



BLOCK 2
INTERVENTION AND EVALUATION

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UNIT 4 SOCIAL ISSUES AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS*

Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Definition and Nature of Social Problems
- 4.3 Approaches to Social Problems
- 4.4 Social Issues and Problems
 - 4.4.1 Gender Discrimination
 - 4.4.2 Delinquency
 - 4.4.3 Poverty
 - 4.4.4 Unemployment
 - 4.4.5 Violence and Criminal Behaviour
 - 4.4.6 Child and Elder Abuse
 - 4.4.7 Other Social Issues and Problems
- 4.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.6 References
- 4.7 Key Words
- 4.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 4.9 Unit End Questions

4.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to,

- discuss the definition and nature of social problems;
- describe the approaches to social problem; and
- explain various social issues and problems.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Have you ever felt like changing some systems in our “society” because they didn’t feel right like gender discrimination or caste system?

Things around us that influence and impact us as a community, come under an umbrella term called social issues could be across all societies. Often, we

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notice, that these invisible yet strong factors are beyond any person's control because, we as a society follow them as much as worry about them (for example, dowry). We hear and notice elderly and child abuse and wonder if we can ever eliminate such practices which significantly impairs well-being of people who are dependents and cannot raise concerns when ill-treated. Social issues can also stem from differences in economic power (for example, poverty induced violence communal violence, criminal behaviour due to unemployment that leads to delinquent behaviour and we notice these concerns adding burden to the social problems we already face in India. A social problem often begins with thoughts are seen in actions and affects a lot of people at the same time, which if not addressed takes the form of a chaos.

In the very first unit of this course, we discussed about applied social psychology. We mainly discussed that applied social psychology seeks to understand various social issues and problems in a systematic manner in order to develop suitable intervention strategies. The title of the block 2 of this course is Intervention and Evaluation. But in order to develop suitable interventions, it is imperative to focus on the social issues and problems. thus in the first unit of block 2 (unit 4), we will focus on social issues and problems and in the next unit (unit 5), we will discuss about intervention and evaluation.

In the present unit, we will mainly try to understand what social issues and problems are and will also focus on some of the prominent social issues and problems.

4.2 DEFINITIONS AND NATURE OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS IN INDIA

Any social happening which can disturb the smooth functioning of social order and create unrest can be identified as a social problem. In the beginning, it can be thought as “one-time event” which could be noticed but ignored to reduce any kind of confrontation. However, when it starts to affect normal social functioning, is when we term it as a problem.

Let us start with discussing various definition of social problem.

According to Leon-Guerrero (2016 page 7) “A social problem is a social condition or pattern of behaviour that has negative consequences for individuals, our social world, or our physical world”. For example, violence can have a negative impact on the individuals”.

Reinhardt in 1952 (page 14) defined social problem as “ a situation confronting a group or a section of society which inflicts injurious consequences that can be handled only collectively”.

According to Nisbet and Merton (1961) social problems are “problems in the sense that they represent interruptions in the desired scheme of things;

violation of rights as a society; dislocation in the social patterns and relationships that a society cherishes.”

E. Raab and G.J. Selznick (1964) defines social problem as “a problem in human relationship which seriously threatens society itself or impedes the important aspirations of many people”.

As can be seen from the above definitions, a social problem is described as a situation or a condition that is leading to disruption or is having negative consequences.

According to Bernard, any social problem irrespective of its consequences has three types of components; that is,

- 1) Tension factors which challenge some values of society,
- 2) Social values which are being challenged and
- 3) Intense reaction of individuals and groups to challenge.

At times it is noticed that social stratification (categorisation of people based on their economic status etc.) brings about imbalance in social class and leads to malpractices like unemployment, poverty and tensions. These can further lead to group problems like communalism (tension between people identified as different communities,), linguism (discrimination based on person's language) causing regionalism (focussing on a region than the whole country) and thus racism (extreme form of exploitation of people by others considered higher in the society).

Nature of social problems exhibit characteristics as listed below:

- 1) **Shameful:** Shameful means that social problems cause misery and suffering and affects value system of the society.
- 2) **Several causes:** Each social problem is noticed to be a complex mixture of many causes like poor economy, social unrest, anxiety or unemployment.
- 3) **Intertwined:** It has been noticed that interconnected causes could create a social problem. For example, addiction leads to abuse which further leads to increase in crime and delinquency.
- 4) **Multi-fold solutions:** Social problems need to be addressed at various levels thus various solutions.
- 5) **Utility value:** Social problems though troublesome in the beginning could lead to a better world tomorrow. What may seem like a problem today could be an answer to an age-old problem in the society.

According to Carr (1951) a social problem exists whenever we become conscious of a difficulty, a gap between our preferences and our reality. Ram Ahuja in his book titled Social problems mentions that “the custom of Sati in India was a ritual as long as most people thought of it as desired. Only when

Raja Ram Mohan Roy took constructive steps towards recognising it as a social problem, did people support his cause in the social movement.

There are three different theoretical standpoints to explain social problems as given in table 4.1. We will discuss the approaches to social problems in the next subsection.

Table 4.1: Theoretical standpoints explaining Social problems

Theoretical perspective	Major assumptions	Views of social problems
Functionalism	<p>Every society has institutions that perform functions that help maintain stability.</p> <p>Any social problem reduces a society's stability.</p>	<p>Functionalism suggests that social problems must be functional in some ways for society, otherwise these problems would not continue.</p> <p>Poverty is also a major social problem, but one function that poverty serves is that poor people do jobs that otherwise might not get done because others would not want to do them (Gans, H. J. (1972).</p>
Conflict theory	<p>Society exhibits inequality which is based on social class, gender, etc. We need far reaching results to eliminate social inequality and create equal opportunities for all.</p>	<p>Social problems exist due to problems in the structure of the society which favour some people over others on different dimensions.</p> <p>While functionalist theory emphasizes the benefits of the various parts of the society for ongoing social stability, conflict theory favours social change to reduce inequality.</p>
Symbolic interactionism	<p>People develop their roles as they interact. As this interaction occurs, individuals manage social life through symbols like words and gestures to reach a shared understanding of their interaction.</p>	<p>Social problems arise from the interaction of individuals.</p> <p>People who engage in socially problematic behaviours often learn these behaviours from others (like substance use, crime etc.)</p>

Let us understand the above with an everyday example; like drug addiction. A functionalist approach will suggest that addiction might bring positive functions in society, like creating jobs (drug pedlars, de-addiction centres, NGO's facilitating rehabilitation).

A conflict theory would explain addiction due to poverty, street criminals, delinquency and frustration; that can arise from desperation due to lack of opportunities and low self-esteem.

To reduce addiction, conflict theory would advocate far-reaching changes in the social/economic structure of the society.

Lastly, symbolic interactionism would explain how addicts become addicted due to their close interaction to drug dealers and other addicts. To connect to their environment, they would use addiction to be "accepted". Solution to it would be to advocate awareness and de-addiction programs for potential criminal offenders like in schools and slums.

We have discussed nature of social problems and what they are like in theory; now let's bring into perspective how they are dealt with in practicality. We operate in a social structure whereby we see things happening around us and explain their occurrence as a part of the social structure we live in. At times social deviancy is seen as a problem with "some people" and therefore we blame them.

Person-blame approach: Assumption to this approach is that there are laws which everyone has to follow and those who don't are considered as problematic. As society is a custodian for all customs and traditions, people who deviate from those ethics are seen as troublemakers in the society.

But the question here is, why do people become troublemakers? Social scientists like Herbert Spencer says that "the poor are poor because they are unfit." The poor are poor because they do not have the intellectual ability to be wealthy. He argues that they are greedy and that is why they are unable to uplift themselves off their misery.

- **Person-blame distracts attention away from institutions:** This mentality to blame one person shifts the focus from the larger concerns like the environment (government, economy and social milieu) which are to be blamed.
- **Person-blame makes it difficult to establish a systemic change:** As we blame one person, we make it difficult for any change that needs to be suggested in the system. Unjustified social norms are ignored when facing concerns like racism, homophobia, gender equality, etc and the protests are curbed all in the name of curtailing violence.
- **Person-blame allows the powerful to control rebels:** When we blame a person and call his/her behaviour deviant, we allow the government to control and punish such rebels. Rebels are treated unfairly and times sent

to institutionalised care like prisons and rehabilitation which mentally affects them more. The system nevertheless still stays unchanged because of which rebels were born.

- **Person-blame encourages judging group of people:** We convince ourselves with what we see and form opinions in the form of stereotypes (Men drive better than women). This leads to generations carrying forward same stereotypes without challenging them and judge people.

Check your progress I

- 1) What is a social problem?

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4.3 APPROACHES TO SOCIAL PROBLEMS

There are four main approaches as suggested by Etzioni (1982, as cited in Shetgovekar, 2018) that can be explained in the context of social problems. These are discussed as follows:

- 1) **The consensus and structural-functional approach:** The consensus and structural-functional approach mainly highlights how the social structure of a society meets the needs of the individuals in the society. Society, according to this approach is like an integrated system with different parts that are connected with each other and work in coordination in order to maintain balance in the society. Thus, various organisations, institutions both governmental and nongovernmental in a society are interrelated and function in tandem with each other. Thus, society functions as an integrated system in order to meet the needs of the individuals in the society. And in order to meet the needs of the individuals, the society undergoes constant adjustment to ensure that at least needs of the majority of the persons in the society are met. Practically speaking though, many a times needs of all the individuals and segments in the society are not met. And in many cases even the fundamental needs of individuals are not met. This kind of deviation (that can be termed as a deviation of the society from its own norm of meeting the needs of the individual) leads to creating of a social issue or a problem. Social problem are also seen as consequences of breaking down of socialisation that can be as a result of issues and difficulties related to individuals, families and subcultures. This approach does assume that disparity to some extent in meeting needs of all the

individuals will exist, though largely the society as a social system will function adequately. The approach as such does not provide any suggestions regarding intervention to deal with the social problems. Though it suggests re-socialisation and control as measures to deal with any deviants from the social norms. The approach does not propose rapid change in society as that could derail the social order. But it does support a change or reform that is slow and gradual.

- 1) **The conflict or alienation approach:** The main focus of this approach is on the tension and contradictions that may exist between the classes of individuals in the society who have power and the individuals who do not have power. According to this approach such tensions and contradictions are integral and basic to any society. And thus, inequalities on the basis of class, gender and so on, exist in any society. The approach suggests societal transformations or change at a larger level in order to deal with varied social issues and problems. And these transformations are directed towards decreasing or removing the inequality between the groups so as to encourage power sharing.
- 2) **Symbolic interactionism:** According to this approach, social problems originate from difficulties or issues in interactions amongst the individuals. Further, the approach also states that individuals displaying deviant behaviours learn the behaviour from others in the society and perception of social problems as well is learned from others. According to this approach, there is no permanent solution for social problems as issues and difficulties in communication, ambiguity in meanings and social norms will continue to exist in any society.
- 3) **The neo-conservative approach:** This approach focuses on the scarcity of resources that leads to a kind of division, where there are individuals who are less fortunate as they do not adequately receive resources and there are individuals who are fortunate and receive resources adequately. According to this approach, there is a social contract between these two groups and thus the elite may provide leadership and protection to the less fortunate and the less fortunate in turn will entrust the power to the elite. Social problems arise, when there is a breach in this social contract. Social change is not seen as necessary by this approach as social problems are assumed to arise as a result of deviant behaviour or issues related to authority.

Check Your Progress II

- 1) List the approaches to social problems.

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4.4 SOCIAL ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

We have understood the definition and nature of social issues and problems. Now let us briefly look at some of the social issues and problems.

In the present subsection of the unit, we will discuss about various social issues and problems especially in the Indian context.

4.4.1 Gender Discrimination

Men and women are born different and that makes them unique. At times these differences which emerge from our biological, psychological and cultural norms create inequality between men and women and affect our experiences in life (education, personality, careers and family life).

Gender discrimination can be explained as a social concern where the birth of a girl child is unwelcoming and the girl child is considered as a burden to the family. Girls are provided with fewer opportunities given to them which reduces their chances of personal growth and confidence. Male dominated society as noticed in most parts of India; mark women inferior to men and position them at home for child rearing responsibilities.

As per 2011 census data, effective literacy rates (age 7 and above) were 82.14% for boys and 65.46% for girls. The main reason why parents are not willing to spend on girl's education is the mindset that educating women is of no value as in the future they will only serve their husbands and in-laws. Even in open minded societies, women are still paid less for the same work done by men which shows obvious gender inequality. The absence of basic information about gender inequalities is a serious limitation because due to economic conditions, probably stronger family influences (Vindhya, 2007), greater female safety concerns (Vindhya, 2007) and differing cultural expectations (Chandrakar, 2014).

There are many socio-cultural reasons why gender inequality still exists in India as follows:

- i) **Poverty:** In a patriarchal society like ours, many still look up to the “man of the house” to earn for the family whereas if the woman earns as well, she is not given any respite from household chores. Further, women in India lack economic opportunities and autonomy, lack of access to economic resources including credit, land ownership and inheritance, lack of access to education, support services and their minimal participation in the decision-making process.
- ii) **Illiteracy:** Despite educational reforms, girls in our country are denied a chance in learning over helping at home. An educated, well-read woman ensures that other members especially the children of the house get quality education. That is why it is said, that when you teach a woman, you teach a whole family. According to Census of India, 2011 at the state

level female literacy rate varies from 35% in Bihar to 88% in Kerala. In states like Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir and Rajasthan, the female literacy rate is below 50%.

- iii) **Patriarchal setup in our Indian society:** Most households in India are dominated by a male figure who controls decision making for the whole family. In urban cities, we notice a change in mindsets, however we have a long way before we see equality at home as well as at work.
- iv) **Lack of employment facilities:** In India, many women spend most of their time devoted to home-based activities (cooking, washing, cleaning, looking after family members, etc). As there is no equal distribution of work at home, women are overburdened and subdued in their position at home. In urban cities, lack of proper day care facilities for their children restricts women to leave their children in safe hands to pursue their careers.
- v) **Social-cultural beliefs:** From our mythology to our films, men are seen as stronger gender who are protectors of the family and this impression is passed on to young children, wishing to grow up to take those social roles. Boys continue to be preferred gender by expecting parents in business communities and are seen as an asset whereas girls are seen as liabilities (expenses related to marriage and dowry).

Thus, gender discrimination can be termed one of the prominent social issues or problems that can have an impact on the overall development of the individuals and society and suitable intervention strategies that focus on attitude towards women and on creating awareness regarding issues like education for girls and equal opportunities etc. need to be developed.

4.4.2 Delinquency

Delinquency is defined as criminal behaviour, especially by a young person who is engaging into crime and misconduct finally resulting into violation of law. Acts like stealing and destroying public/private property may be thought as petty concerns but from a psychological point of view, they create criminal minds and law offenders.

Frequently researched and referred topic under this category is that of Juvenile delinquents who are defined as minors (less than 18 years of age) intently committing crime. It is very important to understand why a minor commits a crime to prevent it from occurring in future.

Delinquent behaviour includes running away from home/school without permission, poor academic record, use of vulgar language, committing sexual behaviours, engaged in gambling, drugs, drinking and constantly defying authority and rules. Understanding the causes of juvenile delinquency is an integral part of preventing a young person from involvement in inappropriate,

harmful and illegal conduct. In Indian context, there are different causal factors related to delinquency that are discussed below:

- i) **Personal Characteristics:** Those who have been observed to have low intelligence and have not received proper education become vulnerable to criminal behaviour. Acts like aggression, impulsive thrill-seeking behaviour is commonly noticed as factors contributing to delinquency.
- ii) **Family Influences:** Families where there has been poor to no parental supervision, tensed marital relationships, neglect and abuse have higher chances of delinquent cases. Also, when parents themselves disregard rules and norms, children are likely to follow in their footsteps. Lastly, children showing no attachment to their families display stronger delinquent characteristics.
- iii) **Substance Abuse Factors:** Most delinquents have been observed to be addicted to one or more substances (drugs, smoking, alcohol, etc). Research has shown school going children to be using stronger drugs than 10 years ago. This vicious circle of addiction makes them steal money and miss school.
- iv) **Peer Pressure:** If friends engage in delinquent acts, a child feels pressured to do the same to move in the same circle with them. This increases group's unity to defy authority together.
- v) **Socio-economic Factors:** Poorneighbourhoods are seen to be more responsible for delinquency as children growing in those neighbourhoods want to prosper hence steal and commit crimes. Most commonly committed crimes are done for necessity (fulfilling an urgent need) without giving it a second thought.

This is yet another relevant social issue and the focus needs to be not only on developing intervention strategies for parents and teachers at varied levels that could work as preventive measures, but the focus also needs to be on providing suitable counselling, guidance and support to the juvenile delinquents so that they are able to make correct choices for their future lives and move in a positive direction.

4.4. 3 Poverty

Poverty is an unfortunate situation where people lack basic necessity to meet their daily needs like food, shelter and safety. According to India's Planning Commission (2012) some 76.5 million people (21% of the total urban population) are considered poor. The National Building Organization reports that approximately 93 million people live in slums. This population is most impacted to the risks inherent in unplanned rapid urbanisation. India's poor regularly face losing their homes and livelihoods. Inequality in earnings are widening the social gap and making richer rich and poor miserable. Increasing rate in population and decline in agriculture are strong factors

contributing to poverty. Economical, Psychological as well social disadvantage pushes many into crimes to sustain themselves and areas where poverty is high, it is being noticed, crime rates to be higher as well.

People suffering in poverty are seen more involved in alcohol and drugs, the rate of violent crime has been increased from 29 percent from 2000 to 2010. The rate of murder also increased from 41 percent from last two decades. To evade desperate times due to poverty, people may indulge in activities like human trafficking (trade of humans for the purpose of forced labour, sexual slavery or commercial sexual exploitation), drug selling that results to home violence. Communal violence is also led by frustrations attached to illiteracy, lack of equal opportunity and poverty.

According to Henry Bernstein (1992 as cited in Shetgovekar, 2018, page 253) the dimensions of poverty include:

- Lack of ways to maintain livelihood on day to day basis.
- Inaccessibility to financial and other resources.
- Feelings of insecurity and frustration.
- Inability to develop effective social relationships due to lack of resources.

There are various causes of poverty and these can be categorised in to the following:

- **Individual causes:** In this, the poverty is mainly attributed to the individual and his/her success or failure. Thus, the individual is poor because of his/her personal reasons, that could range from being lazy, ineffective efforts, lack of efficiency an so on.
- **Culture of poverty:** Culture can be explained as way of life and when we talk about culture of poverty it denotes poverty as a way of life that ha been passed along the generations. Thus, certain behaviours are maintained, values and norms are followed and the individuals are used to a certain lifestyle that lead to poverty and also serves as a barrier in eradication of poverty.
- **Social structure:** Certain social conditions like lack of educational and employment opportunities and other economic aspects etc. lead to proliferation of poverty and can be categorised under social structure.

In India poverty can be attributed to various reasons like lack of educational and employment opportunities, lack of resources or inadequate use of resources, unemployment and so on (Ahuja, 2014). Poverty affects health and wellbeing of the individuals and the individuals may not be able to fulfil their basic needs of food and shelter and as a result they are not able to lead their lives to the fullest. Poverty also leads to inequalities in the society and thus can have an impact on overall development of the society.

Dealing with poverty is not an easy task and interventions at various levels are required. On one hand, education and awareness regarding need for education needs to be created and on the other hand employment opportunities are to be provided. Social and welfare schemes and policies directed towards reducing poverty also need to be developed.

4.4. 4 Unemployment

Unemployment can be explained as willingness to work but not employed and earning a salary. This affects people not only economically and socially but a lot more psychologically. Lack of productivity and self-worth pushes people into criminal mind and behaviour. Reasons behind unemployment can range from increased population, rapid technological change, lack of education or skills to rising costs of living thus resulting into financial, social and psychological problems. Ahuja (2014) described unemployment as absence of work that is remunerative, though willingness and potentiality to work is present. The three main elements of unemployment are, willingness to work, present of potentiality and willingness to make efforts to find work. But despite of these the individual is not able to get a remunerative work.

Some of the types (or causes) of unemployment (Shetgovekar, 2018) are as follows:

- **Seasonal unemployment:** The individuals remain unemployed for a certain period of time in a year. For example, in certain cities, individuals may remain unemployed due to seasonal changes like snowing.
- **Agricultural unemployment:** These result due to seasonal nature of farming or due to increase in industries that leads to decrease in agricultural related work.
- **Cyclic unemployment:** This is as a result of fluctuations that take place in trade and business.
- **Industrial unemployment:** These include factors like lack of growth in industries, increased migration and so on.
- **Technological unemployment:** Many a times when technological upgradations are carried out in an industry or organisation, a work activity that was carried out by many individuals can now be carried out by fewer or single individual(s). This can lead to technological unemployment.
- **Educational unemployment:** Lack of fit between education and the requirement in the job market can lead to educational unemployment.

Unemployment can also attributed to social factors like increase in population, lack of willingness to carry out certain jobs that are seen as below one's status, increased migration and so on.

Unemployment can be detrimental to the development of the society and can also have an impact on the individual as he/ she experiences stress, anxiety

and other issues as a result of being unemployed. Poverty and unemployment are also related and both can have a negative impact on the overall development of the society as a whole.

Intervention strategies to deal with this social problem need to focus on educational opportunities, bridging the gap between education and the demands of the job market, generation of employment opportunities and so on.

4.4.5 Violence and Criminal Behaviour

WHO (2021) defines violence as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation" (<https://www.who.int/violenceprevention/approach/definition/en/>). Violence can be categorised (WHO, 2021) as follows:

- **Self directed violence:** This is the violence where the perpetrator and the victim is same. Self abuse and suicide are examples of this violence.
- **Interpersonal violence:** As the name suggests, this the violence between persons. This can be further be categorised in to family and intimate partner violence and community violence. Family and intimate partner violence includes domestic violence, child abuse, intimate partner violence and so on. Community violence can be further categorised in to acquaintance and stranger violence. Violence at workplace, attack by strangers and so on can be categorised under this category.
- **Collective violence:** This is denoted as violent behaviour by large group of persons and can be categorised as social, political and economic violence.

Violence can have a negative impact on the wellbeing of the individual as a well as society. In this context we also need to focus on the vulnerable group that is even more prone to being victimised. Women, children, elderly and individuals belonging to low Socio Economic Status are more vulnerable to be victimised and the impact of violence on them can be grave.

Violence against women can range from domestic violence, sexual harassment, rape to female foeticide and infanticide. Dowry system that is still prevalent in Indian society can also lead to harassment and victimisation of the women and their maternal families.

Criminal behaviour like stealing, robbery and kidnapping seem to be an easier option when a person/gang is unemployed. This gives them a chance of making quick money without hurting anyone.

Unemployed individuals are driven into violent crimes by addiction (drugs, alcohol, etc) and casual approach towards laws. Farnsworth et al. (1994) have

explained that unemployment has strong relation with criminal behaviour. Increase in joblessness increases social stress leading to anti-social behaviour like violence. Sociological point of view explains that when a person is treated negatively from social institutions (religion, community, workplace) and is unable to achieve his/her goals in life (earning a living), s/he turns to crime as they do not feel the need to be controlled by any social order. Since unemployment increases daily excessive time it also increases the probability that the person gets into bad company and starts engaging in criminal activities (Patacchini and Yves, 2007).

To deal with these social problems as well, interventions need to be carried out at various levels. Awareness programmes need to be organised and certain programme at school and community levels also need to be organised. Stricter laws against violence also need to be created and implemented. Though, necessary measures also need to be taken in order to prevent violence and criminal behaviour in society.

4.4. 6 Child and Elder Abuse

Over and above wrong doings in the society, there are concerns at domestic front by family members on dependents such as children and elders that need to be discussed. Unfortunately, as dependents are unable to fight back, they are abused more frequently.

Abuse to a child can be explained any form of maltreatment by an adult that is violent and threatening. It can be from someone at home or caretakers' outsiders on whom a child depends on. Trust is violated and the child is left hurt for life.

It has been noticed that abused children have a hard time trusting other due to their traumatic past experiences and could also become abusers. Primarily there are four types of abuses commonly seen in children:

- 1) **Physical abuse:** All forms of physical violence
- 2) **Emotional abuse:** An adult regularly insults the child, acts in a hostile manner towards the child
- 3) **Neglect:** The child does not receive the care and nurturing that s/he needs (physically) and is ignored for their need for love, warmth and security.
- 4) **Sexual abuse:** Child is subjected to molestation or abused sexually.

Causes of Child Abuse and Neglect: Children can become victims to child abuse for various reasons, some of them have been explained.

- i) **Domestic Violence:** when home environment is violent, children become soft targets to frustrations and disappointments.

- ii) **Alcohol and Drug Abuse by parent(s):** When parent are addicted to substances, it has been noticed that children from those families witness rage, neglect and physical abuse from their addict parent.
- iii) **Parents having history of mental disorder:** Children who have parents suffering from personality disorders are physically and mentally not there for their children and thus suffer neglect.
- iv) **Poverty and Socio-economic conditions:** Financial distress takes parents away to work, leaving children unsupervised and thus prone to abuse. Abusers have been reported to be unemployed and disappointed with their lives and target children for their unhappy lives.

Elder Abuse: Elderly abuse has been described as intentional actions that cause harm or risk basic needs and safe living conditions of the elderly. It includes physical abuse, negligence, material exploitation and sexual abuse (Cohen et al. 2006).

HelpAge India (2011) has performed a study in 12 major cities of India and reported different kinds of elder abuse cases in its study. According to it, an elderly is abused verbally (60%), physically (48%), emotionally (37%) and economically (35%), and 20% of elderly feel neglected themselves by the family as well as society.

Furthermore, this study reported that major types of crimes faced by the elderly are burglary, molestation and criminal acts. With incidences of crime against the elderly going up, there is a perceptible increase in fear of crime among the elderly.

Elder abuse can be categorised as follows:

- **Physical Abuse:** Hitting, pushing, kicking, inappropriate use of drugs or restraints
- **Mental abuse:** Insults, threats, humiliation, controlling behaviour, confinement and isolation
- **Financial abuse:** Misusing or stealing a person's money or assets
- **Neglect:** Not providing food, housing, or medical care
- **Sexual abuse:** Sexual contact without consent

The above noted abuses could be for several reasons and it varies from poor physical to deteriorating mental health of victims; at times substance abuse can also be seen as a risk factor. At times, gender (women) is seen more at risk as well as shared living space accounting to their dependency on the abuser.

Elderly persons deteriorating health and increase in medical expenses could also be a pressing reason why family members see them as burden and treat them badly. Mostly being retired and now dependent, they are neglected and suffer loneliness.

Intervention programmes here not only need to focus on providing suitable counselling, therapy and support to the victims but also on creating awareness and taking up preventive measures. Stricter laws also need to be created and implemented.

4.4. 7 Other Social Issues and Problems

Besides the above, there are various other aspects that could lead to social problem. One such aspect is communalism. Communalism can be explained as a strong attachment towards one's own community and religion to the extent that it creates distinctions within community against each other. People follow communalism blindly as they are uneducated and are influenced under the name of god and religion. Rioters see 'others' not like them to be using resources and therefore treat them like threat. Thus, the very social fabric of the society can be disturbed as a result of communalism. Besides, the caste system that serves as a system of social hierarchy separating people into ranks can lead to discriminations and thus can have an impact on development and wellbeing of the society. There are also social issues that are related to language. India is a diverse country with people belonging to different culture and speaking different languages. And in certain cases the language could lead to development of certain social issues and problems.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was quoted as saying, "*One language can unite people. Two languages are sure to divide people*". What comes to mind when one thinks of language, is a close connection it has with that country's heritage and culture. Common language relates people to each other and at times different dialects can cause confusion and disharmony. Shortly after gaining independence, the Indian government created states based on linguistic (spoken language) boundaries.

For the most part, each state has a majority language which takes precedence over the many others which also exist in the region. The official language is not always the majority language of the state.

With over 900 million people and more than one thousand languages, India is certainly one of the multilingual nations in the world today. India has been proud of its secularism and multicultural societies which allows people to speak different dialects of which Hindi stays as the most commonly spoken language. English is still considered an elite and commonly accepted spoken language especially in urban cities, whereas in suburban and rural areas, people still prefer to use their regional language, something they are most comfortable with. This confusion separates people speaking different languages and also forms groups against one another.

These social issues and problems can also be dealt with the help of suitable intervention strategies that focus on awareness and also by nurturing and encouraging acceptance of diversity and respect towards others, even those who differ from oneself.

Check your progress III

- 1) List the categories of elder abuse.

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4.5 LET US SUM UP

When we live in a society, we live in harmony knowing our social limits in the name of social norms. A particular behaviour can become a social problem when it moves beyond social norms and starts to target certain groups in the same societal set up. If things are not resolved at one to one level, it tends to get escalated at a group/community level and that's when we see a social issue becoming a social problem. The trouble with social problems is that it digs deep roots and brings out at times regressed concerns; along with the present problems leading to resentment and unrest till a solution is shouldered to create social harmony. Any occurrence considered as a social pathology includes convicts being punished to set rules or lessons for others in society to follow. Law and police are involved in resolving social harmony and trust in the legal system of the country. In the present unit thus, we discussed about the definition and nature of social problem. We also discussed about various approaches to social problem. Lastly various social issues and problems like gender discrimination, delinquency, poverty, unemployment, violence and criminal behaviour, child and elder abuse and other social issues and problems were also discussed. In the next unit we will mainly focus on the intervention and evaluation. Based on varied social issues and problems and their nature suitable intervention strategies can be developed and these interventions can be evaluated on regular basis in order to improve them.

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http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/data_files/india/Final_PPT_2011_chapter6.pdf

4.7 KEY WORDS

Delinquency: Delinquency is defined as criminal behaviour, especially by a young person who is engaging into crime and misconduct finally resulting into violation of law. Acts like stealing and destroying public/private property may be thought as petty concerns but from a psychological point of view create criminal minds and law offenders.

Person-Blame Approach: Assumption to this approach is that there are laws which everyone has to follow and those who don't are considered problematic. As society is a custodian for all customs and traditions, people who deviate from those ethics are seen as troublemakers in the society.

Social Problem: According to Leon-Guerrero (2016 pg 7) "A social problem is a social condition or pattern of behaviour that has negative consequences for individuals, our social world, or our physical world". For example, violence can have a negative impact on the individuals".

Unemployment: Unemployment can be explained as willingness to work but not employed and earning a salary. This affects people not only economically and socially but a lot more psychologically.

Violence: WHO (2021) defines violence as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation".

4.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check your progress I

1) What is a social problem?

According to Leon-Guerrero (2016 pg 7) "A social problem is a social condition or pattern of behaviour that has negative consequences for individuals, our social world, or our physical world". For example, violence can have a negative impact on the individuals.

Check Your Progress II

1) List the approaches to social problems.

The approaches to social problem are:

- The consensus and structural-functional approach

- The conflict or alienation approach
- Symbolic interactionism
- The Neo-conservative approach

Check your progress III

- 1) List the categories of elder abuse?

The categories of elder abuse are as follows:

- **Physical Abuse:** Hitting, pushing, kicking, inappropriate use of drugs or restraints.
- **Mental abuse:** Insults, threats, humiliation, controlling behaviour, confinement and isolation.
- **Financial abuse:** Misusing or stealing a person's money or assets.
- **Neglect:** Not providing food, housing, or medical care.
- **Sexual abuse:** Sexual contact without consent.

4.9 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) Explain the definition and nature of social problem.
- 2) Describe the various approaches to social problem.
- 3) Discuss poverty and unemployment as social issues and problems.
- 4) Describe violence and criminal behaviours as social issues and problems.
- 5) Explain child and elderly abuse.

UNIT 5 INTERVENTION AND EVALUATION*

Structure

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Intervention
 - 5.2.1 Types of Intervention
 - 5.2.2 Intervention Mapping
- 5.3 Design and Implementation of Intervention
- 5.4 Impact analysis
- 5.5 Evaluation
 - 5.5.1 Types of Evaluation
- 5.6 Let us Sum up
- 5.7 References
- 4.8 Key Words
- 4.9 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 4.10 Unit End Questions

5.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to,

- discuss what is intervention;
- explain the designs and implementation of intervention;
- explain impact analysis; and
- describe evaluation.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Sanika was working as a project manager with a Non- Governmental Organisation (NGO) that worked in the field of health in a village. Sanika collected data on knowledge related to reproductive health of the women in that village. When the data was collected and analysed, Sanika found that the the women had very low knowledge about reproductive health. Therefore, she decided to develop and intervention strategy to promote awareness about reproductive health amongst the women.

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Chinmaya worked as an industrial psychologist in an organisation. She would make it a point to interact with employees, especially workers in the manufacturing unit everyday to understand the issue and problems faced by them. While interacting with the workers she realised that the workers were not using safety devices adequately. She therefore developed a workshop for the workers on importance of safety devices and how to use them correctly. She also evaluated the workshop for its effectiveness and found that the workshop led to positive outcome. The workshop created by her was then implemented in other manufacturing units of the organisation as well.

Two cases have been discussed above that mainly focus on how intervention strategy was used in order to change or modify behaviour in order to promote positive outcome. In psychology, we use intervention in various ways. Intervention can be terms of counselling or psychotherapy at an individual level or it can be done at a group level as well. For example, it can be for students of a certain class or could be for employees in an organisation. Though, intervention can also be at State or National level and in such a case the nature and scope of intervention is vast. Further, intervention may focus on various issues ranging from health to awareness regarding environmental issues and so on.

In the previous units, we discussed about applied psychology and also about various social issues and problems. We understood that the main essence of applied psychology is understanding a social issue or problem and developing suitable intervention to deal with the issue or problem. It is thus, important for us to understand what is an intervention and also discuss about how the interventions can be evaluated.

5.2 INTERVENTIONS

Intervention has a significant role in the subject area of psychology. We often refer to intervention in the context of clinical and counselling psychology where the clients having psychological issues, problems or disorders are provided with suitable intervention. These interventions are based on counselling and psychotherapy and could be carried out at individual or group level as well in certain cases. We also discuss about interventions in the context of industrial and organisational psychology, where interventions can be in terms of training programme and workshops.

The goal or objective of intervention in applied social psychology is same as that in clinical psychology or industrial and organisational psychology, that is, bringing about change in human behaviour. Though, many interventions in applied social psychology could be at much greater scale and are targeted towards larger groups and communities.

When we study social psychology we discuss about various concepts like social influence, conformity, obedience, conflict, social cognition and perception and so on. And when we talk about any social issue, most of the

social issues they tend to have their roots in cognition and behaviour. For instance, certain health related issues can be attributed to the lifestyle of the individuals. Thus, often various social problems can be dealt with by focusing the cognition and behaviour of the individuals. And this can be done by developing various interventions, be it awareness programmes or counselling and so on.

As we have discussed in the definition and previous units, the main focus of applied social psychology is on developing interventions. In this regard, we need to understand what an intervention is.

Interventions can be described as actions that are carried out in order to facilitate change amongst individuals. They, thus focus on modification of behaviour, cognition, emotions and so on.

Lodzinsky, Motomura and Schneider (2012, page 62) defined intervention as “a strategy (or procedure) that is intended to influence the behaviour of people for the purpose of improving their functioning with respect to some social or practical problem”. Intervention can range from a psychotherapeutic treatment provided to an individual to deal with his/ her psychological issues and problems to programmes developed in order to deal with a social problem like violence against women. Intervention can also be described as measures that are carried out in order to bring about a change in behaviours, emotions or feelings of the individual. The focus of all the descriptions of intervention is on modification or bringing about a change. And this change is in direction of alleviating a social issue or problem so as to promote welfare in the society.

While developing interventions, it is important to identify those aspects of the social issue or problem, for which if intervention is developed, it will lead to alleviation of that issue or problem. Further, the factors that influence the behaviour in this regard also need to be focused on so that the same can be incorporated in the intervention. It is then important to identify an intervention strategy that would be effective in dealing with the social issue or problem.

There are various other programmes that have been initiated in order to improve social services or to enhance services related to education, health and income opportunities. One of the strategies is Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). Initially it was named as Mahatma Gandhi Employment Guarantee Act 2005. The main focus of this act is provide livelihood and security in rural areas by providing the individuals in rural areas with employment of at least hundred days. More information on MGNREGA can be found on <https://nrega.nic.in/netnrega/home.aspx>. Even with regard to COVID19 situation, various awareness related activities etc. have been taken up by the Government of India. Some of the relevant campaigns and programmes in India are highlighted in box 5.1. Though, in this we have mainly highlighted

the interventions carried out at large levels, there could be interventions that are carried out at organisational, community or state level as well. For example, certain interventions to promote creative writing or enhance communication skills can be carried out in a school. Or interventions to enhance soft skills or behavioural skills can be carried out in an organisation.

Box 5.1 Campaigns and Programmes in India

There are various campaigns and awareness programmes in India. These awareness programmes can be termed as intervention strategies that mainly focus on the knowledge, attitude and practices amongst the general public.

National Mental Health Programme (NMHP)

National Mental Health programme was launched in 1982 by Government of India to ensure that basic mental health care is available and accessible especially to the vulnerable and underprivileged section of the country and also to encourage the participation of the community in development of mental health services. The District Mental Health program (DMHP) were launched as well under NMHP. For more information the following website can be referred <http://nhm.Gov.in/index1.php?lang=1&level=2&sublinkid=1043&lid=359>.

Awareness related to HIV/ AIDS

National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) is a division of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India that was formed in 1992 (<http://naco.gov.in>). The organisation is involved in policy making and implementation of programme that aim at prevention and control of HIV/AIDS in India. Besides various other activities, NACO is mainly involved in interventions focusing on creating awareness about HIV/ AIDS. The organisation also works towards ensuring quality care and dignified treatment to individuals who are HIV positive.

National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP)

The National Tobacco Control Programme was launched in 2007-2008 by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. The main aim of the programmes is “ creating awareness about the harmful effects of consuming tobacco, reducing the production and supply of tobacco products, ensuring effective implementation of the provisions under The Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003” (COTPA), helping individuals quit tobacco use, and facilitating the implementation of strategies for prevention and control of tobacco advocated by WHO Framework Convention of Tobacco Control (<https://ntcp.nhp.gov.in>). The main activities involve training social and health workers, school teachers and so on, Information, education and

Communication activities that again focus on creating awareness and setting up cessation facilities for individuals willing to quit tobacco.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Abhiyan

Once such campaign is 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Abhiyan' that was launched in 2015 by Ministry of Women and child development, Government of India. The campaign mainly focuses on saving the girl child and educating her. It also focuses on creating an awareness and to improve the effectiveness for welfare services schemes available for girls in India. The main objectives of this initiative are "preventing gender biased sex selection elimination, ensuring the survival and protection of the girl child and ensuring education and participation of the girl child" (<https://wcd.nic.in/bbbp-schemes>).

Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA)

One of the important programmes launched in 2000 by the Government of India is SarvaSiksha Abhiyan that focuses in achieving Universalisation of Elementary Education with a time frame in accordance with the 86th amendment to the Constitution of India, that is, making free and compulsory education to the Children of 6-14 years age group a fundamental right. The aim of SSA is also to provide quality elementary education. It also focuses on the education of girl child and children having special needs (<https://www.aicte-india.org/reports/overview/Sarva-Shiksha-Abhiyan>). More information on SSA can be assessed from <http://www.ssa.nic.in>.

5.2.1 Types of Intervention

Lets us now look at the types of intervention (Lodzinsky et al., 2012), these are discussed as follows:

- 1) **Personal intervention:** These are that interventions that are utilised by individuals on day to day basis. A teacher may use certain interventions while teaching certain topic in her class room in order to enhance learning in his/ her students. A supervisor could use praise as an intervention to encourage an employee in carrying out his/ her work effectively. These interventions are relevant in day to day life and are carried out by each one of us. Such interventions can be used to motivate and encourage other individuals.
- 2) **Programmatic intervention:** Royse et al. (2006) defined programme as a collection of activities that are carried out in an organised manner in order to attain certain objectives. This is the intervention that we mainly discuss about in applied social psychology. Such interventions are organised in order to prevent, alleviate or eliminate the negative outcomes of social issues and problems. Intervention for example can be carried to create awareness regarding reproductive health amongst adolescent students in a school so as to promote healthy behaviour

amongst the students. Interventions can also play a role in encouraging and strengthen the positive aspects. For example, certain career development workshops can be organised for efficient employees.

- 3) **Trial intervention:** Yet another type of intervention is trial intervention. In this the intervention is carried out on trial basis. Trial interventions are also termed as programme efficacy studies as they mainly focus on effective of the intervention. For example, if an intervention is developed for school students to promote positive environmental attitude amongst them, then the intervention is initially carried out on trial basis and based on the results obtained the intervention is modified. There are two types of trial intervention. In the first type a research is carried in order to study the effectiveness of the intervention and the second type is one in which intervention is carried out on pilot basis and if found to be adequate, it is implemented on permanent basis. An example of the first type could be an intervention to create awareness regarding healthy lifestyle amongst general public. An example of the second type could be a workshop of mathematical skills for students of 9th standard in a school, that is carried out on pilot basis and if found effective it is implemented on permanent basis to all such students in the school.

5.2.2 Intervention Mapping

In the context of intervention, we also need to discuss about intervention mapping. According to Shetgovekar (2018, page 264), “intervention mapping can be described as a process that involves planning that is based on systematic utilisation of evidence for the purpose of scientific research and theories”. Intervention mapping includes various steps ranging from problem identification to actual implementation and evaluation of the intervention. In order to carry out an intervention, it is important that a thorough planning is carried out. And this planning is not linear or one time process but it will take place repeatedly through the implementation and evaluation of the intervention. And this kind of planning is important to link each step of the intervention implementation and to avoid any error. As if there is error at any stage, the whole intervention process could be affected. Thus, an intervention is evaluated for its efficacy and necessary modifications are carried out as required and in this as well adequate planning is required. Intervention mapping also plays a role in dealing with type III error that can be explained as ineffective intervention as a result of poor design and implementation (Bartholomew et al, 2011).

In the context of intervention planning, there are four main perspectives, they are discussed as follows:

- 1) **Participation perspective:** This denotes the perspective of the participants on whom the intervention will be implemented. It is important to encourage active involvement of participants in the intervention design and implementation process and that will facilitate

the implementation. It will also lead to positive attitude towards the intervention and less resistance to change. Besides, it will also lead to empowerment of the participants.

- 2) **Eclectic utilisation of the theories:** This denotes that multiple theories can be used in order to understand any social issue or problem.
- 3) **System perspective:** This perspective highlights that an intervention is a part of a system and various influence can have an influence on the intervention.
- 4) **Ecological perspective:** This perspective highlights the relevance of social and physical environment in the context of human behaviour. These need to be kept in mind during design and implementation of an intervention.

There are various issues and constraints that may arise while an intervention is designed, developed and implemented. And this can pose a challenge to the designers of intervention as they have to manage the constraints as well as ensure that the intervention is effective and implemented adequately. Let us look at some of the constraints.

- **Budgetary constraints:** One of the significant constraint has to do with finances. Any intervention will involve financial implications and thus an intervention not only needs to be validated using scientific methodology but it also required to be vetted in terms of its financial requirements. For example, in an industrial set up if a human resource manager wants to provide the employees with an intervention programme to enhance their mental health, then besides using scientific method to design and develop the intervention, he/ she will also be required to note the financial resources required. The management will thus decide about whether such an intervention could be given to the employees or not on the basis of financial aspect besides the the scientific validation of the intervention.
- **Participation of the stakeholders:** Intervention is a collaborative activity and will require participation of numerous individuals, departments etc. Participation of individuals on whom the intervention will be implemented is also required. Thus, the designers of intervention need to ensure active participation of all the stakeholders and ensure effective communication between them. While designing an intervention care needs to be taken that the ideas and point of view of varied stakeholders are integrated in the intervention.
- **Organisations constraints:** There could be other constraints like availability of human resources with necessary educational qualification and experience, availability of certain facilities, operational issues and so on that also need to be taken care of by the designers of intervention.

- **Ethical constraints:** Interventions are implemented on individuals and thus ethical issues also need to be focused on. These are necessary to ensure the protection of the rights of the participants and also to ensure their wellbeing and not subject them to any harm. We discussed about ethical issues in Unit 2 of this course and those ethical issues also need to be kept in mind while the interventions are designed, developed and implemented.

Check Your Progress I

- 1) List the types of intervention.

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5.3 DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERVENTION

According to Oskamp and Schultz (1998), the steps involved in the design and implementation of intervention are as follows:

Step 1 Identification of a problem: The very first step in design and implementation of intervention is identification of the problem. To take an example, for a doctor to suggest suitable medication, he/she needs to have clear idea about what the patient is suffering from. In a similar manner before an intervention is suggested, it is important to identify and understand the problem. Further, while carrying out the process of identification of the problem, it also important to focus on the severity of the problem. The main role in the process of identification of the problem is played by the stakeholders. Stakeholders denote individuals who have some interest in the intervention programme and they could also be affected by the programme. Stakeholders could be people who are affected by the problem, persons involved in financial aspect of the programme, individuals who will be involved in implementation of the intervention, individuals who would work in the frontline, people who would be involved in management of the intervention and so on. Thus, for example if an intervention strategy is to be developed to promote consumption of healthy and nutritious diet amongst adolescents, the stakeholders would be the adolescents, the teachers and parents who would probably play a role in implementation of the programme, the funding agency that could be the school or any other agency and so on.

Need assessment needs to be carried out in order to understand the problem in a better manner. Need assessment can be denoted as measurement of the

need of the intervention programme. Thus, before an intervention is developed on the promotion of health and nutritious food amongst the adolescents, a need assessment will be carried out with regard to whether such a programme is required or not.

This need assessment can be carried in an informal or formal manner. An example of informal need assessment could be an assessment based on observation and experience that is carried out by human resource manager with regard to communication skills of the employees in certain department. In this context a systematic study or need assessment is not carried out. In a formal need assessment a systematic method is followed and data is collected using suitable tool. For example, data can be collected from migrants regarding their health related behaviours and practices in order to develop suitable health related intervention programme for them.

Step 2 Finding a solution: Once the problem is identified, the process of finding the solutions can start. In the process of finding a solution, it is important to take in to consideration various precipitating (factors that lead to the development problem) and perpetuating (factors that contribute to sustenance of the problem) factors can be identified. These two factors are extremely important and if one of them is not focused on, the intervention developed will not be effective and will not lead to behavioural change. For example, in a school, the low pass percentage amongst 10th standard students could be as a result of ineffective learning strategy (precipitating factor), but there could also be other factors as lack of motivation and interest in studies (perpetuating factors). In order to improve the pass percentage amongst 10th std students in this school, both the factors need to be focused on.

It is not so that we need to develop a solution to the problem, but it is also possible that the solution is already available. Thus, before an intervention strategy is developed, we also need to explore the existing intervention strategies and their suitability in the context of the presenting problem faced by us. For example, there could be an effective intervention strategy that could have been used in another school to deal with low pass percentage. If found suitable, this intervention strategy can be effectively implemented in the school. A new intervention strategy can be developed if no suitable existing intervention is available.

Once the solution is generated, the same can be presented in form of an intervention hypothesis. This would be a tentative statement about the effectiveness of the intervention. For example, the intervention hypothesis could be that workshop on effective learning strategies and skills will lead to improvement in learning capacity of the students.

Step 3 Setting of the goal and intervention designing: This is the third step in the process of designing and implementation of an intervention. This step denotes identification of the goals of the intervention and the actual implementation of the intervention.

Goals in this context could be long term (broad goals) or short term (objectives) and based on these various activities that would be incorporated in the intervention need to be developed. Objectives are often based on the broad goals. For instance, if the intervention goal is enhancing the learning strategies and skills of the students, one of the objectives could be enhancing note taking in classroom. And based on the objectives, activities can be developed. For example, a workshop can be developed for the students to learn how to take notes.

Thus, in the context of this step in designing of intervention, three main aspects are activities, objectives and goals, that are related to each other. One empirical way in which these can be rationalised is with the help of Programme logic model. Programme logic model can be described as a blueprint of or a rationale for how the activities related to the programme can lead to achievement of the programme objectives and then how the achievement of programme objectives lead to the achievement of the programme goals. Thus, there needs to be an adequate explanation or theoretical reasoning for the programme activities, objectives and goals. Example of programme activities leading to attainment of programme objectives and eventually the programme goals is given in table 5.1.

Table no. 5.1 : Examples of programme activities and related objectives and goals.		
Programme Activities	Objectives	Goals
Workshop on note taking	Improvement in learning style	Increase in pass percentage of students in 10th class
Training in communication for employees	Enhanced interpersonal communication amongst the employees	Increase in employee productivity

Step 4 Implementation: Once the previous steps are complete, the intervention strategy is now ready for implementation. Though during this step as well there are numerous aspects that need to be considered including, the nature, structure, size and other details of the intervention that will determine the kind of resources that would be required, especially, the human resource. That is, the number of people required to implement the intervention, their educational qualification and experience, if they need to be trained and so on. Besides, the budget required for intention also needs be specified along with the space, furniture and other requirements like computer, phones etc.

A larger intervention would require a large amount of resources and involvement of a number of persons as opposed to a smaller intervention.

Whatever be the size and nature of intervention, it is important that the effectiveness of its implementation is amenable to measurement and evaluation.

In the process of design and implementation of intervention, the ethical issues, mainly beneficence and nonmaleficence need to be keep in mind, besides the other ethical issues as we discussed in unit 2 of this course.

Further, the intervention needs to be implemented in such a way that its efficacy can be measures and evaluated.

Check Your Progress II

- 1) List the steps in design and implementation of intervention.

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5.4 IMPACT ANALYSIS

Once the intervention is implemented, its impact needs to be analysed. Impact analysis as the name suggests is an analysis of the impact that the intervention has on the target behaviour. Impact can be termed as a function of how effective, sustainable and relevant an intervention programme is.

Impact analysis is also termed as impact assessment and can be described as a procedure that involved qualitative analysis with regard to whether an intervention programme was successful or not and this is done using controlled experimentation. Fortuny (2021) defined impact assessment as “a structured a process for considering the implications, for people and their environment, of proposed actions while there is still an opportunity to modify (or even, if appropriate, abandon) the proposals. It is applied at all levels of decision-making, from policies to specific projects”

In order to effectively carry out impact analysis, it is relevant that the programme had objectives that were specific and amenable to measurement. The intervention programme also needs to be adequately implemented on the target population and its outcome measures need to valid and reliable. Thus, impact analysis mainly focuses on the impact that is as a result of an intervention programme and this result or outcome can be positive or negative. It can also be direct impact or an indirect impact. And the impact can also be intended or unintended. Thus, the focus of impact analysis is also on what lead to the change in behaviour or the causes of the impact that was studied. Impact analysis can be explained as an evaluative process. And this

process is carried out in an empirical manner so that authentic information about the effectiveness of an intervention programme can be obtained. The focus of impact analysis is on whether the intervention programme lead to any difference or not.

Impact analysis can be Ex ante impact analysis (forecasting or prediction related to the impact) or ex post impact analysis. (involves evaluation of the impact) Ex ante impact analysis is necessarily a part of need assessment and planning process of an intervention strategy and it is an analysis that is carried out before the implementation of the intervention to understand possible impact of the intervention. Ex post impact analysis can be termed as a part of the evaluation and management process after the intervention is implemented. In the next sub section we will discuss about evaluation and before we do so, we need to differentiate between impact analysis and evaluation. The focus of impact analysis is mainly on the effect of the intervention. Whereas, the focus of evaluation is broader and covers efficacy of the intervention, the effectiveness of the intervention design, cost and benefit and so on. Though, it could be difficult to thoroughly differentiate ex post impact analysis and evaluation, as impact analysis is often incorporated in evaluation process of an intervention. Thus, impact analysis provides a narrow point of view of the effect of intervention and is also focuses on impacts that are well defined. Evaluation as we will discuss later, is broader and will answer many more questions related to the overall effectiveness and efficacy of the intervention.

Impact analysis is mainly based on a theory and involves establishment of theory of change. Thus, there is a description about the cause and relationship, that is, how intervention leads to the desired outcomes or effects. It also needs to be noted here that when we discuss about cause and effect relationship here, the effect can also be as a result of interaction between the intervention and the context or situation. This is especially true because, when we implement an intervention programme, we do so in a social system that is open and thus the context or the situation can also have an influence.

Impact analysis can be helpful to the proponents of intervention programme, stakeholders, communities and also decision makers (Fortuny, 2021).

The main aims of impact analysis are

- Assessment of intended and unintended change as a result on intervention.
- Assessment of the magnitude of change.
- Determining the causal factors that lead to the impact.
- Enhancing the effectiveness of the intervention programme.
- Promote effective decision making based on results obtained.

The process of impact analysis starts with planning regarding how the impact analysis is to be carried out. This is followed by carrying out impact analysis, which is done in a scientific manner using quantitative and qualitative approach. In the process of impact analysis, it is important to first of all define the change that the intervention programme is expected to bring about. Further, it is also relevant to identify the main difference in terms of the change in target behaviour from certain reference point or a baseline. The possible impact of the main difference also need to be highlighted and these possible impacts can then be prioritised on the basis of risk and prospects. The process of impact analysis also includes interaction with the stakeholders and the members of community where the intervention is to be or is implemented. Impact analysis also involves interaction, consultation and coordination with the proponents of the intervention, different organisations or units, policy makers involved and so on. Once the process of impact analysis is over, a report is prepared and based on this suitable decisions can be taken.

To summarise, it is important that the impact analysis is carried out in a well planned manner keeping in mind various aspects in order to get a correct picture of the effect of the intervention programme so that suitable decisions can then be taken.

Check Your Progress III

1) What is ex ante impact analysis?

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5.5 EVALUATION

As the concept of intervention and its design and implementation is clear, let us now focus on on the term evaluation.

Any intervention that is implemented needs to be evaluated from time to time so that suitable modifications can be made in it as per the requirement. Such an evaluation is also relevant as when an intervention is put to test, an empirical evidence of effectiveness of the intervention can be obtained. And based on such evaluations theories can be developed or modified. Further, any intervention programme is designed in order to benefit the individuals at large and to promote social welfare. But in case if the intervention is not able to achieve this objective then it needs to be modified so as to benefit the individuals. Implementation of a redundant intervention strategy should not

be continued as it will not benefit the individuals in any way. It is also possible that an intervention programme has been found to be effective, but a regular intervention will help maintain the efficacy of the programme with changing times and situations.

Evaluation as we have discussed above is thus relevant from the perspective of beneficiaries of the intervention. Though we also need to remember yet another important aspect of intervention and that is finance. Intervention involves financial investment and accountability. Thus, any intervention needs to be evaluated in order to ensure that the financial resource is put to good use and this will also be reflected in the positive outcome of an intervention. If there is no positive outcome of the intervention, then again it will be required to be modified or changed or even discontinued.

The evaluation of an intervention can be based on cost and benefit ratio and this ratio needs to be considered during the design and implementation of the intervention as well. If the cost is high and benefit is low, then the intervention need not be carried out, where as when cost is low and benefit is high, such an intervention can be termed as effective. When both cost and benefits are low, again there would be no point in designing or implementing the intervention. If the cost of intervention is high but so are the benefits, keeping in mind various factors and keeping in mind nature and urgency of the problem, the intervention could be implemented. Post the implementation, during the evaluation as well, the intervention can be assessed based on the cost and benefit ratio.

An intervention could be ineffective (Shetgovekar, 2018) due to following reasons:

- 1) **Inadequate theory and rationale of the intervention programme:** Often an intervention programme is based on a theory and if the theory is inadequate to start with then the intervention programme will also not be effective. Thus, before we design an intervention based on a theory or rationale, we need to thoroughly study the theory and its empirical aspects before the intervention is designed based on the theory.
- 2) **Implementation is not carried out adequately:** It is not enough to design the intervention but it needs to be suitably implemented. Effective designing of intervention is not enough, the intervention needs to be suitably implemented as well. If the intervention is not implemented adequately, then it will not lead to positive results. Any resistance to intervention from the individuals for whom the intervention is designed also need to be apprehended and measures need to be taken to deal with the same. Before implementation, relevant information regarding the group on whom the intervention is to be implemented needs to be collected. Various aspects related to implementation of an intervention needs to be focused on and only then the actual implementation needs to be carried out.

- 3) **Reaction and response of individuals for whom the intervention was designed:** The reaction and response of the individuals for whom the intervention was designed also is relevant. Despite of all the measures taken as discussed in earlier points, the individual may not positively react to the intervention which in turn can affect the outcome of the intervention. The individuals could feel threatened or may have negative attitude towards the intervention. Involvement and active participation of the individuals for whom the intervention is designed in the process of development and implementation of intervention can help deal with the reaction issue. Also measures can be taken to deal with any misinformation or negative attitude of the individuals towards the information. Awareness needs to be carried out about the benefits of the intervention amongst the individuals.
- 4) **Cultural incompatibility:** Culture is an important aspect that plays a relevant role in determining human behaviour. Any human behaviour can be viewed in the context of cultural background. While implementing intervention, issues could also arise as a result of cultural incompatibility. This can be explained as an intervention which is not compatible with the cultural beliefs, values and practices of the group for whom it is intended. For instance, with regard to an intervention to promote nutrition and diet, the nature and type of food and even ingredients used need to be considered. Language can also play a role. For instance, an awareness programme in certain area would be more effective if it is carried out in local language spoken in that area.

5.5.1 Types of Evaluation

The three main types of evaluation are:

- **Process or formative evaluation:** This evaluation focuses on the implementation of the intervention programme on the target group as was planned. Thus, an awareness programme with regard to HIV/ AIDS for adolescents in a college will be evaluated based on whether the programme was implemented on the adolescents in the college as was planned.
- **Outcome or summative evaluation:** The outcome evaluation denotes the evaluation of the results of the intervention programme. This evaluation focuses on whether the goals and objectives of the intervention were achieved or not. Most often, the outcome evaluations follow process evaluations.
- **Developmental evaluation:** Developmental evaluation denotes the significant role of evaluation in facilitation of the process of innovation and learning in an organisation. Such an evaluation mainly focuses on the experimentation of new and innovative approaches to social problem.

Check Your Progress IV

- 1) List the types of evaluation

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5.6 LET US SUM UP

To summarise, in the present unit we discussed about intervention, impact analysis and evaluation. Interventions can be described as actions that are carried out in order to facilitate change amongst individuals. Types of intervention namely, personal intervention, programmatic intervention and trial intervention were also discussed besides the term intervention mapping. Various issues and constraints that may arise while an intervention is designed, developed and implemented were also discussed. The term impact analysis was also described with a focus on its aims and process. Lastly the term evaluation was explained. The reasons for ineffective interventions and types of evaluation were also discussed.

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5.8 KEY WORDS

Impact analysis: Impact analysis is also termed as impact assessment and can be described as a procedure that involved qualitative analysis with regard to whether an intervention programme was successful or not and this is done using controlled experimentation.

Intervention: Lodzinsky, Motomura and Schneider (2012, pg 62) defined intervention as “a strategy (or procedure) that is intended to influence the behaviour of people for the purpose of improving their functioning with respect to some social or practical problem”.

Intervention mapping: According to Shetgovekar (2018, page 264), “intervention mapping can be described as a process that involves planning that is based on systematic utilisation of evidence for the purpose of scientific research and theories”.

5.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

- 1) List the types of intervention.

The types of intervention are:

- Personal intervention
- Programmatic intervention
- Trial intervention

Check Your Progress II

- 1) List the steps in design and implementation of intervention.

The steps in design and implementation of intervention are:

Step 1 Identification of a problem

Step 2 Finding a solution

Step 3 Setting of the goal and intervention designing

Step 4 Implementation

Check Your Progress III

- 1) What is ex ante impact analysis?

Ex ante impact analysis is necessarily a part of need assessment and planning process of an intervention strategy and it is an analysis that is carried out before the implementation of the intervention to understand possible impact of the intervention.

Check Your Progress IV

- 1) **List the types of evaluation**

The types of evaluation are:

- Process or formative evaluation
- Outcome or summative evaluation
- Developmental evaluation.

5.10 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) Elucidate intervention with a focus on its types.
- 2) Discuss the steps involved in the designing and implementation of intervention.
- 3) Explain the concept of impact analysis.
- 4) Explain the concept of evaluation and describe the reasons for ineffective interventions.