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Programme: M.A., HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Course Title : Interpersonal Relations and Soft Skills Development

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Unit-II

Social Psychology

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What is Social Psychology?

- **Definition:**

- Social Psychology is the scientific study of how individuals think, feel, and behave in social situations.
- Focuses on how people are influenced by the real, imagined, or implied presence of others.

Factors Influencing Human Behavior

1.Social Norms:

1. Accepted behaviors in a society or group.
2. Influence how we act in public or private settings.

2.Conformity and Obedience:

1. People tend to conform to group norms (peer pressure).
2. Obedience to authority figures can alter behavior (e.g., Milgram's experiment).

3.Social Roles:

1. Individuals adopt roles in social contexts (e.g., student, parent, employee) that guide their behavior.

4.Social Identity:

1. The way individuals define themselves in relation to the groups they belong to (e.g., cultural, religious, gender identities).

Theories of Human Behavior

1.Theories of Aggression:

1. **Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis:** Frustration leads to aggression.
2. **Social Learning Theory:** Aggression can be learned through observation of others.

2.Attribution Theory:

1. How we explain others' behaviors (internal vs. external causes).
2. People often attribute success to internal factors (ability) and failure to external factors (luck).

3.Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger):

1. We experience discomfort when our beliefs conflict with our behaviors, leading us to change one or the other.

Human Behavior and Evolution

- **Evolutionary Perspective on Human Behavior:**

- Human behaviors, especially in social contexts, have evolved to increase survival and reproductive success.

- **Key Evolutionary Concepts:**

- **Reciprocal Altruism:** Helping others with the expectation that they will help you in return.
- **Kin Selection:** The idea that individuals are more likely to help those who are genetically related to them.
- **Mate Selection and Pair Bonding:** Evolution of romantic relationships as a strategy for raising offspring.

What is Commitment?

- **Definition:**

- Commitment refers to the dedication or attachment to a relationship, cause, or goal.
- It involves maintaining and nurturing a relationship despite challenges or obstacles.

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Theories of Commitment in Relationships

1. Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love:

1. **Intimacy:** Emotional closeness and connection.
2. **Passion:** Physical attraction and sexual desire.
3. **Commitment:** The decision to maintain the relationship.
4. **Complete Love:** When all three components (intimacy, passion, and commitment) are present.

2. Social Exchange Theory:

1. People weigh the costs and benefits of relationships and are more likely to remain committed when rewards outweigh costs.

Maintaining Commitment in Relationships

• **Strategies for Strengthening Commitment:**

- **Conflict Resolution Skills:**
 - Resolve disagreements constructively rather than avoiding them.
- **Quality Time:**
 - Spending time together helps build intimacy and emotional connection.
- **Regular Check-ins:**
 - Regularly reassess goals and values to ensure alignment.
- **Expressing Gratitude:**
 - Appreciating each other's contributions fosters a sense of worth and commitment.

Theories of Human Behavior

- **Behaviorism:** Behavior is learned through interaction with the environment.
- **Cognitive Theory:** Behavior is influenced by mental processes such as perception and memory.
- **Humanistic Theory:** Emphasizes individual experience and self-actualization.
- **Social Learning Theory:** Behavior is learned by observing others.

Attitudes and Behavior

- **Definition of Attitude:** A predisposition to respond in a certain way to people, objects, or events.
- **Components of Attitudes:** Cognitive, affective, and behavioral components.
- **Attitude-Behavior Relationship:** How attitudes can predict behaviors, but they are not always aligned.

Understanding Human Relationships

- **Definition:** A relationship is a connection between two or more individuals that is influenced by interactions, communication, and emotions.
- **Types of Relationships:**
 - Family
 - Friendship
 - Romantic
 - Professional

The Evolution of Relationships

- **Early Human Relationships:** Evolutionary psychology suggests that human relationships evolved to ensure survival, reproduction, and social cohesion.
- **Hunter-Gatherer Societies:** Early humans formed close-knit groups for protection and resource sharing.
- **Agricultural Revolution:** Led to the development of larger communities and complex social structures.

The Role of Evolution in Relationships

- **Survival and Reproduction:** Evolution favors behaviors that help humans survive and reproduce, such as cooperation and caregiving.
- **Attachment Theory:** The emotional bond between individuals, especially between parents and children, evolved for the survival of offspring.
- **Kin Selection:** Favoring the welfare of relatives to increase the likelihood of gene survival.

The Science of Attraction

- **Physical Attraction:** Symmetry, health, and reproductive cues are universally seen as attractive.
- **Psychological Attraction:** Similarity, shared values, and complementary traits.
- **Social Exchange Theory:** Relationships are maintained based on rewards and costs.

Social Networks and Group Dynamics

- **Social Networks:** The web of relationships connecting individuals, from close family to distant acquaintances.
- **Group Dynamics:** How individuals behave and interact within groups; concepts such as groupthink and social facilitation come into play.
- **In-Groups vs. Out-Groups:** The social groups to which individuals belong versus those they do not.

Factors Influencing Relationship Formation

- **Proximity:** People are more likely to form relationships with those who are physically close.
- **Similarity:** Shared interests, values, and beliefs strengthen bonds.
- **Reciprocity:** Mutual exchange of benefits and resources helps form lasting connections.
- **Self-Disclosure:** Sharing personal information fosters closeness and trust.

Communication and Relationships

- **Verbal Communication:** Speaking and listening are crucial for developing and maintaining relationships.
- **Non-Verbal Communication:** Body language, eye contact, and physical touch communicate emotions and intentions.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Effective communication is vital in resolving misunderstandings and disagreements.

The Impact of Culture on Relationships

- **Cultural Differences:** Culture shapes how we perceive and engage in relationships.
- **Cultural Norms and Expectations:** Marriage, family, and friendships are viewed differently across cultures.
- **Inter-Cultural Relationships:** Navigating relationships that span different cultural backgrounds.

Conclusion

•Key Takeaways:

- **Human behavior** is shaped by both individual factors and social influences, such as norms, roles, and group dynamics.
- The **evolution of human relationships** has been driven by the need for survival, cooperation, and reproduction.
- **Commitment** is the foundation of lasting relationships and requires trust, communication, and shared goals.

•Importance of Social Psychology:

- By understanding the psychological underpinnings of human behavior and relationships, we can improve our social interactions and build stronger, more meaningful connections.