

**B. A. (Hons.) Part III  
Psychology Paper V**

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**Introduction to Social Psychology****Lesson Structure**

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**1.0 Objective**

The main objective of this lesson is to make the readers acquainted with the postulates, meaning, nature, scope, problems, values, present trends and subject matter of Psychology. Here some conceptual definition of social psychology will be given. In this lesson a brief comparison will be made of the relationship of Social Psychology with Sociology and Anthropology. In the end, a summary of the lesson will be provided. Besides, key words, Questions for exercise and suggestions for further reading will also be given. After going through the lesson carefully the learners will be in a position to answer the questions.

## 1.1 Postulates of Social Psychology

### (i) Postulate of Social Causation

Social Psychology possesses one major postulate that every activity of the human individual originates in some or the other cause. Every science begins by presuming the validity of the cause-effect relationship. Social Psychologist attempts to discover the fundamental causes which lie at the root of the interactions between the individual and the group.

### (ii) Postulate of Social Interaction

Another postulate of social psychology is that the social conduct of an individual is dependent upon his interaction with his social and cultural environment. With this postulate as the basis, much research is being done in the field of social psychology. Of the two factors in this interaction between the individual and society, social psychology places a greater emphasis upon the social factor. And many social psychologists have contended that the society is superior to discrete individuals. They have also proved and substantiated the importance of the influence of society in the development of personality.

### (iii) Postulate of Social Attitudes

It has been pointed out by Sherif and others that the social conduct of the individual is dependent upon the attitude that he brings to bear upon the world that surrounds him. Every individual exists in a specific and definite mental world that is distinct from the physical world of concrete realities. He also possesses his own norms of right and wrong whereby he evaluates the propriety or otherwise of any action with which he is concerned. Hence it becomes necessary to study his frame of references, social perception, personal habits and social norms in addition to his stimulus situations in studying his social behaviour.

### (iv) Postulate of everyday Existence

Modern social psychology is not limited only to the situations that involve laboratory work. On the contrary, it would be more appropriate to cover the studies conducted in real life situation. For example, after the last World War, the social psychology of war and revolution had been the subject of many a detailed study. The function of the laboratory is only to verify those principles which can be seen in the realistic conditions of life. The greater the veracity of a psychological principle, the greater will be the degree to which it will suit the situations of real life and the more accurate will it appear to be. Hence, modern social psychology does its best to work in the controlled conditions and the opportunities offered for controlled work within the laboratory. Thus social psychology in its modern phase is becoming more and more experimental though there are many factors that cannot be studied within the precincts and confines of a laboratory.

## 1.2 Meaning & Definition of Social Psychology

Social Psychology is one of the very important branches of Psychology which has been defined differently by different scientists. One major difficulty in defining Social Psychology is that the coverage of its subject matter always changes. In this branch such facts are collected which have a social origin. It is very difficult to study such facts. In spite of the difficulty several scientists (Psychologists) have tried to define Social Psychology. Some important definitions are given below :

Krech, Cfutchfield and Ballachey (1962) — "Social Psychology may be broadly viewed as the science of behaviour of the individual in society."

This definition is very much similar to the definition given by Sherif and Sherif (1956) with the only difference that the term "behaviour" has been used broadly including experience and behaviour both. The above definition is not able to define the term social behaviour and social situations nor does it even clear the nature of social psychology. It is rather a very brief definition.

It is clear from the above definition that individual's behaviour is studied in two different social situations. One is within group and the other in between groups. In spite of a broad outlook of studying behaviour this definition is also criticised.

Chaplin (1975) defines Social Psychology in a more clear way : "Social Psychology deals with the behavioural interaction of individuals within groups and the interaction between groups."

Allport (1985) defines, "Social Psychology is an attempt to understand and explain how thought, feeling and behaviour of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others."

R. S. Reber (1987) defines Social Psychology in the following way : "Social Psychology is that branch of Psychology that concentrates on any and all aspects of human behaviour, that involve persons and their relationship to other persons, groups, social institutions and to society as a whole."

This definition is somewhat comprehensive and more satisfactory as it has following important points :

1. It is important branch of Psychology which is pure and applied both.
2. It explains individual's behaviour in social situations like
  - (i) individual-to-individual
  - (ii) individual to group
  - (iii) group to group
  - (iv) individual to social organisation
  - (v) individual with full society.

- Sears et al. (1991) Social Psychology is the scientific study of social behaviour.
3. Field of Social Psychology is broad in which all social situations (imagined and real) are taken into consideration for study of behaviour.
  4. Social behaviour which are studied in Social Psychology are organised and goal directed, which is the result of all emotions, memories and cognitions.
  5. Social Psychology is primarily concerned with individual and society, including behavioural unit and inter-personal response trait.

### 1.3 Nature or Characteristics of Social Psychology

On the analysis of above definitions it is clear that following are the important characteristics of Social Psychology.

**1. Characteristics of Social Psychology as pure Science :** It has some conditions and according to these subject matter and methods are changed whether, it is laboratory experiment, field experiment etc. The other important thing with this science that is testable hypothesis is formulated. If the hypothesis is tested and proved that will be taken as principle. Thus, it proves the requisites of a pure science.

**2. Characteristics of applied behavioural Science :** It is applied branch of Psychology which deals with the practical problems of behaviour. In the light of psychological laws and principles psychologists attempt at making individual's life happy and prosperous, e.g. industrial Psychology and educational Psychology.

**3. Characteristics of interaction :** It is the Science of characteristics of interaction between individuals, individual and group and group and organisation. It is based upon S-O-R formula. It means it deals with the simple or complex relationship between stimulus, organism and responses.

**4. Characteristics of analysis of behaviour :** Behavioural interaction depends on so many factors and without analysing behaviour characteristic interaction can not be predicted. To analyse behaviour it is essential to understand three systems of a person. These systems are personality system, social system and cultural system. Social behaviour or characteristics of interaction can be understood after the analysis of this behavioural system.

**5. Characteristics of using scientific methods :** The methods of social psychology are scientific. In social psychology, experimental method is widely used. In experimental method a subject is placed under controlled condition for the sake of study. After a minute observation, a social psychologist puts down the facts in black and white, classifies them and lays down the general 'laws' through generalisation. These are the laws of social psychology. It is thus clear that social psychology makes use of the

scientific method. The other methods included in social psychology are not as much scientific as the experimental method, but even in them an attempt is made to give a scientific form as far as possible and a great deal of success has been achieved in this attempt. Social psychologists may differ to any extent regarding the merits and demerits of some special method, but they agree that the methods in social psychology must be scientific.

**6. Characteristics of facts & factual :** The study in social psychology is factual. The decisions of the social psychologist are impartial and objective. They do not give the verdict as in jurisprudence. They describe the behaviour and discuss the general laws. In this way they relate to facts and not to values.

**7. Characteristics of Universality :** The laws of social psychology are to a greater extent the same in all places and in all times although the psychology of a special human being may differ to any extent. For example, the law that individual behaviour in a crowd is altogether unbalanced and different from his behaviour when he is left alone will hold good everywhere.

**8. Laws of Social Psychology are verifiable :** In this way the laws of social psychology are always found to be true after verification and re-verification. Their validity can be verified at any time. For example, there is always some sort of preconception, ignorance and superstition, etc. at the root of group tensions and this fact may be verified anywhere.

**9. Characteristics of cause-effect relationships :** Social psychology discovers the laws of behaviour and explains the cause-effect relationships therein. For example, the social psychologist discovers cause-effect relationships in mutual attraction between man and woman, socialization of a child, mob-behaviour, etc. and makes useful laws. In this way social psychology discovers "what" and "why" of any behaviour.

**10. Characteristics of prediction :** Since social psychology discovers cause-effect relationships. It can predict about the human behaviour and this prediction is generally true. Therefore, in all the advanced countries these days, help is taken from the prediction by social psychologists in solving the various social problems and this help has proved to be very useful.

11. It is clear from the above description that social psychology is a science, but it does not mean that it possesses the accuracy of the physical sciences. As a matter of fact, the same amount of accuracy cannot be expected from all kinds of sciences. The accuracy of a science depends to some extent on the subject matter of that science. Obviously, the science that studies the individual behaviour in social situation cannot be so accurate as the sciences which study the physical effects, because behaviour is a complex, changing and progressive phenomena. Thus while calling social psychology

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an exact science, it is necessary to keep in mind the limits of its exactitude, although these limits cannot be said to be strictly definite. With the introduction of new methods, accuracy of social psychology is bound to increase.

### 1.4 Scope of Social Psychology

The whole society, so far as it influences man in his interactions, may be called the scope of social psychology. The scope of social psychology extends as far as man's behaviour is influenced by the behaviour of his fellow beings. Wherever an individual's behaviour is influenced by the behaviour of other individuals or influences them, there one finds the subject matter of social psychology.

The scope of social psychology may be divided into three parts, viz.,

1. Social stimuli and social stimulus situations.
2. Individual's reactions and experiences arousing social stimulations, and
3. Influence of social environment on the individual.

**1. Social Stimuli and Social Stimulus situations :** In society, there are many situations which stimulate the individual to work in a particular manner. For example, when an individual is in a crowd, he is in a social stimulus situation, because in this situation the other individuals are present to influence the behaviour of that individual directly. But the stimulus situation can be also indirect. There are many things which symbolically influence an individual. For example, national flag is symbol of nation's prestige. Its presence, its disrespect, its fall, its honour or any other event may influence the individuals and their behaviour. Again, social stimuli and stimulus situations may be simple or complex. Social psychology studies all such social stimuli and stimulus situations. In this study, it tries to discover the causes or the characteristics which permit the special social stimuli and social stimulus situations to influence the behaviour of an individual. For example, the psychological aspects of communalism and communal situations in India have been studied.

**(2) Individual reactions and experiences arising from social stimuli :** Social stimulations influence the reactions of an individual. A man's behaviour in a crowd is at once different from his behaviour when he is all alone. Not only this but the reaction in individual behaviour is varied in crowds of various types. Along with the study of social stimuli and stimulus situations, social psychology also studies in individual reactions and experiences arising from them. It discovers the cause-effect relationships in these reactions and experiences through a psychological analysis. Thus social interaction is the subject matter of social psychology.

**(2) Influence of social environment on the individual :** Social reactions bring about a socialization of an individual. While learning the social ways and customs, one

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also adopts the social behaviour. Socialization not only changes a man's outward behaviour but also his psychology. Some of his impulses undergo a change and he cultivates in himself some other social impulses. Social psychology studies the effect of social environment upon the individual. Moreover Cooper (1979) has explained the following field and scope of Social Psychology :

**1. Individual behaviour** : Basically Social Psychology is related to individual's behaviour which has different dimensions e.g. – Social, economical, political, religious. It studies experience and behaviour of a person in social context.

**2. Socialization** : Socialization is the process through which a person learns to behave according to social standard, values and customs as a child is a social organism at birth.

**3. Group and Group behaviour** : Social Psychology is related to individual's behaviour in social situation in which group and group behaviour is essential. It is because society is made up of individuals and it is a part of it.

**4. Crowd and crowd behaviour** : In Social Psychology crowd and crowd behaviour is necessary because it explains different kinds of behaviour in a crowd.

**5. Leader and leadership behaviour** : It is also one of the essential parts of Social Psychology because leader and his behaviour affect followers' behaviour and followers' behaviour can also affect leader's behaviour.

**6. Attitude, stereotype and prejudice** : All the three facts are important for social interaction. Without attitude, stereotype and prejudice social interaction cannot be understood well.

**7. Motivation and cognition** : The two concepts and its types, nature, characteristics and determinations must be deeply and clearly understood because these two terms can affect social interaction.

**8. Propaganda, public opinion and rumour** : These facts can also affect social behaviour and social interaction. So, it is included in the field of social psychology.

**9. Language and Communication** : Language and communication play an important role in individual's life. So, it is important to study all facts related to two languages and communication.

**10. Person perception and social perception** : For the collection of information and to understand behaviour it is essential to study perception from both the sides (parts), individual's part i.e. how a person perceives about others and social part i.e. how the group perceives about a person.

**11. Social tension and group conflict** : Social tension and group conflict directly affects individual's behaviour and social interaction. It is thus necessary to understand social tension and group conflicts.



**12. Role strain :** Each person has to play different roles in different situations. In some situation a person has to play a different role against expectation which creates some tensions within the individual. Causes and remedies are essential for reducing tension.

**13. Aggression and violence :** These two factors play very Important role in social or personal interaction, example – communal tension, caste riots etc.

Thus scope of social psychology is much wider as it includes all such social behaviour which directly or indirectly affect social interaction in a standard interpersonal behaviour event.

### **1.5 Social Psychology and Sociology**

The aim of sociology is to study society and social organization, how human beings create and recreate an organization which guides and controls their behaviour. Its main concern is to study how society is organised, how it changes and how really fundamental changes in society are resisted. Sociology studies how society as an organization liberates as well as limits the activities of its members, how it sets up standards which the members must follow and maintain. It studies society as a system of usages and procedures, of authority and mutual aid, and how it controls human behaviour. Sociology studies social relationships, and how social relationships change, and how the individual depends on the society for his protection, comfort, education, equipment and opportunity. Human beings live in groups, in communities or nations. In fact, it is possible for a person to find all satisfaction in the tribe or the village or the city; he can find all his social relationships and satisfaction within the community. But modern civilization has released forces which have broken down the self-containedness of the communities. The task of sociology is to study how in the tribal and other forms of group relationships, groups are self-contained and how technological changes in modern times have affected such relationships. Thus, the main difference between sociology and social psychology lies in this approach; while sociology is interested in the social relationships themselves, social psychology is interested in the individuals who enter into social relationships. The difference thus lies in the focus. The focus of social psychology is in the attitudes, the subjective reactions of individuals to institutions, while the focus of sociology is in the institutions themselves like the family, the community, the caste, the social class etc. Every social relationship involves attitudes on the part of the individuals who enter into such a relationship. Two persons may be friendly in their attitude to each other or indifferent or hostile. Thus, the relationship between the two persons is obviously influenced by the attitude which each has towards the other. Similarly, the group as a whole may develop attitudes towards the other groups. When there is a border dispute between two states in India, one group becomes hostile to the other group and social

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tensions and social conflicts arise. Whether the groups are kinship groups, village groups, linguistic groups, communal groups or national groups, they develop attitudes of friendliness or indifference or hostility towards other such groups, Inter-tribal conflicts, inter-village conflicts or international conflicts arise out of such hostile attitudes. Similarly friendly attitudes within the group or between groups promote group cooperation. The task of social psychology is to study such attitudes, how they arise, how they change or how they may resist any kind of change. On the other hand, sociology is more interested in social relationships and social institutions. It is obvious that both the sciences help in understanding. So here we notice nearest relation between psychology and sociology. While defining social psychology, Krech and Crutchfield have said, "Social psychology is the science of behaviour of the individual in society." Social psychology is so much similar to sociology that Karl Pearson has not admitted any difference between them. In the words of Motwani, "Social Psychology is a link between psychology and sociology." Thus the relation of psychology with sociology is very close. Lapiere and Fransworth have rightly said, "Social psychology is to sociology and psychology as biochemistry is to biology and chemistry."

Lastly it can be said that the unit of social Psychology is individual studied in context of society whereas sociology starts studying group and comes to individual. Hence the basic difference lies in the unit of study.

### **Difference**

In spite of the above-mentioned close relation between sociology and social psychology, there are some fundamental differences between the two sciences. Some of the main differences are as follows :

**(1) Subject Matter :** Sociology studies the social relationships, institutions, groups etc. But social psychology studies the behaviour of the individual in group, crowd, mob, audience and other social situations. In the words of Klineberg, "At the same time it remains true that the primary concern of the sociologist is group behaviour and that of the social psychologist is the behaviour of the individual in the group situation. "Thus the subject matter of sociology and social psychology are different. Bogardus has rightly said, "As psychology analyses mental processes so sociology analyses social processes."

**(2) Attitude :** There is difference of attitude in the studies of sociology and social psychology. Social psychology studies the attitudes of individuals towards cultural and social values. Sociology studies social forms and values related with these attitudes. W. R. H. Rivers has rightly pointed out that both these studies are closely related, but they should not depend on each other.

Thus psychology provides elemental facts to sociology while social psychology provides conditioning facts to it.

### 1.6 Social Psychology and Anthropology

The cultural anthropologists are interested in social institutions, the mores and beliefs of tribal societies. According to the anthropologist, all that a group of people have created, whether it is an artifact or a taboo, an implement to work or a mode of worship, in short, whether they are physical objects, or social and religious ideas or relationships, they all form "a culture." Thus, for the anthropologist, culture signifies the total social heritage of mankind. In their study of tribal groups, the anthropologists have become acutely aware of the intimate relation between individuals and the culture itself. They have come to realize that the understanding of the personality of the individual belonging to a culture as well as culture complex of which the individual is a part demands a careful analysis of the ways in which the two are interrelated. In other words, the cultural anthropologists have shown that personality and culture are not only interrelated but are interdependent. Thus, we see the resemblances and differences between social psychology and cultural anthropology. Studies in cultural anthropology have shown how the perceptions and learnings of an individual are closely determined by the cultural background. Thus, the factual data collected by the anthropologists are of immense help in understanding how the individual behaviour and personality are determined by the social and cultural influences. On the other hand, social psychology helps in understanding some of the cultural situation, how he interacts with others and how he is influenced by the other people. From this point of view, social psychology is related more to other social sciences like sociology and cultural anthropology than to the biological sciences, while general psychology is related more to the biological than to the social sciences. For example, while general psychology is interested in the development of personality as such, social psychology is interested in the study of how personality is influenced by the social environment and the social processes, Social Psychology is interested in the study of how the innate needs of man are modified by the social and cultural influences, how social learning takes place and how an individual becomes a typical member of a group so that he not only speaks the particular language of the group in which he has been brought up but also develops attitudes prevailing in the group and cherishes the values of that group; how he acquires the prejudices of the group and develops hostility to the other groups.

#### Common Problems

It is evident from the above account that there are considerable similarities between social psychology and cultural anthropology. The two exhibit the following similarities and relationships —

**1. Some common problems :** Both social psychology and cultural anthropology study the interactions between the cultural environment and the individual. Hence they have some problems which are common to both.

**2. Study of Behaviour :** As has been pointed out earlier, cultural anthropology studies individual's behaviour social circumstances. Similarly, social psychology also studies the interactions of and behaviour of individuals in social circumstances and under cultural conditions.

### **Differences :**

Despite the above-mentioned close relationship the two sciences differ from each other in the following respects —

**(1) Viewpoint :** Social psychology aims at discovering universal laws concerning the individual's social behaviour while social anthropology looks into the past. It does not find it incumbent upon itself to make any suggestions for the future. The approach of cultural anthropology is fundamentally anthropological while that of social psychology is psychological.

**(2) Subject matter :** The subject which social anthropology desires to study is cultural and the cultural behaviour of the individual while social psychology aims at a study of the interaction between individual, culture and society rather than any one of them.

**(3) Methodology :** Social anthropology employs a specifically practical method known as participant observation in which the observer lives in those societies of which he intends to make a study. On the other hand, social psychology uses such methods as experimentation, introspection, case history, questionnaire, and projective techniques, etc.

**(4) Guidance :** Social anthropology makes little or no contribution towards the active and actual solutions of problems that beset society. It is in that respect academic. But social psychology, on the other hand, is expressly concerned with eradicating social evils.

The foregoing account may have created the impression that social anthropology and social psychology are of mutual dependence to each other, yet they are both independent sciences.

### **1.7 Problems of Social Psychology**

In the light of the above discussion, the following problems of social psychology may be stated :

1. The problem of the study of the individual's behaviour in society.
2. The problem of prediction regarding individual's behaviour.

3. The problem of reducing social barriers & social tensions.
4. The problem of studying various groups.

**Aspects of social psychology :** Social Psychology has theoretical as well as practical aspects. The theoretical aspect includes the study and description of the individual's behaviour in society. It discovers the cause-effect relationship and on the basis of discovery it lays down general laws. On the other hand, practical aspect is the use of established law so as to ease social tensions and barriers etc.

### **1.8 Value of Studying Social Psychology**

The importance of Social Psychology in modern India is as follows :—

- (i) In reducing social and international tension,
- (ii) In social reform,
- (iii) In promoting trade by means of effective propaganda & public opinion,
- (iv) In the field of industry
- (v) In the field of politics by entrusting the concept of effective leadership.
- (vi) In the development of self-government
- (vii) In cultural field

In every field the purpose of study of social psychology is to create a healthy interaction between the individuals which may develop a healthy social adjustment.

### **1.9 Present Trends in Social Psychology**

Sherif & Sherif have pointed out the following three trends in Social Psychology—

- (i) Use of Scientific methods & techniques.
- (ii) Achieving necessary perspectives.
- (iii) Study of social behaviour in a frame of reference of increasing influences.

Kimbal Young has made reference to the following six tendencies in Modern Social Psychology —

- (i) Change in the methods of study
- (ii) Change in the presentation of subject matter
- (iii) Substitution of the principle of learning in place of theory of instincts.
- (iv) Increasing impact of Cultural Anthropology
- (v) Increasing influence of clinical and experimental psychology
- (vi) New foundation (Interaction, role & status) of Social Psychology

**1.10 Summary**

A brief summary of the present lesson is given below :

- (i) There are four postulates of social psychology which include social causation, postulates of social interaction, postulates of social attitudes and postulates of everyday existence.
- (ii) Social Psychology has been defined in various ways. The definition of R. S. Reber is accurate and satisfactory. According to this definition social psychology is both pure and applied science which explains individual behaviour in social situations like individual to individual, individual to group, individual to social organisation and individual with full society.
- (iii) Following various definitions of social psychology it becomes clear that it has the characteristics of pure science, as well as that of applied science and it includes the study of interaction, analysis of behaviour by using scientific methods, facts and factual universality, cause-effect relationship and prediction of behaviour.
- (iv) Scope of social psychology is vast and it can be divided into three parts; Social stimuli and social stimulus situation; Individual Reaction and experience causing social stimulations and Influence of Social environment on individuals. Cooper has explained the field of social Psychology which includes individual behaviour, socialisation, group and group behaviour, crowd and crowd behaviour, leader and leadership behaviour, attitude, stereotype and prejudice, motivation and cognition, propoganda and public opinion and rumour, language and communication, personal and social perception, social tension and group conflict, Role strain and aggression and violence.
- (v) Social Psychology is closely related to Sociology. The aim of psychology is to study society and social organisation which guide and control human behaviour, on the other hand, social psychology deals with individuals, their attitudes relating to social institution. The difference between the two is in respect of subject matter and attitude. The subject matter of sociology is social relation, institutions and groups. On the other hand, the subject matter of social psychology is the study of behaviour of individual in the group. Social psychology studies the attitudes of individual towards the cultural and social values. On the other hand, sociology studies social forms and values related to these attitudes.
- (vi) Social Psychology and Anthropology are closely related. Both study the interaction between culture and individual. Anthropology studies individual's

behaviour in social situation. In spite of above similarities both the sciences differ in respect of viewpoint, subject matter, methodology and guidance. Social psychology aims at discovering universal laws concerning the individual's social behaviour while Anthropology looks into the past. The subject matter of Anthropology is cultural behaviour of the individual whereas the subject matter of social psychology is the study of the interaction between the individual, culture and society. Anthropology uses participant observation whereas social psychology uses experimentation introspections, case history, questionnaire, projective technique methods.

- (vii) There are several problems of social psychology relating to the study of individual's behaviour in society, problems of predication of behaviour, problem of reducing social tension and problem of studying social groups.
- (viii) Study of social psychology is very important as it provides measure to reduce social tensions and make social reforms, as well as helps in promoting propaganda and public opinion etc. to achieve a desired goal.
- (ix) Different psychologists have mentioned different types of present trends in social psychology. Sherif and Sherif have mentioned three trends such as use of scientific method, achieving necessary perspectives and study of social behaviour in a frame of reference of increasing influences, similarly Young has mentioned six trends which have been already discussed earlier.

### 1.11 Key words used in the Lesson

Postulate, perception, stimulus, veracity, precincts, cognitions, preconception, stereotyped, self-containedness, artifact, taboo, heritage, introspection, clinical instinct.

### 1.12 Questions for Exercise

#### (a) Short Answer Questions

- (i) What are the postulates of Social Psychology ?

Answer — See 1.1

- (ii) What do you mean by Social Psychology ?

Answer — See 1.2

- (iii) What are the characteristics of Social Psychology ?

Answer — See 1.3

- (iv) How is Social Psychology related to Sociology ?

Answer — See 1.5

(v) How is Social Psychology related to Anthropology ?

Answer — See 1.6

(vi) What are the problems of Social Psychology ?

Answer — See 1.7

(vii) What are the values and importance of Social Psychology ?

Answer — See 1.8

(viii) What are the present trends of Social Psychology ?

Answer — See 1.9

**(b) Long Answer Questions**

(i) What do you mean by Social Psychology ? What are its characteristics ? Discuss

Answer — See 1.2, 1.3

(ii) What is the scope of social psychology ?

Answer — See 1.4

(iii) What are the problems and values or importance of Social Psychology ?  
How is Social Psychology related to Sociology and Anthropology ?

Answer — See 1.7, 1.8, 1.5, 1.6

**1.13 Suggested Readings**

- |       |                                  |                                  |
|-------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| (i)   | Krech, Crutchfield and Ballachey | : Individual in Society          |
| (ii)  | Kuppuswamy                       | : Elements of Social Psychology  |
| (iii) | Sulaiman, M.                     | : Adhunik Samaj Manovigyan       |
| (iv)  | Rastogi                          | : Samaj Manovigyan               |
| (v)   | Srivastava, Pandey, Singh        | : Adhunik Samaj Manovigyan       |
| (vi)  | Singh, A. K.                     | : Samaj Manovigyan Ki Roop-rekha |





**Attitude****Lesson Structure**

- 4.0 Objective
- 4.1 Meaning and Definition of Attitude
- 4.2 Characteristics of Attitude
- 4.3 Dimensions of Attitude
- 4.4 Functions of Attitude
- 4.5 Attitude and Belief
- 4.6 Attitude and Opinion
- 4.7 Attitude and Motive
- 4.8 Formation of Attitude : An Introduction
- 4.9 Factor Determinants of Attitude formation
- 4.10 Development and Change of Attitude
- 4.11 Thurstone Scale of Attitude measurement
  - 4.11.1 Steps in Construction of the Scale
  - 4.11.2 Merits of Thurstone Scale
  - 4.11.3 Demerits of Thurstone Scale
- 4.12 Likert Scale : The Method of Summated Ratings
  - 4.12.1 Steps
  - 4.12.2 Merits of Likert Scale
  - 4.12.3 Demerits of Likert Scale
- 4.13 Summary
- 4.14 Key words used in the Lesson
- 4.15 Questions for Exercise
  - (a) Short Answer Questions
  - (b) Long Answer Questions
- 4.16 Suggested Readings

## 4.0 Objective

One major objective here is to make the learners acquainted with the concept and nature of the attitude. An idea of its differentiation from belief, opinion and motive has been also provided. Another objective of the lesson is to focus on the determinants of attitude. After going through this lesson one will find that there are several factors including psychological determinants which are responsible for formation of attitudes. Still another purpose of the present lesson is to make the readers know how the changes in existing attitude take place. The last objective is to make the learners familiar with the scaling techniques mainly those developed by Thurstone and Likert for measuring attitudes.

## 4.1 Meaning and Definition of Attitude

Attitude has been defined in different ways. Allport (1935) defined an attitude as a "mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related." He looked upon attitude primarily as a set to respond in a particular way.

An attitude is an enduring system that includes a cognitive component, a feeling component and an action tendency. Attitude involves an emotional component. This is why when an attitude is formed it becomes resistant to change; it does not generally respond to new facts. An attitude involves beliefs as well as evaluations. The upper caste man has an unfavourable attitude towards a Harijan. The Indian has an unfavourable attitude towards the Pakistanis or the Chinese. These attitudes involve some knowledge about the other groups (the cognitive component). Some feelings of dislike (the affective, evaluational component) and a predisposition to avoid, attack etc. (the action component).

Our attitudes are derived primarily from social influences. From birth, the human being is enmeshed in social institutions which constitute his environment in the same sense as the physical world. The home, being the primary social unit, has a great influence on the formation of one's attitudes. This is why later experiences cannot easily alter these attitudes. This is also the reason why attitudes give a consistency to our responses to persons, groups, and other social objects.

From the foregoing account it is evident that attitude is a specific mental state of the individual towards something according to which his behaviour towards it is moulded. For example, due to differences in the respective attitudes of the Muslims and the Hindus towards cow slaughter, their behaviour towards the cow differs.

- (a) Attitude is the mental or neural state of readiness.
- (b) Attitude influences the reactions of the individual.
- (c) Attitude changes the reactions of the individual.

"An attitude may be defined as a learned and more or less generalised and effective tendency or predisposition to respond in a rather persistent and characteristic manner, usually positively or negatively (for or against) in reference to some situation, idea, value, material object or class of such objects or person or group of persons." This definition of attitude improves upon the definition by Allport in this respect that it introduces the following two elements omitted by Allport :

- (a) Attitude is generally either negative or positive.
- (b) Attitude is a learned or acquired effective tendency.

"An attitude can be defined, as an enduring organisation of motivational, emotional, perceptual and cognitive processes with respect to some aspect of the individual's world." This definition is a specific attempt at the analysis of attitude and an exposure of the various elements present in it. Thus attitude consists of perceptual, motivational, emotional and behavioural component.

### 4.2 Characteristics of Attitude

An account of the characteristics of attitudes will help in understanding its diverse nature. The major characteristics of attitude are as follows :

1. Related with images, thoughts and external objects : Attitudes are related with images, thoughts and external objects. For example, upon hearing of the Chinese attack on Indian territory, every Indian national developed a negative attitude towards the Chinese aggressors. In this attitude is involved the thought that in attacking India the Chinese have made a most unjustified and immoral move. In this attitude some imaginary concepts concerning the Chinese aggressors are present in the mind of the individual, and these are based upon his knowledge of the Chinese attack. This mental attitude is further influenced by some external objects. Because of this attitude, the individual is persuaded to contribute his entire wealth to the national defence fund in order to help to expel the aggressor from the country. The relation of the attitude to thoughts, images and external objects is evident from this example.

2. **Directive for specific direction** : Attitudes guide and control the behaviour of the individual in a particular direction. In the foregoing example which illustrated the nature of attitude, it was seen that due to there being a negative attitude towards the Chinese aggressors the individual was prepared to do his best to help the Indian

soldiers who were fighting with them. In this way, the behaviour of an individual can be predicted if there is knowledge of his attitude towards the Chinese attack, since attitudes direct the activities of the individual, his reaction can be predicted by knowing his attitudes.

**3. Affective experience :** Various kinds of affective experiences are also attached to attitudes. In the foregoing example may be seen attached emotions of anger, displeasure and sometimes hatred in the attitude of the Indian individual towards the Chinese attack.

**4. Importance of the unconscious in the creation of attitude :** The unconscious motive is an important factor in the creation of attitudes. Sometimes even the individual himself is unaware of the motives behind his attitude towards a particular person or object because in fact the motive is in his unconscious.

**5. Relation between the individual's needs and problems :** Attitudes are related to the person's needs and problems. When China attacked India, every Indian was faced with economic, political and other problems which thereby became all the more glaring. This led to a very direct interference in the fulfilment of his day-to-day needs since it is natural for the populace to suffer many hardships. In this way, being related to needs and problems a negative attitude towards the Chinese is developed in the minds of the Indian people.

### 4.3 Dimensions of Attitude

**1. Direction :** This dimension is concerned with 'for' or 'against' tendency of the individual towards the object. It is concerned with whether the attitude is positive (favourable) or 'negative' (unfavourable). To hold an attitude itself indicates that an individual is holding either positive or negative attitude towards it. Direction is indicated on the scale by 'like dislike' or 'yes-no' or such similar pairs. It indicates the favourableness or unfavourableness of the individual towards the object.

**2. Intensity :** This dimension indicates the strength or degree of attitude; i.e. how strongly the person feels about the object. It ranges from "very strong" to "very weak."

**3. Centrality :** This dimension indicates whether an attitude is close to the centre of attitudes and values that are highly significant to the welfare and goals of the individual and whether it occupies an important place in his life or not. Generally attitudes that are strongly held are central and those which are weakly held are peripheral. Thus a person's attitudes toward himself are central, while those regarding others will be peripheral.

**4. Salience** : This dimension shows the degree to which an attitude is given special prominence by the individual. Attitude towards particular object may be central, but may not be salient.

**5. Consistency** : This is the dimension of the extent to which various attitude systems form together and are related. This is concerned also with change in attitudes over a period of time.

### 4.4 Functions of Attitude

People have attitudes towards social objects because they (a) help them to organize, simplify and understand the world around them, (b) protect their self-esteem, by avoiding unpleasant truths about themselves, and (c) allow them to express their fundamental values (Triandis, 1971). To these three functions must be added a fourth one, that they help them to conform to the group and thus maximize rewards from the group. Thus attitudes help us to adjust to our environment.

### 4.5 Attitude and Belief

Worchel and Cooper (1979) define belief as an expression of relationship among objects or ideas. Similary Krech et al (1948) define belief as an enduring organization of cognition about some aspects of some individual world.

It is obvious that like attitude, belief is also stable and characterised by cognitive and behavioural components. However they differ in the following ways :

(i) Belief does not possess feeling component whereas attitude is characterised by it besides, cognitive and behavioural component.

(ii) Each and every belief must possess the attitude, but every attitude is not a belief.

(iii) Attitude is directional positive or negative, belief is non-directional.

(iv) The behavioural aspect of attitude is comparatively strong

(v) The field of belief is comparatively limited than that of attitude

(vi) Belief possesses more superstitions than attitude,

(vii) The probability of change of attitude as compared to belief is more.

Thus we see that there are several differences between attitude and belief.

### 4.6 Attitude and Opinion

Chaplin (1975) defines opinion as a belief, particularly one that is tentative and still open to modification. Attitude and opinion are not synonymous. They differ from one another as follows :

- (i) Attitude is an anticipatory response whereas opinion is verbalized expression,
  - (ii) The behaviour of a person is largely influenced by attitude and partly influenced by opinion.
  - (iii) The area of attitude is unconscious whereas area of opinion is conscious.
- Thus we see that there are several differences between attitude and opinions.

### 4.7 Attitudes and Motives

There are several differences between attitudes and motives :

- (i) Motive continues till they are satisfied. The moment goal is achieved, motives die. On the other hand attitudes are comparatively stable.
- (ii) Both motive and attitude have definite goals.
- (iii) Both consist of emotional and perceptual components.
- (iv) The field of attitude is wider as compared to motives.
- (v) The characteristics of mobility are more in motive and its affective component is stronger. On the other hand cognitive and emotional components of attitude are much stronger.

Thus we see that attitudes and motives are closely related. At the same time we come to the conclusion that both of them differ significantly from each other.

### 4.8 Formation of Attitude

How are attitudes acquired ? How do they develop ? As noted above, the majority of attitudes held by a person are acquired from the members of the family and from the peer group in early childhood and later from reference groups and organization. Thus, other people are generally the sources for the formation of attitudes. Most of our attitudes develop within the group to which we belong. Another source is personal experience; such experiences, however, form a small number; though they are more intense than those formed by association with other people. The most intense but rare are the attitudes formed by a "traumatic experience" like, for example, the shock of being suddenly attacked physically by a member of another communal group.

The cognitive components of attitudes are influenced by the general tendency to categorization. A Muslim meets many Hindus, but he tends to put them all together and simplifies the problem by some such generalization as "All Hindus are unreliable." Similarly the Hindu who meets many Muslims overlooks all the variations and may generalize "All Muslims are crude." Such categorizations simplify the situation but they are highly inaccurate because of the simplification.

The affective component of attitudes is characterized by the presence of positive or negative emotion. The affective component is influenced greatly by reinforcement and repetition. The positive attitude towards festivals is due to food, the lights etc., which give rise to pleasure. Similarly the negative attitudes are due to displeasure associated with individuals, groups or social events.

The behavioural components of attitudes are greatly influenced by social norms which are ideas held by a group regarding what is correct behaviour and what is not. In the course of socialization children are told by parents about what they should do and what they should not do. The general basis for negative attitude towards Harijans is the fact that parents prevent children from associating with sweepers, cobblers, etc., who are poor, illiterate and dirty. Why do such norms for behaviour towards outgroups develop? Triandis and Triandis (1960) have argued that economic conditions place one group in a position of advantage over another. In order to maintain this position of advantage negative attitudes are developed towards the group with economic disadvantage so that it can continue to be backward. The norms will continue to operate even when economic considerations are not relevant. The upper caste man, for instance, continues to look upon a person as "untouchable" though he may have superior education wealth etc. This is how he tries to maintain his self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1967).

### 4.9 Factor determinants of attitude formation

Attitudes have great influence on the individual's social behaviour. There are many factors that influence the formation and development of attitudes right from the early age. The most important factors are motivation, information to which the individual is exposed, group affiliation, personality traits of the individual, social learning and direct experience.

**1. Motivation want satisfaction :** Attitudes develop in the process of want satisfaction. In coping with various problems in trying to satisfy his wants the individual develops attitudes. He develops favourable attitudes toward the objects, persons and situations that help in satisfying his wants. The final goal objects will be favourably evaluated and the means-goals (intermediate goals) will be seen favourably (e.g. a patient has favourable attitudes towards a doctor). An individual will develop unfavourable attitudes toward the object and people that block the achievement of his goals. The individual's attitudes may come to have surplus instrument at value for him. He develops his attitudes in response to problem situation while trying to satisfy his specific wants. In so far as his attitudes are enduring systems they remain with him and may be used by him to solve various other problems in satisfying his wants. For example, a boy may acquire a favourable attitude only for pleasing his father who is a

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professional politician. When he becomes an adult this attitude becomes involved in satisfying his wants for power or for achieving prestige or securing material gains or for helping others.

The attitudes of racial prejudice which seem to support aggression due to frustration are often derived from economic, social, political and sexual frustrations. The important point is that the attitude formation is rooted in the motives of people.

**2. Exposure to information :** Attitudes are shaped by the information to which the individual is exposed. This is concerned with the cognitive component of the attitude. It is possible that an individual may not have any attitude toward certain objects or situation such as 'biological warfare.' But he may read about such objects from newspapers or books, or may hear from other people and may form unfavourable (negative) attitudes towards them. He may get information through various sources such as authorities books, magazines, newspapers, radio, television, government, leaders, scientists, or an old person with great experience etc. The information collected from various sources may or may not be valid. If the wrong or incomplete information is taken as valid, then the attitude toward the object will be relatively prejudiced. Sometimes some authorities purposely spread incorrect information or partial information about a particular situation, so that desirable attitudes may be formed toward it either positive or negative. The techniques of propaganda are based on this condition. When the correct and additional information is gathered the individual may change his attitude. As the person grows older he goes on getting information about various objects and situations; and he may go on modifying his attitudes toward them.

**3. Group affiliation :** The group to which the individual affiliates (belongs), also helps in determining his attitudes. His attitudes tend to reflect the values, beliefs and norms of his group (society).

**(a) Group beliefs :** People form group in order to achieve common goals. The uniformity in attitudes among members of a group (or culture) is partly due to common beliefs about objects, people, events, situations, issues etc. A Russian acquires certain beliefs about American from his Russian culture and his attitudes toward Americans are based upon these beliefs.

**(b) Group-Values :** Many values are shared by group members in common. Things that are supposed to be "good" or "bad" by the group are also accepted as good or bad by the individual and he forms favourable or unfavourable attitudes towards that object.

**(c) Group norms :** Regulate the activities of participants in standard behaviour events (what is appropriate at a particular time). Group norms also prescribe what are the right attitudes for the members of the group and they are punished for holding 'wrong' attitudes by social disapproval.



**4. Personality :** This is also a factor that determines an individual's attitudes. The individual tends to accept those attitudes of his own which are most consistent with his personality pattern. This is true of religious and political or attitudes towards such things as war, foreign affairs, women's liberty and so on.

Among the personality variables which determine the formation of attitudes, the most important is child-training which leads to formation of 'authoritarian' personality. Adorno et al (1950) showed that people who had stern and punitive fathers and grew up in families organized along hierarchical lines with a powerful father figure, developed authoritarian personality. Such people accept in group authority figures without questioning them, desire powerful leaders, show obedience and respect for authority, approve severe punishment for deviants and admire military men, athletes and financiers. By contrast those low in authoritarianism prefer equalitarian leaders, show warmth and love in interpersonal relations, are tolerant of deviants, admire scientists, artists and social reformers. Thus, those high in authoritarian scale are highly prejudiced in their outlook while those low in it are tolerant.

Another significant personality variable is 'conscience' or inner control. There is a good deal of evidence to show that when the mother is the chief socializer using techniques of discipline like withdrawal of love, the child develops internal controls. But, when the father is the chief socializer using techniques of discipline like physical punishment, the child has weak internal controls; he does not learn to control himself. People who learn to use internal controls are more likely to act according to their own standards, while those who are under the influence of external controls are more likely to act according to the norms of their ingroup.

Thus, the kind of child training to which different individuals are exposed results in different conceptualizations regarding interpersonal relationships. The more positive conceptualization leads to an outlook that people are good, strong and humanistic; they advocate negotiation etc. to settle disputes. But those who had experience of highly punitive child training practices are likely to develop negative views of human relation looking upon people as bad and weak and favour settling disputes by violence.

Insecurity is another important personality variable. Sense of insecurity makes a person intolerant of ambiguity; so he may opt for "right dictatorship" (fascism) or "left dictatorship" (communism). Insecurity may be caused not only by child training, where the parents punish inconsistently and without explanation, but also by loss of status in adult life.

**5. Social learning : Acquiring Attitudes from others :** Other people are one of the major sources of our social attitudes. Briefly we acquire our preferences and aversions, beliefs and behaviour tendencies from persons around us. It is through social

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learning that we acquire our attitude. Social learning seems to take many forms and occurs in diverse ways but here we will examine three processes that often play a role in information of attitudes.

(i) Classical conditioning is one type of learning based on association. It is a basic principle of psychology that when one stimulus regularly precedes another one that occurs first may soon become a signal for the one that occurs second. In other words, when the first stimulus is presented, individuals come to expect that the second will follow. As a result, they may gradually demonstrate the same kind of reactions to the first stimulus as they do the second, especially if the second stimulus is one that induces fairly strong reactions when encountered.

How actually classical conditioning lead to formation of attitude ? It will be discussed by taking an example. Imagine a young child who sees his father frown and demonstrate signs of displeasure each time he meets members of a particular minority group. At first the child is quite neutral towards members of this group, their defining characteristics (e.g. skin colour, style of dress, accent etc.) have little or no effect on her. Yet her father's emotional signs of disapproval are quite upsetting to the child. Gradually he begins to experience negative reactions to the group in question.

In short, the child has acquired a tendency to respond negatively to such persons. Such affective reactions may then form the core of a developing negative attitude towards members of this group.

In short, classical conditioning can play a vital role in the development of attitudes and some of these, at least, have a high degree of social importance (Rajecki, 1989).

(ii) Instrumental conditioning plays an important role in attitude formation when young children are rewarded or punished for indulging in certain forms of behaviour. These behaviours are strengthened or weakened depending whether reward or punishment is used. Thus we see that behaviour that is followed by positive outcomes are strengthened and tend to be repeated. In contrast, behaviours that is followed by negative outcomes are weakened, or at least suppressed. Thus, a second way in which attitudes are acquired from others is through the process of instrumental conditioning. By rewarding their children for stating the 'right' views, the ones they themselves favour parents and other adults play an active role in shaping their offspring's attitudes. It is for this reason that, until they reach their teen years, most youngsters express political, religious and social views highly similar to those held by their families.

(iii) **Modelling** : Third important process through which we acquire attitude is modelling. Here individuals develop specific views simply by observing the words or behaviour of others, even in the total absence of direct rewards for doing so. Such effects can frequently be seen in situations where parents do not actively attempt to instruct their children in given views, but do demonstrate these in their own actions.

Young children imitate or copy the behaviour of not only parents but other significant individuals.

**6. Role of Direct Experience :** In many cases our attitudes are formed through direct or enforced contact with attitude objects—not simply 'borrowed' from other persons through some form of social learning. Thus in many cases our attitudes stem from direct experience often seem to be stronger and easier to remember than ones acquired less directly (e.g. through observation of the words or actions of others). Evidence pointing to these conclusions have recently been obtained by Fazio and his colleagues. Their findings and support to the view that attitudes developed through direct contact with attitude objectives are stronger and more readily accessed within memory than attitudes developed without such contact. These results point to another intriguing conclusion—attitudes formed through direct experience often exert stronger or more consistent effect upon our actions than attitudes formed in the absence of such experience.

### 4.10 The Change of existing Attitude

There are two major kinds of attitude change. Attitude change has most generally come to mean a change in the sign of the existing attitude (from positive to negative or negative to positive) or a decrease in the initial amount of positivity or negativity. This type of change we will term incongruent change because the direction of change is towards the sign opposite that of the original attitude. The second major type of attitude change is congruent change because the direction of change is congruent with the sign of the existing attitude. Congruent change may involve an increase in the negativity of an existing negative attitude or an increase in the positivity of an existing positive attitude.

The principles of attitude change may not be the same for both the congruent and the incongruent types of change.

Congruent change is always easier to produce than incongruent change, other things being equal. Congruent change is relatively easy, more extreme, multiplex, consistent, interconnected, consonant, want-serving, and centrally valued attitude.

#### 4.10.1 Techniques of Changing Attitude

The following are the methods of changing existing attitudes :

**1. Change in group affiliation (Affiliation with new group) :** When an individual affiliates himself with a new group, he tends to adopt the attitudes prescribed by the values and norms of the group. It has been reported that changes in the group affiliation of the individual often bring about changes in his attitudes. But all new group

affiliations are not, of course, equally effective in inducing attitude change. The power of a group to modify the attitudes of new members is, in part, a function of certain characteristics of the group. Such as the nature of the group norms, constraints upon leaving the group, and the effectiveness of the monitoring system of the group.

**2. Enforced Contact :**

Enforced contact with the object of an attitude may strengthen or weaken an existing attitude, may produce congruent or incongruent change. Familiarity may breed love or hate. Enforced contact may also change the intensity of an attitude, may even if its valence remains unchanged.

Enforced modification of behaviour owes its effectiveness to several factors. First, enforced contact with members of minority groups tends to correct autistic distortion. This may correct invalid, stereotyped beliefs which support prejudiced attitudes. Secondly, when there is a need to come to terms with a "negative" object, there is also a tendency to seek to discover favourable aspects about that object.

Prejudices are likely to be diminished when prejudiced people are brought into situations that compel contact between them and the objects of prejudice, provided

(a) that the behaviour of the objects of prejudice is such as not to conform with the beliefs of the prejudiced. That is, the Negroes with whom the prejudiced person has contact are not "lazy", "ignorant", "delinquent", etc.

(b) that the intimacy and amount of contact with objects of prejudice not conforming to the stereotypes of the prejudiced are such as to result in experiences which are sufficiently compelling to resist marked perceptual and memorial distortion.

(c) that the contact takes place under conditions which make the nonconforming behaviour seem relevant to the basis on which the objects of prejudice are grouped together.

(d) that the prejudiced person has values or is exposed to social influences (e.g. democratic values or the social influences emanating from a policy of an official, public body) which would strongly conflict with the unabashed retention of unrationalized prejudices.

In support of the fact that enforced contact has significant effect on attitude change two relevant studies have to be mentioned here. One study was made by the research branch of the Army's Information and Education Division (1952), in which Negro soldiers were mixed with white soldiers. The attitudes of white soldiers towards Negroes were measured both before and after the mixing of troops. The first survey showed that the majority of the white soldiers and two-third of the white officers showed unfavourable attitudes towards Negro soldiers. The second survey indicated that 77% of the white officers showed favourable attitude toward Negro soldiers. Only 7% of the

white soldiers showed unfavourable attitude. Thus the survey supported the hypothesis that enforced contact is an effective tool for changing existing attitudes.

Another study was made by Deutsch and Collins (1951) who compared Negro-white relations in two types of housing project — Integrated project and Segregated project. In the Integrated housing project Negro and white families were assigned apartments together while in segregated project Negro and white families were assigned two different buildings or two different areas. The findings of the study supported the hypothesis that living in an Integrated project will result in better interpersonal relations between Negroes and whites. This experimental evidence also is indicative of the fact that enforced contact is significantly conducive to attitude change.

### **3. Role Playing**

People often find themselves in situations in which norms of behaviour require them to act towards members of a minority group or towards other attitude objects in a way that is opposed to their private attitudes. The prejudiced professor is constrained to be polite to a Jewish colleague or a Negro student; the bigoted businessman must, if he is to survive, attract and serve customers of all races, creeds, and colours; the ethnocentric white guest must show a modicum of politeness to a Negro whom he finds is a fellow guest in the home of his host. The culturally defined roles of professor, businessman, and guest prescribe behaviour toward minority group persons which is opposed to the private attitudes of the prejudiced professor, the bigoted businessman the ethnocentric guest.

### **4. Mass Media**

Medium of communication plays a vital role in changing existing attitudes. It includes radio, T.V., newspapers etc.

The effectiveness of propaganda is influenced not only by who the propagandist is, but by the medium (radio, television, newspaper, magazine, word of mouth, etc.) which is used. Considerable researches have been done on this problem, and in this section we will compare mass-media appeals with personal appeals.

#### **Mass-Media Vs. Personal Influence**

There seems to be almost universal agreement that personal influence is more effective than the influence of the various mass media in changing attitudes.

Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet, in their study found personal influence much more effective in inducing changes in voting decisions than the mass-media. They suggest that the greater effectiveness of personal influence is due to the greater flexibility of face-to-face persuasion. The mass media had, in fact, only small effects upon actual vote decisions and even smaller effects upon changes in vote decision. The ineffectiveness of mass media over short periods of time is due largely to the fact that people tend to select information which is congruent with their existing attitudes.

Katz and Lazarsfeld have compared the relative impact of personal influence and mass media on such personal decisions as the purchase of food and other household goods, the choice of motion pictures, and fashion changes. In all three types of decisions, personal influence played a greater role than did any of the mass media.

The greater effectiveness of face-to-face influence does not mean that the mass media are not important in the flow of communication in modern society. One of the major hypotheses of the study by Katz and Lazarsfeld, in fact, was that of "the two step flow of communication." This was first stated by Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet as follows : "Ideas often flow from radio and print to the opinion leaders and from them to the active sections of the population."

If this "two-step" hypothesis is valid for opinion leadership in the areas of marketing, movie-going, and fashions, the opinion leader should be found to be more highly exposed to the various mass media than non-leaders. And this was found by Katz and Lazarsfeld to be the case. In a modern society, communications tend to flow from the various mass media to opinion leaders and from them by word of mouth to other people. Despite the name, mass media do not depend only upon direct influence on the mass media for their effectiveness.

Peak (1955) has directed a programme of research on attitude change which is based upon the following assumption : "An attitude toward any object or situation is related to the ends which the object serves, i.e., to its consequences. This we have called the instrumental relation."

It follows from this assumption that attitude change should result from changes in expected satisfaction from the goals served by an attitude or from changes in the instrumental relations believed to exist between the attitude object and the goal. A study by Carlson (1956) was designed to test the latter.

The work of Peak and her students suggest an important principle for the propagandist : A communication that induces new beliefs about the instrumental or means attributes of an object will be more effective than one that does not have that advantage. The good propagandist will attempt to design his message to change beliefs about the object of the attitude. This requires that the propagandist tailors his propaganda to hit those beliefs of his audience which support the attitude.

**Conclusion drawing by communication by audience** : As we have stressed earlier facts do not speak for themselves. The same facts may mean different things to different people. We should, therefore, expect that the propagandist would be more effective in securing comprehension and acceptance if the intended interpretation of his facts point out the desired conclusion.

**Order of Presentation** : When a propagandist writes a speech, he is faced with the question of how best to order his arguments. Shall he present positive arguments before negative arguments ? Shall he present the sweet first and the bitter second, or viceversa ?

McGuire (1957) addressed himself to the latter question. He sought to determine how best to persuade an audience to accept future educational programme, some features of which were seen as desirable by the audience and some as undesirable. He predicted (and his study confirmed his prediction) that when desirable features were presented first and undesirable second greater agreement would result than when the features were presented in the reverse order.

### **5. Exposure to Additional Information**

Formation and change are not separate stages in the lives of attitudes. They are rather continuous phases in growth which we have separated arbitrarily for purposes of ex-position. The principles of attitude formation and the principles of attitude change must, therefore, be consistent with one another.

Attitudes, are used by the individual in constructing a meaningful, orderly and stable world. We should expect, then, that in so far as additional information tends to change, enlarge, or constrict the individual's world, such information will tend to become incorporated into existing attitudes. As this happens, the original attitudes undergo change.

The attitudes of the individual, formed as he interacts with other persons in his group, reflect the beliefs, norms, and value of his groups. As he moves into new groups with different belief systems, different norms and different values, his attitudes will tend to show accommodating changes.

The following are the factors influencing the direction and degree of attitude change induced by additional information :

**(i) Situational Factors** : Three characteristics of the communication situation have been subjected to scientific study : the effect of group versus solitary exposure, the effect of private versus public commitment after exposure of a communication, and the effect of group decision.

Although there is little or no supporting evidence, it is commonly thought that the most effective radio and television broadcasts are those which are addressed to arranged audiences rather than to isolated individuals. The success of the results based on the study suggest that group listening may counteract the effects of a communication if there is a split in opinion among the members of the group and the members are allowed to discuss the issue.

(ii) **Commitment** : The device of requiring people to commit themselves publicly to a change in attitude has long been used by propagandists. It is assumed that if a person makes his stand public he will be less likely to change his position as a result of counter propaganda.

The effect of commitment on the stability of changes in attitude has been studied by several investigators. In general, public commitment has been found to be an effective procedure; private commitment (making a decision which remains unknown to anyone but the individual) has been found to be ineffective.

(iii) **Group Decision** : Lewin and his associates (1952) were the first to study and confirm the effect of group decision upon the action and attitudes of individuals.

**5. Personality change Technique**

In recent years there has been increasing interest in examining the possibility of changing social attitude changing personality. For an earlier study illustrating the use of a standard psychotherapeutic technique with "problem children" and resulting changes in racial attitudes.

(i) **Pride and Prejudice** : In a series of studies, Katz and his associates have studied the role of self insight and self-defensiveness in racial attitudes and in the changing of racial attitudes. In one study Katz, Sarntoff, and McClintock (1956) compared the effectiveness of a factual informative appeal and a self insight procedure. They found that unfavorable attitudes toward the Negro were not appreciably changed by the factual, informative appeal.

The interpretative material was found to be effective in producing more tolerant attitude toward the Negro in persons who were low and moderate in self-defensiveness. Those subjects who were high in self-defensiveness were not, however, appreciably changed. This was interpreted as due to resistance; the material was assumed to be so threatening to a highly self-defensive person that it was rejected. The high "ego-defender" needs, and needs badly, to keep her prejudice, to preserve her pride.

It was also found that the self insight material, as predicted, had a greater effect, over time than did the informational material. The prediction of a " sleeper effect" for the self insight procedure was based on the notion that "deeper" changes in the personality would be produced by this material and that these changes would take longer to occur.

It was found that the material designed to produce self-insight was most effective when accompanied by this appeal to self-consistency. A number of subjects changed their attitudes because they came to recognize the inconsistency of prejudice existing in the kind of persons they were or believed they were. The process seemed to be more one of increased self-understanding than one of increased insight into the defensive nature of prejudice.



### 4.10.2 Cognitive Dissonance

While maintenance of existing attitude is a function of cognitive consonance, the change of existing attitude is a function of cognitive dissonance.

**Cognitive Dissonance** : Festinger (1957) has developed a theory of cognitive dissonance which has a number of interesting consequences for attitude change. The cognitive dissonance theory holds that two cognitions "...in dissonant relation if, considering those two alone, the obverse of one element would follow from the other." For example, the belief that all human beings are equal in the sight of the Lord and the belief that Negroes should not be allowed to worship in one's church are in dissonant relation since the obverse of the second belief follows logically from the first. The theory further holds that dissonance, "...being psychologically uncomfortable, will motivate the person to try to reduce dissonance and achieve consonance."

The direct applicability of this theory to the phenomena of attitude change through enforced modification of behaviour and through role playing is obvious. If, through either of these means, the individual is led to express outwardly an attitude which is discrepant from his actual private attitude, then a state of dissonance is created in him. This uncomfortable state can be reduced in various one of which is to shift the inner attitude that it corresponds more closely with the outward expression. For a study which individual some unexpected consequences of such dissonance between inner belief and overt act.

### Conclusions

The free man in society unlike the subject man in the psychological laboratory, lives in world in which all the factors that make for attitude change or attitude persistence are simultaneously active, working together or at cross purposes. The final result attitude change or attitude persistence is the product of complex interactions among the various determinants which we have discussed in this chapter.

For clarity of exposition we have treated these various determinants separately. But here, as everywhere in psychology, interaction is the rule. Men are exposed to new information which may both support and oppose existing attitudes, their goals, in whose service attitudes are formed, may be various and conflicting, the groups with which they affiliate may demand antagonistic loyalties. The change or persistence of their attitudes is the end result of the complex interaction of these diverse, and often opposing forces.

### 4.11 Thurstone Scale of attitude measurement

One of the first methods for assessing attitudes was developed about seventy years ago by Thurstone and Chave (1929).

It is one of the most important methodological contributions to attitude scale construction and perhaps most widely used procedure of attitude measurement. It is also called L.L. Thurstone's technique of equal appearing intervals.

#### **4.11.1 Steps in Construction of Thurstone attitude Scale**

The various steps in constructing a Thurstone attitude scale are as follows :

1. Brief statements expressing attitudes about a particular issue are gathered from current literature or are especially prepared for this purpose. The statement should cover the entire range of attitudes from extremely favourable to extremely unfavourable, including an adequate number of neutral statements.

There is no absolutely set number of statements. In constructing an attitude scale about the church, for example Thurstone began with 130 statements. The statement should be brief, unambiguous, and relevant in such form that they can be endorsed or rejected in terms of a definitely expressed attitude. Wang (Journal of Social Psychology, III, 367-373) mentioned sixteen criteria which should be considered in the preparation of statements for attitude scale.

2. After being carefully edited, the statements are given an arbitrary number for identification and mimeographed in such form that they can be cut into fairly uniform individual slips of paper. Complete set of the statements are given to a large number of judges with clear, simple instructions to sort them into several piles, usually 7 to 11, so that the various piles represent a graduated series of attitudes from extremely favourable to extremely unfavourable. Accordingly, each judge places each statement in one of the 7 or 11 piles, depending on the degree of favourableness or unfavourableness indicated by the statement in judge's opinion.

This is perhaps the most important as well as most vulnerable step in the construction of the Thurstone scale. It should be emphasized that the judges are not supposed to express their own attitude about an issue but attempt to arrange the statements as objectively in terms of the various positions on the scale. If the judges are careless or for some other reasons fail to follow instructions, the resulting scale value might be distorted. In this connection it is significant to point out that the attitude which the judges hold do not seem to influence their ratings of the statement.

3. After all the judges have sorted the statements, a complete tabulation is made of sorting so that it is possible to determine the number of times each statement is included in the several piles.

4. The scale value for each statement is determined graphically. The accumulated proportions of each statement are plotted in the form an give or cumulated frequency curve. By means of simple interpolation the median and quarile value so obtained

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represents the scale value of the statement. If a statement is ambiguous the difference between  $Q_1$  and  $Q_2$  will be large.

This difference is known as the  $Q$ -value or coefficient of ambiguity.

The final scale is made up of a selection of 15 to 20 comparatively unambiguous, relevant statements arranged in random order, representing a graded series of values from extremely favourable to extremely unfavourable. The scale is known to be administered to a sample of the population whose attitudes are to be measured. Two alternative procedures have been used which give substantially the same results, the scores for the subject filling out an attitude scale may be either 1, the arithmetic mean of the scale values of the statements that are endorsed 2. the median value of the endorsed statement, indicated by either a single or double check.

An example of Thurstone attitude scale

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Favourable

Neutral

Unfavourable

### 4.11.2 Merits of Thurstone Scale

1. This is a simple method for measuring attitude. Attitude, can be easily measured through this scale.
2. Consistent and favourable statements are selected by the experts or judges. As such correct statements are selected.
3. This is a 11-point scale. As such attitudes are correctly and easily measured. But Likert scale is a 5-point scale.
4. According to Feldman (1985), the value of this technique is that we can be fairly confident that the resultant scale has mathematically equal intervals between each points.
5. Thurstone has claimed that equal appearing interval method is highly reliable. Its  $r = .80$ . Ferguson found reliability for items between .52 and .80 and for 40 items between, .68 and .89.

### 4.11.3 Demerits of Thurstone Scale

1. Krech et al (1982) has pointed out that the claim of Thurstone that the judges while sorting the statements on 11-points are not influenced by their personal attitude is incorrect to a greater extent. The sorting of statements is influenced by their own attitude.
2. Krech et al has pointed out that there is no provision of item discrimination in this scale. As such, Thurstone scale is not superior to Likert scale.

3. Edward (1957) has pointed out that there is no provision for the selection of discriminating items in this scale.
4. Though the content validity of this scale is satisfactory, its predictive validity is doubtful. Krech et al has also criticized this scale on the same ground.
5. Method of equal appearing interval is time taking. In this scale the selection of statement is also difficult.

#### 4.12 Likert Scale : The Method of Summated Ratings

The second type of attitude scale is referred to as the "technique of summated ratings" although it is frequently labeled as the "Likert technique," and "the method of internal consistency." This technique is similar to the Thurstone's technique of equal appearing intervals. In fact the only important difference is in the determination of scale values. The basic procedure of attitude scale construction which is associated with Likert had been used previously in constructing personality scales and as early as 1916 was applied by Lewis Terman in his work on intelligence tests. Besides being the first one to apply the method of internal consistency to attitude measurement, Likert also emphasized the importance of each of item as a scale in itself, made comparisons of the sigma and arbitrary methods of scoring, and compared the summated rating method of scoring Thurstone method. The technique of summated ratings avoids the somewhat difficult procedure of having a group of judges sort the statements for the purpose of determining scale values. It is alleged that the technique of Summated ratings required less labour and at the same time gives equally reliable results to an extent since the subjective influence of judges is eliminated.

##### 4.12.1 Steps involved in the Construction of Likert Scale

The basic steps in constructing an attitude scale according to the technique of summated ratings are as follows :

1. Like the Thurstone technique a series of propositions expressive of wide range of attitude from extreme positive to extremely negative and concerning a particular question are compiled and carefully edited. In selecting the statements emphasis is placed on values rather than facts. Moreover, the statements are so constructed as to indicate clearly a position for or against the point at issue.
2. Each proposition usually calls for a response by checking or underlying one of five words such as strongly approve, undecided, disapprove, strongly disapprove. Frequently the expressions strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree are used almost always, frequently, occasionally, rarely, almost never may be applicable for certain purposes. It

should be pointed out that the wording or order of response categories may be effect of negative words; however, it acquires a similar, negative meaning. As a result, the child comes to experience strong negative feelings whenever he hears this word, just as he did initially to the words "dirty", "ugly" and so on. In this simple manner, classical conditioning has planted the seeds for later strong racial or ethnic bigotry.

3. A large number of subjects are requested to check their attitude on the original list of statement in accordance with the scheme. In preparing an attitude scale on the American-born Japanese for example 99 statements were included in the preliminary list which was filled out by approximately 500 subjects.
4. A total score for each subject taking the test is obtained by summing the value for each item.
5. A basis for determining the selection of items for the final scale the discriminative value of each item is computed. This is done by obtaining the difference between the average score for each item when the total scores are arranged in qualities continued.
6. In this type of scale two methods of scoring have been used. They are the 'arbitrary' method and the 'sigma' method. The arbitrary method is generally preferred because it involves less work and is just as reliable as the Sigma method. The arbitrary method merely requires adding the values of the expressions for each statement that is checked.

### 4.12.2 Merits of Likert Method

1. In Likert's method there is provision of selecting the discriminating statements through item analysis. No such provision has been made in Thurstone scale.
2. It is easy to construct attitude scale through this method. At the same time the analysis of the given response is also easy. On this scale the high score indicates favourable attitude and the low score unfavourable attitude.
3. It is a flexible method. The researcher can reduce or enhance the number of statements according to his requirements, which does not influence the attitude scale. But Thurstone scale lacks these merits, because in this scale each statement bears different scale value.
4. The original statistical analysis is also easy in this scale.

### 4.12.3 Demerits

1. The main limitation of this method is that the meaning of higher and lower scores may be clear, but sometimes the meaning of scores on neutral point is distorted.

2. The assumptions in this scale are not valid to an extent. Sometimes individuals give different response to the same statement.
3. Sometimes people do not express the same attitude on equal total scores. As such, this method is not precise.
4. The validity of summated rating is also not satisfactory. According to Black and Champion (1976) the collection of items and statements in this scale depends upon the personal experience of the researcher. As such sometimes such statements are obtained which fail to measure the attitude of the individual.

### 4.13 Summary

1. Attitude is an enduring system that includes a cognitive component, a feeling component and an action tendency. The definition reveals several facts :

- (a) Attitude is the mental or neural state of readiness which influences the reaction of the individual.
- (b) It is generally negative or positive.
- (c) It is learned or acquired.
- (d) Elaboration of the definition of attitude exhibits several characteristics.

Such as (i) It is related with image, thought and objects. (ii) It has detection, (iii) It is affective experience, (iv) It is related with individual's needs and problems, (v) Attitudes have several dimensions such as direction, intensity, centrality, salience, constituency.

2. How does Attitude form, acquire, develop? In this respect there are several factors which are responsible for development and formation of attitudes. They can be classified into cultural determinants, psychological determinants, functional determinants, and social determinants. Cultural determinants include culture, religion, belief etc. Psychological determinants includes tensions, needs, expectation, effective experience, perception, learning through conditioning, modelling and direct experiences. Functional determinants include the type of personality, belief, propaganda, etc. Besides a group affiliation, group beliefs, group values, group norms also play an important role in the development of attitude. Personality factors include child rearing, conscience, or inner control and insecurity.

3. Attitude can be measured. However, there are limits to the measurement of Attitude which are as under

- (a) It can be measured indirectly,
- (b) Measurement cannot be much reliable or acceptable,

(c) The accuracy of measurement can be judged from accuracy of predication of the individual behaviour,

(d) An accurate scale must possess the quality of reliability, exactness and objectivity.

4. There are three types of scale. There are—(a) opinion scale, (b) rating scale, (c) indirect scale. Opinion scale includes Thurstone scale, Likert scale and Guttman scale. Rating scale includes rank order scale and percentage of population scale.

5. Thurstone scale of attitude measurement has five steps. In the first step relevant, positive and negative, favourable or unfavourable, statements are formed. In the second step the suggestion for the judge are taken. In this step judges have to clarify about the statements which are positive which are negative, which are favourable, which are unfavourable. In this third step, scale value of statement on eleven point scale is obtained. The median value is supposed to be the scale value. In the fourth step, inter quartile range is computed. In the last step, statements are given to subjects who are asked to point out the statements with which they are agreed from statistical analysis, internal constituency is obtained.

6. The scale has several merits : It is useful to measure the attitudes relating to war, religious institution, church etc. It is a simple method with high reliability as opinions are obtained by the experts.

The scale has several demerits. It is subjective in nature and is also time, money and labour consuming. It lacks predictive validity. It does not give the direction of attitude whether it is positive or negative.

7. Likert scale of attitude measurement is also known as method of summated ratings. It consisted of five steps—

(a) In the first step relevant positive and negative statement are collected,

(b) In the second step the statements are given to the group of subjects to categorise into strongly approve and undecided, disapproved and strongly disapproved,

(c) In the third step responses are assigned 5, 4, 4, 3, 2, 1 and 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in accordance with their favourable and unfavourable character,

(d) In the last step item analysis is done, irrelevant statements are removed and relevant statements are taken in the scale.

(e) In the last step.

8. The scale has several merits. It is a simple method possessing high reliability. It can give both magnitude and direction of attitude to be measured. Moreover it has demerits as well. It is subjective in nature. The danger of bias is found. It has low validity.

9. Overall comparison between the two scale makes it clear that they have different similarities and dissimilarities.

(a) Similarity : Both are scaling methods using self-report techniques,

(b) Number of statements in each is equal and statistical technique to be used is of same nature,

(c) The reliability and validity of both the methods are almost same.

Despite above similarities they differ in respect of construction, opinion, selection procedure, administration, scoring and utility. In this way we see that there are several differences in both types of scales.

#### 4.14 Key words used in the Lesson

Predisposition, perceptual, cognitive, arousal, salient, prohibition, affiliation, motivation, frustration, prejudice, conscience, socialize, punitive fascism, amenable, determinants, antagonistic, propaganda, radical.

#### 4.15 Questions for Exercise

##### (a) Short Answer Questions

1. What do you mean by attitude ? Define it.

Ans. — See 4.1

2. What are the characteristics of attitude ?

Ans. — See 4.2

3. What are the dimensions of attitude ?

Ans. — See 4.3

4. What are the functions of attitude ?

Ans. — See 4.4

5. Discuss merits and demerits of Thurstone scale.

Ans. — See 4.11.2, 4.11.3

6. Discuss the steps involved in Thurstone's scaling.

Ans. — See 4.11.1

7. Discuss the steps followed in Likert scaling.

Ans. — See 4.12.1

8. Discuss the merits and limitations of Likert scale.

Ans. — See 4.12.2 & 4.12.3



**(b) Long Answer Questions**

**1. Define attitude and discuss its nature and functions.**

**Ans. — See 4.1, 4.2, 4.4**

**2. What are the factor determinants of attitude formation ?**

**Ans. — See 4.5 & 4.6**

**3. How do attitudes develop ? Discuss the determinants of change in attitude.**

**Ans. — See 4.7 & 4.8**

**4. Evaluate Thurstone Scale of Attitude Measurement.**

**Ans. — See 4.11.1, 4.11.2, 4.11.3.**

**5. Evaluate Likert Scale of Attitude Measurement.**

**Ans. — See 4.12.1, 4.12.2, 4.12.3**

**4.16 Suggested Readings**

- |                        |   |                                                 |
|------------------------|---|-------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Allport, W. G. M.   | : | <b>A Handbook of Social Psychology</b>          |
| 2. Young, K.           | : | <b>Handbook of Social Psychology</b>            |
| 3. Newcomb, T. M.      | : | <b>Social Psychology</b>                        |
| 4. Krech, Crutchfield  | : | <b>Theory and Problems of Social Psychology</b> |
| 5. Baron & Byrne       | : | <b>Social Psychology</b>                        |
| 6. Mc. Dongall         | : | <b>An Introduction to Social Psychology</b>     |
| 7. Katz, Daniel & Kahn | : | <b>The Social Psychology</b>                    |
| 8. Sulaiman, M.        | : | <b>Adhunik Samaj Manovigyan</b>                 |
| 9. Rosenberg & Turner  | : | <b>Social Psychology</b>                        |
| 10. Singh, A. K.       | : | <b>Samaj Manovigyan Ki Rooprekha</b>            |



**Prejudice****Lesson Structure**

- 5.0 Objective**
- 5.1 Meaning of Prejudice**
- 5.2 Definition of Prejudice**
- 5.3 Nature of Prejudice**
- 5.4 Prejudice and Attitude**
- 5.5 Prejudice and Stereotype**
- 5.6 Origin of Prejudice**
- 5.7 Factors Producing Prejudice**
- 5.8 Agencies for Controlling and Reducing Prejudice**
- 5.9 Summary**
- 5.10 Key words used in the Lesson**
- 5.11 Questions for Exercise**
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  - (b) Long Answer Questions**
- 5.12 Suggested Readings**

**5.0 Objective**

The lesson aims at making the learners familiar with the concept of prejudice so that they may be able to distinguish prejudice from attitude and stereotype. Secondly, it provides knowledge about the genesis of prejudice. After going through this lesson one may find that there are several factors including psychological determinants which serve as the genesis of prejudice. Thirdly, the lesson tends to make the learners acquainted with those methods which can be used for reducing or minimising different types of prejudice, especially existing in Indian culture. In the end, a summary of the lesson, key words used, questions for exercise and suggested readings have been given.

### 5.1 Meaning of Prejudice

The term prejudice is rather difficult to define, since it is used in many contexts. First of all the term has a negative connotation. Generally we say that a person is prejudiced if he has got an unfavourable opinion about a person or a group. Prejudice also implies that it is irrational, it implies that the opinion or judgement is formed before a thoughtful examination of the pertinent facts; that it is unfair and hasty judgement.

Among the outstanding features of prejudice are :

- (1) It is an inter group phenomenon;
- (2) It has a negative orientation;
- (3) It is a special kind of attitude.

Thus, prejudice may be defined as a negative attitude towards a socially defined group. Generally most members of a given group have prejudice not only against the other group as a whole but also the members forming the group. For example, a Hindu looks upon himself not as an individual, but also as a member of the Hindu group; he tends to look upon another person not only as an individual but as a member of, for instance, the Muslim group. This is how the problems of intergroup prejudice arise. We perceive ourselves as members of a given group; we perceive others as members of the other groups and attribute to them all the characteristics which the members of our group attribute to the members of that group. In other words, we neither perceive ourselves as individuals, nor perceive others as individuals. Our frame of reference is always in terms of a group unless we take special efforts to dissociate ourselves from such frames of reference.

Prejudice, as is evident from its name, is the preconceived attitude towards some subject or some individual. It is not unusual for people to make assumptions about some individual or object without being possessed of all the relevant information. In India, the Hindus possess prejudices towards the Muslims while the Muslims are prejudiced against the Hindus. And even within the community itself, members of the higher castes are prejudiced against those belonging to the lower castes. Prejudices of this kind are based not on experience and knowledge but on various fears, emotions, ignorance, etc. And even within the higher strata, individuals, are seen harbouring prejudice for each other. Taking only India, one finds prejudices of all kinds among the people in different parts of the country. These prejudices differ from one region to another. It is also true of the different social classes. In America people are seen harbouring extremist and vicious prejudices against the black skinned. The darker skinned people also reciprocate this feeling.

From the foregoing discussion, it should not be deduced that prejudice is always against someone or something. A prejudice can both be contra pro, but in both cases it is based on prejudgement and not on knowledge or experience. Almost every mother harbours some favourable illusions about her children and because this prejudice is colouring her vision she fails to perceive their defects. In society one sees the processes of co-operation as well as conflict. The people with whom one co-operates one forms favourable prejudices whereas the prejudices are against those with whom one comes into conflict.

### 5.2 Definition of Prejudice

The word prejudice denotes the activity of formulating an opinion concerning something without any attempt at investigation to find out its true nature. Evidently, prejudices are irrational. The following are some of the definitions of prejudice, and it would be worthwhile to consider them :

**1. James Drever** : "Prejudice is an attitude, usually with an emotional colouring, hostile to or in favour of, actions or objects of a certain kind, certain persons and certain doctrines." In this definition, prejudice has been shown to be some attitude conjoined to which is some emotion. Hindus harbouring communal prejudices use derogatory names in referring to the Muslims and avoid them. People belonging to the higher castes hate those who belong to the lower castes. In America, the white people are wont to register disgust upon seeing the Negroes and they are shy of sitting with them. In all these examples, there is in evidence an attitude of a special kind towards some people or some group and to this attitude is also attached the emotion of disgust and fear.

**2. M.F. Ogburn** : "Prejudice is a hasty judgement or opinion formed without due examination." As has been pointed out at an earlier juncture, in a prejudice, the individual forms an opinion without examining the subject. For example, many Hindus are prone to assume that all Muslims are by nature unpatriotic, and do not take the trouble to find out whether they are actually so or not. In much the same manner, the Muslims look upon every individual belonging to a different sect as a non-believer, a sinner and a liar. This is an opinion formed without adequate examination.

**3. Kimbal Young** : "A prejudice is a composite of stereotypes, myths and legends in which a group label or symbol is used to classify, characterise and define an individual or a group considered as a totality.... It means 'prejudgement', the making of a decision or the adoption of an attitude or a belief in advance. It is a perversion of rational judgement by self interest or group interest. It is usually accompanied by strong emotional likes and dislikes." In this definition, prejudice has been said to be a stereotype, a prejudgement, an irrational judgement to which are conjoined strong emotions of likes and dislikes. This definition of prejudice comprehends practically every aspect of it.

**4. Krech and Crutchfield :** "Prejudice refers to attitudes and beliefs that serve to place the objects of the attitude and beliefs at an advantage or disadvantage. Racial prejudice refers to attitudes or beliefs concerning any minority, racial, ethnic or national group that are disadvantageous to the members of that group." In this definition, prejudice has been described as the attitudes and beliefs of an individual or group of individuals towards an object, either favourable or hostile. Racial prejudice is an excellent example of it.

It is evident from the foregoing definitions of it that prejudice is one such conglomeration of stereotype, beliefs, attitudes, prejudgements, legends, etc., to which the emotions of like and dislike are customarily attached and which portray an object or an individual or a group of individuals into a favourable or unfavourable condition. In India, examples of prejudice may be seen in casteism, linguism, regionalism and communalism etc.

### **Prejudice in Social Relationships**

Prejudices are important elements in determining the social relations. In the mutual social relationship of individuals belonging to different Indian tribes, races, communities, regions and languages etc., prejudices are readily apparent. At almost every place, one sees emotions of hatred or disgust for each other in the people. The high caste people exhibit a distaste for communicating with those belonging to the lower castes. The brahmins are prejudiced against non-brahmins. The trading class baniya has no inclination to communicate with or even to tolerate the Kayastha. And despite the fact that they have been living together for quite a few hundreds of years, the relations between the Hindus and Muslims continue to be dominated by their mutual prejudices. Some people are exploiting this psychological fact to serve their own interest by trying to prejudice people of one part of the country against those occupying other parts. People of this kind have demanded the recognition of south India as a separate state. The mutual relationship between the white skinned and the dark skinned people of America is entirely coloured with white racial prejudice. In this way, due to prejudice and mutual hatred, competition and conflict are evinced by different communities, groups and individuals. On the other hand, people are found supporting individuals and groups blindly and unreasoningly because of prejudice.

### **5.3 Nature of Prejudice**

The main facts relating to the nature of prejudice as expressed in the foregoing account, are as follows :

**1. Prejudice is based upon ignorance :** The prejudice that exists between two different groups, parties and individuals are the outcome of ignorance on the part of both. This ignorance leads to creation and adoption of different kinds of false beliefs and assumptions about other people.

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**2. Prejudice can both be in favour of and hostile to :** The existence of prejudice leads to the acceptance of one object while it also causes the rejection of some other object. So, in this way, prejudice may be in favour of some group or individual and it may also be against the same. The prejudice that exists at the root of casteism leads to bias in favour of one's own caste and hatred and disgust for the other caste.

**3. Attitudes and emotions are attached to prejudice :** If the prejudice is favourable, the attitude attached to it is one of approval and acceptance while an unfavourable or hostile prejudice is accompanied by the attitude of disapproval or rejection. At the root of regionalism is a prejudice and because of it, the individuals who give credence to this creed harbour affection for the people of their own region. On the other hand, they not only oppose the people belonging to the other region but also exhibit hatred and disgust for them. The prejudiced individual is not very balanced and logical in his conversation. The fair skinned people not only deem it necessary to maintain social distance with the dark skinned individuals, they even manifest open disgust when they are confronted by the latter.

**4. Legends and stories are conjoined to prejudice :** At the root of some of the communal prejudices existing in India are some legends as well as historical facts. The Hindus give currency to various legends concerning the unpatriotic, cruel and unjust behaviour of the Muslims. Similarly, the Muslims reciprocate this tendency by circulating different legends among themselves concerning the Hindus and their behaviour and nature.

**5. Prejudice is motivated :** A motive is a mental or neural set which affects the reactions of an individual towards some object, individual, group, etc. A prejudice is motivated and at the base of it are superstition and irrational judgement.

**6. Wrong beliefs are included in prejudice :** Each and every individual has his own world and his own circle in which he formulates certain beliefs and convictions on the basis of what he has been seen and heard. These beliefs may be good as well as bad. But in either condition his behaviour is influenced by those beliefs. Prejudice, whether in favour of or against, is usually founded on false and wrong beliefs.

**7. Prejudice is hasty, prejudged and an irrational decision :** Because of a prejudice a person reaches a decision. In other words, a prejudice finds expression in the form of a decision. These decisions are reached very hastily without any reference to experience or reason. For this reason, prejudices almost always prove to be harmful.

### 5.4 Prejudice and Attitude

The concept of prejudice and that of attitude are intimately related. Prejudice is in fact a special type of attitude. On this ground attitude and prejudice have several

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points of similarity between themselves. However, both the concepts are fundamentally different. In the first place prejudice refers to the affiliation with a particular community, class or caste. On this ground prejudice may be communal prejudice, class prejudice caste prejudice etc. On the other hand, prejudice does not refer to any group, community or class, rather it refers to an individual, an object or a particular stimulus.

In the second place prejudice is characterised by hostility, while attitude does not necessarily involve the characteristic of hostility. In communal prejudice, or caste prejudice we find hostility between the communities or castes, resulting in struggles for rights. On the other hand, we may have a positive attitude or a negative attitude toward a particular object without having any sort of hostility.

In the third place prejudice is by and large negative in its character. It always refers to negative aspect of the target, person, group or community; on the other hand attitude may be positive or negative.

In the fourth place, it is very difficult to root out prejudice of any sort. It is needless to say that in spite of our best efforts communal prejudice or caste prejudice still exists in our society. On the other hand, it is easier to introduce or root out the existing attitude.

Finally, the implications of prejudice have far more implications to our behaviour as compared to attitudes. It is our common observation that people fight and are significantly influenced by various prejudices in their interpersonal relationship and decision making. Attitudes do not have such implications in different walks of human life.

### **5.5 Prejudice and Stereotypes**

There is a close relationship between prejudice and stereotypes. Both are acquired and both have their significant impact on our behaviour. However, prejudice differs from stereotypes in following respects :

1. Prejudice is the consequence while stereotype is the antecedent. In other words, prejudice is the effect of stereotype. In our society one of stereotypes is related to the submission or docile behaviour of the female population as compared to the male population. This stereotype has laid to the emergence of a type of prejudice called sex prejudice. In likewise manner other types of prejudice are also related to some types of stereotypes.

2. Prejudice in comparison to stereotype involves emotional hostility or hatred toward some group, class or community. The example is communal prejudice between Hindus and Muslims. On the other hand, stereotype is not necessarily characterised by hostility. The example is several types of stereotypes existing in Hindu communities without having any hostile attack on Muslim community. It is a stereotype that Hindus and Muslims wear trousers whose style is somewhat different, but there is no hostility between the two communities on this ground.

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3. Prejudice is not as much traditional as stereotype. It is our common observation that stereotypes are transmitted from generation to generation. This is not the case with prejudice in the real sense of the term. A Hindu may not have communal prejudice from his tradition, but he may develop this prejudice after being victim to communal riots.

4. Prejudice always has its implication for some person belonging to other group, community or class. So, it is based on the theory of dislike for the unlike. On the other hand, stereotype is concerned only with the group or community to which it belongs. A Muslim always uses a particular type of pot while drinking water, but it has no adverse effect on Hindu or any other community.

5. In comparison to stereotype, prejudice is easier to reduce or minimise. Although communal prejudice, caste prejudice etc. are to be rooted out yet stereotypes are not difficult to root out.

### **5.6 Origin of Prejudice**

Different psychologists have put forward differing views and theories concerning the origin of prejudice, as they consider one or the other cause as its origin. The major ones among them are the following :

- (1) Theory of Innate Tendency
- (2) Theory of Self-Love
- (3) Theory of Ethnocentrism
- (4) Psycho-Analytic Theory.

**(1) Theory of Innate Tendency :** According to the theory of Innate tendency, which is intended as an explanation of the origin of prejudice, the cause of prejudice is only innate tendency. The individual from his very birth possesses the tendency to like people who are like him and to dislike or hate who do not concur with him. According to this view, all individuals have love for people of their own group while they have disgust and hatred for all individuals belonging to other groups. In the opinion of these thinkers, prejudices are the natural and essential part of social life. Among those who have professed this view are Giddings, Ross and Sumner. It is the opinion of these thinkers that prejudice, stature, colour and physical tenacity are based on some innate peculiarities.

This conception of the origin of prejudice has come in for some extremely bitter criticism at the hands of modern social psychologists. In the words of Kimball Young. "There is no evidence whatsoever that prejudice is instinctive or innate... yet psychology and physiology give no support to any theory that a man has inborn prejudices against persons of a different race and colour of a different society and culture." The truth is



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that it is entirely wrong to consider physiological differences as the cause of prejudice. Prejudices are also found to exist in people possessing like physiological characteristics and it is not impossible for people with unlike physical characteristics to be entirely devoid of them.

**2. Theory of Self-Love :** Embree and Reuter have propounded the theory of self-love to explain the origin of prejudice. The living being has an innate tendency to love himself. Because of this tendency of self-love the individual is repelled and disgusted by people who are different and separate while he loves those who are assimilated in his ego or self. For example, the tendency of self-love can be seen in any child who, at the same time, manifests love and affection for his mother and all those who are his nearest and dearest, and who become part of his ego or self. And yet, the theory of self love does not explain the origin of prejudice. It is right that self-love is one factor in prejudice but at its root there are many social, physiological and other causes.

**3. Theory of Ethnocentrism :** Some scholars have made an effort to explain co-operation and conflict in international relations on the basis of Ethnocentrism. On the same basis prejudice has also been explained by them. This theory has also been refuted along with the racial or ethnic principle. It is true that the cause of prejudice between the white and the black people of America is Ethnocentrism but it can also be seen that the white and the black people also possess prejudice for or against the members of their own races. In criticising the theory of Ethnocentrism Murphy and Newcomb have remarked correctly that friendship is based not on racial homogeneity but on benevolence, cooperation and contact.

**4. Psycho-Analytic Theory :** In considering the problem of origin of prejudices, the psycho-analysis theory considers human experience to be the root cause of prejudice. The individual forms prejudices concerning the different objects, individuals and institutions etc. in accordance with the experiences that he had of them in his childhood. Bitter experiences lead to the formation of hostile or adverse prejudice while the prejudices that are formed as a consequence of pleasant experiences are of a favourable nature. Franz Alexander is correct in his thesis that the formation of prejudices is on the basis of early frustrations. But such a statement is insufficient to clearly elucidate the nature of prejudice. People are found to possess prejudices concerning those individuals and groups with which they have never come into contact and hence have no experience of. Secondly, as has been pointed out by Moreno, the influence and the importance of the environmental factors and education are also not negligible in the development or formation of prejudices. Pearl Buck and Horowitz have also criticised this theory. In fact, as Newcomb has written, "In brief, capacity of prejudice is unlearned but its target (the group against which it is directed) is learned."

## Prejudice

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In this way, the development or origin of prejudice cannot be explained with the help of only one factor. The personality of the child is developed first at home and later on in the school environment; because of the innumerable influences emanating from either of these two institutions, the child develops many prejudices. In course of many experiments Horowitz found that the prejudices possessed by white boys and girls against the Negro children were caused mostly by their parents who taught them to think in this manner. A school going girl of Tennessee, in America told Horowitz "Mother does not want me to play with coloured children, because they are coloured men. Might have pneumonia if you play with them. I play with the coloured children sometimes and mamma whips me." Another child confided to him and told that her mother forbade her to play with dark children and did not want to tell her the reason for this restriction. In this way, the children form prejudices because of the influence of their parents and other individuals in the family. In missionary schools the children form prejudices against the Jews because of the type of education or the instruction imparted by the teachers. The importance of personal experience and contact in the formation of prejudices is by no means inconsiderable. It is a matter of common knowledge that the prejudices that we form in connection with anything concur with our experience of that particular thing, animate or inanimate. The formation of these prejudices is further contributed to by the various frustrations and mental peculiarities of the individual. Personal experience is an important factor in the development of the attitude and tendencies of the individual. On the basis of experiences conducted by him B. Lasker declared that personal experience is an important factor in the development of the prejudices of the individual. But sometimes the individual, in spite of having no personal experience of the object, forms prejudices on the basis of the experience of other members of his group, forms prejudices on the basis of the experiences of other members of his group which have been communicated to him. For example, in the study of some American children, Bogardus found them possessing hostile prejudices for the Chinese and the Germans despite the fact that they had never even seen either of the two. In addition to all these factors, others that affect the formation of prejudice are culture, folk literature, and the laws of society etc. L. Hearen found the Japanese and American folk literature as important factors in the formation of prejudices. Krech and Crutchfield have mentioned the various kinds of environments as factors that influence prejudice. The importance of newspapers and magazines in the formation of prejudices has been pointed out by Bearlson and Salter whose findings are based on their experimental study in this direction. In addition to all this, all the other media of propaganda influence the prejudices. In this way, the development of prejudices is influenced by many social causes in addition to the various personal experiences and other factors.

The word stereotype owes its introduction into the annals of social psychology to Walter Lipman who first employed it in 1920. In its original form, the word was used to indicate the main systems appearing in a mental disease called Dementia Praecox. The literal meaning of stereotype is that bowl or plate which performs the function of a mould. Lipman used the word to denote those thoughts and tendencies which, when aroused, draw a figure or symbol on our mental vision.

### 5.7 Factors behind the origin of Prejudice

The factors that contribute towards the development of prejudice can roughly be divided into two classes—psychological and social. Of these the social factors render assistance in the creation and production of the prejudice whereas the psychological factors are the individual bases of the prejudice. For facility in analysis it is the second classification that will be studied first.

#### Psychological Factors

The psychological factors of prejudice are many and varied. In India, one finds all sorts of psychological variables such as the emotions of hatred and jealousy, mutually contradictory beliefs and the tendencies of conflict, etc. at the root of the prejudices maintained by people belonging to different castes, religion, regions etc. When the sense of self-respect of an individual is hurt, he fosters hatred and disgust for other groups and individuals and forms prejudice against them. If the prejudice is to be eliminated, as preliminary to it, its psychological cause must also be removed or destroyed. The main psychological factors are as follows :

**1. Abnormal Personality :** Many of the abnormalities of the individual are the cause of his prejudices because by rationalizing his pathological tendencies and behavioural patterns he forms different kinds of preconceptions. For example, in communal riots, the abnormal tendencies of the individual are expressed in the form of aggression or pugnacity whatever the argument that he puts forward to justify his behaviour. Many kinds of mental diseases are also the causes of prejudice. For example, an individual affected by persecution mania which is a mental disease, tends to look upon all those surrounding him as his enemies and he doubts the bonafide of everyone. And for this reason he formulates prejudices of all kinds about the other.

**2. Frustrated needs :** Every individual has many kinds of physical and psychological needs and if they are not satisfied, they become frustrated. They are then manifested in the form of hatred, disgust, pugnacity, etc. And because of his frustrations, the individual forms unconsciously, different kinds of prejudices concerning different individuals and groups.

**3. Poor Adjustment :** The individual may not have healthy adjustment between himself and the environment and other groups of individuals. As a result of this he may

develop complexes of various kinds. His life becomes marked by discontent and hopelessness. He also fails to sublimate his anti-social tendencies. Hence, he becomes possessed with tendencies of hatred, fear, disgust, etc. towards other individuals and groups, and as a further consequence of this, he forms prejudices. It is a common observation that frustration leads to aggression and discharge of aggression is generally on mented and worker one.

**4. Self-defence** : Every individual wants to protect his self and ego and if these are injured he reacts violently. In this reaction he develops emotions of hatred, disgust, etc., for the individual or group that is responsible for this injury and consequently forms all kinds of prejudices concerning them.

**5. Motive of self-regard** : Every individual wants to maintain his self-respect and self-regard. This motive of self-regard is not restricted only to his own personality. In addition to the development of his own ego, he wants to see intact the self-respect of his relatives, companions, party, group, etc. As a result of the link formed between them and the motive of self-regard the individual forms prejudice against them.

**6. Desire for social conformity** : In every society, some customs, laws, superstitions, notions, etc. are prevalent. In his desire for social conformity the individual accepts these without reflecting upon them and adopts them in the form of prejudices.

**7. Learning** : One very important psychological cause of prejudice is learning. The individual often learns or acquires his prejudices from others. For example, the children of one community become prejudiced towards the members of other community because their parents possess some prejudices. These adults inculcate prejudice into the child's mind. In this way, the child acquires these prejudices from his parents either by emulating them or by being taught by them.

In fact, most of the prejudices are acquired. The importance of learning or education in the removal of prejudices is shown by the part it plays in their acquisition.

### **Social Factors**

In addition to the aforementioned psychological factors there are some social factors that are instrumental in the formation of prejudices. The main ones among them are—

**1. Social distance** : In every society different groups possess specific status within the social strata. Some are higher, others are at a lower level. Those social status are separated by the proper social distance. To take an example, the brahmins are believed to possess the highest and the shudras the lowest status in the social stratification of the Hindu society. The social distance between these social classes is so great that the brahmins look upon the shudras as lowly and impure creatures. If a brahmin child ever touches the child of some shudra the former is given a bath to rid

him of the supposed defilement caused by this touch. As a result of this strict formulation of his activities the brahmin child forms a prejudice in his mind that the shudras are untouchable and impure.

**2. Cultural Differences :** An important factor at the root of prejudice is the cultural difference. Every individual regards his own culture as superior in comparison to other culture by virtue of its being different from his own. In this way, the distance between different individuals, influenced by different cultures increase because there is no meeting point between the two. This distance ultimately assumes the form of hatred. Consequently, these individuals develop prejudices against each other. For example, people who profess their allegiance to ancient Indian culture hate and despise those who prefer western culture. By virtue of this hatred, they form all kinds of prejudices against the ones who profess their liking for Western culture. They seem to consider the latter as the very manifestation and figure of immoral conduct, corruption, unpatriotic feelings, prodigality and ostentation although it is not at all essential for an individual who likes Western culture and adopts it to possess all these faults and shortcomings.

**3. Social taboos and restrictions :** Many groups are characterised by social taboos and restrictions upon mutual behaviour between the individuals. To take a well-known example, among the Hindus it is not permissible for a person of a particular caste to marry someone of a different caste. Further, the socially higher castes are not supposed even to eat with members of the lower castes. The result of such social taboos and restrictions is that the social distance between the various social classes continually increases and all kinds of prejudices are created. There is another way in which the restrictions upon the mutual conduct between individuals of different sexes exert their influence. In view of the many and varied restrictions upon the mutual behaviour between man and woman that are imposed in the civilised societies, these individuals have to repress their sex need or have to satisfy it in some unnatural way by which disturbance and conflict is very much aggravated and all kinds of prejudices are the inevitable result.

**4. Social phenomena :** In addition to the above mentioned social causes that cause prejudice, there are some social circumstances and social phenomena that cause the creation and formation of prejudices. To take an Indian example, communal tensions not only cause communal riots and conflicts but also prejudice in the minds of Hindus and the Muslims. Differences in the various customs, traditions and practices prevalent in different groups also become the cause of prejudices.

### **Other Factors**

The aforementioned social and psychological causes are not all the causes of prejudices. They do not exhaust all the sources from which prejudices may stem. There are other causes also, but only the important ones are mentioned below :

**1. Historical factors :** At the root of all the prejudices that the Hindus and Muslims entertain against each other there are some historical causes also. It is a historical fact that the original followers of the Islamic religion were not the native product of the country but came from foreign strands and forced many Hindus to convert to the Islamic religion. Many of the Muslims also heaped injustice upon the luckless and helpless Hindus. On the other hand, some of the Hindu kings gave a severe answer to this unjust behaviour of the Muslims. These historical incidents are now old and are of interest perhaps only to the academicians. But nevertheless, many individuals cannot bring themselves to forget the old history and times when the misanthropic activities of Aurangzeb endangered the existence of Hindu religion or when the Mohammedan mothers coaxed their children to sleep by frightening them by talking of Harisingh Nalva. Because of this even today there are many Hindus and Muslims who entertain feelings of hatred, fear, disgust, etc, for each other, and this leads to the fostering of all kinds of prejudices. However, it is to be noted that for eradication of conflict and prejudice the historical facts have been distorted and this distortion is to be minimized. The historical distortion becomes the cause behind a prejudiced mind.

**2. Geographical factors :** Some causes of prejudices are also geographical. In India people living in different regions are found fostering all kinds of prejudices concerning their brothers who live in other parts of the country. To take an example, many stories concerning the so-called foolishness and imprudence of the Sikhs are prevalent in U. P. People living in different geographical zones look upon those of their own regions as fellow beings while people from different regions are apt to be looked upon as strangers. The result of this is that they form favourable prejudices for their own people while concerning the others they are unfavourably prejudiced.

**3. Political factors :** Some political causes also encourage the formation and excitement of prejudices. For example, in India many parties, propelled by political interests, try to prejudice the public against their rivals by indulging in campaigns of bitter recrimination and even going to the length of concocting false tales of a prejudicial nature.

**4. Economic factors :** There are some economic causes of prejudice also. People influenced by the communistic outlook commonly tend to regard very rich individual and each capitalist as a cruel, corrupt, immoral and degraded person. They believe that all rich people are heartless. On the other hand, the rich people as a class tend to consider their poor brothers as uncivilised, ill-behaved, crude and unrefined. Evidently, the notions of both classes of people are prejudiced because of economic factors. This fact is all the more clearly manifested when individuals of different economic status come into close contact.