
UNIT 7 APPLICATION OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY TO COMMUNITY AND LEGAL SYSTEM*

Structure

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7.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you will be able to:

- describe the concept of community;
- describe the application of social psychology to community; and
- explain how social psychology can be applied to the legal system.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

“In India . . . we must aim at equality. That does not mean and cannot mean that everybody is physically or intellectually or spiritually equal or can be made so. But it does mean equal opportunities for all, and no political, economic or social barrier. . . . It means a faith in humanity and a belief that there is no race or group that cannot advance and make good in its own way, given the chance to do so. It means a realisation of the fact that the backwardness or degradation of any group is not due to inherent failings in it, but principally to lack of opportunities and long suppression by other groups.”

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India* (1946)

* Dr. Tina D’ Cunha, SEN Inclusion Learning Mentor and Key worker

We have had a good introduction to social psychology in the previous Units and hence now we shall directly understand the main aspects of this Unit, that is, application of principles of social psychology to community and legal systems.

The Unit will mainly focus on the concept of community and how social psychology can be applied to community. Community life is all about shared practices, common values and belief system. For instance, Goa – has the ‘Goan’ community- as it is often referred to. Being geographically on the coast and four centuries of Portuguese rule has led people of the state to have their own way of life and sustenance. The Portuguese influence is evident in names, food, architecture, music and all this is beautifully blended with Hindu festivals, the Konkani language, the farming, fishing and tourist industry and an undeniable Indian culture. Thus, we will not only understand the concept of community but will also look at the application of social psychology to community.

Further, the Unit will also explain the application of social psychology in legal system will be highlighted. The legal systems hold its prominence in social living. Since criminal behavior involves the violations of socially defined norms, psychologists view these behaviours to be accountable to both, the person as well as the situation it occurred in.

7.2 CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY

The community we live in or are a part of has a great influence on people’s day-to-day lives and are central to humankind. They contribute to the development and sustenance of in-group knowledge and identity and also provide strong tools for empowerment. Under this section we will explore the applications of social psychology to community life starting by understanding the concept of a community.

According to the Oxford dictionary, the English-language word "community" derives from the Old French word *comuneté* (currently "Communauté"). Archaeological studies of social communities use the term "community" in two ways. The first is an informal definition of community as a place where people used to live (example a village, city or town). The second meaning resembles the usage of the term in other social sciences: a community is a group of people living near one another who interact socially.

Community can be explained as a group of people who are functionally related and reside in a certain geographical locality at certain point of time. The people also display cohesiveness and a common culture. These people are a part of a social structure and display awareness regarding their identity as a group that is unique and separate identity.

Community can be differentiated from society as society can be explained as a system of relationships amongst individuals and community can be

described as a group of people who reside in certain locality and display cohesiveness to one another. Thus, there are a group of individuals in both society and in community but the society denotes a system related to social relationship. Whereas, community can be related with certain locality. Further, society as such may not have cohesiveness of we-feeling that is often displayed by a community. Community is a concrete concept and society is an abstract concept. Though, community is narrower when compared to society. Community thus can be a village or state or national community, where as society is larger in size. Any society has differences as well as similarities. However, community is mainly on the basis of similarity amongst the individuals.

There are three broad categories of community:

1) **Rural Communities:** Today it is difficult to explain the term 'rural'. One characteristic of these communities is that they have a lower population density compared to the urban areas. Rural communities are often understood to be quiet, isolated and untouched by the urban developments of the world. These areas tend to have higher rates of poverty, unemployed or underemployment. They also place emphasis on family and blood lineages, kinship relationships, family and cultural preservation.

An interesting element in a social contact emphasised when understanding rural communities is 'understanding resilience'. Rather than examining what is not working out in rural areas, this approach examines what is present in these communities and its own strengths that could help deal with any challenges. Margalit (2004) suggests that such resilience is based on an inter-connection between the individual, family and the socio-cultural adaptation.

1) **Urban Communities:** Urban communities tend to be more complex and diverse in terms of their social status and needs. They have higher level of demographic complexity and hence the bonds that connect members of these communities could be weaker. The people in these communities could also come from many different places and often do not know one another or the heritage of place they live in. Unlike in rural areas, urban people may have to travel long distances for work and their lives are more controlled by their working hours. Overall, the social condition of people is more developed and generally more educated.

2) **Suburban Communities:** These are usually lower density areas that separate residential and commercial areas from one another. They may be part of a city or urban area. Suburban communities often have more job opportunities than rural areas though may not be as many as in urban areas. They often also benefit from better access to healthcare, spaces for physical activity or recreation.

The discipline of psychology holds the view that we as individuals are social beings and we exist in a community culture and we need each of our community lives in order to realise our distinct sense of self, attachment and individuality. Community life integrates individuals into a society. It connects personal histories and experiences to shared cultural values and practices. Social representations such as community symbols, histories, rituals and aspirations of people shape community life and these become a strong sense of social behavior and knowledge for people. Communities play an important role in influencing the behaviour of individuals who are its members. Communities provide social norms that direct and regulate the behaviours of the individual

Social psychologists also highlight that a community helps us in our need for 'belongingness'. It is important to note that a community cannot develop in isolation or influences from other communities. Hence, they construct their roots and identity based on the social life and experiences of people living in it. Though, there are numerous problems and issues world wide and they occur at various levels like economic issues, health issues, climate change, population, wealth distribution etc. Conflicts are bound to develop in groups and among individuals. They are present in every community group as well. There are differences in thought, opinions and experiences. These need to be minimised and resolved in a fair and open manner.

Further, in all societies we notice that some groups are socially excluded and may face discrimination. *Social exclusion* describes a process by which certain groups are systematically disadvantaged because they are discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, caste, descent, gender, age, disability, HIV status, migrant status or where they live and so on. Discrimination occurs in public institutions, such as the legal system or education and health services, as well as social institutions like in the household. A HIV positive lady gave this testimony "*I got HIV from my husband. After a year of our marriage, my husband died from AIDS. When it was discovered that I had become infected with HIV, my in-laws stopped having anything to do with me and disowned me. So I had to move back to my parents' house. After this tragedy I went looking for a job. Before my marriage I used to teach in a school, so I thought when I needed a job I could apply to the same school again. But the school authorities found out about my HIV status and refused to accept my application. Not only that, I was also humiliated and looked down upon. Later, I got in touch with a foundation which helped me get HIV treatment. Through them I found my present job.*" Social exclusion can also be subtle and unintentional like in the cases of disability where the common spaces like educational institutes, market places, government offices are not designed to be disabled friendly. One of the direct consequences, among other factors, of social exclusion is poverty in various communities. Socially excluded people are often denied opportunities causing low income and are left economically behind. Living with low income can increase parental stress and affect family bonding.

Poverty could indicate poor living and housing conditions, overcrowded neighbourhoods and unsuitable environments and influences like crime. It has negative influences on children's health, development and overall wellbeing.

Thus, there could be numerous issues in communities, that may need interventions based on the principles of social psychology.

Check Your Progress I

- 1) List the three categories of community.

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7.3 APPLICATION OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY TO COMMUNITY

In the context of application of social psychology to community, we can discuss about the term community psychology that also encompasses effective application of principles of social psychology to community.

Community psychology can be described as focusing on how individual relates with communities and society. It also focuses on improvement of quality of life for individuals as well as in communities and society as a whole and this is done with the help of research and action. According to Lafreniere et. al. (2012, page 275), the main values of community psychology include “family wellbeing, sense of community, respect for diversity, social justice, participation of citizens, collaboration and community strengths and empirical grounding”.

Some of the relevant values and approaches in community psychology (Lafreniere et. al., 2012, page 276 and 277) are discussed as follows:

- **Sense of community:** This is denoted by the feelings of belongingness and membership that the individuals in the community have towards the community. The main characteristics of the sense of community are interdependence and attachment towards other members of the community.
- **Ecological perspective:** The focus here is on fit between the individual and his/ her environment. The outcomes of a lack of such a fit is also highlighted. Further, any issue or problem is to be analysed at various levels as individuals are influenced simultaneously by multiple systems

like microsystem (family and peers), organisations (school, college, workplace), macrosystem (cultural group or political structures of the State of Country).

- **Promotion of wellbeing and prevention of problems:** Wellbeing here can be explained in terms of both physical and mental wellbeing. The focus of the community psychology is on enhancing wellbeing and also on prevention of problems that can negatively impact wellbeing of the individuals.
- **Respect for diversity:** In earlier unit, we focused on diversity. The community psychology also strives towards inculcating respect for diversity amongst the individuals.
- **Social justice:** Social justice denotes fair and equal distribution of resources and opportunities in the community. The rights of the underprivileged members are also upheld.
- **Collaboration and community strength:** Attempts are made to develop a relationship that is collaborative and in which the expertise and the experiences of the community members are utilised while the research is designed and programmes are planned.
- **Participation and empowerment of the citizens:** This involves encouraging the active participation of the members of the community in dealing with the social issues and problems in the community and in bringing about betterment of the community. The goal is also to make individuals in the community take control of their lives and become empowered.
- **Social action and bringing about social change:** Community psychology aims at bringing about positive social change and direct social actions in order to resolve social issues and problems.
- **Empirical grounding:** In this the focus is on research and empirical methods that can be used to study social issues and problems and develop suitable interventions in order to alleviate them.

In order to encourage positive influence of the community on the individuals and to enhance their sense of community, the social psychologists can focus on the four main elements that are described as follows:

- **Membership:** This denotes that any community will have boundaries that are social and geographical and an individuals can be seen as belonging to certain community or other. Sense of membership can lead to feelings of safety and belonging ness amongst the individuals, which in turn will lead to desire to work for the benefit of one's own community.
- **Influence:** This mainly focuses on the power. That is the influence that the community has on the individual and vice versa. Individuals who feel that

they have a presence or value in their community will have a strong sense of belongingness with that community.

- **Interdependence:** The members in the community are interdependent and play a role in fulfilling each others needs. There is also sharing of resources, goods and values.
- **Shared emotional connection:** A community that is cohesive in nature will have a stronger shared emotional bond with the community and with the members in the community. This can be promoted with the help of shared experiences, rituals and celebrations.

Cultivating a sense of community can lead to wellbeing of individuals as the community will provide the much needed direction and social support. Interventions based on the fur elements of sense of community can be developed in order to enhance the sense of community amongst the individuals.

With regard to application of principles of social psychology to community, the focus can be on understanding deindividuation, that is mainly a loss of sense that is experienced when the person is in a crowded place or is burdened with overstimulation. This is often seen in urban cities, where despite of all the amenities and facilities, the individuals may not be fit to the environment and may experience stress and various other issues (Lafreniere et. al, 2012). Psychological experiences of living in an urban set up are not only due to various aspects like pollution, crowing etc.) but they could also be as a result of stimulus overload. Stimulus overload can be explained as a condition that is denoted by an overloaded nervous system that makes it difficult to respond simultaneously to varied stimuli in the environment. This can lead to adaptation in form of psychological retreating where response is not provided to all the stimuli that demand attention. According to Milgram (as sited by Lafreniere et. al, 2012), the following ways in which the psychological retreat takes place:

- Rushing through social situations and less time is devoted to dealing with obstacles.
- Prioritisation takes place and thus, tasks that are low priority get less attention or will be avoided.
- Structures are created in such a way that personal element has no place. Automation in terms of ATM machines and so on reduces social interaction to a greater extent.
- Barriers are created in order to avoid social interaction in day to day life.
- Specialised agencies are created to deal with certain issues and problems. Thus, any problem is directed to that agency and the individuals do not have to feel responsible.

In the context we can also discuss about diffusion of responsibility, that can take place when none of the individuals feel responsible and each one feels that some one else will help. This also leads to bystanders effect that we study in social psychology. The term bystander effect refers to the tendency for people to be inactive in high danger situations due to the presence of other bystanders (Latané& Nida, 1981). Thus, people tend to help more when alone than in a group. A young woman called Kitty Genovese was murdered in New York, while several of her neighbors looked on. No one intervened until it was too late. Latanéand Darley (1970) identified three different psychological processes that might prevent a bystander from helping a person in distress: (i) diffusion of responsibility; (ii) evaluation apprehension (fear of being publicly judged); and (iii) pluralistic ignorance (the tendency to rely on the overt reactions of others when defining an ambiguous situation).

Thus, when a social psychologist works in a community setup, especially in an urban community, the points discussed above need to be taken in to considered in order to enhance the person- environment fit and avoid deindividuation and diffusion of responsibility that could negatively affect the overall development and wellbeing of the community.

The main focus of community psychology (that could of interest to social psychologists as well) is on how the community or society have an influence on an individuals wellbeing. The focus is mainly on the disadvantages and aversive conditions in the social environment of an individual that can have an impact on his/ her mental health and wellbeing. And if community play a role in an individuals wellbeing, then various interventions at community level can have a positive impact and can play a role in enhancing the wellbeing of the individuals in the society.

Community-based mental health services are emphasised in the World Health Organisation's Mental Health Action Plan, the World Bank's Disease Control Priorities, and the Action Plan of the World Psychiatric Association. There is increasing evidence for effectiveness of mental health interventions delivered by non-specialists in community platforms in low- and middle-income countries (Kohrt et. al., 2018). The availability and integration of mental health services into communities can promote accessibility, acceptability, affordability, and scalability of services, as well as promote adherence to treatment and increase the likelihood of positive clinical outcomes. Moreover, community services can play a crucial role in promoting mental health awareness, reducing stigma and discrimination, supporting recovery and social inclusion, and preventing mental disorders. In a study by Nimgaonkar et. al. (2015) in Tamil Nadu used low cost task shifting by providing community education and identifying and referring individuals with psychiatric problems as effective strategies for treating mental disorders in tribal communities. Through the program, the health workers established a network within the village, which in turn helped the patients to interact with them freely. Consenting patients volunteered at the educational sessions to

discuss their experience about the effectiveness of their treatment. Community awareness programs altered knowledge and attitudes toward mental illness in the community.

Thus, community based interventions can play an important role in promoting mental health and wellbeing amongst individuals in the community.

Social psychologists also need to focus on diversity and respect and acceptance of diversity among the members in the community. This was discussed by us in details in the previous unit. Interventions can be designed by social psychologists in order to promote respect and acceptance of diversity and reduce stigmatization, prejudice and discrimination.

Community psychology also focuses on research and action in order to bring about social change. This is in accordance with the definition of applied social psychology, where empirical research is carried out in order to understand a social issue or problem and then based on the results intervention strategies are designed, developed and implemented. Community psychologists aim to create a positive social change within a social structure at two levels, firstorder changes, that involves encouraging changes in individuals inorder to prevent or fix a community problem. And second order changes that involves changing the social systems that contribute to problems inorder to ensure that individuals fit well into their environments. And interventions can be developed accordingly in order to bring about first order or second order change. Action research that we discussed n unit 2 of this course can be used in order to study social issues and problems and develop suitable intervention strategies.

Check Your Progress II

- 1) What is sense of community?

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7.4 APPLICATION OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY TO THE LEGAL SYSTEMS

Legal systems are a part of political, social and economic development of any given country. Major social changes are always reflected in the laws of the land. The relationship between social psychology and law may not be common in our understanding but it helps when we look at it as a 'coded set of rules that regulate human behavior and interactions'. The regulation of behaviours through set laws helps in conflict resolution and guiding accepted behaviours. There is a very deep connection between human mind and behaviours and the functioning of the legal system. In the following case study of false confessions, we can attempt to see how being 'caught' in a criminal offence can work on the human mind and have its consequences.

At 16, Huwe Burton confessed to killing his mother. He was still in shock from discovering her body when New York City police began to interrogate him. After hours of being threatened and cajoled, he told the police what they wanted to hear. He soon recanted, knowing he was innocent and hoping the justice system would clear him. Burton was convicted of second-degree murder in 1991 and received a sentence of 15 years to life. After 20 years in prison, he was released on parole, but he never could shake the stigma of the conviction. Attorneys from several organisations worked for more than a decade to clear him. They produced facts that contradicted the confession and showed evidence of prosecutorial misconduct. But for the Bronx District Attorney's Office, Burton's confession outweighed all other evidence; after all, who would admit to a crime they did not commit? Burton's attorneys brought in Saul Kassin, a psychologist, to help with the interrogation.

Kassin explained that false confessions are not rare. Drawing on more than 30 years of research, Kassin told the legal team how standard interrogation techniques combine psychological pressures and escape hatches that can easily cause an innocent person to confess. He explained how young people are particularly vulnerable to confessing, especially when stressed, tired, or traumatised, as Burton was.

The above case study highlights the role of psychology in legal system. The focus of the present unit though will be specifically on how the principles and concepts of social psychology can be applied to legal system.

7.4.1 Social Psychology and Crime

The foremost issue under legal system that needs to be focus on is crime and criminal behaviour. Crime can be termed as a social issues and can be linked to various other social issues and problems like poverty, discrimination socio-economic status and so on. Thus, it is important to view crime from social psychology lens in order to understand it and suggest suitable intervention strategies to deal with it.

In this section we will discuss the role of social psychology in the legal system. The socio-legal approach says that law is directly linked to the analysis of a social situation involving a legal angle and should be put into perspective of how the law plays a role in the maintenance or change of the situation.

When we try to understand crime or criminal behaviour, we need to focus on the factors that lead to criminal behaviour. And in the context of social psychology, it is important to focus on the environment or social situation of the offender rather than only his/ her personal characteristics.

Deindividuation: Once such factor (in the context criminal behaviour) could be deindividuation (that was also mentioned earlier in the previous subsection). Deindividuation can not only have a negative impact on the community as was discussed earlier but can also promote criminal behaviour and thus needs to be dealt with adequately. Deindividuation refers to the fact that when people are placed into groups or surrounded by a crowd, many people seem to lose their sense of identity or individuality, resulting in the loss of self-control or moral restraints. Deindividuation is commonly used to explain various situations of violence, including genocide, violent riots or crowds, gangs or antisocial group behavior. Philip Zimbardo, a well-known psychologist, believes deindividuation usually follows as a result of a complex set of events:

- a) The presence of many others encourages a feeling of anonymity.
- b) The individual feels that he/she has lost their sense of identity and becomes part of “the group”.
- c) The group identity gives comfort in the fact that he/she can no longer be singled out or held responsible for their behavior.

This then generates a loss of self-awareness, reduced concern of his or her behavior being evaluated by others, and an increasingly narrowed focus of attention.

Criminal behaviours like stealing are more likely when individual are in a group. Deindividuation can also be attributed to collective aggression as there is a loss is sense of identity when on wis ina group and there may be loss of self control that could lead to individuals displaying behaviours that may not be as per the societal norms.

Social facilitation: Yet another concept that we can discuss in the context of social psychology and crime or criminal behaviour is social facilitation. Social facilitation refers to the finding that people sometimes show an increased level of effort as a result of the real, imagined, or implied presence of others. In a study by Thornberry et. al. (1993) the boys of the Rochester Youth Development Study who were gang members were found to be much more delinquent than non-gang members. Results for transient gang

members, those who were gang members for only one year and presumably less committed to the gang, were most consistent with the social facilitation model. Involvement in delinquency was particularly high when the boy was an active gang member, but these boys were not consistently more delinquent than non-gang members when they were not active in the gang. For those who remained gang members for at least two years and were presumably more committed to the gang, that is, the stable gang members, these boys exhibited the highest rates of general delinquency, yet delinquent involvement was greatest during their years of active gang membership.

Antisocial patterns of attitudes: The study of attitudes, including antisocial attitudes, and their relation to behavior is an important endeavour in social psychology. Attitudes are generally thought of as evaluative judgments that a person makes about an issue, an object, an event, or a person. Thus, a person's attitudes toward crime may be relevant to his or her tendency to commit a crime. Andrews and Bonta (2002) identified five elements that comprise an antisocial pattern of attitudes (including values and beliefs):

- High tolerance for deviance in general,
- Rejection of the validity of legal authority and institutions,
- Use of cognitive distortions (for example rationalisation, denial) to make one's antisocial behavior acceptable.
- Interpretation of a wide range of environmental stimuli as a reason for anger, and
- A style of thinking that is generally antisocial.

The frustration- aggression hypothesis: We can also discuss about the frustration- aggression hypothesis in the context of criminal behaviour. This hypothesis is a social psychology model that states that anger, hostility and violence are more likely an outcome of an individual being prevented from achieving his/her goals (frustration). This theory is based on the psychodynamic theory of catharsis, (catharsis — the process of releasing, and relieving strong or repressed emotion). The following stages are proposed;

- 1) An attempt to achieve a goal is blocked,
- 2) Frustration is experienced,
- 3) Aggressive drive is created,
- 4) Aggressive behaviour displayed (e.g. violent fantasy, verbal / physical outburst).

This is cathartic because the aggression created by the frustration is satisfied, thereby reducing the drive and making further aggression less likely.

The principles of social psychology can thus be used to understand criminal behaviour and the above points can be kept in mind when programmes are developed to prevent criminal behaviour and workshops and programmes can

also be organised at community levels in order to understand the factors leading to community behaviours so that the same can be avoided.

7.4.2 Social Psychology and Law

Discussing about legal psychology, it can be explained as the application of psychology and its principles to legal system. According to Tapp (1973 as cited in Fisher, 1982), there are three main areas of application to psychology in legal systems that have been mainly focused on, they are legal socialisation in communities, the process of judiciary in the court of law and the criminal justice process. Though in the present section our focus will be on how one of the branches of psychology, that is, social psychology finds its application in legal system. Almost all aspects of legal rules and procedures relate to human behavior. Many assumptions made by the law about human behavior have been challenged by research in psychology, more specifically social psychology. In the related field of cognitive psychology, important contributions from research in memory regarding eyewitness testimony and eyewitness identification have led to greater scrutiny and occasionally expert testimony at trials (Ceci and Friedman, 2000).

Social psychology can thus find its application in legal system to understand the behaviour of the jury, lawyers, eyewitnesses, defendants as well as the accused. Further, it can also find its application to the arrest, interrogation and prosecution process.

Police investigation: Social psychology can play a role in understanding the investigation that is carried out by police. Investigation mainly involves a careful and systematic collection of information. And this involves interacting with the victim, eyewitness and even suspects. It is important that this process is free from any bias and error and is carried out as per the required procedure as stated by the law.

A lot will also depend on the interview that is carried out during the interrogation as the interviewer can have an impact on the interviewee (who could be the victim, eyewitness or the suspect). Interactional synchrony could take place, where the body movements are coordinated by the people when they are interacting with each other. This can have a detrimental effect on the investigation process. For example, if the interviewer, is a police officer, is restless during the interview, as a result of interactional synchrony, the interviewee could also get restless and this could be perceived as suspicious behaviour by the police officer. Any stress created during the investigation may make the suspect wrongly confess to crime. Thus, these issues need to be considered while the investigation is being carried out.

Further, self fulfilling prophecies can also play a role here. Self fulfilling prophecies occurs when expectations that a person has from another person, affects his/ her own behaviour and that of the other person in such a way that the person's beliefs will be confirmed. Thus, if the investigating officer has a preconceived notion that the person he/ she is interviewing has committed the

crime, the interviewee will behave in accordance with the self fulfilling prophesy, thus leading to error in the investigating process. Investigative interviews thus can be carried out keeping these aspects in mind and by employing effective cognitive interview techniques. For example, focus on rapport building, asking open ended questions, questions that are non leading, and strategic silence could be used (Day and Marion, 2012). The investigative officer needs even more careful while investigating children and questions asked again need to be non suggestive or non leading and neutral in nature.

Eyewitness testimony: The application of social psychology can also be discussed in the context of how eyewitness's testimony, mainly the ability to identify the perpetrator. There could be errors in this as well as this identification will depend on various circumstances. For instance, the eyewitness could make error when under stress while witnessing the event. Fewer errors are made when the full face of the perpetrator is visible rather than when the perpetrator is in disguise or the face is not clearly visible. In this regard cross-race effect may also occur, where the individuals are able to recognise a face of individuals belonging to their own race rather than that of an individual belonging to another race. The conditions under which the eyewitness has to identify the witness may also play a role. In this regard, the foils (individuals who are innocent), who stand in the lineup along with the suspects need to be selected carefully. The line up could also be sequential line up (one at a time) rather than simultaneous line up (all lined up together). Thus, errors can be reduced in investigation and the perpetrator identification process using the principles and concepts in social psychology.

Further, we discussed some of the important skills related to cognitive interviewing, communication skills and so on. Workshops on these can be organised for the police personnel in order to help them enhance their investigative skills.

A tool that could be of help during interrogation is the polygraph test or lie detector that is based on principles of psychology. Lie detection is a major theme in 'psychology and law', which in turn is one of the main areas of applied psychology. To facilitate lie detection, psychologists and practitioners have developed numerous lie detection tools. Such tools span the entire possible range from observing behavior, analysing speech, and measuring peripheral physiological responses to recording brain activity.

Negotiations by lawyers: In legal system, there are often negotiations that take place between two or more parties. In the legal context the key aims of negotiation are to

- Arrive at a compromise in settling a dispute in a way which is most beneficial to the client.
- Achieve the best possible outcome for the client without needing to resort to litigation.

- Obtain enough information from the other party to reach a potential solution.

A lawyer must always act ethically in negotiations. However, there is much room for debate as to where and how lines should be drawn. For example, a lawyer should never lie but is not obliged to volunteer information which may adversely affect his or her case. Negotiators may suffer from a bias blind spot, which refers to the tendency for people to view others as biased, while being unable to perceive their own biases, even when alerted to the potential for bias in their decisions. Rapport is another interpersonal influence in negotiation, and it is an important determinant of the extent to which negotiators develop the trust necessary to reach mutually beneficial agreements (Nadler, 2004).

Jury: A jury is a sworn body of people (the jurors) convened to render an impartial verdict (a finding of fact on a question) officially submitted to them by a court, or to set a penalty or judgment. The role of the jury is described as that of a finder of fact, while the judge is seen as having the sole responsibility of interpreting the appropriate law and instructing the jury accordingly. The jury determines the truth or falsity of factual allegations and renders a verdict on whether a criminal defendant is guilty, or a civil defendant is civilly liable. It is important that the Juror needs to be impartial they need to reach a decision based on the admissible trial evidence alone (Day and Marion, 2012). According to Vidmar and Schuller (2001, as cited in Day and Marion, 2012, page 263), a juror could have following prejudices that can lead to bias:

- **Interest prejudice:** The juror has interest or stake in the trial outcome.
- **Specific prejudice:** The juror has certain attitudes and beliefs that may interfere with his/ her impartial judgement of the case.
- **Generic prejudice:** The juror may have a general attitude related to race or gender and so on that can interfere with his/ her evaluation of the evidence.
- **Normative prejudice:** A strong community sentiment about a case could interfere with the ability of the judge to make an impartial decision about the case.

Prison climate: Besides the above the principles of social psychology can also be applied to understanding and improving prison climate or setup. The prison has many goals. It can be a form of punishment or means of removing the individual from the society for safety of others, it can be incapacitation of the offender, rehabilitation and also denunciation to imply that the behaviour as displayed by the offender will not be tolerated. Prison includes a social environment as various offenders as well as the guards interact with each other on day to day basis. The social climate of a correctional system like

prison has three main dimension according to Moos (1987, as sited in Day and Marion, 2012, page 266):

- **Relationship oriented:** Includes support, involvement and expression.
- **Personal development:** Includes autonomy, practical orientation and personal problems orientation.
- **System maintenance and change:** Includes order and organisations, programme clarity and staff control).

Prisons need to play an important role in rehabilitation of the offender and thus the environment needs to be created in such a way that it facilitates positive behaviour change.

Thus, when we discuss about application of social psychology to legal system, numerous issues are covered including the crime related instigation, to the eyewitness testimony, to jury prejudices and prison settings.

Principles and concepts in social psychology can be used not only to understand various aspects of legal system and also to develop suitable interventions.

Check Your Progress III

1) What is deindividuation?

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7.5 LET US SUM UP

To sum up, in the present unit, we discussed about the concept of community. Community can be explained as a group of people who are functionally related and reside in a certain geographical locality at certain point of time. The people also display cohesiveness and a common culture. These people are a part of a social structure and display awareness regarding their identity as a group that is unique and separate identity. The three broad categories of community, namely, rural, urban and sub-urban communities were also discussed. The unit also focused on the application of social psychology to community. In this section, some of the relevant values and approaches in community psychology were also covered. With regard to application of social psychology to legal system, the subsection focused on social psychology and crime and social psychology and law. Under social psychology crime, deindividuation, social facilitation, antisocial patterns of

attitude and the frustration- aggression hypothesis. Under social psychology and law, we discussed about police investigation, eyewitness testimony, negotiation by lawyers, jury and prison climate.

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7.7 KEY WORDS

Community: Community can be explained as a group of people who are functionally related and reside in a certain geographical locality at certain point of time. The people also display cohesiveness and a common culture. These people are a part of a social structure and display awareness regarding their identity as a group that is unique and separate identity.

Community psychology: Community psychology can be described as focusing on how individual relates with communities and society. It also focuses on improvement of quality of life for individuals as well as in communities and society as a whole and this is done with the help of research and action.

Deindividuation: Deindividuation refers to the fact that when people are placed into groups or surrounded by a crowd, many people seem to lose their sense of identity or individuality, resulting in the loss of self-control or moral restraints.

Frustration- aggression hypothesis: This hypothesis is a social psychology model that states that anger, hostility and violence are more likely an outcome of an individual being prevented from achieving his/her goals (frustration).

Social facilitation: Social facilitation refers to the finding that people sometimes show an increased level of effort as a result of the real, imagined, or implied presence of others.

7.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

1) List the three categories of community?

The three categories of community are rural, urban and suburban.

Check Your Progress II

- 1) What is sense of community?

This is denoted by the feelings of belongingness and membership that the individuals in the community have towards the community. The main characteristics of the sense of community are interdependence and attachment towards other members of the community.

Check Your Progress III

- 1) What is deindividuation?

Deindividuation refers to the fact that when people are placed into groups or surrounded by a crowd, many people seem to lose their sense of identity or individuality, resulting in the loss of self-control or moral restraints.

7.9 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) What is a community? describe the different types of communities.
- 2) Describe the application of social psychology to community.
- 3) Explain social psychology and crime.
- 4) Describe social psychology and law.

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