factors in Person Perception
    - 1.4.1 The Most Important Aspects of Impressions
- 1.6 Summary
- 1.7 References/Further Reading
- 1.8 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercise



#### 1.1 Introduction

In the last unit, we discussed impression formation. The unit also served to introduce us to other units in this course. You can now state the general principles of impression formation. You can also describe the type of information that you may use. We are now ready to discuss another interesting unit: understanding some important factors in person perception and impression formation. We will now consider person perception: impression formation. Let us take a look at what other content you should learn in this unit as specified in the objectives below.

Meanwhile, do you know what perception is all about? Someone should explain person perception.



## 1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- describe person perception;
- identify important factors in person perception;
- and explain the most important aspects of impression.



## 1.3 Person Perception

While perception implies the use of direct sensory information, person perception is concerned with the process by which impressions, opinions, and feelings about other persons are formed. Often an opinion about another person is not based on direct information but on statements by others or knowledge of the person, received from other sources. It is important for you to note that opinions, feelings, and impressions are rather on subjective processes, and inferences drawn on the basis of such subjective judgments go to constitute what person perception is all about.

There are three sources in forming impressions of personality which are stimulus information, perceiver variables, and impressions of stimulus person. Stimulus information comprises of the physical appearance of the person, and his overt verbal and nonverbal behaviour. Perceiver variables consist of the perceiver's feelings and cognitions towards stimulus, his self-concept, and his implicit personality theory and stereotype. The last source consists of perception of causality, intent, justifiability, attribution of personality traits and other cognitions towards the stimulus person.

As you can see from the list of the factors above, most of these sources apart from the source of stimulus information belong to subjective judgment of the perceiver. There are however the following modes of perceiving others, viz:

- a. From the point of view of the outward appearance and other superficial characteristics of the person.
- b. From the point of view of central traits of the person, for example, aggressive, shy, and so on.
- c. From the point of view of a cluster of congruous traits of the person, for example strong and bold, polite and kind, and so on.
- d. From the point of view of a variety of traits not necessarily congruous of the person, for example, polite but cruel, kind but aggressive, and so on.

The above modes of person perception will be clear if we consider the following factors influencing person perception in the next section of our discussion.

### Self-Assessment Exercises1

1. Describe three sources in forming impressions of personality.
2. Identify the factors influencing person perception.

## 1.4 Important Factors in Person Perception

a. **Verbal Cues:** In a study conducted by Asch (1986), subjects who were all college students, were asked to write a brief characterisation of the person for whom the following traits were given, for example, energetic, assured, talkative, cold, ironical, impulsive, and persuasive. In spite of the paucity of information, all subjects readily accepted the task of completing the sketch of the person. Their responses showed significant differences in making use of the traits, though they were all given the same list of traits. Some perceivers saw the hypothetical person as cold, inquisitive and ironical, others perceived him as energetic and assured, and some perceived him as talkative, and persuasive. In all cases, there was one predominant trait that characterized the hypothetical person. There was also evidence that new traits were invented, and ascribed to the person.

b. **Non-Verbal Cues:** As a source of impression formation, physiognomy has been studied more systematically than other forms of non-verbal stimulus information. In one study, facial photographs of women having narrowed eyes, a relaxed and full mouth, and a smooth skin, were perceived as more feminine and sexually attractive than others of women lacking these features (Secord, 1955). The classic example that we tend to form opinions about others from their appearances, is to be found from the frequently quoted passage from Shakespeare's Julius Caesar Act 1, scene 2:

Let me have men about me that are fats sleek-headed men and such as sleep O' nights: You Cassius has a lean and hungry look; he thinks too much: such men are dangerous.

Let us cite another example: Sheldon's (1982) theory of personality on the body types, like, ectomorphic, mesomorphic, and endomorphic is a relevant example.

c. **The Social Stereotype:** We often find ourselves having only categorical information concerning a person. We often categories a person as a policeman, a teacher, or an old man. In all such categorizing processes, society selects the dominant traits identifying various categories of persons, for example, age sex, membership of group, or some behaviour patterns. It is important for you to note that stereotyping has also two other characteristics:

- i. perceivers agree on the attributes that the persons in the category possess, and
- ii. a discrepancy exists between the attributed traits and actual traits.
- d. **Perceiver Variables:** Bruner and Tagiuri (1964) referred to the idea that perceivers generally have a set of biases in judging others in their 'implicit personality theories'. That is, without realizing it, the perceiver has a theory about what other people are like, and this theory influences his perception. For example, an individual may believe that a person who is friendly is also honest, though other persons may associate friendliness with other traits, each of them being influenced from his own experience or learning.

In another experiment, a group of children were taught the same lesson by a 'popular teacher' who was instructed to make as many 'mistakes' in teaching as possible, and by another 'unpopular teacher' who was instructed to give a 'copy-book lesson'. A post-text was given to the children asking them to rate the teaching of the two teachers, and it was found that the children rated the 'popular' teacher who made mistakes during teaching as a 'better' teacher than the other who made no mistakes at all during teaching. It is obvious from such findings that individual biases towards the other person had influenced their perception of the teaching methods of the two different teachers. Many studies have shown that perceivers like persons they assume to be more similar to themselves than persons towards whom they feel neutral or whom they dislike. Remember that no hard and fast generalisation can be made from either of these opposite types of evidence.

Sometimes, preferences are shown on the basis of similarity, for example, successful teachers tend to perceive the teaching profession as the only honest profession worth doing; they even marry within their profession. There are cases when an individual who is withdrawn and shy, and knows that he is not rewarded by others for being so, tends to admire one who is opposite, that is talkative, self-confident, and-persuasive. It is to be noted that in the latter case, the preferences are based on compatibility and admiration, and admiration, we all know, arises from one's accepted knowledge or belief of one's inferiority in some respect. You must also remember that one's self-concept influences one's person perception.

#### **1.4.1 The Most Important Aspect of Impression Evaluation**

The most important and powerful aspect of first impression is 'evaluation.' Do we like or dislike a person? Put more formally, the evaluative dimension is the most important of a small number of basic dimensions that organize our unified impressions of other people.

This point was shown in a study by Osgood (1957) using a measurement procedure called the semantic differential. In this study, participants were given a list of trait pairs and asked to indicate which trait more closely described particular persons and objects. The list consists of such trait pairs as happy- sad, good- bad, strong- weak, and warm-cold. It is important for you to note that these underlying dimensions accounted for most of the ratings. Potency (strong-weak) and activity (active-passive). Once we know that someone rate 'mother' as very good, moderately, strong, and somewhat passive, we learn little more about these perceptions of 'mother' by asking for additional ratings. It is to be noted that evaluation is the main dimension that underlines perceptions; potency and activity play lesser roles.

### **Positively Bias**

A general evaluative bias in person perception is to evaluate people positively; a phenomenon termed the positively bias. (Sear, 1983a). Let us cite an example to enhance your level of understanding. In one study, students rated 97% of their professors in college favorably (that is above 'average' on a rating scale), despite all the mixed experiences students have in their college classes (Sear, 1983a). There is a hypothesis about why people are evaluated so favorably. It has been suggested that people feel better when they are surrounded by good things, pleasant experiences, nice people, good weather, and so on.

There is a special positively bias in people's evaluation of others, which Sears describes as the person-positively bias. People feel more similar to other people than they do to impersonal objects and therefore extend to them a more generous evaluation.

### **Negativity Effect**

During impression formation, we tend to pay special attention to negative information. And when we come to form an overall impression of the person, that negative information is weighed more heavily. That is, a negative trait affects an impression more than a positive trait, everything else being equal. This has been called the negativity effect. The main explanation for this effect is based on the figure-ground principle. As just noted, positive evaluations of other people are much more common than negative evaluations. Negative traits, which are more unusual, are therefore more distinctive. People may simply pay more attention to those negative qualities and give them more weight.

It is important for you to note that the impact of negative information depends in part on what kind of judgment is being made about a person. The negativity bias is very strong for moral traits. Thus, if a person engages in dishonest behaviour that is assumed to be very informative

about the person's underlying morality. Positive behaviours, in contrast, are perceived to be performed by both moral and immoral persons.

### Emotional Information

As it is true for negative information, perceivers notice emotionally charged information and make great use of it in their judgments about others. That is we infer what people are like from the emotions they express. In fact, emotional information is one of the most difficult sources of information to ignore when perceiving others.

### Self Assessment Exercise2

State 4 modes of perceiving others



### 1.5 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt person perception. You have therefore learnt important factors in person perception. In addition, you have learnt the most important aspects of impressions: evaluation, positivity bias, negativity effect and emotional information. You have therefore, learnt the process of putting together information about people.



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## 1.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

### Answers to SAEs 1

1. The following are factors influencing person perception:

- a. Verbal Cues
- b. Non-Verbal Cues
- c. The Social Stereotype
- d. Perceiver Variables

2. The three sources in forming impressions of personality are;

- a. **Positively Bias:** Is a general evaluative bias in person perception is to evaluate people positively; a phenomenon termed the positively bias. There is a hypothesis about why people are evaluated so favorably. It has been suggested that people feel better when they are surrounded by good things, pleasant experiences, nice people, good weather, and so on.
- b. **Negativity Effect:** During impression formation, we tend to pay special attention to negative information. And when we come to form an overall impression of the person, that negative information is weighed more heavily. That is, a negative trait affects an impression more than a positive trait, everything else being equal. This has been called the negativity effect. People may simply pay more attention to those negative qualities and give them more weight.
- c. **Emotional Information:** As it is true for negative information, perceivers notice emotionally charged information and make great use of it in their judgments about others. That is, we infer what people are like from the emotions they express. In fact, emotional information is one of the most difficult sources of information to ignore when perceiving others.

### Answers to SAEs 2

The following are modes of perceiving others:

- a. From the point of view of the outward appearance and other superficial characteristics of the person.
- b. From the point of view of central traits of the person, for example, aggressive, shy, and so on.
- c. From the point of view of a cluster of congruous traits of the person, for example strong and bold, polite and kind, and so on.
- d. From the point of view of a variety of traits not necessarily congruous of the person, for example, polite but cruel, kind but aggressive, and so on.



## UNIT 2 ATTITUDE

### Unit Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Outcomes
  - 2.3 Meaning of Attitude
    - 2.3.1 Formation of attitude
    - 2.3.2 Attitude development
    - 2.3.3 Why Attitude influence behaviour
      - 2.3.3.1 How do attitudes guide behaviou
- 2.4 The fine art of persuasion: How attitude are changed
  - 2.4.1 Resisting Persuasion attempts
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 References/Further Reading/ Web Resources
- 2.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents



### 2.1 Introduction

In our previous unit we discuss what perception is all about, the person perception and other aspect of perception. Attitudes are dynamic phenomena that interact with all other elements of an organism. The concept of attitude originated in the United States. Allport described it as probably the most distinctive and indispensable concept in contemporary American Social Psychology. In their study of the Polish Peasant, Thomas and Znaniecki used the term attitude extensively. Often the term attitude is identified with prejudices, biases, and states of readiness, beliefs or ideas with an emotional tinge. Attitudes exercise a great influence on the life and behaviour. Attitudes indicate the direction and intensity of response of the person to stimuli. They reveal the drives which lead to some form of behaviour. It is a clear fact that every individual has a vast array of attitudes: e.g., Attitudes towards health, children, food, clothes, God, pets, etc. now, i believed you all frequently heard the word attitude. What is attitude? Does attitude influence our behavior?



### 2.2 Learning Outcomes

After studying this unit, you should

- Understand how attitudes are formed and the process of development of attitude.

- Know when and why attitudes influence behavior.
- Techniques of changing attitudes such as persuasion and cognitive dissonance.



## 2.3 Definition of Attitude

The term attitude is a French term that originated from the Italian word *attitudine* and from the Late Latin *aptitūdō* and *aptitūdin-* (American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 2000; Venes, 2001). An Internet search for the term attitude resulted in sites such as the following: multiple motivational resources, clothing and apparel lines, a wilderness survival site, a New Zealand site for teenage depression, a gay lifestyle magazine (produced in the United Kingdom), a Web site maintenance company, music sites, and a site with humor for adoptive mothers. These are a few examples of instances where the term attitude is used as a proper noun (a name of something) and, therefore, does not result in definitions.

The term attitude is most often defined as a noun. The following are definitions found in various dictionaries. .

1. “A settled opinion” and “behavior reflecting this” (Abate, 1999).
2. “Behavior based on conscious or unconscious mental views developed through cumulative experience” (Venes, 2001, p. 189).
3. “Aircraft attitude is used to mean two closely related aspects of the situation of an aircraft in flight” (Wikipedia, 2006a).
4. “A pose in which the dancer stands on one leg, with the other leg lifted behind (*derriere*) or in front (*enavant*) of the body with the knee bent at approximately 120-degree angle” (Wikipedia, 2006b).
5. The posture or position of a person or an animal, or the manner in which the parts of his body are disposed; position assumed or studied to serve a purpose.
6. Position as indicating action, feeling, or mood . . .” (Zimmerman, 2001).
7. “An enduring, learned predisposition to behave in a consistent way toward a given class of objects, or a persistent mental and/or neural state of readiness to react to a certain class of objects, not as they are but as they are conceived to be” (Dark, 2005).

However, Attitudes refer to a mental and neural set of readiness, organized through experience exerting a directing or dynamic influence upon the individual’s response to all objects and situations with which it is related. An attitude is a readiness to respond in such a way that

behaviour is given a certain direction. According to Allport (2011) attitudes are three types:

1. Social Attitudes
2. Attitudes towards specific persons.
3. Attitudes towards specific groups.

### 2.3.1 Attitude Formation

Attitudes are a result of beliefs. Beliefs about the object, feelings towards the object, behavioural intentions regarding the object and actual behaviour thus shown are all steps towards attitude formation. For example, if employees believe that their current job will provide them with experience and training a positive attitude is developed in them towards the job. There are four processes in attitude formation. It is similar to how beliefs are formed. They include:

1. **Past experience:** People develop attitude on the basis of their past experience.
2. **Available Information:** A piece of information that is happy will influence the beliefs. This will consequently affect the attitude formation. For eg: If an employee hear about the promotion of many people in an industry his attitude changes.
3. **Generalization:** Generalization comes from similar situations or events. Eg: No one in a job is promoted. This will give a general feeling that there is no promotion.

The most important thing to remember about attitude formation is that it is learned. Family, friends, experiences co-workers, are involved in attitude formation.

### 2.3.2 Attitude Development

In early development stage (infant) attitudes exist in their most primitive form, as simple pleasant or unpleasant states of the infant. Some of these feelings are results of satisfied or unsatisfied biological needs. Others are produced by pleasurable or unpleasurable responses from mother, father or siblings. An infant gains pleasure from being helped and protected. But a child in the early period of walking is likely to resent and reject the helping hand. Developmental changes produce changes in child attitude with objects and situations (Dark, 2005).

Child's attitude towards authority figure is an important element of socialization. It determines his behaviour in school. A rebellious attitude towards authority (teacher, principal, peer group) can bring conflicts. Teacher can influence the attitude of a child considerably. Attitudes of Children have their origins in the family relationships at home. The parental attitude of 'acceptance – democratic' seemed to facilitate growth and development more than others. Attitudes developed during the preschool years are associated with the general culture. Day to day

experiences and the child's perception of them have a strong influence on the development of attitude.

Attitude develops moment by moment. Some of them are formed without direction. Others are a result of careful planning by a person or persons who desires to encourage the development of attitudes. Much of citizenship training is a matter of attitude formation. Emotional attitude play great role in one's life. Children should gain unbiased attitude through content mastery. School becomes a very important factor in the development of existing attitude and to create new ones. Teachers play a great role in this respect.

An individual's attitude is determined by various developmental factors. They are as follows:

1. **Physical growth and development:** This is responsible for poor emotional and social adjustment. Social adjustment has important effects on the formation of attitude.
2. **Intellectual development:** The components of intelligence like memory, understanding, thinking and reasoning play a significant part in attitude formation. This is because they help in gaining perceptual experience.
3. **Emotional Development:** Emotions play dominant role in converting behaviour in to attitudes.
4. **Social Development:** Social interaction is a key to attitude formation at any age of human development. Social attitudes can be picked up from respective group.
5. **Ethical and Moral Development:** Individuals enhancing his feelings of self-esteem tries to develop those attitudes that increases his values and ideals.

In attitude formation, both home and family environment plays a leading role. Attitude offer great possibilities for successful achievement as well as failure in life. They are an important motivator of behaviour and influence all human values.

### 2.3.3 When and Why Attitude Influence Behaviour

How attitudes are formed and how to get it changed? They are an important determinant of behaviour. The link between attitudes and behaviour is quite weak. Therefore, knowing some one's attitude was not very useful in predicting their behaviour. There is a gap between one's attitude and behaviour on many occasions. Attitudes often do exert important effects on our behaviour. Research findings show the possibility of predicting people's behaviour from their attitudes. Social psychologists made progress in understanding the link between attitude and behaviour.

### 2.3.3.1 How Do Attitudes Guide Behaviour

In late 1960s, social psychology was experiencing serious crisis. Many studies concluded the fact that the link between attitudes and behaviour is actually quite weak. This means knowing someones attitude was not very useful in predicting their overt behaviour. Later studies support the fact that our attitudes often do exert important effects on our behaviour. Research findings in this respect supported the possibility, of predicting people's behaviour from their attitudes.

#### The Attitude Behaviour Link

Study was conducted by Lapiere (1934). His study results indicated that there is a sizable gap between attitudes and behaviour. That is between what people say and what they actually do. Later studies indicated that attitudes do indeed influence behaviour. It is the type of attitude that matters in behaviour. Ambivalent attitudes are weaker predictors of behaviour. Recent research in this area, concluded that when attitudes are not ambivalent, that is, when attitudes have no positive and negative feelings—attitudes do indeed predict behaviour. Situational constraints moderate relationship between attitudes and behaviour.

There are several aspects of attitudes that guide behaviour:

- (1) Attitude origin – Evidence indicates that attitudes on basis of direct experience have stronger effects on behaviour.
- (2) Attitude strength. The stronger the attitudes are, the greater their impact on behaviour.
- (3) Attitude specificity. This is the extent to which attitudes are focused on specific objects. Attitude behaviour link is stronger when attitudes and behaviours are measured at same level of specificity.

#### Self-Assessment Exercise1

1. How does attitudes formed?
2. Discuss attitude-behaviour link

## 2.4 The Fine art of Persuasion: how attitudes are changed

Persuasion is the effort to change our attitudes through the use of various kinds of messages. It is a part of daily life. Studies of social psychologists yielded insights into the cognitive process that play a role in persuasion. For attitude change persuasive communication plays a vital role. Persuasive communication is such a skill which is employed by a person to persuade other person or persons. The skill may be based

on reason. In persuasive behaviour communication is vital. It can be through dialogue, written ideas, television or film. Through these media, the messages sent might bring changes in our view point. Some persuasive appeal does not succeed in attitude change.

**Example:** Some advertisements fail to sell the goods advertised; while others are successful. The various ingredients of persuasion are: The communicator, communication, process of communication, these four elements include, 'What means', and to 'whom'.

There are two routes to persuasion. They are:

- (1) **The central route to persuasion.** Persuasion that occurs when interested people focus on the arguments. e.g: Advertisement of computer.
- (2) **Peripheral Route to persuasion.** Persuasion that occurs when people are influenced by incidental cues. e.g: Attractiveness of the speaker.

#### 2.4.1 The Early Approach to Persuasion

It is found that source credibility is an important factor in persuasion. Following are some interesting findings of early research on persuasion.

- i. Communicators who are credible are more persuasive. Experts with respect to the topics are more persuasive than non-experts.
- ii. Communicators who are attractive in some way. E.g. physically attractive.
- iii. People are more susceptible to persuasion.
- iv. When audience attitude is contrary to that of the persuader.
- v. People who speak rapidly are often more persuasive than persons who speak more slowly.
- vi. Persuasion can be enhanced by messages that arouse strong emotions (especially fear) in the audience.

#### 2.4.2 Resisting Persuasion Attempts

We are highly resistant to persuasive messages. If we are not, our attitudes would be in a constant state of change. Several factors contribute to such resistance to persuasion.

1. **Reactance:** It is negative reactions to efforts by others to limit our personal freedom. In other words we tend to protect our personal freedom.
2. **Forewarning:** It is the prior knowledge of persuasive intent. It is the knowledge that someone is trying to change our attitudes.
3. **Selective Avoidance:** It is a tendency to direct our attention away from information that challenges our existing attitudes.

4. **Counter arguing against competing views:** When exposed to persuasive messages we actively counterargue against the information they contain. This also increases our resistance to persuasion.
5. **Biased assimilation and attitude polarization:** These are two additional processes that play a role in resistance to persuasion. Biased assimilation is the tendency to evaluate information that disconfirms our existing views as less convincing than that confirms these views. Attitude polarization is the tendency to evaluate information in such a way that it strengthens our initial views.

### Self-Assessment Exercise2

3. What are the factors contributing resistance to persuasion?



### 1.5 Summary

What you have learnt in this unit concerns attitudes and how it influences life and behaviour. You have also learnt how attitudes are formed and the process of development of attitude, when and why attitudes influence behavior. In addition, the unit also explains various techniques of changing attitudes such as persuasion and cognitive dissonance.



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## 2.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

### Answers to SAEs 1

Attitudes are formed through the following:

- i. . **Past experience:** People develop attitude on the basis of their past experience.
- ii. **Available Information:** A piece of information that is happy will influence the beliefs. This will consequently affect the attitude formation. For example, if an employee hears about the promotion of many people in an industry his attitude changes.
- iii. **Generalization:** Generalization comes from similar situations or events. Example, No one in a job is promoted. This will give a general feeling that there is no promotion.

2. There a sizable gap between attitudes and behaviour, between what people say and what they actually do. However, there are several factors that affect the strength of the relationship between attitude and behaviour. These factors determine the extent to which attitudes influence overt behaviour. Attitudes influence behaviour in that;

- (1) When situational constraints moderate the relationship between attitudes and behaviour
- (2) when situational pressure shapes the extent to which attitudes can be expressed.
- (3) when attitudes are powerful and strong.

## Answers to SAEs2

Factors contributing resistance to persuasion:

1. **Reactance:** It is negative reactions to efforts by others to limit our personal freedom. In other words we tend to protect our personal freedom.
2. **Forewarning:** It is the prior knowledge of persuasive intent. It is the knowledge that someone is trying to change our attitudes.
3. **Selective Avoidance:** It is a tendency to direct our attention away from information that challenges our existing attitudes.
4. **Counter arguing against competing views:** When exposed to persuasive messages we actively counterargue against the information they contain. This also increases our resistance to persuasion.
5. **Biased assimilation and attitude polarization:** These are two additional processes that play a role in resistance to persuasion. Biased assimilation is the tendency to evaluate information that disconfirms our existing views as less convincing than that confirms these views.

## UNIT 3      PERSUASION

### Unit Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcomes
  - 3.3 Theories of Persuasion
- 3.4 Factors that Affect Persuasion
  - 3.4.1 Resisting Persuasion
- 3.6 Summary
- 3.7 References/Furtherreading/Web Resources
- 3.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises within the contents



### 3.1 Introduction

Attitudes are formed from birth, and the formation process continues for as long as we remain alive. These attitudes are also the target of change. The act of trying to change our attitudes by others is called persuasion. We are confronted daily, with activities or events initiated by individuals or groups, all aimed at persuading us to change our attitudes. Think of your day- to-day activities- starting from morning, how many bill boards, sales men, hawkers, friends, and family members have you come in contact with? These interactions, in most cases, are all attempts at persuading you to change your attitude towards something or someone. We are all potential agents of persuasion, as long as we have some views and ideas to share with others. The usual intention is to get our audience to see our point of view, to agree with it or accept it. The use of various kinds of messages in an effort to change other people's attitudes is persuasion.

In this unit, you will come to appreciate the power that others have in persuading us to change our attitudes. You will also be exposed to the processes of persuasion, the factors that affect persuasion, and the effectiveness of persuasion.



### 3.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Define the communicators and the audience in persuasion
- Explain the place of message in persuasion
- Identify the factors that affect persuasion

- Describe how we can resist persuasion
- Discuss the theories of persuasion.



### 3.3 Theories of Persuasion

The following theories focus on how messages are processed before persuasion takes place.

#### 1. Systematic Processing Theories

These theories focus on the detailed processing of the content of the message by the recipient. Hovland et al. (1953), propose that there is a sequence of processes that makes messages persuasive, any error of omission or mix-up will make persuasion impossible. These processes include:

1. attentiveness
2. comprehension of the content
3. acceptance of conclusion

McGuire (1969), corroborating the above, identifies the following as being crucial to the persuasive process:

1. attentiveness
2. good understanding of the message (comprehension)
3. acceptance of the message
4. retention
5. resultant reaction/action, as a result of the message

If any of the above steps is omitted, the sequence will be broken making persuasion attempt ineffective.

#### 2. Elaborate Likelihood Model (ELM)

This model proposes that if one is able to, critically, evaluate the logic of persuasive arguments, and also able to generate counter arguments, then the less likely he will be persuaded. The ability to access and generate counter arguments will depend on the type of thinking one is engaged in. When presented with persuasive arguments, we process them using any of the routes to persuasion discussed below:

##### i. Central Route to Persuasion

Here, one must have both the motivation and time to think critically about the logic of the argument. This makes us less susceptible to persuasion.

##### ii. Peripheral Route to Persuasion

When we are motivated and/or do not have time to evaluate the arguments presented to us critically, especially when we are listening

and doing another thing at the time, we are not able to generate effective counter-argument. This will make us susceptible to persuasion (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986; Stephenson, Benoit & Tshida, 2001).

### 3. Heuristic Systematic Persuasion Model (Chaiken, 1987)

Heuristics are shortcuts to problem solving that do not always lead to the right answers. The above theory states that people who process on the peripheral route often use heuristics as logical thought (Drake et al 1998). The use of heuristics can result in people using superficial aspects of the argument that is not related to the logic of the argument to be persuaded.

The audience might allow things like physical beauty, popularity of the communicator rather than the quality of argument to persuade them. The attitude formed using peripheral route does not last and do not predict behaviour like those formed during the central route. (Chaiken 1987; Fazio 1990).

#### Self-Assessment Exercise2

1. Identify the sequences of processing persuasive messages according to McGuire.
2. Identify and explain the first five factors that affects persuasion

### 3.4 Factors That Affects Persuasion

In persuasion, we have the source (communicator) and the recipient or receiver (audience) using the message as the tool (what). Usually, if one can answer the question- “WHO said WHAT to WHOM, with WHAT effect?” Then persuasion has been effective or successful. For communicators, the following factors will be considered in persuasion.

#### 1. Credibility of Communicators

Experts and people who seem to know what they are talking about are likely to be more persuasive than non experts. Also, members of our in-group are usually assessed as more credible than those of the out-group.

#### 2 Physical Attractiveness of Communicators

Once the source of the message is from an attractive communicator, the product or object of persuasion becomes associated with the attractiveness portrayed. Advertisers use attractive models to associate their products with such beauty. It is implied that the use of such products will result in the same physical attractiveness of the models.

Attractive people are likely going to be able to persuade us well, especially if we are processing information using the peripheral route where we are likely going to concentrate on the superficial qualities of the speakers, rather than actually evaluating the quality of the arguments. (Eagly & Chaiken 1975; Petty, Cacioppo & Goldman 1981).

### **1. Appearance of The Message**

When messages are designed to change our attitudes, they may not succeed compared to those that are not intended for that purpose. When messages or arguments presented do not look like attempts to persuade us, we are likely going to be persuaded by them (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Prior warnings help build our resistance to persuasion.

### **2. Use of Distraction in Persuasion**

Distractions may make the audience more susceptible to persuasion than having the audience pay full attention to the message.

### **3. Adoption of a Two –Sided Approach By The Communicator**

This approach is effective where the audience holds contrary views or attitudes to persuasion. Here, both sides to the arguments are presented with emphasis on refuting the side the speaker is opposed to; this gives the audience a sense of satisfaction allowing the speaker to reinforce his/her position in order to be able to persuade the audience.

### **4. Fast and Slow Communicators**

The audience is likely to perceive the credibility of the speaker better if he/she speaks rapidly, because it is believed that those who speak rapidly are good at persuasion than slow speakers (Miller et al., 1976).

### **5. Confidence of The Communicators**

If the speaker appears to be very confident as he/she speaks, regardless of the validity of what is said, he/she is likely to persuade the audience more than a less confident communicator.

### **6. Age and Persuasion**

Younger people are likely going to be persuaded to change their attitudes easier than the older ones, because adults are more resistant to change their attitudes.

## 7. The Audience

Some people can easily be persuaded than others. **The young** can be easily persuaded compared to the adult. Those who use the **peripheral route** for processing information may be easily persuaded than the users of the **central route**. **Females** may be persuaded more easily than males etc. Knowing your audience is important in persuasion.

The following variables are equally central to the process of persuasion.

### a) **Intelligent Quotient (IQ)**

People low in IQ may be easily persuaded compared to those with moderate to high IQ, because they lack the cognitive ability to critically analyse messages and generate counter arguments. In some cases, people with high IQ may be easily persuaded than those with low IQ, especially, if the persuasive message requires complex analysis which those with high IQ can easily appreciate (Rhodes & Wood, 1992).

### b) **Self-Esteem**

Here, those with moderate self-esteem are easily persuaded than those with either low or high self-esteem (Rhodes & wood, 1992). Those with low self-esteem may be easily distracted and not able to concentrate on the persuasive message, resulting in their inability to process the arguments well, and leading to a failure of persuasion. On the other hand, those with high self-esteem have a lot of confidence in their own opinions; and even when they appreciate and comprehend the arguments, they are not likely going to yield easily to persuasive arguments.

### c) **Age**

Young people try to develop attitudes they will hold on to as adults, so while trying to develop their own attitudes, they become vulnerable to persuasive attempts. The older we are, the less vulnerable we become to persuasive attempts (Krosnick & Alwin, 1989).

### d) **Mood**

The mood of an audience will determine if they can easily be persuaded or not. People will always want to maintain a happy mood; thus, they will not likely, analyse persuasive messages critically, and may use the peripheral route and analyse messages based on superficial qualities of the speaker. People who are good looking or smart, but not in a happy mood will use the central route to analyse persuasive messages; they may be easily persuaded because the message must be logical for them to appreciate (Bless, Bohner, Schwarz & Strack, 1990).



### 3.4.1 Resisting Persuasion

Why do most attempts at persuasion fail? Due to our attitudes concerning the issues that have been formed, we are more likely to resist any attempt at persuading us to change these attitudes. The following factors explain why we are able to resist most systematic efforts aimed at persuading us.

#### 1. Reactance

Here, we react in the face of mounting pressure to persuade us to change our attitudes on some issues. We do so in order to protect our personal freedom. As the pressure to persuade us rises, we begin to experience a degree of resentment and anger that is likely to influence us to take the opposite views to those the speaker presents or is attempting to persuade us to adopt. The effect is a negative change in attitude. It is believed that in an attempt to change ourselves, strong persuasive messages in favour of attitude change may produce greater opposition, than when moderate or weak persuasive messages are presented (Fuegen & Brehm, 2004). The strong motivation to react comes to play when the individual perceives that the persuasive message is a direct threat to his/her freedom.

#### 2. Forewarning

This is the advantaged knowledge we have that the persuasive message is targeted to change our attitudes towards certain issues. Do you think that knowing ahead of time that your parent, sibling or friend is coming to convince you on an issue prepares you to resist? In a way, this may be true; this is because it gives you the chance to be armed in the following ways.

##### a. Opportunities to formulate counter arguments

Our counter arguments reduce the effect of the messages on us, and give us time to recall facts that may come to disprove some aspects of the persuasive message, thus reducing the likelihood of our being persuaded.

##### b. Opportunity to make positive attitude change

Here, if individuals have the foreknowledge of a speaker's intention, it may help them to make a shift in the positive direction before they receive the persuasive message. This way, they can convince themselves that they have given in to change, not because they want to, but that they have allowed it to show themselves as not gullible or easily influenced (Quinn & Wood 2004).

##### c. Selective avoidance

This is a tendency to direct attention away from information that has the potential to change existing attitudes. Such avoidance increases resistance to persuasion. People can decide to ignore or avoid information that does not agree with their views, and these include persuasive messages. If they do not pay attention to the message, their chances of analysing and becoming persuaded by the message is reduced. This also means that we are likely going to pay full attention to persuasive messages that agree with our views. When we ignore certain messages and pay attention to others, we are engaging in selective exposure. When we select what to focus our attention on, our attitude is likely to remain, mostly, intact for long periods of time.

#### **d. Defending our attitudes**

People usually provide their own defence against attempts to persuade them by arguing against views that contradict their own (Eagly et al., 1999). People do also, process carefully, counter attitudinal inputs and argue actively against them, rather than ignore them. This helps in resisting persuasion.

#### **e. Inoculation against “bad ideas”**

People can be inoculated against persuasion by presenting to them views contrary to their own, alongside arguments refuting these counter attitudinal positions. When counter-arguments against opposing views are presented, people become motivated to generate additional counterarguments of their own, which will make them more resistant to any attitudinal change.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise2**

2. Explain the basic propositions of Elaborate Likelihood Model of persuasion.



### **3.5 Summary**

In this unit, you have learnt the act of persuasion which is complex and unique. The actors are all expected to participate actively, if persuasion is to succeed. Sincerity and integrity of both the givers and the receivers of the persuasive messages go a long way in helping this process. Attention must therefore be given to details with a focus on increasing the ability to persuade our social world, towards improving it positively. You are now conversant with the various factors involved in persuasion.

The various theories of persuasion and reasons why persuasions can be successful or resisted by the recipients have also been highlighted.



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### 3.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

#### Answers SAEs 1

- (a) McGuire persuasive processes are
- i. attentiveness
  - ii. good understanding of the message (comprehension)
  - iii. acceptance of the message
  - iv. retention
  - v. resultant reaction/action, as a result of the message
- (b) Factors that affect persuasion:
1. **Credibility of communicators:** Experts and people who seem to know what they are talking about are likely to be more persuasive than non experts.
  2. **Physical attractiveness of communicators:** Once the source of the message is from an attractive communicator, the product or object of persuasion becomes associated with the attractiveness portrayed.
  3. **Appearance of the message:** When messages are designed to change our attitudes, they may not succeed compared to those that are not intended for that purpose.
  4. **Use of distraction in persuasion:** Distractions may make the audience more susceptible to persuasion than having the audience pay full attention to the message.
  5. **Confidence of the communicators:** If the speaker appears to be very confident as he/she speaks, regardless of the validity of what is said, he/she is likely to persuade the audience more than a less confident communicator.

6. **Age and persuasion:** Younger people are likely going to be persuaded to change their attitudes easier than the older ones, because adults are more resistant to change their attitudes.
7. **The audience:** Some people can easily be persuaded than others. **The young** can be easily persuaded compared to the adult.
8. **Fast and slow communicators:** The audience is likely to perceive the credibility of the speaker better if he/she speaks rapidly, because it is believed that those who speak rapidly are good at persuasion than slow speakers

### **Answers to SAEs2**

**Elaborate Likelihood Model (ELM)** model proposes that if one is able to, critically, evaluate the logic of persuasive arguments, and also able to generate counter arguments, then the less likely he will be persuaded. The ability to access and generate counter arguments will depend on the type of thinking one is engaged in.

## UNIT 4 STEREOTYPE

### Unit Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcomes
- 4.3 Main Content
- 4.4 Gender and stereotypes
- 4.5 Summary
- 4.6 References/Further Reading/Web Resources
- 4.7 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents



### 4.1 Introduction

In our previous unit, you have learnt the act of persuasion which is complex and unique. The actors are all expected to participate actively, if persuasion is to succeed. Sincerity and integrity of both the givers and the receivers of the persuasive messages go a long way in helping this process. However, think of the groups you have ever joined. As a member, do you think you are like other members of your group? This may not be so. No two people are exactly alike, not even identical twins. So why do people make assumptions and generalisations about a group, as a whole, just from the little they know about the individuals in that group? These over simplified perceptions, are called stereotypes. The word stereotype was coined by Lippman (1922) and he defines stereotypes as “picture in our head”; stereotypes are considered the cognitive (thinking) components of attitudes toward a social group which consists of beliefs about what the group is like.

Stereotypes come from the word “stereos” which means “solid or hard”; it also refers to a metal plate used in printing. Things printed from the same mould can be said to be stereotypes. Since it is not possible to have people coming from the same mould, we can assume that stereotypes about people means we are ignoring individual differences and environmental influences as we try to understand the individual in the group or see the individual as distinct from the group he belongs to. Stereotypes act as theories guiding or selecting what to attend to; and it influences how we process social information.

Therefore, in this unit, a clearer distinction between stereotypes and prejudice will be drawn; reasons for stereotypes and how we can reduce

stereotyping will also be explained. Therefore, what is stereotype and how can we reduce stereotype.



## 4.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Define stereotypes
- Explain reasons for stereotypes
- Evaluate the relationship between stereotypes and gender
- Describe the strategies of reducing stereotypes.



## 4.3 Definition of Stereotypes

In dealing with people, it is difficult not to make generalisations mainly because the demand on us will be more in each new situation without generalisation. Though accurate generalisation helps us to save time and enables us make informed judgements or take decisions about the individual or group, inaccurate generalisation will affect us and our relationships negatively. Forming impressions about strangers based on stereotypes uses the category-driven method of processing which is the easiest, least strenuous route; but to rely on their unique characteristics is a more strenuous route that uses the attribute-driven processing method (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990).

Stereotypes involve assigning someone to a particular group, bringing into play the belief that all members of the group share certain characteristics (stereotypes) and inferring that a particular individual must possess these characteristics. While stereotypes may be valid for the group, it may not be applicable to a given individual. Most stereotypes involve ethnocentrism - the belief that other cultures may be inferior to one's culture. Lippman (1992) describes stereotypes as selective, self-fulfilling and ethnocentric; it relies on a "very partial and inadequate way of representing the world". However, he went further to argue that stereotypes serve an important practical function. He posits that:

The real environment is altogether too big, too complex and too fleeting for direct acquaintance. We are not equipped to deal with such subtlety, so much variety, so much permutations and combinations. And although we have to act in that environment, we have to reconstruct it on a simpler model before we can manage it.

The above views also agree with those of Allport (1954) and Brislin (1981). They believe that stereotypes are “categories about people” and that “categories and stereotypes are shortcuts to thinking”, respectively. Stereotypes are also seen as resource saving devices simplifying the processing of information about other people. Brislin (1993), suggests further that “stereotypes should not be seen as a sign of abnormality, but that they reflect people’s need to organise, remember and retrieve information that may be useful to them as they attempt to achieve their goals and meet life’s demands”.

### Self-Assessment Exercise 1

1. Explain Allport and Brislin perspectives on stereotypes.
2. Discuss two methods of reducing stereotypes

## 4.4 Gender and Stereotypes

Issues on gender do come up frequently because these groups have been here with us since man and woman came into existence. That there are differences is not in doubt, but the issue borders on the extent to which we are willing to go to encourage assumed differences. We have come to agree that stereotypes are traits, but we can include other variables like physical appearance, preferences and behaviour. These traits or characteristics can be either negative or positive attributes, accurate or inaccurate assumptions, and can be accepted or rejected by members of the stereotyped group. Gender stereotypes are beliefs about the characteristics of women and men that contain both positive and negative traits.

### Some Common Traits (stereotypes) Associated With Women and Men.

Female Traits	Male Traits
Warm	Competent
Emotional	Stable
Kind/positive	Tough/Coarse
Sensitive	Self-confident
Follower	Leader
Weak	Strong
Friendly	Accomplished
Fashionable	Non-conforming
Gentle	Aggressive

**Source:** Deaux & Kite, 1993; Eagly & Mladinic, 1994; Fiske et al 2002.

Therefore, Women are viewed as kind, nurturing and considerate on the positive side, while on the negative side they are viewed as dependent,

weak and emotional. Men also have both positive and negative traits and are viewed as decisive, assertive and accomplished on the positive side, and aggressive, insensitive and arrogant on the negative side.

Generally, the use of warm for women gives people a positive feeling about women. This positive feeling, however, is not enough when it comes to women in positions of authority. Suffice it to say that women suffer more than men from any violation of these stereotypes. All over the world, women are making positive impact in various areas of life; but the struggle for women to survive in a male dominated world is still attributable to stereotypes and the generalisations we make about women that affect them and their struggles in society.

#### **4.4.1 Reducing Stereotypes**

Stereotypes of certain groups are so negative, pervasive, and have existed for so many generations that they can be considered part of the culture into which most children are socialised (Brislin, 1993). Suppressing stereotypes may not be an effective means of reducing stereotypes; the better option will be getting people to have insight into their stereotypes, see through them and understand them. This is an effective means of reducing stereotypes in adults who are expected to relate this new perception to their children or to younger people under their care.

Note also that stereotypes differ from in-groups to out-groups. There is the tendency to see members of our in-group as being different from one another or more heterogeneous (known as in-group differentiation); on the other hand, it is possible to see members of the out-group as all alike or more homogeneous (known as out-group homogeneity). So changing or reducing stereotypes will largely depend on whether we are dealing with members of an in-group or those of the out-group. Two methods of reducing stereotypes have been suggested, let us look at these one after the other.

##### **1. Learn to “just-say-no”**

It is believed that we acquire stereotypes through learning by association, between certain characteristics and various racial or ethnic groups. This view suggests that it is possible to break the stereotype habit by learning to say “no” to the stereotype trait associated with specific groups. If the process of saying “no” to a stereotype traits is repeated, the reliance on stereotypes can be reduced (Kawakami et al., 2000).

##### **2 Social influences**

Social norms suggest that attitude expression is supported by the rule guiding the group or society. Stereotypes that seem to be wildly shared within members of the group influence the expression of prejudice. Thus, reducing stereotypes must target members of the in-group. In addition, stereotype attitudes held by individuals are influenced by early experiences and current information; so it is expected that part of the current view will reflect the view of other members of their group who are mostly respected or admired by the individual.

It is assumed that if the view of the individual is very far from those of the group, and that the group represents what the individual likes, and is made up of people admired and respected by the individual, then these stereotypes can be reduced as the individual makes allowances to accommodate popular views thus reducing stereotypes.

### Self-Assessment Exercise2

1. List five stereotype traits attributed to men and women.



### 4.5 Summary

In this unit, you have been exposed to the concept of stereotypes, how they are formed and sustained. The influence of culture and gender in stereotyping and strategies required to reduce stereotypes have also been explained.



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## 1.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

### Answers SAEs 1

1. Allport and Brislin believes that stereotypes are “**categories about people**” and that “categories and stereotypes are shortcuts to thinking”, respectively. Stereotypes are also seen as resource saving devices simplifying the processing of information about other people.
2. **Learn to “just-say-no”**: It is possible to break the stereotype

habit by learning to say “no” to the stereotype trait associated with specific groups. If the process of saying “no” to a stereotype traits is repeated, the reliance on stereotypes can be reduced.

3. **Social influence:** It is assumed that if the view of the individual is very far from those of the group, and that the group represents what the individual likes, and is made up of people admired and respected by the individual, then these stereotypes can be reduced as the individual makes allowances to accommodate popular views thus reducing stereotypes.

### Answers SAEs 2

<b>Male Traits</b>	<b>Female Traits</b>
Competent	Warm
Stable	Emotional
Tough/Coarse	Kind/positive
Self-confident	Sensitive
Leader	Follower
Strong	Weak
Accomplished	Friendly
Non-conforming	Fashionable
Aggressive	Gentle

## UNIT 5 PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

### Unit Structure

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Learning Outcomes
- 5.3 Definition of Prejudice
- 5.4 Theories of Prejudice
  - 5.4.1 Discrimination and Prejudice
- 5.5 Summary
- 5.6 References/FurtherReading/ Web Resources
- 5.7 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents



### 5.1 Introduction

We all want to belong to one group or another or be identified with certain groups and not others. Those belonging to groups have consequences other than just being part of them? We belong to certain groups not by choice, while we have the choice to belong to others. To be born white, or black or Caucasian, male or female is not something you have power over, it is a natural occurrence that is not within your control. One is likely to feel favourable toward the group she/he belongs to (ingroup) and feel otherwise towards another group he/she does not belong to (out group). This type of feeling (a component of attitude) is prejudice. It is usually directed to specific out-groups or social groups. The negative or positive attitude towards members of specific outgroups results in our interpreting or processing information about the groups differently. The way we treat people because they belong to certain groups, thus making them to be targets of prejudice, is termed discrimination. In this unit, our focus will be on prejudice and discrimination, the feeling and acting components of attitudes, their origins and how they affect our evaluation of social groups. The rationale behind the attempts to reduce prejudice and discrimination will also be examined. Does human prejudices or discriminate? What do you understand by discrimination?



### 5.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Define prejudice and discrimination

- Examine the causes of prejudice
- explain the influence of gender on prejudice
- Appreciate the concept of discrimination.



### 5.3 Definition of Prejudice

Prejudice means pre-judgment, usually based on limited knowledge and little contact. Prejudice is a negative attitude towards an individual simply because she/he is a member of a group (Brislin, 1993; Dion, 2003). Prejudice is a largely negative attitude that is formed and unfairly applied to all members of a group, regardless of the individual characteristics or uniqueness of members. Allport (1954) defines prejudice as “An antipathy based on faculty and inflexible generalisation, directed towards a group as a whole, or towards an individual because he is a member of that group. It may be felt or expressed”. Another definition by Baron and Byrne (1991) states that prejudice is an attitude, (usually negative) toward the members of some groups based solely on their membership in such group. Zimberdo and Leippe (1991) define prejudice as:

...a learned attitude towards a target object that typically involves negative affections dislikes or fears, a set of negative beliefs that support the attitude and a behavioural intention to avoid, or control or dominate, those in the target group.

Prejudice is seen as an extreme attitude comprising of cognitive, affective and behavioural components; with prejudice further denoting the cognitive and affective components, while discrimination denotes the behavioural component. Allport (1954) proposes the following five steps in the components of prejudice.

- 1 Anti-location – hostile talk, verbal denigration and racial jokes.
- 2 Avoidance – keeping a distance without actively inflicting harm.
- 3 Discrimination – exclusion, which could be from basic necessities like housing, employment, civil rights etc.
- 4 Physical attack – violence against person and property.
- 5 Extermination – indiscriminate violence against an entire group which can be in form of genocide.

Prejudice is not personal and not directed to the individual based on his characteristics but solely based on his membership of the specific group. Information that concerns targets of prejudice is mostly given more attention or is processed more carefully than the information gotten that is not related to the target of prejudice. (Blascovich et al., 1997; Hugenberg & Bodenhausen, 2003). When prejudiced persons are in the presence of the individual or when they are thinking of the members of

the group they dislike, prejudice, as an attitude, is reflected in the negative feelings or emotions experienced (Brewer & Brown, 1978; Vanman et al., 1997).

Prejudice may be associated with specific inter-group emotions like fear, anger, envy, guilt or disgust, and the discriminatory action that is likely to follow will depend on what emotion underlies the prejudice. Anger, for instance, may result in an attempt to harm, while guilt and disgust may give rise to the tendency to want to avoid the out-group; while fear and envy may result in defensive reaction to protect the ingroup (Glick, 2002; Mackie & Smith, 2002; Branscombe & Miron, 2004; Newbers & Cottrel, 2002).

### Self-Assessment Exercise 1

1. Identify the five components of prejudice, as proposed by Allport.
2. Describe the three elements of authoritarian personality theory as suggested by Theodore Adorno et al. and Attorneys

## 5.4 Theories of Prejudice

The cause of prejudice and its prevalence have been explained by the following theories. Remember, theories are the answers to our questions on issues that concern the why of behaviour (and in this case, prejudice) based on research evidence.

### 1. Social identity theory

This view is concerned with the consequences of seeing the self as a member of a social group and identifying with it. This tendency to divide the social world in terms of “us” (in-group) and “them” (outgroup) affects the way we perceive groups in general. Thus, this theory suggests that people like to feel positively about their in-group, and their self-esteem depends on their ability to identify these groups and belong to them. It is believed that the value we place on our in-group and the bias towards the out-group have bearings on prejudice, since we are most likely to think favourably of our in-group, and not mostly so about the out-group (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Oakes et al., 1994; Spears, Doosje & Ellemers, 1999).

It is possible for groups to feel favourably towards other groups, rather than their own and reduce prejudice, especially if they feel secure in their groups and the superiority of the group is not threatened (Hornsey & Hogg, 2000).



## **2. Cognitive theories**

The social cognitive processes that people use in dealing with and explaining their understanding of the world may lead to prejudice. This is because we meet many people in various situations that result in diverse behaviours, and we are not likely going to remember all of them, so we use cognitive shortcuts to organise and make sense of these experiences that try to explain our social world (Fiske, 1998). We are likely to begin the cognitive process by grouping all people we meet into social categories or groups. This is followed by perceiving members of each group as possessing similar characteristics. Any distinct behaviour from the individual members of the group may lead to generalising this behaviour to the group, which may lead to developing prejudice towards the group.

The feeling is that all members of the same group share the same beliefs and values, differently from members of other groups (Dovadio, Kawakami & Gaertner, 2000; Anthony, Cooper & Mullen, 1992; Dion, 2004; Hamilton Sherman, 1994).

## **3. Learning theories**

Prejudice can be learned, just like we learn other attitudes. This learning can come from parents, peers, siblings or popular people we admire, as we listen to them. In this kind of learning, negative attitudes towards people or groups we have not met or that we have met briefly can occur (Rohan & Zanna, 1996; Smith & Mackie, 2000).

## **4. Authoritarian personality theory**

The motivation to enhance self-esteem, sense of security and meet certain personal needs has encouraged and exposed people to prejudice. According to Theodore Adorno et al., (1950) and Attemeye (1996), people with the personality trait known as authoritarianism are likely to exhibit prejudice more. The authoritarianism trait has three elements namely:

- a) acceptance of conventional or traditional values.
- b) willingness to follow orders from authority figures, without questions.
- c) the inclination to act aggressively towards individuals or groups identified by authority figures as threats to the values held by their in-group.

It is believed that those with authoritarian personality become prejudiced as a result of the frustration they experienced as children, which must have mostly been harsh, punitive, and disciplinary, with little affection.

They usually have high opinions of their parents, but harbour unconscious hostility that may be displayed against minority groups which are likely to become the target of authoritarian hostility. They have very little insight and generally feel threatened by other groups and may project onto them their own unacceptable and antisocial impulses, while their prejudice serves as a defence of ego.

### **5. Realistic conflict theory**

This theory is of the view that prejudice comes from competition for scarce resources that result in conflict; it proposes that this conflict, among groups, motivates the development of prejudice (Levine & Campbell, 1972). When competing for jobs, which are usually few, for instance, issues like gender, race, class, and ethnicity may come into play, and biases coming from our perception of these groups may affect selection and encourage prejudice.

### **6. Motivational theory**

This motivational theory holds that most people whether authoritarian or not are motivated to identify with their own group (in-group), which they are likely going to see as better than other groups (out-group). As a result of this, members of the in-group mostly see all members of other groups as less in other qualities than their in-group members, and sometimes treat them badly (Prentice & Miller 2002; Jackson 2000).

### **7. Relative deprivation theory**

Based on the frustration aggression hypothesis, the theory postulates that when there is discrepancy between actual attainment and expectations (referred to as relative deprivation), thus falling short of expectations leading to acute deprivation which is usually what the people believe they are entitled to. The right to shelter, food, employment, better wages and safety among others, have been issues that have caused friction between leaders and their followers. Most aggressions towards the authority had been as a result of the perceived deprivation of what the citizens see as their entitlement.

### **8. Social identity theory (SIT)**

The focus of this theory is the minimal group effect in developing prejudice. The suggestion is that individuals seek to achieve or maintain a positive self-image through personal identity and social identity. While personal identity includes those unique personal characteristics and attributes, social identity revolves around the group, giving the individuals a sense of who they are, based on the group they belong to.

These social identities are mainly based on the number of groups we belong to. If the image of the group is positive, it may result in their positive social image and, by and large, positive self image.

#### 5.4.1 Discrimination and prejudice

Just like attitude, prejudice may not always be reflected in overt behaviours. Most negative attitudes arising from prejudice are not expressed publicly, perhaps, due to social pressure, laws, and fear of retaliation. However, discrimination is still being expressed in subtle or disguised forms “old fashioned racism”, which has now been replaced with racism, a more subtle form of discrimination or prejudice in action. This racism is prejudice concealed from others in public places but is expressed when the opportunity is right or when it is safe to do so, which is discrimination.

The important difference between prejudice and discrimination is that while prejudice is an attitude, discrimination is a negative behaviour directed at members of a group, usually out-groups; and mostly, discrimination results from prejudice.

#### Self-Assessment Exercise 2

3. Differentiate between prejudice and discrimination.



#### 5.5 Summary

You have learnt that prejudice and discrimination are attitudes that can be changed, and should be changed. In this unit also, you have been exposed to the causes of prejudice and discrimination.



#### 5.6 References/Further Reading/Web Resources

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## 5.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

### Answers to SAEs 1

(1) Allport five steps components of prejudice:

- i. **Anti-location** – hostile talk, verbal denigration and racial jokes.
- ii. **Avoidance** – keeping a distance without actively inflicting harm.
- iii. **Discrimination** – exclusion, which could be from basic necessities like housing, employment, civil rights etc.
- iv. **Physical attack** – violence against person and property.
- v. **Extermination** – indiscriminate violence against an entire group which can be in form of genocide.

(2a) Acceptance of conventional or traditional values.

- (b). Willingness to follow orders from authority figures, without questions.
- (c) The inclination to act aggressively towards individuals or groups identified by authority figures as threats to the values held by their in-group.

### Answers to SAEs 2

Just like attitude, prejudice may not always be reflected in overt behaviours. Most negative attitudes arising from prejudice are not expressed publicly, perhaps, due to social pressure, laws, and fear of retaliation. However, discrimination is still being expressed in subtle or disguised forms “old fashioned racism”, which has now been replaced with racism, a more subtle form of discrimination or prejudice in action.

**MODULE 3**

- Unit 1 Interpersonal attraction and close relationships
- Unit 2 Social Influence
- Unit 3 Prosocial behaviour: Motives and Responding to an Emergency
- Unit 4 Behaviour Modification
- Unit 5 Behaviour-Genetic Influences and Environmental Influences

**UNIT 1 INTERPERSONAL ATTRACTION AND CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS****Unit structure**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 Internal determinants of attraction: the need to affiliate and the basic role of affect
  - 1.3.1 The importance of affiliation for human existence
  - 1.3.2 Affect as a basic response system
  - 1.3.3 Affect and attraction
  - 1.3.4 Additional implication of the affect-attraction relationship
- 1.4 External determinants of attraction: proximity and other observable characteristics
  - 1.4.1 Observable characteristics: instant evaluations
  - 1.4.2 Family is where relationships and attachment styles begins.
  - 1.4.3 Beyond the family: friendships
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 References/Further Reading /Web Resources
- 1.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents

**1.1 Introduction**

In our last discussion you have learnt that prejudice and discrimination are attitudes that can be changed, and should be changed. Also, you have been exposed to the causes of prejudice and discrimination. However, looking at this unit in society today, we can be observed that individuals either get attracted towards each other or do not get attracted. Interpersonal attraction leads to further communication among two or more people. Interpersonal attraction can be determined by some internal as well as external factors. As a social being we have a need for

affiliation. Coupled with the need to be affiliated emotional response plays a significant role in interpersonal attraction. A positive emotional state leads to a smother interpersonal attraction and a negative emotional state can lead in repulsion of someone. There are external determinants in interpersonal attraction like similarity among individuals, physical proximity and the mutual responding. Further, interpersonal attraction leads to formation of relationships.

Generally close relations can be categorised in to members in the family and the friends from our social milieu. Family is the place where relationship builds. These relationships or attachment styles are different for every individual. The attachment styles formed during the interactions with the family can get generalised to the relationships outside the family i.e., spouse, friends and others. Therefore, what is interpersonal attraction?



## 1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- State what is interpersonal attraction?
- Explain internal, external factors responsible for interpersonal attraction.
- Discuss family and friends as close relationships.



## 1.3 Internal Determinants of Attraction: The Need to Affiliate and the Basic Role of Affect

### 1.3.1 The Importance of Affiliation for Human Existence

Human being has the basic need to be part of a group, be affiliated and accepted by someone. There are certain internal factors that drive this behaviour. This behaviour has a survival value of being protected, reproduction and health interdependence. Need for affiliation is the basic motive to seek and maintain interpersonal relationships. It is observed that there are individual differences in expression of need for affiliation. It is like a personality trait which reflects person's preferences for need for affiliation. Some may like to affiliate at some time and in particular context and some may not. People with high need for affiliation will be more sociable and will desire to interact with others. This appears to be a conscious expression of affiliation. However, some may have implicit need for affiliation and would like to be primarily interested in limited two person interaction situations.

It is very unpleasant experience to be excluded and ignored. It gives a left-out and neglected feeling as reaction to be excluded. This kind of behaviour in society generates adverse effect on the individual or group that is excluded. This kind of deprivation results in sensitivity to interpersonal information and cognitive functioning. There are certain situation and contexts where need for affiliation is clearly evident. During natural disasters it can be seen that people help each other. This behaviour is seen because it provides an opportunity for social comparison. An opportunity to communicate what they feel and think further, generating an experience comfort.

### **1.3.2 Affect as a Basic Response System**

Affect refers emotional state of a person, his positive and negative feelings and moods. It is understood that emotional state of a person influences his cognition and emotion as well as the interpersonal attraction. Affect has two basic characteristics one is the intensity of the affect, indicating its strength and second is the direction of the emotion, regarding the positive or negative emotion.

According to Brehm, Miller, Perlman and Campbell (2012) affect is considered as a basic aspect of human behaviour because it has survival value from the evolutionary perspective. It helps us in avoiding the negative experiences as well as reinforcing positive experiences. The ability to discriminate between positive and negative affect serves an important purpose to understand hostility and attraction in social situations. Hence, affect stands as an important internal determinant of interpersonal attraction.

### **1.3.3 Affect and Attraction**

The role of affect in interpersonal attraction suggests that the positive affect will lead to positive evaluation of other people and negative affect will lead to negative evaluation of other person. In this manner a direct effect of emotion on attraction is observed. However, a more interesting phenomenon is referred to as associated effect, this effect occurs when another person is simply present in that situation when your emotional state is aroused by some situation or by some person. For example when you are emotionally in positive state you will evaluate a person positively, even though he is a stranger and will negatively evaluate a friend in a negative state. This can be understood as a form of classical conditioning where a neutral stimulus paired with positive stimulus elicits a positive response and vice versa.

### 1.3.4 Additional Implication of the Affect-Attraction Relationship

Some applications or implicit relationship between affect and attraction can be observed in daily life situations. Laughter leads to a positive evaluation among individuals in a first interaction. Because something humorous happening make the affect positive and further distracts from the discomfort of the situation and gives new perspective to the situation. It is also seen that this understanding leads to manipulating affect to influence behaviour. For example, arousing positive affects and associating it with some product in an advertisement is very much evident. A political leader can be more humorous and arouses a positive emotional state further leading to attracting the voters (Fletcher, 2002).

#### Self-Assessment Exercise 1

1. What are the elements that constitute physical attractiveness of individuals?
2. How would you justify “Affect” as a basic response system as described by Brehm, Miller, Perlman and Campbell

### 1.4 External Determinants of Attraction: Proximity and Other Observable Characteristics

One of the important external determinants of interpersonal attraction is physical closeness. Interpersonal attraction increases as a result of physical proximity and is referred as mere repeated exposure effect. For example in a classroom students sitting beside each other are more likely to making positive evaluations just because of repeated exposure. Another example would be of people working in same office, where mere physical exposure leads to attraction. The mechanism underlying is that with repeated exposure uncertainty reduces and increases the familiarity in the absence of any harmful consequences resulting in to feelings of being safe. Repeated exposure leads to stronger positive evaluation even when the person is not aware of the exposure. The positive affect generated due to repeated exposure can get generalised to other new stimulus. It is also understood that initial negative reaction to the stimulus leads to negative evaluation and repeated exposure leads to adding in to the continuous negative evaluation of the stimulus.

Application of the knowledge regarding the effect of proximity can help us in variety of life situations. If you are in class and prefer to have fiends or prefers isolation than you can chose the place to sit in the classroom accordingly. We can also make out that how interpersonal attraction gets affected by the structure of the residential complex we live.



### **1.4.1 Observable Characteristics: Instant Evaluations**

Instant likes and dislikes are seen to be arousing a strong affect suggesting a phenomenon that goes against the repeated proximity effect. It is possible because something about the person is responsible to elicit a positive or negative effect. Affect is considered to be based on the past experiences, stereotypes and our attributions. These aspects of a person could be incorrect or irrelevant. However, it is seen that these aspects influences an individual's instant evaluations of other person or situation (Brehm et al., 2012).

The other observable characteristics like physical attractiveness and appearance play an important role. Physical attractiveness is a phenomenon that ranges from being evaluated as beautiful or handsome to one extreme and unattractive at the other extreme. It is observed that people do respond positively to a person who is physically attractive and negatively to the person who is physically unattractive. Hence, physical attractiveness is considered as an initial factor that influences positive or negative evaluations. Appearance anxiety is the apprehension of one's own appearance and possible negative evaluation by other people. One's own negative evaluation can lead to negative self-image and decreased self-esteem. However, stereotypes based on appearance are not necessarily correct. For example, it is generally accepted but not necessary that a physically attractive person will be social and have a high self-esteem and a physically unattractive person will be asocial.

### **1.4.2 Family is Where Relationships and Attachment Styles Begins**

Family is the immediate social unit of an individual in a given society. This is the first experience of interaction. However, there may be relatively quantitative and qualitative difference between the individual and his or her family members. First interaction begins with the care giver especially mother. These interaction shapes individual's world. It has a lasting impact on individual's future interpersonal behavior. The degree of security an individual feels in interpersonal relationships is called as attachment style. It is understood that an infant develops two basic attitudes as a result of these early interpersonal interactions with adults. These are self-esteem, which is an attitude towards self and second is interpersonal trust, which is an attitude towards others. Development of self-esteem is dependent on the reactions of the care giver of being important, valued, and loved or the other extreme of being unimportant, unloved, etc. Interpersonal trust is dependent upon being trustworthy, dependable and reliable or the other extreme of this (Noller&Fitzpatrick, 2008).

On the basis of these two basic attitudes and they being high or low can be placed in four types of interpersonal styles as given below:

i. **Secure attachment style**

A secure attachment style is a characteristic of an individual who is high on both, self-esteem and interpersonal trust. Person with this type of attachment style is found to be good at relationships, self-confidence, high on need for achievement and has less fear of failure are other characteristics of secure attachment style.

ii. **Fearful- avoidant attachment style**

This type of attachment style is a result of low self-esteem and interpersonal trust. A person with fearful-avoidant attachment style is poor at interpersonal relationships and also avoids close relationships.

iii. **Preoccupied attachment style**

A negative attitude towards oneself and a high interpersonal trust results in preoccupied attachment style. These types of people are ready to get in to interpersonal relationships but are often found to be pessimistic about their relationships.

iv. **Dismissing attachment style**

This type of attachment style is an outcome of high self-esteem and low interpersonal trust. Individuals with this attachment style avoid genuine close relationship. They feel insecure due to the belief that they deserve a close relationship but are frustrated because of the mistrust towards others. The above mentioned are the four basic attachment styles as result of the variations in the attitude towards self and others. These attachment styles are assumed to be formed in infancy and continue in the adult life, however, certain life experiences can influence and change the attachment style of an individual.

It's not only the mother who influences the child. In a given family the presence of others and interaction with them definitely have an impact on the child. Every member in the family has different experiences, different personality and attitude. Every interaction of each member of the family with the child is likely to have positive or negative effect. The point is that it is not only the immediate care taker but the interactions with the entire family can influence the child. Interaction among siblings is also a significant factor. There can be variety of situations like; single child, two siblings-either both male and female or a combination. These variations can result in different experiences with people outside the home (Harvey&Wenzel, 2011).

However, it is observed that relationships among sibling are also dependent upon the interpersonal relation among parents and their marital satisfaction.

### 1.4.3 Beyond The Family and Friendships

Family where relationships begin and attachment styles develop generally have close relationships among themselves. However, close relationships extend beyond family. A close friendship is a relationship where people spend great deal of time together, interact in variety of situations, are self-disclosing and provide mutual and emotional support. Having friends or not has become a social qualification and a loner is described as person having no friends. Friends are an integral part of our life. It is seen as a source of practical and emotional support.

Generally, it can be understood that the individuals who elicits positive effect can become close friends. Gender difference is seen in friendships. We will find two females discussing more on the topics of their interests than males. It is observed that male gets attracted towards females thinking that eventually their relationship will result in sexual interactions, if not then males eventually end the relationship. In contrast females look for protective role from males and eventually ends up the relationship if she finds nothing as expected in the relationship (Harvey et al., 2011).

#### Self-Assessment Exercise2

3. Describe the immediate relationship of individuals in a given society.



## 1.5 Summary

In this topic we have emphasized on the interpersonal attraction specifically the factors responsible for attraction. We have come across some internal factors like affect-emotional state and external factors like proximity and similarity among individuals responsible for attraction. However, we have also discussed that mutual responses can also play a significant role in attraction. Close relationships begins in the family right from the infancy as a result of interaction with the family members where mother, father, grand parents and siblings influence such relationship significantly.



## 1.6 References/Further Reading/Web Resources

- Baron, R. A., Byrne, D., & Branscombe, N. R. (2006). *Social Psychology*. (11th edition, Indian print).
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## 1.7 Possible Answers to SEAs

### Answers to SAEs 1

1. Physical attractiveness is a phenomenon that ranges from being evaluated as beautiful or handsome to one extreme and unattractive at the other extreme. It is observed that people do respond positively to a person who is physically attractive and negatively to the person who is physically unattractive.
2. Affect is considered as a basic aspect of human behaviour because it has survival value from the evolutionary perspective. It helps us in avoiding the negative experiences as well as reinforcing positive experiences. The ability to discriminate between positive and negative affect serves an important purpose to understand hostility and attraction in social situations. Hence, affect stands as an important internal determinant of interpersonal attraction

### Answers to SAEs2

Family is the immediate social unit of an individual in a given society. This is the first experience of interaction. However, there may be relatively quantitative and qualitative difference between the individual and his or her family members. First interaction begins with the care giver especially mother. These interaction shapes individual's world. It has a lasting impact on individual's future interpersonal behavior.

## UNIT 2 SOCIAL INFLUENCE

### Unit Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 Conformity: Group Influence in Action
  - 2.3.1 Definition of Conformity
  - 2.3.2 Factors affecting Conformity
- 2.4 Compliance To Ask-Sometimes-Is to Receive
  - 2.4.1 The underlying Principle of Compliance
  - 2.4.2 Tactics Based on Friendship or Liking: Ingratiation.
  - 2.4.3 Obedience to Authority
  - 2.4.4 Destructive Obedience: Its Social Psychological Basis
  - 2.4.5 Destructive Behaviour: Resisting Its Effects.
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 References/Further Reading/Web Resources
- 2.7 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents



### 2.1 Introduction

In the last unit we have emphasized on the interpersonal attraction specifically the factors responsible for attraction. We have come across some internal factors like affect-emotional state and external factors like proximity and similarity among individuals responsible for attraction. In this unit, we will look at conformity, compliance, social influence as well techniques use for compliance. Meanwhile what is compliance and conformity?



### 2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Understanding the social influence phenomenon.
- Studying factors affecting conformity.
- Understanding why we conform and why sometimes we resist.
- Understanding the compliance.
- Understanding tactics used to achieve compliance from others.
- Understanding Obedience behaviour



## 2.3 Conformity: Group Influence In Action

### 2.3.1 Conformity

A type of social influence in which individuals change their attitude or behaviour in order to adhere or to stick to the existing social norms. Conformity is a type of social influence involving a change in belief or behavior in order to fit in with a group. Robinson (1989), defines conformity as “adjusting one’s behaviour to align with the norms of the group”.

This change is in response to real (involving the physical presence of others) or imagined (involving the pressure of social norms / expectations) group pressure.

Conformity can also be simply defined as “*yielding to group pressures*” (Crutchfield, 1955). Group pressure may take different forms, for example bullying, persuasion, teasing, criticism, etc. Conformity is also known as majority influence (or group pressure).

The term conformity is often used to indicate an agreement to the majority position, brought about either by a desire to ‘*fit in*’ or be liked (normative) or because of a desire to be correct (informational), or simply to conform to a social role (identification).

Social influence occurs when an individual's thoughts or actions are affected by other people. Social Influence can be defined as efforts by one or more individuals to change the attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, or behaviours of one or more others. For example, the colleagues have strong influence on one’s work, while the friends have strong influence on one’s daily life (Kelman, 1958).

### 2.3.2 Factors affecting Conformity: Cohesiveness, Group Size, Descriptive and Injunctive Norms

#### 1. Cohesiveness and Conformity

We are going to discuss how cohesiveness has impact on conformity. With respect to conformity, cohesiveness can be defined as the degree of attraction felt by an individual toward an influencing group.

Groups with similar attitudes are more cohesive than groups with dissimilar attitudes, successful groups are more cohesive than unsuccessful groups, and groups with clear paths to goals are more cohesive than groups lacking clear paths. A classic finding of social psychology is that when cohesiveness (attraction) is high, pressures

toward conformity are magnified. This is a basic reason why most persons are more willing to accept social influence from friends or persons they admire than from others. E.g., if we join a new college and we have been put in a group of students for project work. Over the period, you realize that they have conservative views about educational policies (Crutchfield, 1955).

It is interesting to think whether our own views change as a function of working together with these new friends. There is strong possibility that we may find ourselves agreeing with them more and more as time passes. It may happen because of cohesiveness i.e., Degree of attraction with the group of friends working on same project.

## 2. Conformity and Group Size

Group size has the important effects on the tendency to conform i.e., the size of the influencing group. We are likely to conform to the opinion held by the group if the number of group members holding the same opinion is large i.e., group size is large. However, there is interesting finding which says that conformity increases with group size up to about three members, but then seems to level off. The possibility for this may be that subject conclude that group members are not expressing individual views but are actually working together to influence them. When too many people agree, therefore, this may be perceived as a signal and tendency to be cautious while conforming.

## 3. Descriptive and Injunctive Norms

Descriptive norms are ones indicating what most people do in a given situation. They influence behaviour by informing us about what is generally seen as effective or adaptive behaviour in that situation. e.g., witnessing somebody blow out the cigarette before entering in to bus. In contrast, injunctive norms specify what ought to be done what is approved or disapproved behaviour in a given situation. e.g., a instruction displayed in the bus “Smoking is prohibited in the public places” (Smith& Bond, 1993).

### Self-Assessment Exercises1

1. Define conformity based on Robbinson’s perspective.
2. Identify the six basic principles of compliance.

## 2.4 Compliance: to Ask-Sometimes-is to Receive

In a situation when you wanted someone to do something for you, you start thinking about the tricks which you can use to get your things done. Social psychologists have put efforts to understand this process, the

most frequent form of social influence. A well-known social psychologist (Robert Cialdini) termed Compliance Professionals- people whose success (financial or otherwise) depends on their ability to get others to say “yes”. These people include salespeople, advertisers, political lobbyists, fundraisers, etc.

### **Basic Principles Underlie Professional Use For Gaining Compliance:**

1. **Friendship/Liking:** We are more willing to comply with requests from friends or from people we like than with requests from strangers or people we do not like.
2. **Commitment/Consistency:** Once we commit our self to a position or an action, we are more willing to say or do things that fit with committed position in various ways. e.g., if in past, we express our opinion to some specific issue in an official meeting, then we are more inclined to think and act in favour of the opinion expressed in meeting.
3. **Scarcity:** It is tendency to value, to feel worthy about and to secure, opportunities that are scarce or decreasing.
4. **Reciprocity:** We are generally more willing to comply with a request from someone who has previously provided a favour or concession to us than to someone who has not (Mann, 1969).
5. **Social Validation:** A tendency to comply with a request for some action if this action is consistent with what we believe persons similar to ourselves are doing (or thinking). We want to be correct, and one way to do so is to act and think like others.
6. **Authority:** We are usually more willing to comply with requests from someone who authority or simply looks like one.

#### **2.4.2 Techniques Professionals Use for Gaining Compliance**

##### **1) Tactics Based on Friendship or Liking: Ingratiation**

There are several techniques for increasing compliance through getting others to like us. This is called as impression management. These impression management techniques are often used for purposes of ingratiation i.e., getting others to like us so that they will be more willing to agree to our requests.

There are many self-enhancing tactics of impression management such as improving one’s appearance, emitting positive nonverbal cues (e.g., smiling, a high level of eye contact), and associating oneself with positive events or people the target person already likes. In contrast, other-enhancing tactics include flattery, agreeing with target persons, showing interest in them, and providing them small gifts or favours. Research findings indicate that all of these tactics can be successful, at least to a degree, in increasing others liking for us.

## 2) Tactics Based on Commitment or Consistency

### i. The Foot in the Door

A procedure for gaining compliance in which requesters begin with a small request and then, when this is granted, escalate to a larger one (the one they actually desired to be agreed). Once the target person says yes to the small request, it is more difficult for that person to say no to a larger request, because if they don't agree it would be inconsistent with the first response (Sherif, 1935).

### ii. The Lowball

It has been seen that auto dealers sometimes use the lowball technique. This involves offering an attractive deal to customers but then, after they accept, changing that offer in some way. Rationally, customers should refuse: but in fact, they often accept less attractive deal because they feel committed to the decision of buying the car. To explain it further, in this technique, a very good deal is offered to a customer. After the customer accepts, however, something is manipulated to show that it necessary for the salesperson to change the deal and make it less advantageous for the customer-for example, an "error" in price calculations is found, or the sales manger rejects the deal. The totally rational reaction for customers, of course, is to walk away. Yet often they agree to the changes and accept the less desirable arrangement.

### i. Bait-and-switch tactic

A technique for gaining compliance in which once the customers enters the shop; items offered for sale are showed as unavailable or presented of very low quality. This leads customers to buy a more expensive item that is available. It happens because for customers point of view, changing one's mind and reversing an initial commitment requires hard work, and many people, it appears, would rather pay a higher price than change their minds.

## 3) Tactics Based on Reciprocity

### i. The Door in the Face

A procedure for gaining compliance in which requesters begin with a large request and then, when this is refused, retreat to a smaller one (the one they actually desired to be agreed). This is exactly opposite of the foot-in-the-door technique: instead of beginning with a small request and then presenting a larger one, persons seeking compliance sometimes start with a very large request and then, after this is rejected, shift to a smaller request-the one they wanted all along.

### ii. The Foot in the Mouth:

When people feel that they are in a relationship with another person-no matter how trivial or unimportant-they often feel that they are obliged to help or considerate to that person simply because the relationship exists. For example, friends help friends when they need assistance, and persons who perceive themselves as similar in some manner may feel that they should help one another when the need arises. A clear demonstration of the power of this tactic is provided by research conducted by Smith and Bond (1993) as stated in Baron, Byrne, D., and Branscombe, (2006). These researchers had female accomplices stop students on a university campus and ask them to contribute to well-known charitable organization.

iii. **That's-not-all technique:**

An initial request is followed, before the target person can make up or his/her his mind to say yes or no, a small incentive is offered by the person who is using this tactic sweetens the deal. For example, auto dealers sometimes decide to throw in a small additional option to the car for e.g., free full tank fill, offer of sea cover, etc., in the hope that this will help them close the deal; and often, it really helps! Persons on the receiving end of the that's-notall technique view this small extra as a concession on the part of the other person, and so feel obligated to make a concession themselves.

**4) Tactics Based on Scarcity**

i. **Playing Hard to Get**

This technique involves the efforts to increase compliance by suggesting that a person or object is scarce, rare and hard to obtain. A study carried out by Williams and her Colleagues (1993) as quoted in Baron, R. A., Byrne, D., and Branscombe, N. R. (2006) explains this phenomenon. Professional recruiters were arranged who were interviewing students at large universities to review information about potential job candidates. This information, which was presented in folders, indicated either that the job candidate already had two job offers (a hard-to-get candidate) or no other job offers (easy-to-get candidate), and was either highly qualified (very high grades) or less well-qualified (low average grades). After reviewing this information, the interviewers then rated the candidates in terms of their qualifications and desirability, the company's likelihood of inviting them to interview, and the likelihood of considering them for a job. Results clearly indicated that the hard-to-get candidate was rated more favourably than the easy-toget candidates regardless of their grades. However, the hard-to-get candidate who was also highly qualified received by far the highest ratings of all. Since it is

persons who receive high ratings that usually get the interviews-and the jobs-these findings, indicate that creating the impression of being a scarce and valuable resource (being hard to get) can be another effective means for gaining compliance.

## **ii. Deadline Technique**

This is a technique for increasing compliance in which target persons are told that they have only limited time to take advantage of some offer or to obtain some item. Advertisements using this deadline techniques state a specific time limit during which an item can be purchased for a specific price. After the deadline runs out, the ads suggest, the price will go up. Of course, in many cases, the sale is not a real one-, and the-time limit is bogus. Yet many persons reading such ads believe them and hurry down to the store in order to avoid missing a great opportunity.

## **5) Other Tactics for Gaining Compliance Complaining and putting others in a Good Mood**

### **i. Complaining**

In the context of compliance, expressing discontent, dissatisfaction, resentment, or regret as a means of exerting social influence on others. Complaining involves expressions of discontent or dissatisfaction with one self or some aspect of the external world, and often such statements are simple expressions of personal states (“I feel lousy!”) or comments on the external world (“Wow, is it cold today!”). Sometimes, however, complaining is used as a tactic of social influence:” Why didn’t you take out the garbage like you, promised?” “We always see the movie you want; it’s not fair,” Statements such as these directed toward the goal of getting the recipient to change his or her attitudes or behaviours in some manner (Deutsch&Gerard, 1955).

### **ii. Putting Others in Good Mood**

People’s moods often exert a strong effect on their behaviour. And, it seems, this principle also holds with respect to compliance. When individuals are in a good mood, they tend to be more willing to say “Yes” to various request than when they are in a neutral or negative mood.

## **2.4.3 Obedience to authority**

Obedience occurs when people obey commands or orders from others to do something. Obedience is less frequent than conformity or compliance, because even persons who possess authority and power generally prefer to exert it through the velvet glove-through requests

rather than direct orders. Business executives sometimes issue orders to their subordinates; military officers shout commands that they expect to be followed without questions; and parents, police officers, and sports coaches, to name a few, seek to influence others in the same manner.

#### **2.4.4 Destructive Obedience: Its Social Psychological Basis**

Why does such destructive obedience occur? Why were subjects in various experiments- and many persons in tragic situations outside the laboratory-so willing to this powerful form of social influence? The following factors play a role in it

1. In many life situations, Transfer of responsibility is the underlying phenomenon. "I was only carrying out orders" is the defense mechanism many offer after obeying harsh or cruel directions. In view of this fact, it is not surprising that many tended to obey; after all, they are not held responsible for their actions.
2. Persons in authority often possess visible badges or signs of their status. These consist of special uniforms, insignia, titles, and similar symbols. Faced with such obvious reminders of who is in charge, most people find it difficult to resist.
3. If there is anticipation that targets of influence might resist, then there is gradual intensification of the authority figure's orders. Initially command or request is made for comparatively mild action but later it is increased in scope and dangerous or objectionable behaviours are expected. For example, police are first ordered to question, threaten, or arrest potential victims. Gradually, demands are increased to the point where these personnel are commanded to even kill unarmed civilians.
4. Events in many situations involving destructive obedience move very quickly: demonstrations turn into riots, or arrests turn into mass beatings-or murders-suddenly. The fast pace of such events gives participants little time for reflection: people are ordered to obey and-almost automatically, they do so.

#### **2.4.5 Destructive Obedience: Resisting Its Effects**

How can this type of social influence be resisted? Several strategies seem to help to reduce tendencies to obey.

1. Individual can be reminded that you will be responsible for the harm produced by following commands and not the authority. This will develop a sense of responsibility for individual's behaviour even for taking decision to follow commands given by authority. Under these conditions, sharp reductions in the tendency to obey have been observed.
2. Individuals can be provided with a clear indication that beyond

some point, unquestioning submission to destructive commands is inappropriate. One procedure that is highly effective in this regard involves exposing individuals to the actions of disobedient models—persons who refuse to obey an authority figure’s commands. Research findings indicate that such models can greatly reduce unquestioning obedience.

3. Individuals may find it easier to resist influence from authority figures if they question the expertise and motives of these figures. Questions such as, are authority figures really in a better position to judge what is appropriate and what is not? What motives lie behind their commands—socially beneficial goals or selfish gains? By asking such questions, persons who might otherwise obey may find support for independence rather than submission.

4. Simply knowing about the power of authority figures to command blind obedience may be helpful in itself.

5. Also, some research findings suggest that when individuals learn about the results of social psychological research, they sometimes change their behaviour to take account of this new knowledge. There is hope that knowing about this process can enhance individual’s ability to resist.

### Self-Assessment Exercise 2

1. Discuss three strategies that can help in reducing the effects of destructive obedience.



## 2.5 Summary

Human being is constantly involved in social interactions. In this process, he/she affects or gets affected by social situations. Conformity is one of such phenomenon. Conformity occurs when individuals change their attitudes or behaviour to comply with social norms—rules or expectations about how they should behave in various situations. Conformity is affected by many factors like cohesiveness, group size and type of social norms. Two distinct types of social norms exist; descriptive norms, which describe how most people behave in a given situation and injunctive norms, which indicate which behaviours are approved or disapproved in a given situation. We conform because of two social motives: the need to be liked and the need to be right. Even, there are strong tendencies to conform; individuals often resist social pressure because there is wish to maintain individuality.

Compliance involves efforts by one or more individuals to change the behaviour of others. Mainly there are six principles to gain compliance:

friendship/liking, commitment/consistency, scarcity, reciprocity, social validation, and authority. There are many techniques to gain conformity like door in the face, the foot in the mouth, and that's not all, playing hard to get and the fast approaching deadline technique, complaining and the pique technique. The most visible form of social influence is obedience following direct orders from another person. This obedience occurs because of factors as authority figures gradually escalate the scope of their orders, they have visible signs of power, and there is little time for target persons to consider their actions in details.



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## 2.7 Possible answers to SAEs

### Answers to SAEs 1

1. Robbinson defines conformity as “adjusting one’s behaviour to align with the norms of the group”.
2. The Basic Principles for gaining compliance are:
  - i. Friendship/Liking: We are more willing to comply with requests from friends or from people we like than with requests from strangers or people we do not like.
  - ii. Commitment/Consistency: Once we commit our self to a position or an action, we are more willing to say or do things that fit with committed position in various ways. e.g., if in past, we express our opinion to some specific issue in an official meeting, then we are more inclined to think and act in favour of the opinion expressed in meeting.
  - iii. Scarcity: It is tendency to value, to feel worthy about and to secure, opportunities that are scarce or decreasing.
  - iv. Reciprocity: We are generally more willing to comply with a request from someone who has previously provided a favour or concession to us than to someone who has not.
  - v. Social Validation: A tendency to comply with a request for some action if this action is consistent with what we believe persons similar to ourselves are doing (or thinking). We want to be correct, and one way to do so is to act and think like others.
  - vi. Authority: We are usually more willing to comply with requests from someone who authority or simply looks like one.

### Answers to SAEs 2

1. Individual can be reminded that you will be responsible for the harm produced by following commands and not the authority.
2. Individuals can be provided with a clear indication that beyond some point, unquestioning submission to destructive commands is inappropriate.
3. Individuals may find it easier to resist influence from authority figures if they question the expertise and motives of these figures. Questions such, as are authority figures really in a better position to judge what is appropriate and what is not?
4. Simply knowing about the power of authority figures to command blind obedience may be helpful in itself.
5. Also, some research findings suggest that when individuals learn about the results of social psychological research, they sometimes change their behaviour to take account of this new knowledge There is hope that knowing about this process can enhance individual’s ability to

resist

## UNIT 3    PROSOCIALBEHAVIOUR:    MOTIVES    AND RESPONSES TO EMERGENCY

### Unit structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcomes
- 3.3 Empathy-altruism
- 3.4 Personality variables associated with Prosocial Behavior
  - 3.4.1 Crucial steps determine helping and non-helping
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 References/Further Reading/Web Resources
- 3.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents



### 3.1 Introduction

Previously, we have learnt how Human being is constantly involved in social interactions. In this process, he/she affects or gets affected by social situations. Conformity is one of such phenomenon. Conformity occurs when individuals change their attitudes or behaviour to comply with social norms-rules or expectations about how they should behave in various situations. Conformity is affected by many factors like cohesiveness, group size and type of social norms. In this chapter we will try to understand the reasons as to why people help each other. What are the motives behind such behaviours and in which situations they are more likely to help. When do they help? When are conditions under which such helping behaviour occurs? Why some people are more helpful in comparison to others? In this unit we will understand: why people help? And Motives behind prosocial behaviour. Before then, let's give a brief definition of what prosocial behaviour.

Staub (1979) defined pro-social behaviour as voluntary behaviour intended to benefit another person. "Voluntary" emphasises the spontaneous initiative by the actor in contrast to professional help (e.g., physicians or nurses). Pro-social behaviour may include helping, sharing, giving, and comforting (Bierhoff, 2002).

Pro-social behaviour is defined as "...any act performed with the goal of benefiting another person" (Aronson, Wilson, & Akert, 2004 p. 382). How is it possible to differentiate the meaning or motivation or consequences between a ten rupees donation to charity and rescuing a drowning child? Many researchers have attempted to narrow the

parameters of discussion by focusing on subsets of prosocial behaviour such as altruism versus self-interest, helping behaviours sustained over time versus one-time events, personality variables versus situational context, the origins of empathy and others. Consequently, why people refuse to assist at the critical time?



### 3.2 Learning Outcomes

This unit will explain:

- Why people help or do not help at the time of emergency.
- What are the factors determining Bystander's response during emergency.
- Factors influencing helping behaviour.
- Long term commitment to Prosocial Acts.



### 3.3 Empathy-Altruism

It refers to putting oneself in other's shoes. Understanding the situation from other's perspective. According to this perspective we help others because we experience empathy towards them; we want their plight to end. Barry and Wentzel (2006) gave the Empathy Altruism Hypotheses to explain prosocial behaviour. They suggested that at least some prosocial acts are motivated only by the desire to help someone in need. If such motivation is strong, the helper is willing to engage even in dangerous and life threatening activity (Baston, Bolen, Cross&Neuringer-Benefiel). Batson and his colleagues devised an experimental procedure to test this view of helping behaviour. The participants were divided into two groups. One group of participants was told that victim is similar to themselves. The other groups were hold that a victim is not similar to themselves. The participants were presented with an opportunity to help victims. They were given a role of observer who watched fellow student on T.V. monitor as she performed a task while receiving electric shock (victim was actually a research assistant recorded on videotape).

#### 3.3.1 Negative State Relief Model: (Cialdini, Baumann & Kenrick 1981)

According to this model we help either because our actions allow us to reduce our own negative feelings. These negative feelings are not necessarily aroused by emergency situation. We engage in prosocial act as a way to improve our own negative mood. In such cases unhappiness

leads to prosocial behaviour. In such situations empathy may be there or not.

### **3.3.2 Empathic Joy**

Helping behaviour has been explained by Empathic Joy Hypothesis (Hall, 1999). This theory suggests that helper responds and helps victims not because of empathy but because he wants to accomplish something and doing so is rewarding. The argument goes like this if we help people only for empathy, then they would not be concerned about feedback. To test this hypothesis Smith Keating and Stotland performed an experiment. In this experiment female student said that she might drop out of college because she felt isolated and distressed. She was described as similar to one group and dissimilar to other group. After watching the videotape the participants were asked to give helpful advice. Some were told that they would be given a feedback of effectiveness of their advice others were told that they would not come to know what student decided to do.

Results showed that participants were helpful only if there was high empathy and feedback about the advice.

### **3.3.3 Competitive Altruism**

According to this view people help others because in doing so their status and reputation is enhanced. Thus, the benefits incurred are larger than the cost of the prosocial behaviour.

Those people who help others get higher status because society will always prefer to have people who engage in prosocial behaviour. If helping person has higher status then such a person may be well compensated for engaging in prosocial action. They are not only treated as a star but they may have entire buildings named after them. The best example is dead diction centre at Poone, Yerwada, named after P.L. Deshpande, the famous Marathi author.

Nelson(2009) found that the greater, the cost involved in behaving in prosocial manner, greater the gains in status to people who behave in this way. Additional studies also suggest that people engage in prosocial behaviour as a way of boosting their social status.

In general, helping others is a signal to others that doing so would enhance their status. The benefits that are received are substantially more than the costs incurred.

### **3.3.4 Kin Selection Theory**

Helping ourselves by helping people who share our genes. The Kin Selection Theory (as given by Cialdini Brown Lewis luck & Neuberg (Pinker 1997). From the evolutionary perspective the main goal of all the organism is passing our genes to next generation. Therefore, we are more likely to help others to whom we are closely related rather than those to whom we are not related. Crandall and Kitayama conducted series of studies in 1994. These studies showed that participants in the study preferred to help their close relatives in an emergency situation. Participants also preferred to help younger relatives rather than the older relatives; Kin selection theory suggests that this is done because they had more chances of passing on their genes to the next generation. But it is not always true, many a times we help people who may not be even distantly related to us.

### Self-Assessment Exercise1

1. What is prosocial behaviour?
2. What is the primary motive of helping others according to Competitive Altruism's perspectives?

### 3.4 Personality Variables Associated With Prosocial Behaviour

Empathy and altruistic motivation are related to other positive characteristic such as sense of wellbeing, achievement motivation, sociability and emotional state that is consistently positive.

Empathy is found lower in people who are higher in aggressiveness. Similarly, people who score high on Machiavellianism tend to be distrustful, cynical, egocentric manipulative and controlling. People ranking high on this characteristic are less likely to show prosocial behaviour (Mctloskey, 1999).people having altruistic personality are more likely to show prosocial behaviour. Altruistic personality refers to a combination of dispositional variable associated with prosocial behaviour.

The components of altruistic personality are as follows:

- 1) Empathy: Most people who are higher on empathy are more likely to show more prosocial behaviour.
- 2) Belief in just world: Those people who help others, believe in just, fair and predictable world. They feel that the good behaviour is rewarded and bad behaviour is punished
- 3) Social responsibility: Those people who help others, believe that each person is responsible for doing her or his best to help anyone who wants to help.

- 4) **Internal locus of control:** This is the belief that people can choose to behave in ways that maximize good outcome, minimize bad outcome. People believe that they have the power to shape their destiny. People who do not help are more guided by external locus of control, believe that life is influenced by fate, luck whatever may be done, may not benefit others.
- 5) **They are not egocentric:** Altruistic people do not tend to be self absorbed and competitive.

### 3.5 Crucial Steps Determine Helping and Non-Helping

Latane and Darley (1970) proposed that likelihood of a person engaging in prosocial is determined by series of decisions that must be made quickly by those who witness an emergency. When we are suddenly and unexpectedly faced with an emergency situation that is difficult to interpret, before acting we must first figure out what if anything is going on and what we should do about it. This requires series of decisions that will determine whether we will help a person. The following factors determine the helping behaviour during emergency.

**1. Noticing or failing to notice that something unusual in happening.** In our day-to-day life we are thinking about something and concentrating on something else. For example, when you are traveling by a local train, you hear a noise and hear that someone is having a problem of breathlessness. We may not notice, maybe we are in sleep or deeply engrossed in some thinking, concentrating on something else. Here we may fail to notice that something unusual is happening. In everyday life we ignore many sights and sounds that are not relevant to us, and may not notice the emergency situation.

Darley and Latane performed a simple experiment on the students who were trained to become priests, those who are more likely to help. These priests were given a task of walking near by the campus and giving a talk. One group was told that they had plenty of extra time to reach the campus. The second group were told that they were right on schedule with just enough time to get there, and third group was told that they are late for speaking assignment and they needed to hurry.

**2. Correctly interpreting an event as an emergency:** Even those who pay attention to an emergency situation have incomplete information about what is happening? Most of the time whatever is noticed may not be always an emergency. Whenever potential helpers are not aware of what is happening, they are likely to hold back and wait for further information. It may be that when Genovese was murdered, people around could not understand what was happening, when they

heard the screams it was felt that man and a woman were possibly having a fight. The situation itself was quite ambiguous for those who were possibly having a fight. The situation itself was quite ambiguous for those who were witnessing it. In such situations people tend to accept the interpretation that is most comfortable to them.

It is observed that when there are many witnesses for a given incident. The help may not be given because of diffusion of responsibility, like when there are so many people who can help why me? Help is generally not given in such a situation with the fear of being misinterpreted by people generally, when we are uncertain about the situation and our actions we end up doing nothing. In the presence of others, we generally engage in a social comparison, we look at others as to how they are reacting and if others do not react we may feel foolish to react. It is always safe to follow majority. This situation is described as “pluralistic ignorance”. It refers to the fact that because none of the witnesses responds to an emergency, no one knows for sure what is happening and each depends on others for interpretation of the situation.

Latane and Darley (1968) performed an experiment to demonstrate how far people will go to avoid making a possibly inappropriate response to a situation that may be or may not be an emergency situation.

**3. Deciding that it is your responsibility to provide help:** Building catches a fire, cars collide, in this situation responsibilities are clearly indicated. Fireman, policeman, etc., take the lead. But when the responsibility is not clear, people assume that someone must take responsibility. But when no one is present, the lone bystander has to take the responsibility.

**4. Deciding that you have the necessary knowledge and skills to act:** Prosocial behaviour cannot occur unless a person knows how to become helpful. Some emergencies are sufficiently simple; almost everyone knows how to become helpful. But when emergencies require a special help only some of the bystanders can be of help. e.g. Good swimmer can help a person, who is drowning or a doctor can help patient with heart problem.

**5. Making final decision to help:** During emergency situation help is given to a person, only when a bystander makes a decision to help. Many times helping behaviour may be inhibited by potential negative consequences of the behaviour. Fritzsche and others held that helper engages himself in cognitive algebra where he weighs positive and negative consequences of it. In Mumbai, if an accident victim asks for help, the first consideration that a bystander has is what will be the consequences? Will he be questioned by the policeman for helping a

person after the accident?

To summarize, deciding whether to help or not to help is not a simple process. It requires series of decisions to be taken by the helper.

### Self-Assessment Exercise2

Explain the steps in determining helping or non-helping behaviour.



## 3.5 Summary

People help during emergency situations because;

- 1) We feel sympathetic towards them. Empathy altruism hypothesis suggests that some prosocial acts are solely motivated by the desire to help someone in need.
- 2) The negative state relief model suggests that we help because such actions help us in reducing our own negative and unpleasant emotions.
- 3) The competitive altruism view suggests that people help other during emergency because it boosts their own status and reputation. The benefits received are more than the costs incurred.
- 4) The empathic joy hypotheses suggests that people respond to the needs of victim because, he wants to accomplish something and doing so is rewarding in itself.
- 5) Person engaging in prosocial behaviour must decide that he/she has knowledge or skill to act.



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### 3.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

#### Answers to SAEs 1

1. Prosocial behaviour is defined as a voluntary behaviour intended to benefit another person. “Voluntary” emphasises the spontaneous initiative by the actor in contrast to professional help (e.g., physicians or nurses). Also, pro-social behaviour is regarded as “...any act performed with the goal of benefiting another person”

2. According to Competitive Altruism view people help others primarily because in doing so their status and reputation is enhanced. Thus, the benefits incurred are larger than the cost of the prosocial behaviour.

#### Answers to SAEs2

The steps in determining helping or non-helping behaviour are;

1. Noticing or failing to notice that something unusual is happening: In our day-to-day life we are thinking about something and concentrating on something else. For example, when you are traveling by a local train, you hear a noise and hear that someone is having a problem of breathlessness.

2. Correctly interpreting an event as an emergency: Even those who pay attention to an emergency situation have incomplete information about what is happening? Most of the time whatever is noticed may not be always an emergency. Whenever potential helpers are not aware of what is happening, they are likely to hold back and wait for further information.

3. Deciding that it is your responsibility to provide help: Building catches a fire, cars collide, in this situation responsibilities are clearly indicated. Fireman, policeman, etc., take the lead.

4. Deciding that you have the necessary knowledge and skills to act: Prosocial behaviour cannot occur unless a person knows how to become helpful. Some emergencies are sufficiently simple; almost everyone knows how to become helpful.

5. Making final decision to help: During emergency situation help is given to a person, only when a bystander makes a decision to help. Many times helping behaviour may be inhibited by potential negative consequences of the behaviour.

## UNIT 4 BEHAVIOUR MODIFICATION

### Unit Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcomes
- 4.3 Meaning of Behaviour Modification
- 4.4 Types and Frequency of Deviant Behaviour
  - 4.4.1 Methods for Controlling Behaviour
- 4.5 Summary
- 4.6 References/Further Reading /Web Resources
- 4.7 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents



### 4.1 Introduction

In this unit, our discuss shall focus on using a principle of learning and cognition to understand and change people's behaviour. This might sound very technical, but it is used frequently by all of us. Parent use this to teach their children right from wrong. Therapists use it to promote healthy behaviour in their patients. Animal trainers use it to develop obedience between a pet and its owner. We even use it in our relationships with friends and significant others in dealing with everyday life experiences. We will also consider managing human behaviour. Let us take a look at what other content.



### 4.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to: explain what is meant by behaviour modification; and list the methods for controlling behaviour.



### 4.3 Definition of Behaviour Modification

Behaviour modification refers to the technique or treatment procedure used to change behaviour by altering a person's current environment to help the person function better in everyday life (Pear & Martin, 2003). Behaviour modification focuses on using a principle of learning and cognition to understand and change people's behaviour. This might sound very technical, but it is used frequently by all of us. Parent use this to teach their children right from wrong.

Westen(1996) define modification as "the alteration of behavioral patterns through the use of such learning techniques as biofeedback and positive or negative reinforcement." More simply, you can modify your child's behavior with positive consequences and negative consequences. Behavior modification is defined as "the alteration of behavioral patterns through the use of such learning techniques as biofeedback and positive or negative reinforcement." More simply, you can modify your child's behavior with positive consequences and negative consequences. Behavior modification is based on the idea that good behavior should lead to positive consequences and bad behavior should lead to negative consequences.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise1**

1. Explain what you understand by behaviour modification?
2. List six (6) methods for controlling behaviour

### **4.4 Types and Frequency of Deviant Behaviour**

It is possible for students of educational psychology with some training to 'shape' the desired behaviour, and to minimize the deviant behaviour of children in classrooms. Some parents with the awareness of the psychology of operant conditioning can shape the desired behaviour of children. What is behaviour modification? By behaviour modification we mean a formal technique for promoting the frequency of desirable behaviour and decreasing the incidence of unwanted ones. Note that behaviour modification has been used in a variety of situations ranging from teaching severely retarded people the rudiments of language to helping people stick to diets (Whaley & Malott, 1993).

Before any behaviour modification is attempted, it is however necessary for the manipulator of the experiment to have a detailed knowledge of the type and frequency of the deviant behaviour needed to be eliminated from the child or the person concerned. For example, if a child is observed to rise from his seat and run to some other child frequently during the lesson hour, then the 'baseline' or operant level of this deviant behaviour of the child has to be determined first. That means the number of times per lesson hour during the morning, for example, the child rises from his seat, and manifests this disturbing behaviour. This has to be assessed to determine the frequency and nature of this distracting behaviour. Then the next step is to determine the 'terminal behaviour' wanted to be seen in the behaviour manifestations of the child or the person concerned.

#### 4.4.1 Methods for Controlling Behaviour

Various methods can be employed for controlling behaviour, and some of them are as follows:

- (a) Operant conditioning
- (b) Shaping
- (c) Scheduling various types of reinforcements
- (d) Modeling or imitations
- (e) Extinction
- (f) Satiation
- (g) Aversion therapy
- (h) Conditioning incompatible behaviour
- (i) Self-control.

If a child manifests some form of deviant behaviour then it is also very likely that the same child manifests some forms of other socially approved behaviour as well. During the initial period of observation of the child's behaviour to determine the baseline of the deviant behaviour, these elements of socially approved behaviour can also be spotted. It is now necessary to quote some examples of modifications of different types of deviant behaviour that has been reported in the relevant literature.

A technique, often employed in behaviour modification is the use of the 'free method'. This implies that the individual manifests his behaviour 'freely' preferably when he is left alone, and the emphasis is on the performances of the individual. Hart and her collaborators (1964) employed the technique of the free operant method to eliminate the crying behaviour of a four-year old child. Firstly, the baseline of the child's crying responses was determined from observing the child's crying behaviour for a ten-day period' morning sessions. It was found that eye-contact with the person present reinforced the crying response of the child.

Then a period of experimentation followed which lasted three more periods, each of ten days. During the first of these experimental periods, the teacher avoided making eye-contacts with the child which produced extinction of the crying behaviour, but other behaviour of the child was reinforced positively. One thing that is to be noted in the experiment is that eliminated behaviour is likely to reappear if the child or the person gets reinforcement of these deviant responses from different environments. This implies that the behaviour that is modified in the school or the clinic should in no circumstances be reinforced elsewhere, and in this regard, parents' cooperation is of great importance to the teacher. The methods we have discussed is the 'free operant method' where extinction, reinforcement of the desired behaviour element, and a

correct scheduling of the reinforcements of the operant were used in modifying the crying operant behaviour of let us go the child.

Another method that is frequently used is the method of 'shaping'. It implies reinforcement of closer and closer approximations of the desired behaviour. Isaacs et. al. (1960) used the method of shaping to reinstate verbal behaviour in an hospitalized patient who had been mute for several years. It was found that the patient would sit at a place without any signs of any movement of eyes or lips. Various methods to draw the attention of the patient, for example, waving cigarettes or other things before his eyes had already failed. The experimenters then found that while taking a packet of cigarettes, a packet of gum accidentally dropped to the floor and this made the patient move his eyes to the floor.

Two things became clear from the shaping experiment: extreme patience on the part of the experimenters and successive reinforcements of closer and closer approximations of the desired behaviour: If the behaviour of the hospitalized patient having being mute for nineteen years could be shaped in course of 18 sessions only, then there is no reason why the behaviour of children in the classroom cannot be shaped by teachers with experience and patience.

The withdrawal of reinforcement is aversive in nature, and it is found that subjects will learn a response that prevents the withdrawal of reinforcement, since withdrawal of reinforcement contingent upon a response decreases the strength of that response. Let us cite an example. If a (hungry) child is sent to his bedroom every time he puts his elbows on a dinner table, then the rate at which he puts his elbows on the table decreases. If the rate of his putting his elbows on the table increases following his experiences of being sent away from the table, then by definition, 'sending away' from the table is positively reinforcing the child. Let us consider another example. We notice that when mothers often say to their children: 'If you do this, I will not speak to you, but if you stop doing this or that, I will love you all the more' children respond to this treatment from their mothers and learn to behave accordingly. Mothers, though inexperienced and untrained in the psychology of avoidance responses and withdrawal of reinforcements, are continually engaged in the process of shaping their children's behaviour.

It is important for you to note that deviant behaviour observed commonly in the classroom can be successfully tackled by experienced and trained teachers though difficult cases should be referred to the specialists in this field. The importance of the psychology of behaviour modification is relevant to teachers as it unfolds to him avenues which produce a congenial atmosphere in the classroom for further progress of lessons. The importance of parental cooperation in achieving the

objective to modify deviant behaviour of children cannot be overstated. It is to be noted that any attempt to modify deviant behaviours presupposes the following:

- (a) Determining the baseline of the deviant behaviour.
- (b) Determining the terminal behaviour, and close approximations of it.
- (c) Deciding on the nature of positive reinforcement that will be attractive to the child.
- (d) Locating the nearest possible avoidance responses available in the behaviour repertoire of the child.
- (e) Reinforcing the child during adaptation while extinction continued.
- (f) Taking recourse to predetermined schedule of reinforcement while shaping of the child's behaviour is continued.

### Self-Assessment Exercise2.

3. State four (4) suppositions that an experimenter must take into consideration in an attempt to modify behaviour



#### 4.5 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt how human behaviour may be managed. You also learnt types and frequency of deviant behaviour. In addition, you have learnt methods for controlling behaviour.



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## 4.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

### Answers to SAEs 1

1. Behaviour modification refers to the technique or treatment procedure used to change behaviour by altering a person's current environment to help the person function better in everyday life
2. Various methods OF controlling behaviour are as follows:
  - (a) Operant conditioning
  - (b) Shaping
  - (c) Scheduling various types of reinforcements
  - (d) Modeling or imitations
  - (e) Extinction
  - (f) Satiation
  - (g) Aversion therapy
  - (h) Conditioning incompatible behaviour
  - (i) Self-control.

### Answers to SAEs

Suppositions that an experimenter must take into consideration in an attempt to modify behaviour:

- (a) Determining the baseline of the deviant behaviour.
- (b) Determining the terminal behaviour, and close approximations of it.
- (c) Deciding on the nature of positive reinforcement that will be attractive to the child.
- (d) Locating the nearest possible avoidance responses available in the behaviour repertoire of the child.
- (e) Reinforcing the child during adaptation while extinction continued.
- (f) Taking recourse to predetermined schedule of reinforcement while shaping of the child's behaviour is continued.

## UNIT 5 BEHAVIOUR-GENETIC INFLUENCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES

### Unit Structure

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Learning Outcomes
- 5.3 Meaning and Importance
- 5.4 Behaviour-Genetic Influences
  - 5.4.1 Behaviour-Environmental Influences
- 5.5 Summary
- 5.6 References/Further Reading/Web Resources
- 5.7 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents



### 5.1 Introduction

This unit put us through how human behaviour is influenced both by the genes that we inherit and the environment in which we live. With the significant advances in our knowledge of genetics and publication of the draft sequence of the human genome, the focus of research has moved once again towards understanding the biological contribution to behaviour. Some researchers are attempting to locate specific genes, or groups of genes, associated with behavioural traits and to understand the complex relationship between genes and the environment. This is called research in behavioural genetics. In contrast to research into the genetic basis of diseases and disorders, researchers in behavioural genetics investigate aspects of our personalities such as intelligence, sexual orientation, susceptibility to aggression and other antisocial conduct, and tendencies towards extraversion and novelty-seeking. However, let us look at what other content you should learn in this unit as specified in the objective below.



### 5.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss behavioural genetic and its importance
- Describe some of the main psychological influences on human behaviour.



### 5.3 Meaning and Importance of Behaviour

Behavioral genetics is the study of genetic and environmental influences on behaviors. By examining genetic influence, more information can be gleaned about how the environment operates to affect behavior. Behavioural genetics is a multidisciplinary field of research studying the role of genetic influences as possible contributors to individual differences, human behavioural traits and behavioural disturbances and diseases. One of the motives of this research area is to develop methods for controlling human behaviour (gene technology) and its disturbances (gene therapy). Research in behavioural genetics is based on the conviction that the relative proportions of genetic and environmental influences can be determined, and that this knowledge may be applied to understanding and improving human behavioural characteristics. Inherent in these convictions is the assumption that genes and environment can make independent contributions to behavioural development. However, the basic assumptions of behavioural genetics have evoked strong criticism and doubts as to their scientific validity (Allen, 1998; Gottlieb, 2006; Lewontin, 2001; Lickliter and Honeycutt, 2015; Moore, 2013; Rose, 1997).

Behavioral genetics is the study of genetic and environmental influences on behaviors. By examining genetic influence, more information can be gleaned about how the environment operates to affect behavior.

#### Self-Assessment Exercise 1

1. What do you understand by behavioural genetics?
2. Why is behavioral genetics important?

### 5.4 Behaviour-Genetic Influences

One of the longest running debates in psychology is the ‘nature versus nurture’ debate. This relates to the question of whether behaviour is best explained by reference to genetic or to environmental factors. Note that at times the issue divides the academic community, with proponents of both schools of thought providing evidence supporting their own viewpoint and challenging that of their opponents.

The question is important for a number of reasons. If it is possible to prove that a person's genes predominantly determine certain aspects of behaviour, then there is little point in trying to change people by using external influences. Let us cite an example to ensure clear understanding. If intelligence was found to be almost entirely determined by genetic factors, then there would be little point in

spending billions of naira on providing a good education for those who are low in intelligence. To do so would be a 'wasted effort, as any such attempts would be unproductive.

Similarly, if genetics were found to largely determine criminality, there would be profound implications regarding how society deals with those who exhibit criminal tendencies from an early age. If one were to believe in' such a viewpoint, then one would want to advocate that such individuals be incarcerated at an early age and not be released. Punishment and rehabilitation would presumably be a waste of time because such individuals would be unable to overturn the powerful effects of their genetic make-up.

While it is true that a person's genetic make-up does affect their behaviour, it is rarely in such an absolute way as implied by the examples above. It is important for you to note that these days, psychologists rarely talk about behaviour being determined by either heredity or the environment. Most psychologists would accept that any behaviour results from the interaction between genetic factors and the environment (Moore, 2013).

Every human being comes into this world with a genetic make-up. Note that this is the blueprint for the individual's passage through life and as originating from his or her parents. When a baby is first born, relatives often look to see whether the child looks more like the mother or father. Each new child results from the combination of elements from both the mother and father. The human reproduction system ensures that, with the exception of identical twins, there are no two genetically identical people in the world. You must note that, although there can be nothing in the child that has not come from the mother or father, each child will be genetically different. If you think about a large family with a number of brothers and sisters, each family member may share common characteristics but there will also be identifiable differences between each individual. I know you are eager to know why this is so: This may be partly due to the different genetic makeup of each individual, but also partly because each child will have slightly different experiences as he/she grows up (Rose, 1997).

Let us consider the example of criminality. You may have your own view as to whether or not crime runs in families. The evidence suggests that children born to criminal parents run an increased risk of becoming criminals themselves. It is to be noted that while crime may run in families, this does not necessarily prove that genetics is the correct or the only explanation. It may be that criminal parents instill values in their children that make them more likely to adopt a criminal lifestyle as they grow up. While most parents would punish their child if they

committed a criminal act, criminal parents may encourage or reward their own child for following in their footsteps.

#### **5.4.1 Behaviour-environmental influences**

It is pertinent to note that genetics can play an important role in understanding human behaviour. We also noted that genetics alone can never fully explain why people behave as they do. It is important for you to note that while all individuals enter the world with a genetic make-up, they are not raised in a social or environmental vacuum. If we are to fully understand why people behave as they do, we need to consider both their genetic make-up and the environment in which they are raised.

From the moment of conception, the developing child is subject to all sorts of environmental influences. Even in the womb, the child may develop differently if the mother smokes, takes drugs or is ill while pregnant (Alhassan, 2000). Once born, the baby will be subject to a vast array of environment influences that will help to shape him/her. As this writer explained elsewhere (Alhassan, 1983:450), environment is the aggregate of all external and internal conditions affecting the existence, growth, and welfare of organisms in general and the child in particular. A child's environment commences from within her mother's womb. Thereafter, a child experiences a social environment, a physical environment, an economic environment, and in fact, a political environment. Of course the cultural environment is all-embracing. Both heredity and environment contribute to an individual's intelligence.

It is obvious that the environment can exert a powerful influence on behaviour but when it comes to explaining our own behaviour, humans are not always willing to accept this fact. If you were asked whether you are an independent sort of person, or whether you simply go along with the crowd, you would probably say that while you are influenced by others to some extent, you are still capable of independent thought and decision making. Yet social psychology provides ample evidence of the powerful effects that social situations can have (Lickliter & Honeycutt, 2015).

Let us cite an example. Police Officers will tend to presume that the vast majority of people who are arrested and questioned might initially deny the offence but may eventually confess to the crime. It may never occur to the officer concerned that if a person does confess, this results from the powerful situational environmental forces to which the suspect is subjected.

#### **Self-Assessment Exercise 2**

1. What is the environment influence as perceived by Alhassan

when a child is born?



## 5.5 Summary

What you have learnt in this unit concerns the role of genetics and environment on behaviour. You also learnt that genetics may set the limits within which certain types of behaviour will fall, but the environment may determine which aspects of our genetic inheritance are revealed. You equally learnt that situations exert a powerful influence over people's behaviour and make them do things that we might not predict.



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## 5.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

### Answers to SAEs 1

1. Behavioral genetics is the study of genetic and environmental influences on behaviors. By examining genetic influence, more information can be gleaned about how the environment operates to affect behavior.

2. Behavioral genetics is the study of genetic and environmental influences on behaviors. By examining genetic influence, **more** information can be gleaned about how the environment operates to affect behavior.

### Answers to SAEs2

Once born, the baby will be subject to a vast array of environment influences that will help to shape him/her. Environment is the aggregate of all external and internal conditions affecting the existence, growth, and welfare of organisms in general and the child in particular.

**MODULE 4**

Unit 1	Perspectives and Causes of Aggression
Unit 2	Aggression in Long Term relationship and prevention and control of aggression
Unit 3	Groups and Individuals
Unit 4	Understanding and Attributing Causes to other's behaviour
Unit 5	Socialisation

## **UNIT 1      PERSPECTIVES      AND      CAUSES      OF AGGRESSION**

### **Unit Structure**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 Definition of Aggression and Causes of Human Aggression
  - 1.3.1 Social causes of Aggression
  - 1.3.2 Cultural causes of Aggression
  - 1.3.3 Personal Causes of Aggression
  - 1.3.4 Situational Causes of Aggression
- 1.4 Perspectives on Aggression
  - 1.4.1 The Role of Biological Factors
  - 1.4.2 Drive Theories
  - 1.4.3 Modern Theories of Aggression
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 References/FurtherReading/ Web Resources
- 1.7 Possible answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents



### **1.1 Introduction**

Aggression is one of the most potential dangers to mankind. It is a greatest stumbling block for one's self development and growth. Aggression and violence have been experienced by almost all societies and times. The two world wars, terrorist attacks, racial conflicts, communal clashes, etc., have gradually increased over the years. Whether aggression is manifested by individuals or groups (including nations), it is the most destructive force in social relations and consequently an important social issue. A major concern in either individual or group aggression is its origin. For now, let's start with the meaning of aggression.



## 1.2 Learning outcomes

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the various perspectives of aggression
- Appreciate the various causes of Aggression including the various social and personal causes of Aggression.



## 1.3 Definition of aggression

Aggression is behavior, verbal or physical, intended to physically hurt or harm in some other way another person or thing. Two important definitions of aggression are as follows:

- a) According to Dollard et al., aggression can be defined as “a behaviour whose goal is the injury of the person towards whom it is directed”. Supposedly this includes physical and verbal aggression.
- b) Baron and Bryne has defined aggression in the following words “aggression is any form of behaviour directed towards the goal of harming or injuring another living being who is motivated to avoid such treatment”.

Aggression is defined as behavior aimed at causing harm or pain, psychological harm, or personal injury or physical distraction. An important aspect of aggressive behavior is the intention underlying the actor's behavior. Not all behaviors resulting in harm are considered aggression. For example, a doctor who makes an injection that harms people, but who did so with the intent of preventing the further spread of illness, is not considered to have committed an aggressive act. Aggression can be direct or indirect, active or passive, and physical or verbal (Anderson & Bushman, 2002).

### 1.3.1 Causes of human aggression: social, cultural, personal, and situational

Human aggression is a result of many causes acting in combination. The four most important causes of human aggression are as follows:

1. Social causes of Aggression
2. Cultural causes of Aggression
3. Personal causes of Aggression
4. Situational causes of Aggression

We would discuss each of these briefly

#### **Social causes of Aggression**

The following are the important social causes of aggression:

i) **Frustration:** Frustration is one important and powerful cause of aggression. Frustration can arise due to many factors such as environmental or natural calamities, accidents, personal limitations, lack of aptitude, others ill intentions, etc. In the preceding pages we have seen frustration-aggression hypothesis which stated that a) Frustration always lead to some form of aggression; and b) Aggression always stems from frustration. Buckholtz and Meyer-Lindenberg (2013) has proposed a revised version of the frustration-aggression hypothesis. According to this view, frustration is an aversive, unpleasant experience, and frustration leads to aggression because of this fact. The frustration aggression viewpoint also helps to explain why unexpected frustration and frustration that is viewed as illegitimate or unjustified produce stronger aggression than frustration that is expected or legitimate. For e.g., an employee who has been abruptly terminated from service without a reasonable and proper explanation will feel that his termination is illegitimate and unjustified. Such an individual will develop hostile thoughts, experience intense anger and seek revenge against the perceived source of frustration (in this case the employer). This is due to the fact that unexpected or illegitimate frustration generates greater amount of negative affect than frustration that is expected or viewed as legitimate.

ii) **Provocation:** This is another major cause of aggression. Direct provocation leads to anger. Research studies suggest that direct provocation from others, either physical or verbal, often play a powerful role in eliciting overt aggression.

Not everybody reacts to provocation with aggression, whether we would react to provocation with aggression is influenced by many factors. One such factor is our attributions concerning provocation. For e.g., when we conclude that provocation from another person was intended, i.e., purposely performed, we become angry and engage in strenuous efforts to reciprocate. However, on the other hand if we conclude that provocation was unintended i.e., due to the result of accident or factors beyond other's control, we are much less likely to lose our temper and behave aggressively. Thus, attributions concerning the causes behind the provocative actions of others play an important role in determining how aggressively we would react.

**Kinds of Provocation:** Three important types of provocation that leads to aggression are as follows:

- a) **Contumacious:** Expression of arrogance or disdain on the part of others
- b) **Harsh and Unjustified Criticism:** Harsh and Unjustified Criticism, Especially criticism that attacks us rather than our behaviour.
- c) **Teasing:** Provoking statements that points to an individual's flaws and imperfections. Teasing can range from mild, humorous remarks and

humorous nicknames to comments that are designed to hurt and insult others. Research findings indicate that the more individuals attribute teasing to hostile motives – a desire to embrace or annoy them – the more likely they are to respond aggressively

**Gender differences in Provocation:** Two important gender differences in provocation are as follows:

1. Females were found to become much angrier as compared to males with respect to condescending actions—one's in which the other person showed arrogance or suggested that he/she was superior in some manner.
2. Females were also found to become angrier in situations where someone hurt someone else and in situation where one was insensitive to others

**iii) Heightened Arousal:** The results of a number of experimental studies show that heightened physiological arousal, irrespective of its source, may often serve to facilitate overt aggression. Heightened arousal created by such sources as loud and unpleasant noises, competitive activities and even vigorous exercise has been found to facilitate aggression under “certain” conditions.

**Excitation Transfer Theory:** One of the theories that explain the relationship between heightened arousal and aggression is called as Excitation Transfer Theory introduced by Zillmann (1983). Briefly Excitation Transfer Theory refers to the fact that often physiological arousal dissipates slowly overtime. As a result some portion of such arousal may persist as an individual moves from one situation to another. This residual excitement, in turn, can then transfers to the new context, and intensify any emotional experiences occurring in it. According to Zillmann, arousal occurring in one situation can persist and intensify, emotional reactions occurring in later, unrelated situations. For e.g., the arousal generated by a near miss in traffic can intensify feelings of annoyance or frustration produced, by later delays at an airport security gate.

**Emotion, Cognition and Aggression:** Sapolski (2017) has revised his excitation transfer theory to explain the interaction of emotion and cognition in causing aggression. According to him our thoughts can lead us to reappraise various emotion provoking events as a result of which we would reinterpret the situation and this cognitive activity in turn, may well influence your emotional reactions leading to aggression. For e.g., Zillman (1994) found that if subjects are told in advance that some one with whom they will soon interact is very upset, they experience less anger in response to rudeness by this individual than if they do not

receive such information. Emotional arousal influences our cognition to a considerable extent. According to Zillmann (1994) levels of emotional arousal influences our thoughts about other's behaviour and so our tendencies to aggress against them. According to Zillmann (1994) strong emotional arousal sometimes produces what he describes as cognitive deficit - i.e., reduced ability to formulate rational plans of action or reduced ability to evaluate the possible outcome of various behaviours.

**iv) Exposure to Media Violence:** Exposure to media violence increases aggression in individuals. A large number of research studies have conclusively demonstrated that exposure to aggressive models stimulate similar behaviour among observers. Similarly, research studies have also conclusively shown that exposure to violence in the mass media (films and TV), increases aggression by viewers. Some important findings of the various research studies with respect to exposure to media violence and aggression are as follows.

1. Research on exposure to violent television, movies, video games and music indicates that such material significantly increases the likelihood of aggressive behaviour by people exposed to them.
2. Such effects are both short term and long term in nature.
3. The magnitude of these effects is large, real and long lasting.
4. It has been found that the more violent films or television programs participants watched as children, the higher their levels of aggression as teenagers or adults are.
5. In a study by Damaris et al (1981) have found that individuals who reported that they had often played violent video games in the past directed more aggression against another person who had done nothing to provoke them than people who had rarely played such games. The more participants in the study had played violent video games in the past, the stronger the aggression they directed to their "opponent" on trials when they won.

Exposure to media violence enhances aggression because it desensitizes an individual to aggressive acts and makes the individual aggress against others with increasing intensity.

**v) Violent Pornography:** It means viewing sex films involving violence. A large number of research studies also indicate that violent pornography leads to aggressive behaviour. Exposure to violent pornography increases the tendency of males to aggress against females. Combination of explicit sexual content and violence against women is potentially dangerous. It makes men aggressive. Exposure to violent pornography also leads to desensitizing effect in which viewers react less negatively to the violence in these films as they watch more and more of them. Research studies have shown that prolonged exposure to

scenes depicting sexual violence toward females (several hours of viewing such films), both men and women report more callous attitudes toward such actions. They perceive crimes such as rape as less serious, report less sympathy toward rape victims, indicate greater acceptance of false beliefs about rape (e.g., the myth that many women really want to be ravaged) and become more accepting of bizarre forms of pornography.

### **1.3.2 Cultural causes of Aggression**

Cultural factors also considerably influence aggression. Certain cultural practices with respect to honour, sexuality, etc., are filled with violence and aggression. An important concept in this area is “Cultures of Honour”. It refers to those cultures in which there are strong norms indicating that aggression is an appropriate response to insults to one’s honour. In North India (especially Haryana), among the Rajputs, where such a culture is prevalent, incidents of Honour killings/punishments are fairly common, where the girl and sometimes the girl and the boy are both killed or punished by the family and/or community for engaging in an intercaste/interfaith relationships. Thus, in ‘cultures of honor’ there are strong norms suggesting that insults to one’s honour must be avenged through aggression.

**Sexual Jealousy :** Social psychological research as well as observation of scholars like Shakespeare and Freud have pointed out that sexual jealousy is one of the most potential causes of aggression. Sexual jealousy can be defined as the perception of a threat to a romantic relationship by a rival for one’s partner. Research studies by Buss et al.,(1992). Parrot, (1991); and Sharpsteen, (1991) have demonstrated that individuals who feel that their lover has “done them wrong” by flirting with another person often experience strong feelings of anger and frequently think about or actually engage in actions designed to punish their lover, the rivals, or both. Some studies have found that most of the blame is on one’s lover rather than the rival. It has also been found (Paul et al., 1993) that females experience stronger feelings of anger at both the partner and the rival than males do and they are more likely to react aggressively to such betrayals.

### **1.3.3 Personal Causes of Aggression**

Many personal factors contribute towards aggression, some of which includes:

- i) Personality Factors
- ii) Type A Behaviour Pattern
- iii) Narcissism and Ego Threat
- iv) Sensation Seeking

## v) Gender Differences

We would discuss each of these briefly

i) **Personality Factors:** Many personality factors interact in complex ways with a given situational variable to determine how aggressively an individual reacts to a given situation. One such model is called as the TASS Model: The traits as Situational Sensitivities Model. It suggests that many personality traits function in a threshold-like manner, influencing behaviour only when situations evoke them. For example in people high in trait of aggressiveness, even a moderate level of provocation would trigger intense aggressive reactions. On the other hand for people low in trait of aggressiveness, a moderate provocation would trigger little or no aggression. Only a strong provocation would result in overt aggression.

ii) **Type A Behaviour Pattern:** The Term type A was introduced by Friedman and Rosenman to describe an individual's set of personality characteristics. The Type A behaviour pattern is a pattern of behaviour consisting primarily of high levels of competitiveness, time urgency and hostility. The Type A personalities are highly competitive, achievement oriented and always worried about time. They take too many activities at hand and always work against the pressure of time. Type A individuals are prone to aggressive and hostile behaviours. Type A individuals are hostile because aggressing against others is a useful means for reaching one's goals, such as furthering one's career or winning in athletic competitions (This is called as instrumental aggression). Type A individuals also engage in hostile aggression i.e., aggression whose prime purpose is that of inflicting pain and suffering on the victims. It has been found that Type A's are more likely than Type B's to engage in such actions as child abuse or spouse abuse (Strube et al, 1984).

iii) **Narcissism and Ego Threat:** The term Narcissism is derived from the story of a character from Greek mythology. Narcissus fell in love with his own reflection in the water and drowned trying to reach it. His name has now become a synonym for excessive self-love. Narcissistic individuals are highly selfcentered and hold an over-inflated view of one's own virtues or accomplishments. It has been found that high levels of Narcissism are associated with aggressive behavior. Bushman and Baumeister (1998) found that individuals who have high levels of Narcissism often react with exceptionally high levels of aggression to slights from others, i.e., feedback that threatens their inflated self-image. They also react in an aggressive manner to mild provocations because they believe that they are much better than other people and as a result, perceive mild critical comments from others as strong slurs on their inflated self-image. Due to their inflated selfimage narcissistic individuals perceive themselves to be victims of transgressions (wrong doings).

iv) **Sensation Seeking:** Sensation seeker is one personality

characteristics. Individuals who are described as sensation seekers are ones who are highly impulsive, adventurous, seeks new experiences and gets bored quickly. These individuals seek exciting events having an element of risk in it. They are also less inhibited. According to Zuckerman such individuals are high in aggression. Those who are high in sensation seeking are found to be highly aggressive due to following reasons:

- i. They experience anger and hostile feelings in higher amount as compared to others.
- ii. Their emotions are easily aroused.
- iii. They have lower thresholds for becoming angry.
- iv. Moreover, their tendencies to get bored and to seek exciting new experiences may lead them to have more hostile thoughts.

Geen (2001) found that those scoring high on sensation seeking were found to be high on verbal and physical aggression due to following reasons:

- i. High sensation seekers are generally attracted to situations that elicit aggression because they find such situations as exciting and appealing.
- ii. They experience anger and hostility in higher proportions as compared to those who score lower on sensation seeking.
- iii. They are also more likely to focus on immediate rather than delayed consequences of their behaviour

v) **Gender Differences:** Research studies have shown that there are sex differences in aggression. Males are found to be more aggressive than females. Statistical data indicates that males are more likely than females to be arrested for violent acts.

Myers (2011) in his research study found that males have indulged in wide range of aggressive actions as compared to females. Some important research findings with respect to gender differences in aggression are as follows:

- a. Males are significantly more likely than females to aggress against others when the provocation for aggression was absent.
- b. Gender difference tends shrink or even disappears when there is provocation.
- c. Gender differences are also found with respect to types of aggression. Males are more likely than females to engage in various forms of physical aggression such as kicking, punching, hitting and use of weapons. On the other hand, women are found to indulge more in verbal assaults. It has been further found that females engage in forms of aggression that make it difficult for victims to identify the aggressor or even to realize that they have been the targets of aggressive behaviour.
- d. Males and females also differ with respect to one form of

aggression called as sexual coercion. It involves words and deeds designed to overcome a partner's objections to engaging in sexual behavior and they can range from verbal tactics such as false statements of love to threats of harm and actual physical force. It has been found (Mussweiler and Forster 2000, Hogben et al 2001) that males are far more likely to indulge in sexual coercion as compared to females.

e. Research findings indicate that males are more likely than females to engage in various forms of direct aggression - actions aimed directly at the target and which clearly stem from the aggressor, e.g., physical assaults, pushing, shoving, throwing something at another person, shouting, making insulting remarks, etc. Females were found to indulge more in indirect forms of aggression - actions that allow the aggressor to conceal his/her identity from the victim, and which, in some cases, make it difficult for the victim to know that they have been the target of intentional harm doing. Such actions include:

1. Spreading vicious rumors about the target person.
2. Gossiping behind this person's back
3. Telling others not to associate with the intended victim,
4. Making up stories to get them in trouble, etc.

#### 1.3.4 Situational Causes of Aggression:

Heat (Temperature) and Alcohol:

There are many Situational factors that influence aggressive behavior. Situational forces refers to the context in which the aggression occurs and whether it is viewed as acceptable in a given culture or not. There are many situational factors that influence aggression. The two most important situational factors that can influence aggression are as follows:

1. Heat (Temperature)
2. Alcohol

We would now briefly discuss these two situational causes of aggression.

a) **Heat (Temperature):** Social psychological researchers have found a close connection between temperature (heat) and aggression. Some earliest classic studies in this area was conducted in the 1970s by Baron (1995) and his associates (Baron and Branscombe 2016). Their results indicated that heat increases aggression, but only up to a point. Beyond some level, people become so uncomfortable that they lack the energy for engaging in aggression or any other kind of vigorous activity. Paul Bell and Baron (1975) have presented a negative affect escape model to explain this phenomenon. According to them aggression did increase as temperatures rose in to the mid-80s Fahrenheit, but then dropped off at higher levels. Recently Anderson, Bushman and Groom (1997) obtained correlation between temperature and violent crimes.

These researchers collected average annual temperatures for 50 cities in the USA over a 45-year period (1950 – 1995). In addition, they obtained information on the rate of violent crimes (aggravated assault, homicide, etc.) and property crimes (burglary, car theft, etc.) as well as another crime that has been often viewed as primarily aggressive in nature: Rape. They then performed analysis to determine whether temperature was related to these crimes. Results indicated that the hotter years did indeed produce higher rates of violent crimes, but that they did not produce increase in property crimes or rape. This was true, even when the effect of many other variables that might also influence aggressive crimes (e.g. poverty, age distribution of the population, etc.) was eliminated. These findings and those of related studies (e.g. Anderson, Anderson and Deuser, 1996), suggest that heat is indeed linked to aggression.

b) **Alcohol:** Social Psychologists have found a close relationship between alcohol and aggressive behaviour. Bars, nightclubs, and other places in which people consume alcohol are often the scene of aggressive behaviour. These results and those of several related studies (e.g., Jeavons and Taylor, 1985) suggest that alcohol does not automatically increase aggression by individuals who consume it. Such persons do sometimes become more aggressive, but only in the context of social or situational cues suggesting that such behaviour is appropriate (e.g., strong provocation from other, social pressure to behave aggressively, etc.).

### Self-Assessment Exercises1

1. Discuss the different perspectives of aggression?
2. What are the causes of aggression?

## 1.4 Perspectives on aggression

The term Perspective means viewpoint. Perspectives on Aggression mean different viewpoints on aggression or theories of aggression. It deals with the views of different researches as to the reasons concerning why human beings aggress against others. There are many different perspectives on aggression. The three most common perspectives are as follows:

1. The Role of Biological Factors: From Instincts to Evolutionary Perspective.
2. Drive Theories: The Motive to Harm Others.
3. Modern Theories of Aggression: The Social Learning Perspective and The General Aggression Model.

### 1.4.1 The Role of biological Factors

From Instincts to Evolutionary Perspective: One of the important debatable issues has been what role do instincts or genetic factors play in aggression. One view holds that human beings are genetically programmed for aggression and violence.

Views of Sigmund Freud: One of the earliest instinct theories was given by Sigmund Freud which held the view that human violence stems from built-in (i.e., inherited) tendencies to aggress against others. He held the view that human aggression is instinctive. Freud believed that the individual has two basic instinctive drives:

- I. Eros (or libido or life instinct) and
- II. Thanatos or death instinct.

He called the instinct to live and obtain pleasure libido or eros and gave the name Thanatos to the death drive. When thanatos dominates, the result is self-punishment and suicide. According to this viewpoint aggression springs mainly from a built in fighting, instinct that humans share with many other species. Presumably, this instinct developed during the course of evolution because it yielded many benefits. For example fighting serves to disperse populations over a wide area, thus, ensuring maximum use of available resources. And since it is often closely related to mating, such behaviour often helps to strengthen the genetic makeup of a species by assuring that only the strongest and most vigorous individuals manage to reproduce (Damaris&Rohsenow, 1981).

**Konrad Lorenz on Aggression:** Konrad Lorenz held the view that instinct to aggress is common to many animal species. Lorenz, however, differs from Freud, since he states that aggressive behaviour will not occur unless it is triggered by external cues.

**Instinct view Rejected by Social Psychologists:** Most Social Psychologists rejected the instinctive theories of aggression. According to them it is difficult to give a genetic explanation of human aggression because aggression in human beings is expressed in many different forms, how can such a huge variation be caused by genetic factors. Secondly, the genetic theory of aggression is weak because all societies are not equally aggressive. The frequency of aggressive actions varies tremendously across human societies, so that it is much more likely to occur in some than in others. Do biologically inherited tendencies toward aggression actually exist among human beings? Most social psychologists doubt that they do, primarily for two important reasons:

- (i) First, they note that instinctive view such as the one proposed by Freud and Lorenz is somewhat circular in nature. These views begin by observing that aggression is a common form of behaviour. On the basis of this they then reason that such behaviour must stem from universal

built-in urges or tendencies. Finally, they use the high incidence of aggression as support for the presence of such instances and impulses.

(ii) Second, and perhaps more important - several findings argue against the existence of universal, innate human tendencies toward aggression. Comparisons among various societies indicate that the level of at least some forms of aggression varies greatly. For example, more murders are committed each year in each city in the United States than in entire nations (with ten times their population) in Europe and the Orient. Similarly, the incidence of aggression seems to change over time in different societies. If aggression is indeed a universal human tendency based largely on genetic factors, such differences and shifts would not occur (Bandura, 1981).

The present day Social Psychologists generally conclude that genetic and biological factors play little if any role in human aggression.

**Evolutionary Perspective:** Evolutionary perspective to a great extent believes that human aggression is adaptive in nature and that aggressive acts help individuals to preserve their genetic material. Studies of mate selection among human beings as well as aggression among animals have revealed that aggression confers many evolutionary advantages among individuals of a given species and help them to successfully survive and adapt to their environment.

### 1.4.2 Drive Theories

**The Motive to Harm Others:** Drive theories suggest that aggression originates from external conditions that give rise to the motive to harm or injure others. In other words drive theories suggest that various external conditions (frustration, physical pain, loss of face) serve to arouse a strong motive to engage in harm producing behaviour and such aggressive drive, in turn then leads to the performance of overt assaults against others. One important drive theories of aggression was presented by Dollard et al., called as Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis.

**Frustration Aggression Hypothesis:** This hypothesis was proposed by Dollard et. al., (1939), at Yale University. They stated that aggression is always a consequence of frustration and that frustration always leads to some kind of aggression. In short, it held that frustrated people always engage in some type of aggression and that all acts of aggression result from some type of frustration. Critics have objected to both the portions of the frustration aggression hypothesis.

1. First, it is now clear that frustrated individuals do not always respond to thwarting with aggressive thoughts, words or deed. Rather, they may actually show a wide variety of reactions, ranging from resignation and despair on the one hand to attempts to overcome the

source of their frustration on the other. In many cases, it appears that, the most likely reaction to powerful frustration is depression not overt acts of aggression (Bandura, 1981).

2. Second, all aggression does not result from frustration. People aggress for many different reasons and in response to many different factors. For example boxers hit and sometimes injure their opponents because it is a part of their job to do so, not because they are frustrated. Soldiers often attack and kill others out of a sense of patriotism or simply because it is their duty. Public executioners as well as hired assassin regularly kill individuals they do not know simply because they are being paid to carry out these actions. Thus, all aggression is not a result of frustration.

Social Psychologists have largely rejected this theory.

### 1.4.3 Modern theories of aggression

The Social Learning Perspective and The General Aggression Model: The two most well know modern theories of aggression are the social learning perspective and The General Aggression Model. We would discuss each of these briefly.

i) **The social learning perspective:** This is one of the most popular theories of aggression. According to it aggression, like other complex forms of social behaviour, is largely learned. The theoretical position that aggression is learned social behaviour has been presented in the writings of Bandura (1973), Baron (1995). The social learning theories have basically attempted to see how social models lead to aggression. They have studied the effect of viewing violence, especially televised violence. The social learning view of aggression also states that through direct and vicarious experience.

Social learning perspective suggests that whether a specific person will aggress in a given situation depends on many factors, including an individual's past experience, the current rewards associated with past or present aggression and attitudes and values that shape an individual's thoughts concerning the appropriateness and potential effects of such behaviour

ii) **The general aggression model:** The general model of aggression was presented by a group of researchers, chief among them is Anderson (2002). According to this model aggression is a result of combination of two factors: (a) situational factors and (b) personal factors. We would discuss each of these briefly:

- a) **Factors relating to the current situation (situational factors):**
- i. Frustration.
  - ii. Some kind of provocation from another person (e.g., insult),

- iii. Exposure to other people behaving aggressively (aggressive models – real or those shown in the media),
  - iv. Anything that causes individuals to experience discomfort – such as high temperature, dentist injection / drill, extremely boring lecture.
- b) **Factors relating to the people involved (personal factors):** These factors include individual differences of different types which we find among people. Some of the personal factors that can cause aggression in us are as follows:
1. Traits that predispose some individuals towards aggression (such as high irritability, antisocial personality, impulsivity, etc.).
  2. Attitudes and belief about violence (e.g., believing that it is acceptable and appropriate).
  3. A tendency to perceive hostile intentions in other's behaviour and
  4. Specific skills related to aggression (e.g., knowing how to fight or how to use various weapons).

According to the General Aggression Model, these situational and individual (personal factors) variables lead to overt aggression through their impact on three basic processes:

- i) **Arousal:** They may increase physical arousal or excitement.
- ii) **Affective States:** They can arouse hostile feelings and outwards signs of these (e.g., angry facial expressions) and
- iii) **Cognitions:** They can induce individuals to think hostile thoughts or can bring beliefs and attitudes about aggression to mind.

### Self-Assessment Exercise2

1. Write short note on the following:
  - a. Violent Pornography
  - b. Exposure to Media Violence
  - c. Provocation



## 1.5 Summary

At the end of this unit, we all believe to have learnt some kind of aggression knowledge in us, and explaining it from different perspectives. Unlike classical belief about hormones, genes, and neural processes as the sole controller of emotions, we should also consider the role of socio-cultural and psychological influence on aggressive behaviour. And doing so will give us the chance to evaluate aggression more profoundly thus also giving us the chance to reduce it. Now, we can counteract the factors that provoke it by considering different perspectives, so to say, a child's aggressiveness could be caused by his/her parent's behaviour, hence, we can produce different parenting

methods to reduce it. By using different perspectives, we no longer will treat aggression as only a genetical or hormonal problem instead we can look for societal, environmental, or parental problems.



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## 1.7 Possible answers to SAEs

### Answers to SAEs1

1. **The Role of Biological Factors:** From Instincts to Evolutionary Perspective, one of the important debatable issues has been what role do instincts or genetic factors play in aggression. One view holds that human beings are genetically programmed for aggression and violence

2. **Drive Theories:** The Motive to Harm Others. Drive theories suggest that aggression originates from external conditions that give rise to the motive to harm or injure others

3. **Modern Theories of Aggression:** The Social Learning Perspective and The General Aggression Model.

a. **The Social Learning Perspective:** The social learning theories have basically attempted to see how social models lead to aggression. They have studied the effect of viewing violence, especially televised violence. The social learning view of aggression also states that through direct and vicarious experience

b. **The General Aggression Model:** According to this model aggression is a result of combination of two factors: (a) situational factors and (b) personal factors

2a. Social causes of Aggression

b. Cultural causes of Aggression

c. Personal causes of Aggression

d. Situational causes of Aggression

### Answers to SAEs2

a. **Violent Pornography:** It means viewing sex films involving violence. A large number of research studies also indicate that violent pornography leads to aggressive behaviour.

b. **Exposure to Media Violence:** Exposure to media violence increases aggression in individuals. A large number of research studies have conclusively demonstrated that exposure to aggressive models stimulate similar behaviour among observers.

c. **Provocation:** This is another major cause of aggression. Direct provocation leads to anger. Research studies suggest that direct provocation from others, either physical or verbal, often play a powerful role in eliciting overt aggression

## UNIT 2      **AGGRESSION IN LONG TERM RELATIONSHIP AND PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF AGGRESSION**

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 Definition of Aggression
  - 2.3.1 Personal Aggression of Aggression
  - 2.3.2 Environmental/Situational Cause of Aggression
  - 2.3.3 Social Causes of Aggression
- 2.4 Modern Theories of Aggression
  - 2.4.1 The General Aggression Model
  - 2.4.2 The Role of Biological Factors from instincts to Evolutionary Perspectives
  - 2.4.3 Drive Theories (The Motive to Harm Others)
  - 2.4.4 Konrad Lorenz on Aggression
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 References/FurtherReading/web recourses
- 2.7 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents



### **2.1 Introduction**

In this unit, we look at aggression with a review of available literature on the theories of aggression and techniques for controlling or reducing aggression. Different kinds of aggression that would lead to aggression will be examined. The role of biological factors which eventually lead to aggression including type A and other significant aspects of aggression will all be articulated. Furthermore, our understanding of the reason why normal human beings can turn into destructive machines through the expression of aggression, and the ability of this knowledge to provide guides into how to prevent or reduce this tendency is the greatest service to humanity that social psychologists have done through various researches. The fact that aggression in any form is usually directed toward harming or causing injury to another person, who in turn is motivated to avoid such treatment, means aggression is not desirable. There is an innate aggressive response to provocation or frustration that is expressed or released only in the presence of an appropriate target.



## 2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to

- Define aggression
- Analyze the social causes of aggression
- Demonstrate the personal causes of aggression
- Evaluate the environmental causes of aggression and Modern Theories of Aggression



## 2.3 Definition of Aggression

Aggression is one of the most potential dangers to mankind. It is a greatest stumbling block for one's self development and growth. Aggression and violence have been experienced by almost all societies and times. The two world wars, terrorist attacks, racial conflicts, communal clashes, etc., have gradually increased over the years. Whether aggression is manifested by individuals or groups (including nations), it is the most destructive force in social relations and consequently an important social issue. A major concern in either individual or group aggression is its origin.

Aggression is defined as behavior aimed at causing harm or pain, psychological harm, or personal injury or physical distraction. An important aspect of aggressive behavior is the intention underlying the actor's behavior. Not all behaviors resulting in harm are considered aggression. For example, a doctor who makes an injection that harms people, but who did so with the intent of preventing the further spread of illness, is not considered to have committed an aggressive act. Aggression can be direct or indirect, active or passive, and physical or verbal

### 2.3.1 Personal Causes of Aggression

Some personal characteristics make certain people more vulnerable than others in the expression of aggression. While some may remain calm in the presence of provocation and frustration, others easily react aggressively to the slightest provocation or frustration. Some of the traits or personal characteristics likely to play key roles in explaining aggression are as follows.

#### 1. The type of a Behaviour Pattern

People exhibiting the type A behaviour pattern usually have high levels of competitiveness, time urgency and hostility. When you meet people

who are extremely competitive, always in a hurry and especially irritable and aggressive, then you are interacting with people with the type A behaviour pattern (Glass, 1977; Strube, 1989). The type A behaviour pattern persons are the opposite of the type B behaviour pattern group. The type B group are usually not competitive, not always “fighting the clock”, and do not easily lose their tempers. The type A group are usually aggressive compared to the type B group in most situations (Baron, Russel & Arms, 1985; Carver & Glass 1978). The type A behaviour pattern individuals engage in hostile aggression with the intention of inflicting harm or injury on their victims, and are more likely to be engaged in child abuse and spouse abuse, while the type B individuals are more likely to engage in instrumental aggression and their goal usually is not to cause harm but achieve other goals like receiving commendation or gain control.

## **2. Hostile Attributional Bias**

This involves perceiving evil intent in others. Hostile attributional bias refers to the tendency to perceive hostile intentions or motives in the actions of others, when these actions are ambiguous. How we evaluate and interpret the cause for other people’s behaviours determine our reaction. If their behaviours are perceived as hostile and intentional or provocative, then it is likely that these will result in aggression. Actions are usually dependent on our attributions concerning the exhibited behaviour. People high in hostile attributional bias, mostly, do not give people the benefit of doubt, and they are likely to assume that any provocative behaviour by others is intentional; and so, they react aggressively in response.

## **3. Narcissism and Aggression**

Narcissism refers to excessive self-love; it means holding an exaggerated view of one’s own qualities or achievements. Persons high in narcissism do react to slight overtures from others or from feedbacks that attack their self image or ego. The opinion narcissists have of themselves are unrealistically high; and any attempt at building the self-esteem of young people to the point where they develop this unrealistic high opinion of themselves increase their potential for violence.

## **4. Sensation Seeking and Aggression**

Sensation seeking and impulsivity are likely to go together for someone who likes taking risks and looking for excitement. Such people may be more aggressive than others for the following reasons.

- i. People high in sensation seeking and impulsiveness experience anger and hostile feelings more than others.

- ii. They may have low threshold for anger, and their emotions are easily aroused.
- iii. They may view aggressive exchange with others as exciting and dangerous, and when bored, may seek new experiences that may lead them to entertain hostile thoughts (Zuckerman, 1994). In addition to the points above, Joireman, Anderson and Strathman (2003) have suggested the following tendencies, related to aggression, for people high in sensation seeking.
  - i. Attraction to aggression – eliciting situations.
  - ii. They are more likely to experience anger and hostility.
  - iii. They are likely to focus on the immediate, rather than the delayed consequences of their behaviour
  - iv. They tend to show both physical and verbal aggression at a higher level compared to others.

## **5. Gender and Aggression**

Like all other issues, are there any gender differences in aggression? To some extent, yes; there is sufficient research to support the view that males are more aggressive than females. That is, there is higher incidence of aggressive behaviour in males than females (Harris, 1994). Males are likely to perform aggressive actions and serve as target for such behaviour, which usually continues all through life, though it may vary in size and across situations as follows. There is a gender difference in the absence of provocation than in its presence. Here, males more likely to be aggressive against others even when not provoked in any way, but with provocation, gender differences disappear. Once provoked, we assume that men and women respond in similar ways. · Size and direction of gender differences vary with types of aggression. Males, for instance, engage more in direct aggression, like physical assault, pushing, shoving, shouting, and insults. While females engage more in in-direct aggression where their actions are concealed from the victims and may come in form of gossiping, spreading rumours, telling others not to associate with intended victims and making up stories.

### **2.3.2 Environmental/Situational Cause of Aggression**

Factors relating to the environment or situations within certain contexts do result in aggression; let us consider the following situations.

#### **1. Climate and Aggression**

The relationship between climate and aggression has been studied extensively. Findings are that heat increases aggression; but beyond some level, the reverse may be the case, with aggression decreasing as temperature rises. High temperature makes people very uncomfortable

and tired, or fatigued and not likely to engage in aggressive behavior for the following additional reasons. High temperature reduces aggression for both provoked and unprovoked persons, because for one who is hot, focus will be on reducing this discomfort rather than engaging in fights with others. Hotter years are associated with higher rates of violent crimes. Heat has been linked to aggression in these ways. People get hot and become irritable and may lash out at others or exposure to high temperature for long makes people become uncomfortable, and focus shifts to making self comfortable.

## **2. Air Pollution and Aggression**

Chemical changes in the air are likely to result in aggression. Let us look at some examples.

### **Ethyl Mercaptan**

This is a mild unpleasant pollutant common in urban areas; this has been associated with aggression. People have been found to be more aggressive when exposed to air that contains this chemical (Rothan et al., 1979).

1. **Ozone:** level in the air increases the frequency of aggressive disturbances. Non smokers have been found to be more aggressive breathing smoke filled air compared to clean air (Zillman, Baron & Tambori, 1981).

2. **Lead:** a connection between long term exposures to toxins like lead and incidences of aggression has been established (Needleman, 1996).

**3. Noise:** An unwanted and uncontrollable sound has been associated with the display of aggression, especially, when the noise is unpredictable and irregular (Bell et al., 2000; Grein & Mc, 1984).

### **4. Living Arrangement**

Buildings with few tenants or residents are less likely to provoke aggressive behaviours from tenants compared to tenants of crowded apartment or buildings. This is because crowding tends to result in physiological tension which may make people irritable, uncomfortable and likely induce negative feelings. This tension or arousal can make people like each other less and become more aggressive. Behaviour problems among juvenile delinquents have been shown to have direct bearing on the living conditions of these young ones residing in crowded slums (Ray et al., 1982; Bell et al., 2000).

## **5. Alcohol and Aggression**

Alcohol consumption, especially in large quantities, has been found to be responsible for high level of aggressiveness in those who take it, as opposed to those who don't take alcohol. This effect of alcohol on users has been attributed to reduced cognitive functioning and social perception. Alcohol has been found to impair or distort higher order cognitive functions like the evaluation of stimuli and memory. Alcohol also has the effect of reducing user's ability to process positive information about someone he/she does not like, in the first instance, or one that is viewed in negative terms (Bartholow et al., 2003). Alcohol also causes loss of inhibition, resulting in susceptibility to taking unreasonable risks, which may induce aggressive behaviour, at the slightest provocation.

### **2.3.3 Social Causes of Aggression**

Most of the time, the actions of others or what they say can arouse aggressive feelings in us. Similarly, some happenings or events that do not give us the freedom to act the way we want may lead to aggression. Some of the major social causes of aggression are listed below.

#### **1. Frustration**

The view that aggression is always a consequence of frustration and that frustration always leads to some form of aggression has been advanced by Neal Miller, John Dollard et al., (1939) in their popular frustration aggression hypothesis. Frustration leading to some forms of aggression does not always find expression at the source of frustration. Sometimes the aggression is redirected, transferred or displayed to a lower target or another target at an opportune time.

#### **2. Direct Provocation**

Physical or verbal provocation is a strong cause of human aggression. Provocation is actions by others that tend to trigger attention from the recipient, often because these actions are perceived as stemming from malicious intent. Once people are at the receiving end of aggression, the tendency is to return as much aggression as was received or more, especially if we are sure that the other party was out to harm us in the first place. There are three types of provocation:

- i. **Condescension** – involves the expression of arrogance or disdain by others (Harris, 1993).
- ii. **Harsh and unjustified criticism**- if criticism is directed at attacking the person and not the behaviour, it can provoke aggression (Baron, 1993).
- iii. **Derogatory statements about families**- here, most people may tolerate attack on their persons, but may not stand insults or attacks directed at members of their families.

#### **3. Heightened Arousal**

Heightened arousal - in the form of emotions can result in the expression of aggression in response to provocation, frustration or other factors. According to the excitatory transfer theory, physiological arousal tends to die slowly, and a portion may persist, and continue to be carried from one situation to another. Usually the presence of this stored or repressed emotional arousals termed residual arousal, may or may not be noticed by the individual; but it is likely going to be attributed to present source of irritation (Zillman, 1983, 1988, 1994; Tayler et al., 1991).

#### **4. Exposure to Media Violence**

Media violence is the depictions of violent actions in the mass media. Exposure to, or witnessing aggression, results in the expression of aggression and violent behaviour by viewers. The portrayal of violence by the media seems to strengthen beliefs, expectations and other cognitive processes related to aggression. The effect of media violence is real and has implications on the society in terms of safety and the well being of victims of aggressive actions. High level of aggression is common among people who view violent films or programmes (Bandura, Ross & Ross, 1963; Busshman & Huesman, 2001). Other findings reveal that the more violent films or television programs people watch as children, the higher the rate or level of their aggression as teenagers or adults, and also the more they are likely to be arrested for violent crimes. These findings were replicated in other countries like Australia, Finland, Israel, Poland and South Africa with similar results. This means that exposure to violence through the media results in aggression, and this cuts across cultures. Recent works have revealed that aggression does not only come from watching violent films, but it can also come from news programs, violent lyrics in popular music, and violent video games, among others (Anderson, Carnegey & Eubanks, 2003; Anderson et al., 2004).

#### **5. Pornography and Aggression**

Pornography is erotic material viewed in any of the media. The correlation between the viewing of pornographic films or erotic materials and several forms of anti-social behaviour has been established. Most child molesters and rapists confirm that these crimes were committed immediately after viewing erotic materials (Silbert & Pines, 1984; Marshal, 1989). Men high in promiscuity and hostility who view pornography are associated with sexual aggression more than men low in promiscuity and hostility who view pornographic materials (Malamouth et al., 2000). Aggressive pornography is associated with violence against women. Most men who are likely to abuse women may also be those who view a lot of pornography.

## 6. Sexual Jealousy

Real or imagined infidelity occurs across societies. The culture of honour views infidelity by women as threatening to male honour and do lead to drastic responses. In some cultures, if a female child is found to be a victim of abuse, leading to loss of virginity, her family may respond with violence, to protect the family honour. In cultures of honour, jealousy becomes a very powerful cause for aggression than in other cultures (Blass et al., 1992; Vandello & Cohen, 2003; Puente & Cohen, Packer, 2004).

## 7. Cultural Factors in Aggression

Cultural beliefs, norms and expectations in a given culture suggest that aggression is appropriate or even required under certain circumstances. Some cultures emphasise what is called “cultures of honour” where there are strong norms, suggesting that aggression is an appropriate response to insults to one’s honour. Sexual jealousy is an avenue where the norm to one’s honour comes to play.

### Self Assessment Exercise1

1. Define aggression and explain personal courses of aggression?
2. Discuss the types “a” behavior pattern of aggression?

## 2.4 Modern Theories of Aggression

The Social Learning Perspective and the General Aggression models are the most well know modern theories of aggression. These theories explain aggression in different perspective open our eyes to the modern system of aggression. We will look at them one after the other.

### 2.4.1 The Social Learning Perspective

This is one of the most popular theories of aggression. According to it aggression, like other complex forms of social behaviour, are largely learned. The theoretical position that aggression is learned social behaviour has been presented in the writings of Bandura (1973), Baron (1977) and Zillmann (1979). The social learning theories have basically attempted to see how social models lead to aggression. They have studied the effect of viewing violence, especially televised violence. The social learning view of aggression also states that through direct and vicarious experience we also learn.

- a. How to attack others (For, e.g., through guns, blows, sticks, etc.).
- b. Which persons or groups are appropriate targets for aggression?
- c. What actions by other either justify or actually require aggression

retaliation and.

What situations or contexts are ones in which aggression is appropriate or inappropriate. Social learning perspective suggests that whether a specific person will aggress in a given situation depends on many factors, including an individual's past experience, the current rewards associated with past or present aggression and attitudes and values that shape an individual's thoughts concerning the appropriateness and potential effects of such behaviour

#### **2.4.2 The General Aggression Model**

The general model of aggression was presented by a group of researchers; chief among them is Anderson (1997). To him aggression is as a result of combination of two factors: 1. situational factors and 2. Personal factors.

##### **Situational Factors**

- Frustration.
- Some kind of provocation from another person (e.g., insult),
- Exposure to other people behaving aggressively (aggressive models real or those shown in the media),
- Anything that causes individuals to experience discomfort such as high temperature, dentist injection/drill, extremely boring lecture.

##### **Personal Factors**

These factors include individual differences of different types which we find among people. Some of the personal factors that can cause aggression in us are as follows.

1. Traits that predispose some individuals towards aggression (such as high irritability, antisocial personality, impulsivity. Attitudes and belief about violence (e.g., believing that it is acceptable and appropriate).
2. A tendency to perceive hostile intentions in other's behavior and
3. Specific skills related to aggression (e.g., knowing how to fight or how to use various weapons.

According to the General Aggression Model, these situational and individual (personal factors) variables lead to overt aggression through their impact on three basic processes:

- i) AROUSAL:** They may increase physical arousal or excitement.
- ii) Affective States:** They can arouse hostile feelings and outwards signs of these (e.g., angry facial expressions) and
- iii) Cognitions:** They can induce individuals to think hostile thoughts or can bring beliefs and attitudes about aggression to mind.

## **2.5 The Role of Biological Factors from Instincts to Evolutionary Perspective**

One of the important debatable issues has been what role do instincts or genetic factors play in aggression. One view holds that human beings are genetically programmed for aggression and violence.

### **Sigmund Freud Views on Aggression**

One of the earliest instinct theories was given by Sigmund Freud which held the view that human violence stems from built-in (i.e., inherited) tendencies to aggress against others. He held the view that human aggression is instinctive.

Freud believed that the individual has two basic instinctive drives

1. Eros (or libido or life instinct) and
2. Thanatos or death instinct.

He called the instinct to live and obtain pleasure libido or eros and gave the name Thanatos to the death drive. When thanatos dominates, the result is self-punishment and suicide. According to him aggression springs mainly from a built in fighting, instinct that humans share with many other species. Presumably, this instinct developed during the course of evolution because it yielded many benefits. For example fighting serves to disperse populations over a wide area, thus, ensuring maximum use of available resources. And since it is often closely related to mating, such behaviour often helps to strengthen the genetic makeup of a species by assuring that only the strongest and most vigorous individuals manage to reproduce

### **2.5.1 Drive Theories (The Motive to Harm Others)**

Drive theories suggest that aggression originates from external conditions that give rise to the motive to harm or injure others. In other words drive theories suggest that various Frustration Aggression Hypothesis external conditions (frustration, physical pain, loss of face) serve to arouse a strong motive to engage in harm producing behaviour and such aggressive drive, in turn then leads to the performance of overt assaults against others. One important drive theories of aggression was presented by Dollard et al., called as Frustration Aggression Hypothesis.

This hypothesis was proposed by Dollard et. al., (1939), at Yale University. They stated that aggression is always a consequence of frustration and that frustration always leads to some kind of aggression. In short, it held that frustrated people always engage in some type of aggression and that all acts of aggression result from some type of frustration. Critics have objected to both the portions of the frustration aggression hypothesis.

1. , it is now clear that frustrated individuals do not always respond

to thwarting with aggressive thoughts, words or deed. Rather, they may actually show a wide variety of reactions, ranging from resignation and despair on the one hand to attempts to overcome the source of their frustration on the other. In many cases, it appears that, the most likely reaction to powerful frustration is depression not overt acts of aggression (Bandura 1973).

2. ,All aggression does not result from frustration. People aggress for many different reasons and in response to many different factors. For example boxers hit and sometimes injure their opponents because it is a part of their job to do so, not because they are frustrated. Soldiers often attack and kill others out of a sense of patriotism or simply because it is their duty. Public executioners as well as hired assassin regularly kill individuals they do not know simply because they are being paid to carry out these actions. Thus, all aggression is not a result of frustration. Social Psychologists have largely rejected this theory.

### **2.5.2 Konrad Lorenz on Aggression**

Konrad Lorenz held the view that instinct to aggressive is common to many animal species. Lorenz, however, differs from Freud, since he states that aggressive behaviour will not occur unless it is triggered by external cues.

### **Instinct view rejected by Social Psychologists**

Most Social Psychologists rejected the instinctive theories of aggression. According to them it is difficult to give a genetic explanation of human aggression because aggression in human beings is expressed in many different forms, how can such a huge variation be caused by genetic factors. Secondly, the genetic theory of aggression is weak because all societies are not equally aggressive. The frequency of aggressive actions varies tremendously across human societies, so that it is much more likely to occur in some than in others. Do biologically inherited tendencies toward aggression actually exist among human beings? Most social psychologists doubt that they do, primarily for two important reasons:

1. First, they note that instinctive view such as the one proposed by Freud and Lorenz is somewhat circular in nature. These views begin by observing that aggression is a common form of behaviour. On the basis of this they then reason that such behaviour must stem from universal built-in urges or tendencies. Finally, they use the high incidence of aggression as support for the presence of such instances and impulses.

2. Second, and perhaps the most significant several findings argue against the existence of universal, innate human tendencies toward aggression. Comparisons among various societies indicate that the level of at least some forms of aggression varies greatly. For example, more

murders are committed each year in each city in the United States than in entire nations (with ten times their population) in Europe and the Orient. Similarly, the incidence of aggression seems to change over time in different societies. If aggression is indeed a universal human tendency based largely on genetic factors, such differences and shifts would not occur. The present day Social Psychologists generally conclude that genetic and biological factors play little if any role in human aggression.

**Evolutionary Perspective:** Evolutionary perspective to a great extent believes that human aggression is adaptive in nature and that aggressive acts help individuals to preserve their genetic material. Studies of mate selection among human beings as well as aggression among animals have revealed that aggression confers many evolutionary advantages among individuals of a given species and help them to successfully survive and adapt to their environment.

### Self Assessment Exercise2

1. Explain social learning model of aggression



### 2.5 Summary

In this unit we were able to discuss aggression, different kinds of aggression such as the personal causes of aggression, situational and environmental causes of aggression. Respectively, the general model of aggression and social learning of aggression theory were discussed. We also discussed the role of biological factors of aggression and the instinct to evolutionary model. These will assist students to manage different type of aggression in their respected domain.



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## 2.7 Possible Answer to SAEs

### Answer to SAEs1

1. Aggression is defined as behavior aimed at causing harm or pain, psychological harm, or personal injury or physical distraction. An important aspect of aggressive behavior is the intention underlying the actor's behavior. Not all behaviors resulting in harm are considered aggression.

Some personal characteristics make certain people more vulnerable than others in the expression of aggression. While some may remain calm in the presence of provocation and frustration, others easily react aggressively to the slightest provocation or frustration.

2. People exhibiting the type A behaviour pattern usually have high levels of competitiveness, time urgency and hostility. When you meet people who are extremely competitive, always in a hurry and especially irritable and aggressive, then you are interacting with people with the type A behaviour pattern. The type A behaviour pattern persons are the opposite of the type B behaviour pattern group. The type B group are usually not competitive, not always "fighting the clock", and do not easily lose their tempers. The type A group are usually aggressive compared to the type B groups in most situations. The type A behaviour pattern individuals engage in hostile aggression with the intention of inflicting harm or injury on their victims, and are more likely to be engaged in child abuse and spouse abuse, while the type B individuals are more likely to engage in instrumental aggression and their goal usually is not to cause harm but achieve other goals like receiving commendation or gain control.

### Answer to SAE2

This is one of the most popular theories of aggression. According to it aggression, like other complex forms of social behaviour, are largely learned. The theoretical position that aggression is learned through social behaviour has been presented in the writings of Bandura, (1973), Baron, (1977) and Zillmann (1979). The social learning theories have basically attempted to see how social models lead to aggression. They have studied the effect of viewing violence, especially televised

violence. The social learning view of aggression also states that through direct and vicarious experience we also learn. Social learning perspective suggests that whether a specific person will aggress in a given situation depends on many factors, including an individual's past experience, the current rewards associated with past or present aggression and attitudes and values that shape an individual's thoughts concerning the appropriateness and potential effects of such behaviour

## **UNIT 3 GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS**

### **Unit Structure**

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcomes
- 3.3 The Basic Tenets of Group
  - 3.3.1 Social loafing and the workplace
  - 3.3.2 Coordination in Groups: Cooperation or Conflict
- 3.4 Decision-making Problems and Pitfalls
  - 3.4.1 Group Formation
  - 3.3.2 The Benefit of Joining of Group
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 References/FurtherReading/web resources
- 3.7 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents



### **3.1 Introduction**

In our last unit we were able to discuss aggression, different kinds of aggression such as the personal causes of aggression, situational and environmental causes of aggression. Furthermore, groups are a fundamental part of social life. As we see they can be very small just two people or very large. They can be highly rewarding to their members and to the society as a whole, but there are also significant problems and dangers with them. All this makes them an essential focus for research, exploration and action. Furthermore, in this unit we would carefully look at the basic tenet of group, difference between social grouping and social loafing including fairness in groups, its nature and effect as well as decision making Problems and Pitfalls. At the end of the study, we will be able to understand any types of groups in our respected social activities. By the way, what is group and what are the social grouping and loafing?



### **3.2 Learning Outcome**

By the end of this unit you will be able to

Discuss the basic tenets of group

Analyse difference between social grouping and social loafing.

Demonstrate perceived fairness in groups: its nature and effects

Evaluate Decision making Problems and Pitfalls



### 3.3 The Basic Tenets of Group

As researchers turned to the systematic exploration of group life, different attention emerged. Some social psychologists, looked at the ways in which, group for example, are working in the presence of others tend to raise performance (Allport 1924). Others looked at different aspects of group process. Lewin, (1948), for example, found that nearly all groups were based on interdependence among their members and this applied whether the group are large or small, formally structured or loose, or focused on this activity or that. In a famous piece Lewin wrote, ‘it is not similarity or dissimilarity of individuals that constitutes a group, but interdependence of fate’ In other words, groups come about in a psychological sense because people realize they are ‘in the same boat’ (Davies,2009). Thus, a group is defined as two or more individuals who are connected to one another by social relationships”. (Kidwell, & Valentine, 2009). In part differences in definition occur because writers often select those things that are of special importance in their work and then posit ‘these as the criteria for group existence’ (Yee, &Van Dyne, 2005).

#### **Different Between Social Grouping and Social Loafing.**

In the social psychology of groups, social loafing is the phenomenon of people making less effort to achieve a goal when they work in a group than when they work alone. This is viewed as one of the main reasons as to why groups are sometimes less productive than the combined performance of their members working as individuals. The main explanation for social loafing is that people feel unmotivated when working with a team, because they think that their contributions will not be evaluated or considered. According to the results of a meta-analysis study, social loafing is a pervasive phenomenon, but it does not occur when team members feel that the task or the team itself is important. It can occur when the person feels underappreciated within their team or group. Social loafing occurs in a group situation in which the presence of others causes relaxation instead of arousal. When individuals relax their performance, they are able to fade into the crowd, which is especially appealing to people when they know they are not going to be accountable for their actions or performance. In easier, less demanding tasks, such as singing happy birthday or giving applause, one is likely to exert less effort due to the concept of diffusion of responsibility. This occurs when people think that they can “get a free ride” because someone else will surely pick up the slack. Social loafing is associated with poor performance on easy tasks. However, people tend to exert more effort on challenging or rewarding tasks. If a group is completing a task for some kind of reward, such as money or a good grade, then members are more likely to try harder. Generally, a greater reward

results in more motivation to perform well, and therefore, more effort. People will also work harder when they feel their particular tasks or efforts are indispensable to the group's success

### **3.3.1 Social Loafing and The Workplace**

According to Klep, Wisse, VanDer& Flier, (2011) Tan, social loafing is an important area of interest in order to understand group work. While the opposite of social loafing, called "organizational citizenship behavior", can create significant productivity increases, both of these behaviors can significantly impact the performance of organizations. Social loafing is a behavior that organizations want to eliminate. Understanding how and why people become social loafers is critical to the effective functioning, and effectiveness of an organization.

### **3.3.2 Coordination in Groups: Cooperation Or Conflict**

We often note that individuals engage in prosocial behaviour- action that benefit others but have no obvious or immediate benefit to the persons who is performing the task. While such behaviour is far from rare, another pattern - one in which helping is mutual and both sides benefit. This pattern is known as cooperation and involves situation in which groups work together to attain shared goals. Cooperation can be highly beneficial through this process group of persons can attain goals they could never hope to reach by themselves. Surprisingly, though, cooperation does not always develop, frequently persons belonging to a group try to coordinate their efforts but somehow fail in the attempt. Some times for worse person may perceive their personal interests as incompatible, with the result that instead of working together and coordinating their effort, they often work against each other. In this way they produce negative results for both sides, which are known as conflict. A process in which individuals or groups perceive that others will soon take actions incompatible with their own interest. Conflict has a nasty way of escalating, with a simple mistrust and quickly moving through a spiral of anger, resentment and actions designed to harm the other side. When carried to extremes, the ultimate effects can be very harmful to both the sides. Cooperation is often highly beneficial to the person involved. The question is then why don't group members always coordinate their activities in this manner? They don't cooperate because some goals people don't like to simply share. Several people seeking promotion, same job or romantic partner cannot come together to attain the goal; rewards can go to only one. In such cases cooperation is not possible, and conflict may quickly develop in group as each person will maximize his or her own outcomes

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISES1**

1. List and explain the way in which decision can be made by

group?

2. What are the reward of been part of a group?

### 3.4 Decision-Making Problems and Pitfalls

The way that people think, both as individuals and collectively within organizations, affects the decisions that they make, in ways that are far from obvious and rarely understood. John Hammond, Ralph Keeney and Howard Raiffa writing in the Harvard Business Review have provided some of the most intriguing research and insights in this area. (McPherson, & Craig, (2011). Although bad decisions can often be traced back to the way the decisions were made (the alternatives were not clearly defined; the right information was not collected; the costs and benefits were not accurately weighed), the fault sometimes lies not in the decision-making process, but in the mind of the decision maker

#### 3.4.1 Group Formation

Well-functioning groups do not just form out of the blue. It takes time for a group to develop to a point where it can be effective and where all members feel connected to it. Bruce Tuckman has identified four stages that characterize the development of groups. Understanding these stages can help determine what is happening with a group and how to manage what is occurring. These four group development stages are known as forming, storming, norming, and performing as described below and the skills needed to successfully guide a group through these stages as described below.

**Forming:** This is the initial stage when the group comes together and members begin to develop their relationship with one another and learn what is expected of them. This is the stage when team building begins and trust starts to develop. Group members will start establishing limits on acceptable behavior through experimentation. Other members' reactions will determine if a behavior will be repeated. This is also the time when the tasks of the group and the members will be decided.

**2. Storming:** During this stage of group development, interpersonal conflicts arise and differences of opinion about the group and its goals will surface. If the group is unable to clearly state its purposes and goals or if it cannot agree on shared goals, the group may collapse at this point. It is important to work through the conflict at this time and to establish clear goals. It is necessary that there should be discussion so everyone feels heard and can come to an agreement on the direction the group is going.

**3. Norming:** Once the group resolves its conflicts, it can establish patterns of how to get its work done. Expectations of one another are clearly articulated and accepted by members of the group. Formal and informal procedures are established in delegating tasks, responding to questions, and in the process by which the group functions. Members of the group come to understand how the group as a whole operates.

**4. Performing:** During this final stage of development, issues related to roles, expectations, and norms are no longer of major importance. The group is now focused on its task, working intentionally and effectively to accomplish its goals. The group will find that it can celebrate its accomplishments and that members will be learning new skills and sharing roles. After a group enters the performing stage, it is unrealistic to expect it to remain there permanently. When new members join or some people leave, there will be a new process of forming, storming, and norming engaged as everyone learns about one another. External events may lead to conflicts within the group. To remain healthy, groups will go through all of these processes in a continuous loop. When conflict arises in a group, do not try to silence the conflict or to run from it. Let the conflict come out into the open so people can discuss it. If the conflict is kept under the surface, members will not be able to build trusting relationships and this could harm the group's effectiveness. If handled properly, the group will come out of the conflict with a stronger sense of cohesiveness than before.

### 3.3.2 The Benefit of Joining of Group

**1. Sharing common interests:** If you joined a group of weekend bikers, you already know what the central topic and subtopics are. You'll probably talk about motorcycle magazines, accessories, maintenance, detailing and tuned exhaust pipes. You will also share a bunch of biking stories, run-ins with the law, and near misses that could make the hairs on the back of everyone's necks stand at attention.

**2 Flow of new ideas:** Imagine giving, receiving and recommending tips, tools and pointers that foster your group's growth. You get to pool together the resources of your entire group to solve problems, share tactics and testify to success stories.

**3 Minimal investments:** Most special interest groups, clubs or organizations do not charge high dues for membership. Their goal is to build a steady, growing membership. It when you get involved with business groups, investment clubs and marketing mentorship you can expect to pay anywhere from two- to four-figures a month.

**4. Networking opportunities:** You can expand your business network and exposure through word-of-mouth marketing, referrals and sponsored events. The more people know and like you-the more business will come your way. Its easier to land the big account if someone in yoursphere of influence puts in a good word for you.

**5. Forming new friendships and alliances.** This is the icing on the cake. Not only do you share common interests already, but also you get to share it with people you like. And you get to look forward to deeper and more meaningful experiences the more time you spend together.

### Self Assessment Exercise2

3. A Well-functioning group does not just form out of the blue. Critically discuss the four developmental stages?



### 3.5 Summary

This unit made us to understand that group is of different categories. Several social groups either internal or external exist within our social domain. However, we able to discuss the basic tenets of group, different between social grouping and social loafing, perceived fairness in groups, its nature and effects and as well decision making Problems and Pitfalls. What is left here is to digest in order to be success.



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### 3.7 Possible Answer to SAEs

#### Answer to SAE 1

1. Group's decision making is the process of decision making in groups consisting of multiple members or entities. The following are the step in decision making

- a. Consensus: The group members all agree on the final decision through discussion and debate.
- b. Compromise: Through discussion and readjustment of the final plan, group members come to agreement by giving up some of their demands.
- c) Majority Vote: The decision is based on the opinion of the majority of its members.
- d) Decision by Leader: The group gives the final decision to its leader.
- e) Arbitration: An external body or person makes a decision for the group

(2) 1. Sharing common interests: If you joined a group of weekend bikers, you already know what the central topic and subtopics are. You'll probably talk about motorcycle magazines, accessories, maintenance, detailing and tuned exhaust pipes. You will also share a bunch of biking stories, run-ins with the law, and near misses that could make the hairs on the back of everyone's necks stand at attention.

2 Flow of new ideas: Imagine giving, receiving and recommending tips, tools and pointers that foster your group's growth. You get to pool together the resources of your entire group to solve problems, share tactics and testify to success stories.

3 Minimal investments: Most special interest groups, clubs or organizations do not charge high dues for membership. Their goal is to build a steady, growing membership. It when you get involved with business groups, investment clubs and marketing mentorship you can expect to pay anywhere from two- to four-figures a month.

4. Networking opportunities: You can expand your business network and exposure through word-of-mouth marketing, referrals and sponsored events. The more people know and like you-the more business will come your way. Its easier to land the big account if someone in your sphere of influence puts in a good word for you.

5. Forming new friendships and alliances. This is the icing on the cake. Not only do you share common interests already, but also you get to share it with people you like. And you get to look forward to deeper and more meaningful experiences the more time you spend together.

### **Answer to SAE2**

These four group development stages are known as forming, storming, norming, and performing as described below and the skills needed to successfully guide a group through these stages as described below.

1. Forming: This is the initial stage when the group comes together and members begin to develop their relationship with one another and learn what is expected of them. This is the stage when team building begins and trust starts to develop. Group members will start establishing limits on acceptable behavior through experimentation. Other members' reactions will determine if a behavior will be repeated. This is also the time when the tasks of the group and the members will be decided.

2. Storming: During this stage of group development, interpersonal conflicts arise and differences of opinion about the group and its goals will surface. If the group is unable to clearly state its purposes and goals or if it cannot agree on shared goals, the group may collapse at this point. It is important to work through the conflict at this time and to establish clear goals. It is necessary that there should be discussion so everyone feels heard and can come to an agreement on the direction the group is going.

3. Norming: Once the group resolves its conflicts, it can establish patterns of how to get its work done. Expectations of one another are clearly articulated and accepted by members of the group. Formal and informal procedures are established in delegating tasks, responding to

questions, and in the process by which the group functions. Members of the group come to understand how the group as a whole operates.

4. Performing: During this final stage of development, issues related to roles, expectations, and norms are no longer of major importance. The group is now focused on its task, working intentionally and effectively to accomplish its goals

## UNIT 4 UNDERSTANDING AND ATTRIBUTING CAUSES TO OTHER'S BEHAVIOUR

### Unit Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcomes
- 4.3 The Goals
- 4.4 Affective Cues
  - 4.4.1 Attributing the causes of Behaviour
 Self-Assessment Exercise
- 4.5 Summary
- 4.6 References/FurtherReading/web resources
- 4.7 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents



### 4.1 Introduction

The last unit made us to understand that group is of different categories. Several social groups either internal or external exist within our social domain. However, we able to discuss the basic tenets of group, different between social grouping and social loafing, perceived fairness in groups, its nature and effects and as well decision making Problems and Pitfalls. What is left here is to digest in order to be success. In the course of this work, we will discuss personality traits inferences about what the person like. You can now move from observable information to personality traits. We are now ready to discuss another interesting and practical unit: understanding and attributing causes to others' behaviour. Let us take a look at what other content you will learn in this unit as specified in the objectives below. Before we move on, how do we describe the cause of behavior? What is an affective cue?



### 4.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the goals we have for interacting with people;
- explain affective cues; and
- describe the causes of behaviour



### 4.3 Goals

Our goals and feelings about other people also influence the information that we gather about them. One such factor that influences how we gather information about others is the goals we have for interacting with them. In one study, (Klein & Kunda, 1992 cited in Taylor et. al. 2000) participants were told that another student would be either their partner or opponent in a forthcoming game. Those who expected the student to be their partner were motivated to see him as very high in ability, whereas those who expected him to be an opponent were motivated to see him as low in ability. After interacting with the student in a simulated quiz show during which the student answered some questions correctly and others incorrectly, the participant's impression corresponded to their motivations. Those who expected the student to be their partner thought he was smarter than those who expected him to be their opponent. This occurred even though the student exhibited exactly the same pattern of answers in both conditions.

Goals have also been manipulated experimentally by telling participants either to form a coherent impression of a person (impression formation goal) or to try to remember the separate bits of information they might be exposed to (remembering goal). Generally speaking, under impression goal conditions, people form more organized impressions of others than when their goal is simply to remember the information (Matheson, et. al. 1991 cited in Taylor et. al. 2000).

Another important point you must remember is that the need to be accurate usually produces more extensive and less biased information gathering about a person. Chen et. al. (1996 cited in Taylor et. al. 2000) also reported that the need to be accurate generally leads to more thorough and systematic processing of information about people than is true under conditions when accuracy is not a goal.

The type of impression one forms of another person also depends on the kind of interaction one anticipates having with that individual. Outcome dependency that is, the situation in which achievement of an individual's own goals depends heavily on the behaviour of another person typically leads the individual to form a careful impression of the other. Participants whose goals are not dependent upon the behaviour of another person are more likely to form their impressions quickly and casually. Another powerful goal is communication. The process of gathering information for another person greatly influences not only what information people communicate to that other person, but also the impression they finally form themselves.

When people communicate information about a target individual to a listener, they not only modify their own perceptions about the target, they systematically affect the impressions formed by the listener. The influence of social goals on the kinds of impressions that people form of others is substantial. People who have a particular social goal when they interact with another person appear to make inferences that are consistent with their goals about the other person, even when they do not intend to do so or are completely unaware that they are doing so.

### Self Assessment Exercises1

1. What do you understand by outcome dependency in relation to impression one forms of another person?
2. Define mood according to Taylor, Peplau and Sears, and what is their description for changes in mood?

## 4.4 Affective Cues

Sometimes we use our internal state as a basis for judging other people, and this can lead to systematic errors. When people are emotional, they are more likely to attend to emotional information and use that in their impression. Let us cite an example to drive the point home. When we are aroused, we tend to perceive other people in a more extreme manner than when we are not aroused (Stangor, 1990 cited in Taylor et. al. 2000). If you have just finished playing a table tennis game and you meet someone who strikes you as sleazy, your impression of the person as sleazy is likely to be more extreme than if you met the person having just come from reading a book. Mood is another factor that can influence how another person is perceived. When we are in a good mood, we tend to see another person more positively, and when we are in a bad mood, we tend to view that person more negatively (Taylor, Peplau & Sears, 2000). The effects of mood appear to be stronger for judgments about unusual people than for more ordinary individuals. The reason is .that unusual people elicit extensive processing; therefore more information is available, and there is a longer time for mood to have an influence (Forgas, 1992).

Mood may influence not only the content of impressions we form of others, but also the process we use in forming them. A negative mood makes people more likely to use piecemeal processing in impression formation than categorical processing, even when categorical information is available to them.

### 4.4.1 Attributing Causes to Behaviour

One of the most important influences we make about other people is why they behave as they do. What causes one individual to be shy at a party and another to be outgoing? What prompts a romantic breakup between two people who had seemed so close? Attribution theory is the area of psychology concerned with when and how people ask ‘why’ questions. Theorizing about causal attributions that is, how and why people infer what causes what began with Heider (1958 cited in Taylor et al. 2000). He argued that all human beings have two strong motives: the need to form a coherent understanding of the world and the need to control the environment. In order to achieve understanding and control, we need to be able to predict how people are going to behave. Otherwise, the world is random, surprising, and incoherent.

We are especially likely to make causal attribution when something unexpected or negative events create a need for greater predictability (Kanazawa, 1992, cited in Taylor et al. 2000). To illustrate this point, researchers talked with distressed married couples who had come to a clinic for marital therapy. Each person was asked to list positive and negative events that had happened in their marriage and to indicate how frequently those events occurred. They were then asked their thoughts about the events, which were coded for the presence of causal attributions. The researchers found that the most attributional thoughts were made about the most distressing event: their partner’s frequent negative behaviours or infrequent positive behaviours (Holtzworth et al. 1985).

### Self-Assessment Exercise2

3. State the two strong motives that all human beings have as cited by Heider.



### 4.5 Summary

What you learnt in this unit concerns goals and feelings about other people. You also learnt affective cues. Often, we are in the position of knowing why a person committed a particular action. You have therefore learnt attributing causes to behaviour.



### 4.6 References/Further Reading/Web Resources

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#### **4.7 Possible Answers to SAEs**

##### **Answers SAEs 1**

1. Outcome dependency is the situation in which achievement of an individual's own goals depends heavily on the behaviour of another person. Participants whose goals are not dependent upon the behaviour of another person are more likely to form their impressions quickly and casually.
2. Mood is another factor that can influence how another person is perceived. When we are in a good mood, we tend to see another person more positively, and when we are in a bad mood, we tend to view that person more negatively.

##### **Answers to AEs2**

All human beings have two strong motives:

- a) the need to form a coherent understanding of the world and
- b) the need to control the environment.

## UNIT 5      SOCIALIZATION

### Unit Structure

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Learning Outcomes
- 5.3 The Concept of Socialization
  - 5.3.1 Socializing Agents
  - 5.3.2 Sociometry
- 5.4 Types and Frequency of Deviant Behaviour
  - 5.4.1 Methods for Controlling Behaviour
  - 5.4.2 Other Method of Controlling Behavior
- 5.5 Summary
- 5.6 References/Further Reading/Web Resources
- 5.7 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents



### 5.1 Introduction

What you learnt in the last unit concerns goals and feelings about other people. You also learnt affective cues. Often, we are in the position of knowing why a person committed a particular action. This is interesting and the most relevant unit in the course of our review. Every individual pass through this stage of socialization. We were all assist by our parent uncle, brother sister to be able make it life. It is significant to be adequate in terms of learning appropriate behaviors we can technically stand out among our pear. Nevertheless, we will take a look at the concept of socializing, agent of socialization, the values of interpersonal relationship including various ways in which individual can be successful in any areas of our endeavor. Meanwhile, have you ever heard the word socialization? What does socialization does to human behaviors or attitudes?



### 5.2 Learning Outcome

By the end of this unit, we will be able to

- Define socialization
- Identifies socializing agents; and
- Demonstrate the values of interpersonal relationships.



### 5.3 The Concept of Socialization

At birth, the human baby is entirely dependent on others. It is subject to certain biological pressures such as hunger, thirst, and the need to eliminate waste. This is referred to as physiological needs in psychology. The human baby has no means of avoiding these tensions and may even be unaware of the precise cause of the discomfort. The mother waits upon its needs, communicates in an elementary way, and allays fear. Early in this process, an incipient social relationship is established between the baby and its mother, when the former cries and the latter responds. The human being, though born with the potential for social life, must nevertheless undergo a long process of socialization. He must learn first to live with others and then to participate in his society in satisfying and rewarding ways. This by no means requires the slavish acquisition of conventional values, it does require, however, that some ethics of self-discipline and self-respect be transmitted, not merely for the sake of the social order but for the sake of individual happiness (Alhassan, 2000).

For any society to survive, it is necessary, to transmit to all new members the system of shared meanings, language, customs, values, ideas and material goods that are called culture. Socialization refers to the process of growing up into a human being, a process which necessitates contact with other people. It is through this process that the growing child acquires the language and standards of the social group into which it has been born.

Research studies indicate that deprivation of human contact in early life inhibits the development of normal social responses. Note that all human beings, except those born with severe physical handicaps, have the inborn capacity to become fully mature members of society but, in order for this capacity to be realized, the child has to have adequate social relationships with others. It is to be noted that social behaviour in humans is not inborn. In a very important sense, we have to “learn” to be human beings. Ogburn and Nimkoff (1964) describe socialization as a process whereby the individual becomes a person.

#### 5.3.1 Socializing Agents

The first point you must note in this section is that socialization is not accomplished, willy-nilly, in accordance with personal tastes. Every society has developed specific ways and means of accomplishing it. It may well be that probably all institutions are pertinent to the socialization processes because in all, new members are to be taught the do's and don'ts of the established order. Obviously, some of them are more important than others to the individual's induction into the value of his society.

The major socializing agents are:

1. **The Family:** Everywhere, the family plays a central role in socializing the child. Typically, parenting includes a major responsibility for socialization. It is in the family that the child is born, it is there he spends his early years and learns his first language. The family is the single most important agency for the inculcation of these basic social values and character traits, which make child's responsible participation in the life of society. It is important for you to note that the recent history of the family represents a gradual but inexorable loss of function and importance in the larger community, but the job of child rearing still belongs to it. The family is of course responsible for the physical and material care of the young ones, but to it is also entrusted their moral education. When things go wrong, as in juvenile delinquency, common sense tends to place the onus squarely upon the family and to look for shortcomings in the home. The ultimate origin of personality and character is traced to the dynamics of the parent-child relation, and early childhood experiences within the home is seen as the most important single factor in formation of basic adult attitudes and behaviour. Because family life revolves around basic needs and satisfactions, both physical and emotional, parents are in a position to inflict painful deprivations and thereby exercise considerable influence in moulding their children.

2. **The school:** Beginning with nursery school, the family now relinquishes the child to other people and other more impersonal institutions for a good part of the day and for almost the entire period of youthful dependence. The relinquishing of the family's educative role to the school is most important during adolescence and early adulthood, when the problem of relating to society and to people outside the family becomes acute. There are teachers at all levels of the educational systems, and there are all those who are involved in the production of books, magazines, newspapers and television programmes all contributing individually and severally to the socialization process.

3. **The Peer Group:** Although relationship with parents and the school is important to the child, it is not the only influence in the socialization process. In recent years, psychologists have become interested in peer relationships. Peers are children of roughly the same age who share similar interests. Children all over the world form peer groups. The young spend most of their time with one another, and this strengthens their tendency to the approval of their peers at least as much as that of their family. When family ideas are in sharp conflict with peer group ideas, this creates tension between and children and tends to

reduce the effectiveness of parental control. The interrelatedness of age-mates in peer groups has come to have a new significance in modern society. Where the family is the important unit of social participation, relation cuts across the generations. A peer group shelters and protects its members. It gives them psychological sustenance by meeting emotional needs of affection, understanding and acceptance. It invests individuals with specific status. Since it comprises a small number of persons of equal rank, a peer group can operate as a medium of communication.

Nevertheless, it is not surprising that a peer group provides effective learning situations. It transmits the culture of society in a diluted form, it teaches certain roles and social expectations, and conditions the attitudes and sentiments of its members. Datta (1986) observes that in Africa, much of the peer group socialization was achieved traditionally through the age set system where it was prevalent, though in most other societies, peers had considerable influence on shaping the behaviour of young adolescents.

4. The Mass Media: The mass media print and electronic are playing an increasingly important role in the socialization process. One index of this is the increasing numbers of newspapers, magazines, periodicals, and comic booklets that seem to be enjoying increasing patronage. The influence of radio is most pervasive, especially after the introduction of the battery-operated set. The radio has now penetrated remote corners of every country in Africa. It is cheap to operate, and programmes in many indigenous languages are available. Hachten (1971) reported that the number of transmitters in the whole of Africa jumped to 370 in 1964 from 151 in 1955. During the same period, the number of radio receivers increased from 350,000 to about 12 million. We can rightly say that the expansion of broadcasting is a measure of its popularity as a source of information. Remember that religious authorities have responsibilities for certain aspects of socialization. So do many others.

### 5.3.2 Sociometry

Successful school work depends, among other things, on such characteristics as the pupil's personal adjustment, attitudes, and social or group skills. It is therefore important that teachers know how to measure and interpret these personal and social factors and to use the test results in planning classroom activities. Sociometry is the study of patterns of interrelationship existing in a group of people. Essentially, from the measure of interrelationships it is possible to draw up a chart that will give a pictorial representation of some aspects of interpersonal relations. The teacher could generate sociometric data by asking the pupils different questions: for example, the teacher can ask the children to 'list the person you would like to invite to your birthday party; 'list the

person you would like to sit next to you in class; whom do you prefer as the class game's master'. The children may be requested to make a single choice or two or three choices. The teacher obtains different kinds of information about the pupil's preferences from these differently focused questions. For purpose of illustration, suppose we ask twelve children, 'Whom would you like to sit next to in class?' Each child is allowed two choices. The teacher charts the answers she receives on a specially constructed table. The teacher then transfers the information from her table to a sociogram. If you look at the figure, you will see that a sociogram allows you to see how the cliques in the class are distributed. In our example, you will note that we have represented each child by a circle, and indicated choices by means of arrows pointing from the child who made choice to the child he preferred. In our sociogram, Audu, Bala, and Charles are the most popular in the class. These children are designated the stars. Arrows pointing both to and from them show that their attraction to each other as friends is reciprocated. They also form a clique. The single arrows from Eze, Gab, Kim and Usman to Audu indicate that these children desire friendship and more interactions with Audu but their preferences are not reciprocated. Chide and Usman aspire friendship with other members of the class but no child in the class.

Sociogram showing Sitting Preferences in the Classroom would like to sit with them since none of the other children chose them. We would regard them as isolates on the basis of the question we asked. Sometimes a true isolate is neither chosen by anyone nor does he choose anybody. In our sociogram Mabel is a 'true isolate'. Feeling rejected or isolated can lead to loss of self-esteem and, indeed, sometimes to depression. Experienced teachers are often able to identify rejected or isolated children or young people by watching classroom or playground interactions. Frandsen (1967) suggests that the teacher should compare the pupils' preferences with other information available to her. Such information includes the teacher's classroom observations interviews and other procedures. If these sources support the children's responses, then the teacher will know that her sociogram is valid, and if a particular child is the isolate, the teacher will be alerted to the need to provide special help to remove the causes of rejection.

### **Self Assessment Exercises1**

1. Discuss the forms of agent socialization?
2. Explain the concept of socialization?

## **5.4 Types and Frequency of Deviant Behaviour**

It is possible for students of educational psychology with some training to shape the desired behaviour, and to minimize the deviant behaviour of children in classrooms. Some parents with the awareness of the psychology of operant conditioning can shape the desired behaviour of children. What is behaviour modification? By behaviour modification we mean a formal technique for promoting the frequency of desirable behaviour and decreasing the incidence of unwanted ones. Note that behavior modification has been used in a variety of situations ranging from teaching severely retarded people the rudiments of language to helping people stick to diets (Whaley & Malott, 1993). Before any behaviour modification is attempted, it is however necessary for the manipulator of the experiment to have a detailed knowledge of the type and frequency of the deviant behaviour needed to be eliminated from the child or the person concerned. For example, if a child is observed to rise from his seat and run to some other child frequently during the lesson hour, then the 'baseline' or operant level of this deviant behaviour of the child has to be determined first. That means the number of times per lesson hour during the morning, for example, the child rises from his seat, and manifests this disturbing behaviour. This has to be assessed to determine the frequency and nature of this distracting behaviour. Then the next step is to determine the 'terminal behaviour' wanted to be seen in the behavior manifestations of the child or the person concerned.

#### **5.4.1 methods for Controlling Behaviour**

Various methods can be employed for controlling behaviour, and some of them are as follows:

- (a) Operant conditioning
- (b) Shaping
- (c) Scheduling various types of reinforcements
- (d) Modeling or imitations
- (e) Extinction
- (f) Satiation
- (g) Aversion therapy
- (h) Conditioning incompatible behaviour
- (i) Self-control

If a child manifests some form of deviant behaviour then it is also very likely that the same child manifests some forms of other socially approved behaviour as well. During the initial period of observation of the child's behaviour to determine the baseline of the deviant behaviour, these elements of socially approved behaviour can also be spotted. It is now necessary to quote some examples of modifications of different types of deviant behaviour that has been reported in the relevant literature. A technique, often employed in behaviour modification is the use of the free method'. This implies that the individual manifests his

behavior 'freely' preferably when he is left alone, and the emphasis is on the performances of the individual. Hart and her collaborators (1964) employed the technique of the free operant method to eliminate the crying behavior of a four-year old child. Firstly, the baseline of the child's crying responses was determined from observing the child's crying behaviour for a ten day period' morning sessions. It was found that eye contact with the person present reinforced the crying response of the child. Then a period of experimentation followed which lasted three more periods, each of ten days. During the first of these experimental periods, the teacher avoided making eye-contacts with the child which produced extinction of the crying behaviour, but other behaviour of the child was reinforced positively. One thing that is to be noted in the experiment is that eliminated behaviour is likely to reappear if the child or the person gets reinforcement of these deviant responses from different environments. This implies that the behaviour that is modified in the school or the clinic should in no circumstances be reinforced elsewhere, and in this regard, parents' cooperation is of great importance to the teacher. The methods we have discussed is the 'free operant method' where extinction, reinforcement of the desired behaviour element, and a correct scheduling of the reinforcements of the operant were used in modifying the crying operant behaviour of let us go the child.

#### **5.4.2 Other Method of Controlling Behavior**

Another method that is frequently used is the method of 'shaping'. It implies reinforcement of closer and closer approximations of the desired behaviour. Isaacs, Thomas, & Goldiamond, (1960) used the method of shaping to reinstate verbal behaviour in a hospitalized patient who had been mute for several years. It was found that the patient would sit at a place without any signs of any movement of eyes or lips. Various methods to draw the attention of the patient, for example, waving cigarettes or other things before his eyes had already failed. The experimenters then found that while taking a packet of cigarettes, a packet of gum accidentally dropped to the floor and this made the patient move his eyes to the floor. Two things became clear from the shaping experiment: extreme patience on the part of the experimenters and successive reinforcements of closer and closer approximations of the desired behaviour: If the behaviour of the hospitalized patient having being mute for nineteen years could be shaped in course of 18 sessions only, then there is no reason why the behaviour of children in the classroom cannot be shaped by teachers with experience and patience. The withdrawal of reinforcement is aversive in nature, and it is found that subjects will learn a response that prevents the withdrawal of reinforcement, since withdrawal of reinforcement contingent upon a response decreases the strength of that response. Let us cite an example.

If a (hungry) child is sent to his bedroom every time he puts his elbows on a dinner table, then the rate at which he puts his elbows on the table decreases. If the rate of his putting his elbows on the table increases following his experiences of being sent away from the table, then by definition, 'sending away' from the table is positively reinforcing the child. Let us consider another example. We notice that when mothers often say to their children: 'If you do this, I will not speak to you, but if you stop doing this or that, I will love you all the more' children respond to this treatment from their mothers and learn to behave accordingly. Mothers, though inexperienced and untrained in the psychology of avoidance responses and withdrawal of reinforcements, are continually engaged in the process of shaping their children's behaviour. Another experimental technique that decreases the strength of a deviant behaviour is called satiation. Under this concept, it is implied that the strength of a response will decrease under the influence: of continued reinforcement. For example, if a teacher continually says to a child for every manifestation of a particular behaviour of his that he is a good child, and then it is likely that the child will get bored with hearing that he is good all the time and out of satiating experience he will refrain from emitting that behaviour.

### Self Assessment Exercise2

3. Identify the method of controlling behavior at the early stage of a child?



## 5.5 Summary

Every individual in the society undergoes the process of socialization. This has been transferring to us by our parents or our tutor, mentor. This is key to every aspect of our life. Consequently, in this unit, we would be to discuss the basic tenet of socialization, agent of socialization, behavior modification, and as well as method of controlling or preventing behavior may likely not acceptable to society. This discussion will assist us in the area of information dissemination which will serve as bedrock in any areas of our endeavour.



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## 5.7 Possible Answer to SAEs

### Answer to SAE1

1. The Family: Everywhere, the family plays a central role in socializing the child. Typically, parenting includes a major responsibility for socialization. It is in the family that the child is born, it is there he spends his early years and learns his first language. The family is the single most important agency for the inculcation of these basic social values and character traits, which make child 'responsible participation in the life of society. It is important for you to note that the recent history of the family represents a gradual but inexorable loss of function and importance in the larger community, but the job of child rearing still belongs to it. The family is of course responsible for the physical and material care of the young ones, but to it is also entrusted their moral education. When things go wrong, as in juvenile delinquency, common sense tends to place the onus squarely upon the family and to look for shortcomings in the home. The ultimate origin of personality and character is traced to the dynamics of the parent-child relation, and early childhood experiences within the home is seen as the most important single factor in formation of basic adult attitudes and

behaviour. Because family life revolves around basic needs and satisfactions, both physical and emotional, parents are in a position to inflict painful deprivations and thereby exercise considerable influence in moulding their children.

2. **The School:** Beginning with nursery school, the family now relinquishes the child to other people and other more impersonal institutions for a good part of the day and for almost the entire period of youthful dependence. The relinquishing of the family's educative role to the school is most important during adolescence and early adulthood, when the problem of relating to society and to people outside the family becomes acute. There are teachers at all levels of the educational systems, and there are all those who are involved in the production of books, magazines, newspapers and television programmes all contributing individually and severally to the socialization process.

3. **The Peer Group:** Although relationship with parents and the school is important to the child, it is not the only influence in the socialization process. In recent years, psychologists have become interested in peer relationships. Peers are children of roughly the same age who share similar interests. Children all over the world form peer groups. The young spend most of their time with one another, and this strengthens their tendency to the approval of their peers at least as much as that of their family. When family ideas are in sharp conflict with peer group ideas, this creates tension between children and tends to reduce the effectiveness of parental control. The interrelatedness of age-mates in peer groups has come to have a new significance in modern society. Where the family is the important unit of social participation, relation cuts across the generations. A peer group shelters and protects its members. It gives them psychological sustenance by meeting emotional needs of affection, understanding and acceptance. It invests individuals with specific status. Since it comprises a small number of persons of equal rank, a peer group can operate as a medium of communication.

4. **The Mass Media:** The mass media print and electronic are playing an increasingly important role in the socialization process. One index of this is the increasing numbers of newspapers, magazines, periodicals, and comic booklets that seem to be enjoying increasing patronage. The influence of radio is most pervasive, especially after the introduction of the battery-operated set. The radio has now penetrated remote corners of every country in Africa. It is cheap to operate, and programmes in many indigenous languages are available.

**(2)** For any society to survive, it is necessary, to transmit to all new members the system of shared meanings, language, customs, values, ideas and material goods that are called culture. Socialization refers to

the process of growing up into a human being, a process which necessitates contact with other people. It is through this process that the growing child acquires the language and standards of the social group into which it has been born.

It is belief that deprivation of human contact in early life inhibits the development of normal social responses. Note that all human beings, except those born with severe physical handicaps, have the inborn capacity to become fully mature members of society but, in order for this capacity to be realized, the child has to have adequate social relationships with others. It is to be noted that social behaviour in humans is not inborn.

**Answer to SAE2**

Various methods can be employed for controlling behaviour, and some of them are as follows:

1. Shaping
2. Scheduling various types of reinforcements
3. Modeling or imitations
4. Extinction
5. Satiation
6. Aversion therapy
7. Conditioning incompatible behaviour
8. Self-control

If a child manifests some form of deviant behaviour then it is also very likely that the same child manifests some forms of other socially approved behaviour as well. During the initial period of observation of the child's behaviour to determine the baseline of the deviant behaviour, these elements of socially approved behaviour can also be spotted. It is now necessary to quote some examples of modifications of different types of deviant behaviour that has been reported in the relevant literature. A technique, often employed in behaviour modification is the 'free method'. This implies that the individual manifests his behavior 'freely' preferably when he is left alone, and the emphasis is on the performances of the individual.

**MODULE 5**

- Unit 1 Theories of Attribution
- Unit 2 Conformity
- Unit 3 Compliance
- Unit 4 Obedience
- Unit 5 Research as a route to increased Knowledge

**UNIT 1 THEORIES OF ATTRIBUTION****Unit Structure**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 Theories of Attribution
  - 1.3.1 Kelley's Covariation model
  - 1.3.2 Kelley's Configuration Model
  - 1.3.3 Jones and Davis' Correspondent Inference Theory
- 1.4 Weiner's Attribution Theories of Emotion and Motivation
  - 1.4.1 Self-perception theory of Attribution
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 References/Further Reading/Web Resources
- 1.7 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents

**1.1 Introduction**

In the previous unit we talk about how individual in the society undergoes the process of socialization. This has been transferring to us by our parents or our tutor, mentor. This is key to every aspect of our life. We are all interested in understanding our own behaviour and the behaviours of others as we interact. Knowing well that the reasons why we act the way we do or what we say will help us understand behaviour better. Furthermore, the process of attribution is the key to explaining the causes of events or behaviours. In attribution, we are tried to give reasons, explain and make judgement about the causes of events or behaviours. These reasons are mostly attributed to either external or internal causes. In this unit, we will look at the various theories that explain the causes of our behaviour and the behaviours of others. Therefore, what is a theory? How does a theory help us to explain human behaviors?'



## 1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to

- Discuss theories of Attribution
- Analyse Weiner's Attribution Theories of Emotion and Motivation
- Demonstrate Self-perception theory of Attribution
- Evaluate Kelley's Covariation model



## 1.3 Theories of Attribution

Attribution theory is a collection of diverse theoretical and empirical contributions that focus upon the universal concern with explanation why a particular event, or state or outcome has occurred and the consequences of phenomenal causality (Kelly, 1972). Attribution theory is a theory about how ordinary people make causal explanations, about how they answer questions beginning with “why?” it deals with how the social perceiver gathers information and how it is combined to arrive at causal judgment for an event on the basis concerned with the actual causes of behaviour, but focus more on the perceived causes of behaviour. They assume that there are systematic processes by which attributions are made and the attributions that people arrive at, influence subsequent behaviour and emotional reactions, of either their own behaviour or the behaviour of others. However, these judgements do not necessarily deal with the true cause of things but rather with what a perceiver interprets the cause to be. Thus, attribution theorists are not concerned with the actual causes of behaviour, but focus more on the perceived causes of behaviour. They assume that there are systematic processes by which attributions are made and the attributions that people arrive at, influence subsequent behaviour and emotional reactions.

However, theories result from researches, and these provide explanations for the occurrence of events or behaviours. The theories propounded by Kelley, Davis Jones and Weiner will help us understand why we behave the way we do. Internal causes are related to our personality traits, while external causes are seen as environmental, that is, outside the individual. We will look at the Covariation and Configuration models separately.

### 1.3.1 Kelley's Covariation model

This theory suggests that when we focus on how people behave (actors), we make attributions as observers. In all social interactions, there are

actors and observers, and we can assume any role, as we interact. The Covariation model assumes that once we have the knowledge of how the actor behaves in different situations, and how others also behave in those situations or similar situations, then we can attribute the causes of present behaviours on the following information.

1. **Consensus:** this is the extent to which others behave in similar ways with the actor, in a given situation. If our actor's present behaviour agrees with other peoples' behaviour, then we can say that there is a high consensus, but if others differ in behaviour to the actor, then there is low consensus. High consensus leads to attributing external causes to behaviours, while low consensus results in attaching internal causes to the behaviour in question. To further illustrate this, if a student failed a course, for instance, now, if we know that other students also failed the course, and then there is high consensus. We are likely to attribute the behaviour or event to an external cause, like, poor materials; or we can even question the competence of instructors. If on the other hand, we find out that the student is the only one that failed the course, then there is low consensus; and the likely cause will be internal factor such as the student's level of intelligence or inadequate understanding of the course.

2. **Consistency:** the focus here is on how stable the actor's behaviour is, across time or situations. Using the example above, if the said student also fails other courses in the future, there is high consistency. However, if she/he passes all future courses, the one course she/he failed is viewed in terms of low consistency.

3. **Distinctiveness:** this tells us how the actor's present behavior stands out from other behaviours, in similar situations. If, from our example, we still find out that our hypothetical student also failed other courses in the same semester, then there is low distinctiveness; but if in the same semester he failed only one course, then, there is high distinctiveness.

### 1.3.2 Kelley's Configuration Model

According to Kelley, there are situations where the observer may not be able to observe several behaviours of the actor or may not have all the three types of information as in the covariance model to use in assessing the actor. In such a case, the observer is expected to explain the behaviour, based on single occurrence or based on the present behavior being observed. In the case of single event attribution, a causal schema is used. Causal schemata are general ideas or already made beliefs, preconceptions, theories that explain how certain kind of causes interact to produce a specific kind of effect (Kelley, 1972, 1983; Hewstone and Fincham, 1996). Causal schemata are 'causal shorthand' that enable us

make complex inferences, easily, and within a short time (Fiske and Taylor, 1991). In the face of little information concerning an actor, we rely on past experience or cause-effect relationship and what we have learned from others about such relationship. There are two major causal schemata- the multiple necessary schemata and the multiple sufficient schemata. According to these two schemata, there are either multiple necessary causes or multiple sufficient causes. In multiple necessary causes, the causes or explanations for certain events or behaviours are many, and the absence of any one of the information can result in that behaviour not occurring. While at the same time, the presence of all of these causes may not guarantee the occurrence of the behaviour too. For example, let us assume that for a student to pass a course, she/he must have continuous assessments, attend all lectures and participate actively in class. If the student does not meet one of these requirements, she/he is likely not going to pass the course; but note also that if she/he meets all the requirements, it is not a guarantee that she/he will pass the course. Meeting all the requirements is necessary, but it may not guarantee success, according to this view. In the case of multiple sufficient causes, the causes for certain events or behaviours occurring are many, and each cause is enough to explain the behaviour. The various reasons that explain the behaviour or event are, independently, sufficient to be accepted. According to this view, each of the three reasons we have in our example explaining why the student failed the course is enough to explain the behaviour. Lack of continuous assessment is enough reason to explain failing the course, just like not attending lectures is enough reason for failing the course and among other.

### **1.3.3 Jones and Davis' Correspondent Inference Theory**

This theory suggests that the target of any effective attribution is the ability to make inferences that correspond or that are in line with behaviour; that is, the intention of the behaviour and the underlying disposition of the actor. Both the behaviour and the disposition must be seen and recognised as similar. The behaviour should be made to occur by the actor, with no external influence or instructions to do so; this will enable one to make a corresponding inference.

#### **How do we make Inferences?**

##### **1. Analysing uncommon effects**

We can infer that intended behaviour agrees with some underlying disposition by analysing uncommon effects. This means looking at what is distinct about the effect of the choice made. Once we have many options and decide on one, then we can compare the consequences of the chosen option to the consequences of the other option not chosen. Then what is common about the effect of the choice becomes very important. If there are fewer differences between these comparisons, then we can

infer dispositions with confidence. Also the more negative the consequences which the chosen option will throw up, the more likely we are to attach some importance to the distinctive consequences.

2. We can also look at the actor's choice; whether the choice or behaviour was influenced by situational or internal (free will) factors.

3. We can make inferences by concentrating on the social desirability of the behaviour. Once there is a deviation from what is desired or accepted, this behaviour catches our attention and hastens our impression formation, because of the distinctiveness of the behaviour. We are likely not going to engage in undesirable behaviour that will put us in bad standing with others.

4. We can infer our behaviour based on the desirability of the behaviour being observed. The under listed too can also be put into consideration. The use of roles, these are well defined roles that people tend to conform to; if done well, their underlying dispositions may not be evident, but if these roles are broken and the actor deviates from them, it is most likely that the actor's underlying disposition will be revealed and corresponding inferences about his behaviour will be made. Prior expectations based on past experiences with the actor can also help us to decide if present behaviour is in line with other behaviours of the actors. Access to information on past and present disposition, will help us decide if present information will become less important or more important, depending on whether it is similar or different from past behaviours.

### Self-Assessment Exercises 1

1. What is attribution theory?
2. List and explain the basic structures of attribution theories?

### 1.4 Weiner's Attribution Theories of Emotion and Motivation

This theory applies the basic principle of attribution to emotions and motivation. The theory posits that our emotions and motivation are affected by the attributions we make. This theory puts forth three dimensions of causality namely- locus, stability and controllability. The locus dimension has it that causes of events or behaviours can be internal or external (person/situation). The stability dimension believes that causes of events or behaviours can be permanent or temporary; while the controllability dimension sees causes of events or behaviours in terms of either being controllable or uncontrollable (Weiner 1986). This theory believes causes are multi-dimensional; and that a combination of causes can result in emotions like anger, feelings of

disappointment, anxiety, or depression which, in turn, are likely to affect motivation.

### 1.4.1 Basic Structure of Attribution theories

Basically attribution theory and research study the antecedent conditions that lead to different causal explanations i.e. how the perceiver uses information to arrive at causal explanations for events.

However, the following are the basic structures of attribution theories.

1. Attribution theories investigate the psychological consequences of causal attribute (the influence that attributions exert on emotions and behaviours).
2. Attribution theory is concerned with the generic causal principles that people employ which might be used in a wider variety of domains.
3. Attribution theories, also are concerned with the specific causal attribution process that people employ in a particular life domain.
4. Attribution research involves the systematic assessment or manipulation of antecedents. There is no interest in consequences beyond the attributions themselves, and they are generally measured directly by verbal report.
5. With attribution studies, perceived causes (i.e. causes that are not necessarily the “true” causes of things) are assessed or manipulated and their effects on various behaviours, feelings and intentions are measured. Whereas each types of research have its own focus, many studies have examined both. However, both types of research have common interest in the causal explanations given for an events by ordinary people. While the behaviourist movement, which had excluded cognitive variables in their models of behaviour, maintained that cognitions cannot be observed directly and therefore cannot be studied scientifically, the determinants and consequences of cognitive processes lie in the heart of attribution theories

### 1.4.1 Self-Perception Theory of Attribution

Just as people endeavour to explain the behaviour of others, they attempt to understand and attribute causes for their own actions. According to Bem’ self perception theory, the process of self-perception is similar to the process of the perception of others. Since people like to perceive by themselves and others as rational beings, they often try to explain their own attitudes and internal states, such as emotions, in part by inferring them from the observation of their own behaviour and the circumstances in which the behaviour occurs. Furthermore, people infer their attitudes and other internal states in much the same way as they make attributions

about other people's attitudes and internal states. He suggests that individuals form attribution biases, whereby success is perceived as being due to one's own ability/efforts, and failures are perceived as being due to external factors. Self-perception is readily adaptable to Kelley's co-variance paradigm and increases its usefulness to consumer behaviour. In terms of consumer behaviour, self-perception theory suggests that attitudes develop as consumers look at and make judgements about their own behavior. This is notable for extending attribution ideas to self-perception, especially the self perception of emotion. The theory further suggests that people label feelings of arousal in accordance with external information. Misattribution of arousal to neutral cases can reduce emotional reactions. He argued that internal physiological cues are often ambiguous and consequently may be labeled as consistent with any of several emotions or sources of arousal.

Consequently, Weiner's (1986) view on attribution theory is notable, primarily for developing the dimensions of attribution experience, integrating attribution with emotional processes and enlightening the attribution and affective experience that underlie achievement behaviour and other concrete domains of experience.

### Self-Assessment Exercise 2

1. How do we make Inferences?



### 1.5 Summary

In this unit, the theories of attribution have shown that the causes of behaviour are many; and through the theories of Kelley, Jones and Davis, and Weiner, we have come to appreciate the place of self perception theory of attribution, Covariance, correspondence, configuration, inference, emotion, motivation including the basic structures of attribution theories in explaining behaviour.



### 1.6 References/Further Reading/Web Resources

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## 5.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

### Answer to SAE 1

1. Attribution theory is a collection of diverse theoretical and empirical contributions that focus upon the universal concern with explanation why a particular event, or state or outcome has occurred and the consequences of phenomenal causality. Attribution theory is a theory about how ordinary people make causal explanations, about how they answer questions beginning with "why?" it deals with how the social perceiver gathers information and how it is combined to arrive at causal judgment for an event on the basis concerned with the actual causes of behaviour, but focus more on the perceived causes of behavior.

(2)

1. Attribution theories investigate the psychological consequences of causal attribute (the influence that attributions exert on emotions and behaviours).

2. Attribution theory is concerned with the generic causal principles that people employ which might be used in a wider variety of domains.

3. Attribution theories also are concerned with the specific causal attribution process that people employ in a particular life domain.

4. Attribution research involves the systematic assessment or manipulation of antecedents. There is no interest in consequences beyond the attributions themselves, and they are generally measured directly by verbal report.

5. With attribution studies, perceived causes (i.e. causes that are not necessarily the “true” causes of things) are assessed or manipulated and their effects on various behaviours, feelings and intentions are measured. Whereas each types of research have its own focus, many studies have examined both. However, both types of research have common interest in the causal explanations given for events by ordinary people. While the behaviourist movement, which had excluded cognitive variables in their models of behaviour, maintained that cognitions cannot be observed directly and therefore cannot be studied scientifically, the determinants and consequences of cognitive processes lie in the heart of attribution theories.

### **Answer to SAE2**

#### **1. Analysing uncommon effects**

We can infer that intended behaviour agrees with some underlying disposition by analysing uncommon effects. This means looking at what is distinct about the effect of the choice made. Once we have many options and decide on one, then we can compare the consequences of the chosen option to the consequences of the other option not chosen. Then what is common about the effect of the choice becomes very important. If there are fewer differences between these comparisons, then we can infer dispositions with confidence. Also the more negative the consequences which the chosen option will throw up, the more likely we are to attach some importance to the distinctive consequences.

2. We can also look at the actor’s choice; whether the choice or behaviour was influenced by situational or internal (free will) factors.

3. We can make inferences by concentrating on the social desirability of the behaviour. Once there is a deviation from what is desired or accepted, this behaviour catches our attention and hastens our impression formation, because of the distinctiveness of the behaviour. We are likely not going to engage in undesirable behaviour that will put us in bad standing with others.

4. We can infer our behaviour based on the desirability of the behaviour being observed. The under listed too can also be put into consideration. The use of roles , these are well defined roles that people tend to conform to; if done well, their underlying dispositions may not be evident, but if these roles are broken and the actor deviates from them, it is most likely that the actor’s underlying disposition will be revealed and corresponding inferences about his behaviour will be made

## UNIT 2 CONFORMITY

### Unit Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 Obedience and Authority
  - 2.3.1 Milgram
- 2.4 Resisting Destructive Obedience
  - 2.4.1 Know that authority has to command blind obedience
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 References/Further Reading/ web resources
- 2.7 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents



### 2.1 Introduction

In unit one, we were able to understand that various theories of attribution have shown that the causes of behaviour are many; and through the theories of Kelley, Jones and Davis, and Weiner, we have come to appreciate the place of self perception theory of attribution, Covariance, correspondence, configuration, inference, emotion, motivation including the basic structures of attribution theories in explaining behavior. In another development, Obedience leads to a change in behaviour as a result of response to a demand, usually, from those in authority or authority figures. To what extent can we be affected by demands from others? Can these demands influence us to hurt others? Have you ever wondered what will happen if you disobey those in authority? While we may not think twice disobeying our friends, it is a difficult matter altogether dealing with people in authority. Obedience leads to a change in behaviour as a result of response to a demand, usually, from those in authority or authority figures to what extent can we be affected by demands from others? Can these demands influence us to hurt others? This unit will expose us how to obey and not to obey, why people learn to obey. You will also be able to identify the factors that result in obedience, the destructive aspects of obedience, and how we can resist destructive obedience.



### 2.2 Learning Outcome

By the end of this unit, you will be able to understand

- Discuss obedience and authority
- Analyse the reason behind obedience
- Demonstrate destructive obedience

- Evaluate how to resist destructive obedience



## 2.3 Obedience and Authority

Obedience leads to a change in behaviour as a result of response to a demand, usually, from those in authority or authority figures (Blass 2004). To what extent can we be affected by demands from others? Can these demands influence us to hurt others? Obedience occurs when people obey commands or orders from others to do something. Obedience is less frequent than conformity or compliance, because even persons who possess authority and power generally prefer to exert it through the velvet glove-through requests rather than direct orders. Business executives sometimes issue orders to their subordinates; military officers shout commands that they expect to be followed without questions; and parents, police officers, and sports coaches, to name a few, seek to influence others in the same manner.

### 2.3.1 Milgram

Experiments on obedience in which twenty six of his forty participants obeyed the experimental instruction all the way, upon the administration of up to 450 volts maximum shock (electric) level to the learner was an amazing account of how far people can go, even if reluctantly, to obey those in authority despite their own misgivings about the effect of the obedience. The high rate of obedience noticed by Milgram was attributed to the following factors.

#### 1. The presence of the perceived authority figure

This can be explain (obedience) in two ways, as listed below

- Agents of force-** they tend to intimidate us into following orders. Fear of the consequences of disobedience may lead us to obey orders
- Diffusion of responsibility-** the belief that the authority figure is ultimately in charge relieved the person from following orders, from taking personal responsibility for his/her actions.

#### 2. Graduation of demand

This refers to demand from the less stressful to the more stressful one or from a small demand to more demanding one. One is obeying increasing demands. In our example, if the demand for 450 volts was made at the onset, not many people would have obeyed. But starting with 15 volts and adding to that gradually narrows the gap between the less to the highest volts, making obedience more rational than it would have been.



### **3. The timing of the request made**

If people are not given time to think through what is being demanded of them, they are most likely to obey more than those who have time to think over the demand. It has been found that once people do not have time to think through a demand, they become more vulnerable to persuasive attempts.

### **4. Psychological distance**

Our obedience will depend on how we feel between our actions and the result of those actions. It also means the degree to which we can dissociate ourselves from the consequences.

### **5. Socialisation**

We learn from our parents, teachers and older siblings as we grow up. It is assumed that obedience is also learned and may become a difficult habit to resist (Brown 1986).

### **6. Social situations**

Social roles place certain individuals at advantage in relationships; examples are the parent – child, teacher – student, doctor – patient, employer – employee roles where the parent, teacher, doctor, employer have power more than the child, student, patient and employee in this relationship or settings respectively. How society empowers these groups when interacting can increase or reduce the power these authority figures have. If these roles are changed, will the use of power also change? It is most likely to be no.

## **1.3.2 Factors that Affect Obedience**

In addition to the reasons why people obey, according to Milgram's experiment, the following factors are also listed as affecting obedience or influencing people to obey.

### **1. Status and prestige of authority figure**

The following forms of social power influence people to obey, for the following reasons

#### **2. Expert social power**

The authority figure is able to command obedience because it is believed that this person is knowledgeable and a responsible expert.

#### **3. Legitimate social power**

This person can influence others to obey because it is assumed that he/she has the right or legal authority to give orders (Blass & Schmitt, 2001).

#### **4. Behaviour of others.**

If other people in a similar situation disobey orders or demands, chances are that others will do likewise. If demands are made to a group and some members do not obey these demands, the level of obedience for the group will drop or decrease.

### **.5. Personality characteristics.**

Not everyone is obedient to authority in the same way; but authoritarian personalities are prone to following authority figures without questioning.

## **2.4 Resisting Destructive Obedience**

Obedying orders or demands from authority figures have been shown to be very destructive where the recipient is destructive. Where the recipient is expected to “obey before complaining”, sometimes they do not have time to reflect on these demands or orders but follow through immediately. Some strategies have been suggested to help people resist the effects of destructive obedience.

### **Personal responsibility**

It is believed that those exposed to taking commands from authority figures are also responsible for any harm inflicted or produced. This means that there is a shift from those in authority assuming responsibility for those obeying authority figures.

### **Destructive commands should be seen as inappropriate**

Beyond certain points, total submissions to destructive commands are inappropriate. Here, models acting roles of rejecting commands should be made available.

### **Question authority figures.**

When motives and reasons behind certain commands are questioned by those receiving such commands, this reveals a lot that can make these authority figures rethink and re-evaluate their actions. Note that authority figures have the power to command obedience but that this power is not irresistible. Though most authority figures have the machinery to enforce obedience, and resisting may be very dangerous, it is however not impossible. Most challenges to authority figures cost a lot, but people have tried and won and have also changed the course of history, thereby improving the quality of life of their fellow human beings. People like Mahatma Gandhi of India, Martin Luther king Jnr. of USA and Nelson Mandela of South Africa among others are examples of people who have dared to challenge authorities in their times and changed the course of history for their people, and for humanity.

### **Self-Assessment Exercises1**

1. Briefly discuss the goal of accuracy?
2. What are the factors that affect obedience?

### 2.4.1 Know that authority has to command blind obedience

Knowing that authority figures can command such blind obedience from subordinates. This can help people to prepare ahead of time on how to react during such occasions. Individuals can resist blind commands and help others do likewise, if armed with the requisite knowledge.

### 2.4.2 Goal of Accuracy

This simply means, people are motivated to achieve their goals in the most effective and rewarding manner possible. A person's desire to respond appropriately to a dynamic social situation demands an accurate perception of reality. The need to correctly interpret and react to incoming information is of paramount importance, particularly to targets of compliance and gaining attempts. One inaccurate perception, cognition, or behavior could mean the difference between getting a bargain and being duped. A great deal of recent compliance is that research has investigated how targets of various influence techniques process information and respond to requests as they attempt to gain an accurate construal of the situation and respond accordingly.

#### Self-Assessment Exercise2

1. Explain timing of obedience request?



## 2.5 Summary

In this unit, you are now aware of the fact that authority figures do command obedience and that they can use their authority to inflict pains or harm on others, by enforcing destructive obedience. The reason why people obey and find it difficult to disobey authority has been made known to you too; the strategies for resisting destructive obedience or harmful commands have also been itemized and explained. Furthermore, social norms and goal accuracy also play a very significant role in the aspect of obedience.



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## 2.7 Possible Answer to SAEs

### Answer to SAE 1

1. This simply means, people are motivated to achieve their goals in the most effective and rewarding manner possible. A person's desire to respond appropriately to a dynamic social situation demands an accurate perception of reality

(2)

The following forms of social power influence people to obey following reasons

1. Status and prestige of authority figure
2. Expert social power

The authority figure is able to command obedience because it is believed that this person is a knowledgeable and a responsible expert.

- 3. Legitimate social power

This person can influence others to obey because it is assumed that he/she has the right or legal authority to give orders (Blass & Schmitt, 2001).

- 4. Behavior of others.

If other people in a similar situation disobey orders or demands, chances are that others will do likewise. If demands are made to a group and some members do not obey these demands, the level of obedience for the group will drop or decrease.

5. Personality characteristics.

Not everyone is obedient to authority in the same way; but authoritarian personalities are prone to following authority figures without questioning.

### Answer to SAE2

If people are not given time to think through what is being demanded of them, they are most likely to obey more than those who have time to think over the demand. It has been discovered that once people do not have time to think through a demand, they become more vulnerable to persuasive attempts.



## UNIT 3 COMPLIANCE

### Unit Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcomes
- 3.3 Cultural Values and Conformity
  - 3.3.1 Types of Social Influence
  - 3.3.2 Normative Social Influence
- 3.4 Factors Affecting Conformity
  - 3.4.1 Why and When do we choose to conform?
  - 3.4.2 How do social roles change our behaviour
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 References/Further Reading /Web Resources
- 3.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents



### 3.1 Introduction

In last unit, you are now aware of the fact that authority figures do command obedience and that they can use their authority to inflict pains or harm on others, by enforcing destructive obedience. Nevertheless, Conformity is yielding to group pressure. This may take different forms, and sometimes, it can be as a result of some motives other than group pressure. Conformity is a change in belief or behaviour, in response to real or imagined group pressure. The presence of others, whether actual or implied results in conformity. We tend to do in private or public, what we think people should do or the right thing to do. Individual behaviour is influenced by the group a person belongs to. In conformity, your response to social activity is indirect. The group does not need to ask that you join them, but because everyone seems to agree and act in a certain way, you are likely to join them. In conformity, there is the outward expression of the norm and private acceptance. The two must agree in order for one to feel comfortable. When one outwardly conforms to what he/she does not privately accept, then one is likely to experience dissonance or disagreement. Sometimes people decide to agree with the group, just to reduce dissonance. However, as far as this unit is concern we will look at the factors that influence conformity, cultural value and conformity, public and private conformity, in the type of social influence that exist within conformity as well as group processes involved in conformity will be demonstrated. Now, what is cultural value of conformity? What is public and private conformity?



### 3.2 Learning Outcome

By the end of this unit, you will be able to;

- Discuss cultural values and conformity
- Analyse the factors affecting conformity
- Demonstrate public and private conformity
- Evaluate what types of social influence exist



### 3.3 Cultural Values and Conformity

What would you have done if you had been a participant in a study conducted by? Twenty-four percent of Asch's participants didn't conform on a single trial not even once. Were these people brave rebels who had so much self-confidence they didn't care if they fit in? At least some research indicates that cultural values rather than personal courage may be the most potent force influencing social conformity. Conformity, Culture, and Eating were the high rates of conformity in a replication of the line judgment experiment (about 58%) done in Fiji. The participants in those studies were primary school teachers and teachers in training. Fiji is a culture in which social conformity is highly valued. It is the approximately the same rates of conformity in a replication done in Kuwait that Asch found in the United States. If culture can change the likelihood of people saying the wrong answer even when they know it's wrong, can it affect other types of conformity as well? An interesting example emerged when Berry (1967) compared the Temne people from Sierra Leone (on the west coast of Africa) with Inuits (formerly sometimes called Eskimos) from Baffin Island (in the northernmost section of Canada). Berry discovered that the Temne people demonstrated a strong tendency to go along with the group norm while the Inuits almost entirely disregarded group pressure. Berry came to believe that how a culture accumulates food contributes to these wide cultural differences in conformity. Does this food accumulation hypothesis sound like a farfetched explanation for conformity patterns? If so, perhaps you never have been personally threatened by hunger or belonged to a group threatened with hardship (or even starvation) if a crop fails.

The Temne are mostly rice farmers who can harvest only one crop per year, so they accumulate a great deal of food at one time and raise their children to be obedient, dependable, and cooperative. They have to be: Conforming contributes to their survival. A Temne participant in the line judgment experiment said, "When Temne people choose a thing, we must all agree with the decision that is what we call cooperation." The

Inuits of Baffin Island, on the other hand, have no vegetation. Surviving for these people requires independent, adventurous individuals who can fish and hunt independently, rugged individualists who can take care of themselves in harsh conditions. They are lenient with their children, encourage independence, and value self reliance. When the Inuits from Baffin Island participated in the line judgment experiment, they would usually say nothing at all but “would often display a quiet, knowing smile” as they pointed toward the correct line.

### **3.3.1 Types of Social Influence**

Social influence occurs when our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by other people. Social influence can take two basic forms. Implicit social influence occurs when we follow subtle, unwritten rules communicated nonverbally. One example of implicit social influence is conformity, when we voluntarily change our behavior to follow what others are doing. Another example comes from social roles, our expectations about how certain people are supposed to look or behave (such as police officers vs. librarians). The second basic form of social influence is explicit, which occurs when we follow obvious, direct requests from others (called compliance) or orders from others (called obedience). Social norms are rules about how people should behave in certain situations, which often lead to conformity. Extreme conformity can lead to a herd mentality, or the tendency to follow the direction of a group without question. In general, conformity seems to be contagious; we feel more pressure to conform when the group is larger. This can sometimes even lead to a phenomenon called mass psychogenic illness, which is when psychological conformity leads to people experiencing physical symptoms of illness when there is no physical cause.

### **3.3.2 Normative Social Influence**

There are two types of norms. Descriptive norms refer to what is commonly done, that is, what most people do. Injunctive norms refer to what is socially sanctioned, that is, what society says people are supposed to do. The distinction between the two types of norms is apparent when you think about littering. You’re not supposed to litter (the injunctive norm), but in certain areas, littering is so common that many people will do it anyway, partly because everyone else is littering (the descriptive norm; see Cialdini, Kallgren, & Reno, 1991). It’s not easy to resist the power of social norms. We may privately disagree with the group’s decision or behaviors, but we still give in to the publicly expressed social norms. See one way of measuring someone’s tendency to conform in the Applying Social Psychology to Your Life feature. Uncertainty encourages conformity, especially when we feel social pressure to be “correct”; this motivation is the basis for informational

social influence. But what if there is no uncertainty what if we are fairly sure of our answer? Solomon Asch explored this question by asking people to provide an answer as obvious as what you can see in Figure 7.2: “Which line on the right matches the length of the line on the left?” Asch was one of several energetic social psychologists trying to make sense of what had happened to humanity during World War II. He wrote a textbook that discussed how propaganda could be used in education either to promote (a) “independent thinking and self-reliance” or (b) the kind of conformity created by the Nazis to “indoctrinate blind obedience to state and church”.

Normative social influence, which occurs when we publicly conform, often gain social acceptance and avoid rejection. Thus, normative social influence is more likely to lead us to pretend to agree with a group because we want to fit in our conformity in public but not necessarily private we don’t actually become convinced that the group’s direction is correct.

### Self Assessment Exercises1

1. What do you understand by public and private conformity?
2. With illustration “Conforming is contagious” critically discuss?

### 3.4 Factors Affecting Conformity

People tend to conform because factors like group size, group unity (cohesiveness), fear of ridicule, task difficulty, privacy, group norms among others influence our individual response and behaviour in social situations.

#### 1. Group Size and Unanimity (Majority)

Based on experiments, it has been found that the size of a group, and the level of agreement among members affect conformity. When one person tries to influence another, the level of conformity is low, where two try to influence one person, the level of conformity rises; with three people, the level rises higher and beyond 5 people conformity level drops off, or even, decreases. Once the majority is unanimous, the pressure to conform is high, but where one person disagrees within the group, conformity decreases. Recent findings have shown that conformity increases with group size of, up to, 8 members or more.

#### 2. Minority influence

Though not common, it does happen that the minority in a group can influence the behaviour or the beliefs of the majority. This minority

influence is usually indirect, and occurs slowly. It involves only a moderate change in the view of the majority; it is possible for an individual to resist group pressure (Peplau & Sears, 2002; David & Turner, 2000). Also, minority position must be consistent with current trends of events, and must avoid appearing rigid and dogmatic providing room for some degree of flexibility. This will help them not to appear hell bent on their ideas, and will encourage acceptance by the majority. Minorities do hold strong views and are more concerned over being right. As a result, they do overestimate the number of people who share their views which is usually less than they perceive; though, in a way, this helps them to remain resolute against the position of the majority, which is usually of great benefit, in most cases. The views of the minority may encourage the majority to access why the minorities are adamant in their views or positions and this may result in a change of position, no matter how small, on the part of the majority.

### **3. Fear of ridicule**

Usually, wrong answers or inappropriate behaviour is ridiculed by others, such that when the group is wrong, the fear of being ridiculed suppresses the minority view, resulting in conformity to the group.

### **4. Ambiguity of the situation (task difficulty)**

When faced with difficult tasks, people are likely going to yield to the views of the majority; even if this proposition or answer is not correct, especially if the majority feels confident that they are right. In a situation where people become uncertain, they tend to rely more on other people's opinions, thus increasing conformity to group norms.

### **5. Privacy in responses.**

In the face of group pressure, it is easier for the individual not to conform, if asked to respond privately, than when asked to respond publicly. Thus, there seems to be less conformity in anonymous responses or where responses are given in private or in writing.

Anonymous responses decrease conformity, though it does not remove it or make it disappear.

### **6. Group Norms**

Group norms are very powerful in influencing behaviour. People are mostly influenced by three powerful motives, such as- the desire to be liked or accepted by others, the desire to be right, with accurate understanding of the world- knowing what is right and what is wrong; and finally, the desire to receive rewards and avoid punishment.

### 3.4.1 Why and When do we choose to conform?

Informational conformity or social influence occurs when people change their behavior because they want to be correct. Here, people follow along with what others are doing because they believe the behavior is right; thus, conformity is both public and private (meaning we agree with what we are doing). This type of conformity is more likely to occur when we are unsure what the “correct” answer is. Classic research on informational public conformity was started by Sherif when he studied the auto-kinetic effect, an optical illusion in which people’s guesses about how much a stationary light moved were influenced by other people’s answers. This effect has been shown to occur over “generations” of participants. On the other hand, normative social influence occurs when we go along with group behaviors in order to fit in or be accepted. Here, our public behavior might not reflect private conformity we secretly know that what we’re doing isn’t “correct”.

### 3.4.2 How do social roles change our behaviour

Social roles guide us in how to think, feel, and act in a variety of situations, like characters in a play. The most famous social psychology study of social roles is the Stanford prison study created by Zimbardo; the turned the basement of the Stanford psychology building into a fake prison, then randomly assigned students to play either the role of prisoner or guard. The students quickly seemed to lose their individual identities and simply played the part, or they went along with their assigned social role. One factor that increases our conformity to a social role is called deindividuation, which is when we feel more anonymous due to things like wearing a uniform, wearing a mask, or being in the dark. While deindividuation has been tied to several negative social behaviors, such as cruelty or criminal actions, it has also been tied to positive social behaviors, such as kindness.

#### Self Assessment Exercise2

1. Discuss two types of social influence?



### 3.5 Summary

In this unit, we have observed that individual behaviour is actually affected by the behaviour of the group. We have also considered group size, unanimous groups, group sanction, social influence and group process as factors that influence conformity. Essentially, we also look at

how conformity is contagious as well as social contagious including many other process of conformity were al articulated.



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### 3.7 Possible Answer to SAEs

#### Answer to SAE1

1. Public conformity is to conforming thoughts or behaviors shared with others while private conformity is to conforming thoughts or behaviors kept to oneself, not shared or observed by others increased over time, based on the artificial group norm first announced sometimes days earlier by the original confederate

2. Conforming is contagious. For example, it can be awkward to attend your first holiday meal with new in-laws if no one tells you that Grandpa always sits in a particular chair or that the holiday meal, announced for 2 p.m., is never served until 4:30. Your new family members do not have to say anything to communicate their group norms, however. Instead, you observe that at 2 p.m., the dining room table isn't set, the cooking is just getting started, the teenagers are just getting out of bed, and no one else seems surprised that the meal is so "late." However, to their way of thinking your new family's social norm the meal is right on time. "Dinner is at 2 p.m." really means, "Come on over sometime in the afternoon; we will start cooking." Your social network (new relatives) will guide you to conform according to the cultural expectations that your new spouse probably forgot to mention. The social norms practiced by your new relatives provide specific but implicit guidance about how you are expected to behave.

#### Answer to SAE2

Social influence occurs when our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by other people. Social influence can take two basic forms. Implicit social influence occurs when we follow subtle, unwritten rules communicated nonverbally. One example of implicit social influence is conformity, when we voluntarily change our behavior to follow what others are doing. Another example comes from social roles, our expectations about how certain people are supposed to look or behave (such as police officers vs. librarians). The second basic form of social influence is explicit, which occurs when we follow obvious, direct requests from others (called compliance) or orders from others (called obedience). Social norms are rules about how people should behave in certain situations, which often lead to conformity

## UNIT 4 OBEDIENCE

### Unit Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcomes
- 4.3 Compliance
  - 4.3.1 Techniques professionals use for gaining Compliance
  - 4.3.2 Tactics Based on Commitment or Consistency
- 4.4 Other tactics for gaining compliance
  - 4.4.1 Deadline Technique
  - 4.4.2 Tactics Based on Scarcity
- 4.5 Summary
- 4.6 References/FurtherReading/web resources
- 4.7 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercise(s) within the contents



### 4.1 Introduction

A request places less demand on the individual and gives room for the liberty to comply or not. Behaviour comes as a result of compliance to a request, which, in most cases, is seen as coming from a peer or a friend. In this unit, we will essentially look at the concept of compliance, the basic factors of compliance difference type of compliance or the technique use in familiar with different procedure of compliance. To sum up all however, have you ever noticed that people respond to requests better than they do to demands? If the answer is yes you be ready to get use to the procedure we are about to articulate.



### 4.2 Learning Outcome

By the end of this unit, you will be able to

- Discuss the concept of compliance
- Analyse the Basic Principles underlie many techniques professional use for gaining compliance
- Demonstrate the techniques professionals use for gaining Compliance
- Evaluate other Tactics for Gaining Compliance



## 4.3 COMPLIANCE

Compliance refers to a particular kind of response acquiescence to a particular kind of communication for request. The request may be explicit, as in the direct solicitation of funds in a door to door campaign for charitable donations, or it may be implicit, as in a political advertisement that touts the qualities of a candidate without directly asking for a vote. But in all cases, the target recognizes that he or she is being urged to respond in a desired way. In other words, compliance involves direct request from one person to another or from a group to another. In compliance, people yield to this request, which is different from conformity where there is no request, yet one feels the need to conform.

### 4.3.1 Techniques professionals use for gaining Compliance Tactics Based on Friendship or Liking

There are several techniques for increasing compliance through getting others to like us. This is called as impression management. These impression management techniques are often used for purposes of ingratiation i.e., getting others to like us so that they will be more willing to agree to our requests. There are many self-enhancing tactics of impression management such as improving one's appearance, emitting positive nonverbal cues (e.g., smiling, a high level of eye contact), and associating oneself with positive events or people the target person already likes. In contrast, other-enhancing tactics include flattery, agreeing with target persons, showing interest in them, and providing them small gifts or favours. Research findings indicate that all of these tactics can be successful, at least to a degree, in increasing others liking for us.

### 4.3.2 Tactics Based on Commitment or Consistency

A procedure for gaining compliance in which requesters begin with a small request and then, when this is granted, escalate to a larger one (the one they actually desired to be agreed). Once the target person says yes to the small request, it is more difficult for that person to say no to a larger request, because if they don't agree it would be inconsistent with the first response.

#### **The Lowball**

It has been seen that auto dealers sometimes use the lowball technique. This involves offering an attractive deal to customers but then, after they accept, changing that offer in some way. Rationally, customers should

refuse: but in fact, they often accept less attractive deal because they feel committed to the decision of buying the car. To discuss it further, in this technique, a very good deal is offered to a customer. After the customer accepts, however, something is manipulated to show that it necessary for the salesperson to change the deal and make it less advantageous for the customer-for example, an “error” in price calculations is found, or the sales manger rejects the deal. The totally rational reaction for customers, of course, is to walk away. Yet often they agree to the changes and accept the less desirable arrangement.

### **Bait and switch tactic**

A technique for gaining compliance in which once the customers enters the shop; items offered for sale are showed as unavailable or presented of very low quality. This leads customers to buy a more expensive item that is available. It happens because for customers point of view, changing one’s mind and reversing an initial commitment requires hard work, and many people, it appears, would rather pay a higher price than change their minds.

### **Self-Assessment Exercises1**

1. Discuss the basic principles use in gaining compliance
2. Define compliance

## **4.4 Other Tactics for Gaining Compliance**

### **1. Complaining**

In the context of compliance, expressing discontent, dissatisfaction, resentment, or regret as a means of exerting social influence on others. Complaining involves expressions of discontent or dissatisfaction with one self or some aspect of the external world, and often such statements are simple expressions of personal states (“I feel lousy!”) or comments on the external world (“Wow, is it cold today!”). Sometimes, however, complaining is used as a tactic of social influence:” Why didn’t you take out the garbage like you, promised?” “We always see the movie you want; it’s not fair,” Statements such as these directed toward the goal of getting the recipient to change his or her attitudes or behaviours in some manner.

### **2. Putting Others in Good Mood**

People’s moods often exert a strong effect on their behaviour. And, it seems, this principle also holds with respect to compliance. When individuals are in a good mood, they tend to be more willing to say “Yes” to various request than when they are in a neutral or negative mood.

#### **4.4.1 Deadline Technique**

This is a technique for increasing compliance in which target persons are told that they have only limited time to take advantage of some offer or to obtain some item. Advertisements using this deadline techniques state a specific time limit during which an item can be purchased for a specific price. After the deadline runs out, the ads suggest, the price will go up. Of course, in many cases, the sale is not a real one, and the time limit is bogus. Yet many persons reading such as believe them and hurry down to the store in order to avoid missing a great opportunity.

#### **4.4.2 Tactics Based on Scarcity**

##### **Playing Hard to Get**

This technique involves the efforts to increase compliance by suggesting that a person or object is scarce, rare and hard to obtain. A study carried out by Williams and her Colleagues (1993) as quoted in Baron, Byrne, and Branscombe, (2006) explains this phenomenon. Professional recruiters were arranged who were interviewing students at large universities to review information about potential job candidates. This information, which was presented in folders, indicated either that the job candidate already had two job offers (a hard-to-get candidate) or no other job offers (easy-to-get candidate), and was either highly qualified (very high grades) or less well-qualified (low average grades). After reviewing this information, the interviewers then rated the candidates in terms of their qualifications and desirability, the company's likelihood of inviting them to interview, and the likelihood of considering them for a job. Results clearly indicated that the hard-to-get candidate was rated more favorably than the easy to get candidates regardless of their grades. However, the hard-to-get candidate who was also highly qualified received by far the highest ratings of all. Since it is persons who receive high ratings that usually get the interviews-and the jobs-these findings, indicate that creating the impression of being a scarce and valuable resource (being hard to get) can be another effective means for gaining compliance

#### **1.4.3 basic Principles Of Techniques Professional Use for Gaining Compliance**

1. Friendship/Liking: We are more willing to comply with requests from friends or from people we like than with requests from strangers or people we do not like.

2. Commitment/Consistency: Once we commit our self to a position or an action, we are more willing to say or do things that fit with

committed position in various ways. e.g., if in past, we express our opinion to some specific issue in a official meeting, then we are more inclined to think and act in favour of the opinion expressed in meeting.

3. Scarcity: It is tendency to value, to feel worthy about and to secure, opportunities that are scarce or decreasing.

4. Reciprocity: We are generally more willing to comply with a request from someone who has previously provided a favour or concession to us than to someone who has not.

5. Social Validation: A tendency to comply with a request for some action if this action is consistent with what we believe persons similar to ourselves are doing (or thinking). We want to be correct, and one way to do so is to act and think like others.

6. Authority: We are usually more willing to comply with requests from someone who authority or simply looks like one.

#### **4.4.4 Tactics Based on Reciprocity**

##### **The Door in the Face**

A procedure for gaining compliance in which requesters begin with a large request and then, when this is refused, retreat to a smaller one (the one they actually desired to be agreed). This is exactly opposite of the foot-in-the-door technique: instead of beginning with a small request and then presenting a larger one, persons seeking compliance sometimes start with a very large request and then, after this is rejected, shift to a smaller request-the one they wanted all along.

##### **The Foot in the Mouth**

When people feel that they are in a relationship with another person-no matter how trivial or unimportant-they often feel that they are obliged to help or considerate to that person simply because the relationship exists. For example, friends help friends when they need assistance, and persons who perceive themselves as similar in some manner may feel that they should help one another when the need arises. A clear demonstration of the power of this tactic is provided by research conducted by Aune and Basil (1994) as stated in Baron, and Branscombe, (2006). These researchers had female accomplices stop students on a university campus and ask them to contribute to well-known charitable organization. In a control condition, they simply made this request without providing additional information. In another condition (which used the foot-in-the-mouth technique), they asked

passerby if they were students, and they commented, “Oh, that’s great, so am I.” Then they made their request for funds. Results indicated that a much larger percentage of the persons approached made a donation in the foot-in-the-mouth condition (30.5 percent) than in the control group (11.5 percent). These findings, and those of a follow up study by the same authors, suggest that the reciprocity principle can be stretched even to such tenuous relationships as “We are both students, right? And students help students, right? So how about a donation?”

#### 4.4.5 That’s-not-all technique

An initial request is followed, before the target person can make up or his/her mind to say yes or no, a small incentive is offered by the person who is using this tactic sweetens the deal. For example, auto dealers sometimes decide to throw in a small additional option to the car for e.g., free full tank fill, offer of seatcover, etc., in the hope that this will help them close the deal; and often, it really helps! Persons on the receiving end of the that’s-not-all technique view this small extra as a concession on the part of the other person, and so feel obligated to make a concession themselves.

#### Self Assessment Exercises2

1. Explain the Tactics Based on Commitment or Consistency



#### 4.5 Summary

In this unit the concept of compliance was explained as well as procedure to comply. It has given you an insight into the principles and techniques used in compliance. The principles of friendship/liking, commitment, consistency, reciprocity, social validation and authority have all been incorporated into the techniques used in getting people to comply. Similarly, these various techniques will guide you to be able to understand this course.



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## 5.7 Possible Answer to SAEs

### ANSWER TO SAE 1

1. Friendship/Liking: We are more willing to comply with requests from friends or from people we like than with requests from strangers or people we do not like.

2. Commitment or Consistency: Once we commit our self to a position or an action, we are more willing to say or do things that fit with committed position in various ways. e.g., if in past, we express our opinion to some specific issue in a official meeting, then we are more inclined to think and act in favour of the opinion expressed in meeting.

3. Scarcity: It is tendency to value, to feel worthy about and to secure, opportunities that are scarce or decreasing.

4. Reciprocity: We are generally more willing to comply with a request from someone who has previously provided a favour or concession to us than to someone who has not.

5. Social Validation: A tendency to comply with a request for some action if this action is consistent with what we believe persons similar to ourselves are doing (or thinking). We want to be correct, and one way to do so is to act and think like others.

6. Authority: We are usually more willing to comply with requests from someone who authority or simply looks like one

2. Compliance refers to a particular kind of response acquiescence to a particular kind of communication for request. The request may be explicit, as in the direct solicitation of funds in a door to door campaign for charitable donations, or it may be implicit, as in a political advertisement that touts the qualities of a candidate without directly asking for a vote. But in all cases, the target recognizes that he or she is being urged to respond in a desired way.

### Answer to SAE2

#### The Lowball

It has been seen that auto dealers sometimes use the lowball technique. This involves offering an attractive deal to customers but then, after they accept, changing that offer in some way. Rationally, customers should

refuse: but in fact, they often accept less attractive deal because they feel committed to the decision of buying the car. To discuss it further, in this technique, a very good deal is offered to a customer. After the customer accepts, however, something is manipulated to show that it necessary for the salesperson to change the deal and make it less advantageous for the customer.

### **Bait and switch tactic**

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## UNIT 5 RESEARCH AS A ROUTE TO INCREASE KNOWLEDGE

### Unit Structure

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Learning Outcomes
- 5.3 Research Methodology in Social Psychology
  - 5.3.1 Systematic observation
  - 5.3.2 Social Survey Method
  - 5.3.3 Correlation
- 5.4 The Experimental Method
  - 5.4.1 Assumption of Experimental Method
  - 5.4.2 Factors of Experimental Method
- 5.5 Summary
- 5.6 References/Further Reading/Web Resources
- 5.7 Answers to Possible Self-Assessment Exercise



### 5.1 Introduction

Research is the back bone of any scientific information. Social psychology has good background of research studies conducted in diverse field. To understand the subject matter in social psychology, insight in to the research methods is of considerable assistance. There are many research methods to be investigated; social psychology employs some of them more frequently. These methods include careful observations in natural settings, correlation research methods and most importantly experimental methods. Theory plays also play a significant role in the field of research. The major role of theories is to guide the research and ensure that the theory used is appropriate to the phenomenon investigation. Consequently, the quest for knowledge should be consider the rights of individuals or person in any research field of endeavours.



### 5.2 Learning Outcome

By the end of this unit, you will be able to;

- Discuss research methodology
- Analyse Systematic observation
- Demonstrate Correlation in research methods
- Evaluate The experimental method and nterpreting research results





### 5.3 Research Methodology in Social Psychology

In social psychology we study human behaviour in social context. Information based on the research covers major part of any text on social psychology. To be scientific in understanding, it is essential to know how the information is gathered. This picture becomes clear when we have some basic understanding of research. It is important to know what was the method used in any research. We often come across research regarding attitude of people towards certain product, what is the opinion of people regarding a political party, political leaders, etc. To rely on this information the way research was conducted needs to be explored. This helps us to develop insight in to the issue. Following are some basic methods employed in social psychological research

#### 5.3.1 Systematic Observation

This is a widely used and appreciated research method. In this method there is a systematic observation and recording of behaviour. It is a careful observation of behaviour as compared to our routine observation. It is also called as naturalistic observation observation of behaviour as it occurs. Here a great effort is laid on the observer to avoid any interference or influence on the person who is being observed.

#### 5.3.2 Social Survey Method

Another method is survey method. In this method a large number of people are asked about their responses regarding their attitudes or opinions on different issues (Ali, 1996). There can be a verbal inquiry or written questions in the form of semi-structured interview schedules, scales, questionnaires and inventories can be used. However, certain aspects need to be taken care. One is the sampling and another is the wording of the questions. In sampling it is important to see that the sample is representative of the entire population in question. For example, if you are investigating the attitude of the people towards compulsory (mandatory) voting in the country, then it is not sufficient to take sample only from one state of the country. It will not represent the opinion or attitude of the entire country (Nwogu, 1991). Similarly, wording is also as important as sampling. For example, if you worded your question as person who murdered someone should be hanged, possibly you will get an answer as 'yes', but if you frame your question as "is death penalty necessary" or "are you in favour of death penalty", you may get both type of answers. Wording is important because it can have different impact on different people.



### 5.3.3 Correlation

Research question often ask “are two factors related?” For example, does rain fall in particular region is related to the type of crops cultivated? Or how study habits are related to better performance in exams? Such questions help us in finding the correlation among two factors. Research refers to these factors as variables. Correlation method is scientific and systematic observation of whether a change in one variable is accompanied by changes in the other variable. This method helps in investigating or establishing relationships among the variables. Correlation can range from zero to -1.00 or +1.00. More the departure from the zero indicates stronger relationship. These relationships can be either positive, negative or no correlation. However, it is necessary to explore those correlations focuses only on relation and not causation. For example, low self-esteem eventually leads to depression indicate relation but not the cause of depression; as depression could be as a result of some life event. According to Minimum, King, & Bear, (1993) although, this method of correlation has some limitations, it is a regularly used and trusted method in social psychology.

#### Self Assessment Exercises1

1. Discuss systematic observation of research in social psychology
2. carefully explain experimental method in social science research

### 5.4. The Experimental Method

As correlation speaks about the relationships among the two variables, experimental method gives explanation for the relationship. In short experimental method answers the ‘why’ of the relationship. The strategy experimental method follows is like; a systematic change in the one variable produces measurable changes in the other variable. In this way it tries to establish cause effect relationship which helps in prediction.

#### 5.4.1 Assumption of Experimental Method

In experimental it is assumed that

- (a) Changes in one factor may produce change in another variable,
- (b) The variable that is systematically changed is called as independent variable and the variable that is measured for change is called as dependent variable. To illustrate this, we will consider one example, thirty students were participant of the experiment where it was to investigate that does amount of food increases the levels of concentration in the classroom. For this experiment the ten students were given no food at all, next ten received only half the lunch than required and another group received complete meal as required. This is

called as systematically making variations in independent variable (Baron, Byrne, and Brans, 2006). All thirty students were exposed to a lecture for one hour. Later rating scale was given to them on which all students have to report how much their concentration was, concentration was the dependent variable, where changes could be measured in the three groups according to the amount of food they received. This was a simple illustration. In an experiment there could be many independent and dependent variables. However, this is not all about an experiment alone; there are other factors that needed to be taken care of for a good experiment

### 5.4.2 Factors of Experimental Method

There are two important influences of experimental research,

1. All the participants in the experiment need to be randomly assigned to the systematic changes made in the variables in the experiment. In short, every participant should have equal chance for all conditions. This procedure removes errors from results like effect due to chance rather than experimental manipulation.

3. The question of external validity. For example, like our earlier experiment of amount of food and concentration, if the class happens to be close to a busy street which is very noisy then the effect of food amount gets confounded by noise on concentration rather than only amount of food. The point is that every research must have the ability to generalise the findings and it is indicated by the external validity of the research.

### Self Assessment Exercises 2

1. discuss the role of theory in social psychology



### 5.5 Summary

In this unit several key variables have been used to understand social research in social psychology. Research methodology as well as the step used in conducting research has been discussed. We have tried to focus on the very important aspect of theories and research due to their similarity as it is significant to this field of study. Theories as significant part of research were all explained. These will guide the students to be familiar and understand research to be able to conduct effective and efficient research in any field of their endeavour.



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## 5.7 Possible Answer to SAEs

### Answer to SAE1

1. It is a careful observation of behaviour as compared to our routine observation. It is also called as naturalistic observation observation of behaviour as it occurs. Here a great effort is laid on the observer to avoid any interference or influence on the person who is being observed.

2. As correlation speaks about the relationships among the two variables, experimental method gives explanation for the relationship. In short experimental method answers the 'why' of the relationship. The strategy experimental method follows is like; a systematic change in the one variable produces measurable changes in the other variable. In this way it tries to establish cause effect relationship which helps in prediction

### Answer to SAE2

There are many ways through which the topics of research projects are formulated. Some are formulated by informal, day to day observations of the social world, events around us. Social psychologists observe and take note of these incidents and plan research to increase their understanding of those aspects of events. However, sometimes ideas or topics of research is suggested by the earlier studies. Earlier research indicated the need to further explore some of the facts. Successful experiments not only answer questions posed but also raise new questions. Therefore, the research works based on such ideas that are

valuable in the field. Even though these are the various ways through which the ideas for research are generated, the most important basis for research ideas in social psychology is formal theories