

# **Social Behaviour**

**Dr. Indu Kumari**

**Assistant Professor**

**PG Department of Psychology**

**M.B.R.R.V.Pd.S. College, Ara**

**UG - Semester - 2**

**MJC – 02**

## **Social Behaviour**

### **Introduction**

Social behaviour refers to the actions, reactions, and interactions of individuals that take place in the presence of others or are influenced by other people. Human beings are social by nature, and most of our behaviours—whether speaking, helping, competing, loving, or even fighting—occur within a social context. Social behaviour plays a central role in shaping personality, identity, relationships, and society as a whole.

The scientific study of social behaviour is mainly conducted in the field of Social Psychology, which examines how individuals think, feel, and behave in relation to others.

### **Meaning and Definition**

Social behaviour can be defined as:

Any behaviour that involves interaction between two or more individuals or is influenced by the real, imagined, or implied presence of others.

It includes both **verbal and non-verbal behaviour**, conscious and unconscious actions, and can be positive (helping, cooperation) or negative (aggression, discrimination).

# Nature and Characteristics of Social Behaviour

1. **Interactive Nature** – It involves at least two individuals.
2. **Goal-Oriented** – People engage socially to fulfill needs such as belongingness, approval, power, or affection.
3. **Learned Behaviour** – It develops through socialization, observation, imitation, and reinforcement.
4. **Dynamic and Situational** – Behaviour changes according to context and environment.
5. **Influenced by Culture** – Norms, traditions, and values shape social responses.
6. **Reciprocal** – Social behaviour often involves mutual influence.

## Components of Social Behaviour

Social behaviour consists of three major components:

### 1. Cognitive Component

This involves thoughts, beliefs, perceptions, and judgments about others. For example, forming impressions about a person.

### 2. Affective Component

This includes feelings and emotions toward others such as love, anger, empathy, jealousy, etc.

### 3. Behavioral Component

This refers to actual actions like helping, cooperating, arguing, or avoiding someone.

## Types of Social Behaviour

### 1. Prosocial Behaviour

Prosocial behaviour refers to voluntary actions intended to benefit others, such as helping, sharing, donating, and comforting. It promotes social harmony and cooperation.

Factors influencing prosocial behaviour:

- Empathy
- Moral values
- Social responsibility
- Cultural expectations

### 2. Aggressive Behaviour

Aggression involves behaviour intended to harm another person physically or psychologically. It may be:

- Physical aggression
- Verbal aggression
- Indirect or relational aggression

The Albert Bandura demonstrated through his Bobo doll experiment that aggression can be learned through observation.

### **3. Cooperative Behaviour**

Cooperation occurs when individuals work together toward a common goal. It strengthens relationships and group unity.

### **4. Competitive Behaviour**

Competition involves striving against others for limited resources, recognition, or success.

### **5. Conformity**

Conformity refers to adjusting one's behaviour to match group norms. The experiments by Solomon Asch showed how individuals often conform to group pressure even when the group is wrong.

### **6. Obedience**

Obedience involves following orders from authority figures. Stanley Milgram demonstrated how people obey authority even when it conflicts with personal values.

## **Determinants of Social Behaviour**

Social behaviour is influenced by various factors:

### **1. Biological Factors**

- Genetic predispositions
- Hormones
- Brain functioning

### **2. Psychological Factors**

- Personality traits
- Motivation
- Emotional state

- Self-esteem

### **3. Social Factors**

- Family background
- Peer influence
- Education
- Media exposure
- Socioeconomic status

### **4. Cultural Factors**

Culture determines norms, traditions, and acceptable behaviour patterns.

## **Theories Explaining Social Behaviour**

### **1. Social Learning Theory**

Proposed by Albert Bandura, this theory states that people learn social behaviour by observing and imitating others.

### **2. Social Exchange Theory**

This theory suggests that social relationships are formed based on rewards and costs. Individuals seek maximum benefits and minimum losses.

### **3. Cognitive Dissonance Theory**

Developed by Leon Festinger, this theory explains how individuals change their attitudes or behaviour to reduce psychological discomfort caused by conflicting beliefs.

### **4. Evolutionary Theory**

This perspective suggests that certain social behaviours, such as cooperation and altruism, evolved because they increase survival and reproduction.

## **Importance of Social Behaviour**

Social behaviour is essential because it:

- Helps in building and maintaining relationships
- Promotes cooperation and teamwork
- Maintains social order
- Influences mental health and well-being

- Shapes culture and society

Healthy social behaviour leads to adjustment and social harmony, while unhealthy patterns may lead to conflict and isolation.

## **Role of Social Behaviour in Different Areas**

### **1. Family**

It helps in emotional bonding and role performance.

### **2. Education**

Encourages group learning and classroom interaction.

### **3. Workplace**

Enhances teamwork, leadership, and organizational effectiveness.

### **4. Community**

Promotes unity, cooperation, and collective development.

## **Conclusion**

Social behaviour is a fundamental aspect of human life that governs how individuals interact and function within society. It includes a wide range of actions from cooperation and empathy to aggression and conformity. The study of social behaviour under Social Psychology helps us understand interpersonal relationships, group dynamics, and societal structures.

Understanding social behaviour enables individuals to improve communication, strengthen relationships, and contribute positively to society. It plays a vital role in personal growth, social development, and cultural continuity.