

Long Answer Questions

Q. 1. What is social facilitation? Explain.

Ans.

- i. Social facilitation can be defined as ‘an improvement in performance produced by the mere presence of others’. There are two types of social facilitation: (a) co-action effects (b) audience effect. Studies and research on social facilitation concern the extent to which a given piece of an individual’s behavior is affected by the real, imagined or implied presence of others.
- ii. Perhaps the first social psychology laboratory experiment was undertaken in this area by Norman Triplett in 1898. In his research on the speed records of cyclists, he noticed that racing against each other rather than against the clock alone increased the cyclists’ speeds. He attempted to duplicate this under laboratory conditions using children and fishing reels.
- iii. There were two conditions: the child alone and children in pairs but working alone. Their task was to wind in a given amount of fishing line and Triplett reports that many children worked faster in the presence of a partner doing the same task.
- iv. Triplett’s experiments exhibit the co-action effect, a phenomenon whereby increased task performance comes about by the mere presence of others doing the same task. The co-action effect may come into operation if you find that you work well in a library in preference to working at home where it is equally quiet.
- v. Social facilitation occurs not only in the presence of a co-actor but also in the presence of a passive spectator/audience. This is known as the audience effect, surprisingly.
- vi. We can say that the extent of social facilitation or inhibition depends upon the nature of the interaction between the task and the performer. According to Cottrell (1968), it’s not the presence of other people that is important for social facilitation to occur but the apprehension about being evaluated by them.

Q. 2. State the factors that lead to the formation of attitudes. Explain the process of attitude change giving examples from everyday life. *[CBSE (AI) 2015]*

OR

State the factors that influence attitude formation.

[CBSE (AI) 2011, 2014]

Ans. The factors influencing attitude formation are as follows:

- i. **Family and School Environment:** Learning of attitudes within the family and school usually takes place by association, through reward and punishment and through modeling.

- ii. **Reference Groups:** Attitudes towards various topics such as political, religions and social groups, occupations, national and other issues is developed through reference groups. This is learning by reward and punishment.
- iii. **Personal Experiences:** Personal experience can bring a drastic change in our attitude. Here is a real-life example. A driver in the army went through a personal experience that transformed his life. On one mission, he narrowly escaped death although all his companions got killed. He gave up his job in the army and worked actively as a community leader. Through a purely personal experience the individual evolved a strong positive attitude towards community upliftment.
- iv. **Media-related Influences:** Media can exert both good and bad influences on attitudes. On one hand, the media and internet make people better informed than other modes of communication while on the other hand it can create negative attitudes in people.

Attitude Change (Write any one out of the following three):

In the process of attitude change, the concept of balance proposed by Fritz Heider is described in the form of P-O-X triangle. Attitude changes if there is a state of imbalance between P-O attitude and O-X attitude and P-X attitude.

For example, in the study of attitude towards dowry(X), a person (P) has a positive attitude towards dowry (P-X positive). P is planning to get his son married to the daughter of some person (O) who has a negative attitude towards dowry (O-X negative). Here P-X is positive, O-P is positive but O-X is negative. That is, there are 2 positives and 1 negative in the triangle. This is a situation of imbalance. Imbalance on POX triangle is found when

- i. All the 3 sides of the POX triangle are negative or
- ii. 2 sides are positive and 1 side negative.

Balance is found when

- i. All the 3 sides are positive or
- ii. 2 sides are negative and 1 side is positive.

In the process of attitude change the concept of cognitive dissonance was proposed by Leon Festinger. If an individual finds that two cognitions in an attitude are dissonant, then one of them will be changed in the direction of consonance. For example, consider the case of the following two ideas or cognitions:

Cognition 1: *Pan masala causes mouth cancer which is fatal.*

Cognition 2: *I eat pan masala.*

Here the two ideas are dissonant in the attitude towards pan masala. Therefore, one of these ideas will have to be changed so that consonance can be attained. Thus, to remove or reduce the dissonance, change Cognition 2. Thus Cognition 2 will become:

I will stop eating pan masala.

Both balance and cognitive dissonance are examples of cognitive consistency. Cognitive consistency means that two components, aspects or elements of the attitude or attitude system must be in the same direction.

The 2-step concept of attitude change was proposed by an Indian psychologist, S. M. Mohsin.

Step 1: The target changes his attitude by identifying with the source.

Step 2: The source shows an attitude change towards the attitude object. The target also shows an attitude change. This is a kind of imitation or observational learning.

For example,

Step 1: Preeti reads in newspaper that a particular soft drink she enjoys is harmful. But she imitates the sports person with whom she identifies.

Step 2: The sports person having positive feelings towards his fans may change his habit of consuming the soft drink by substituting it with a health drink. Now, Preeti will also change her attitude and stop consuming the harmful soft drink.

Q. 3. Explain social cognition. Discuss with examples the role of schemas in social cognition.
[CBSE Delhi 2015, (AI) 2015]

Ans. Social cognition refers to all those psychological processes that deal with the gathering and processing of information related to social objects. For example, a teacher's conclusions regarding a student's behavior in school are quite different from his mother's conclusion who observes him at home.

Attitudes, impression formation and attribution are such processes which involve mental activities related to gathering and processing of information about the social world. Collectively this is called social cognition.

Schemas guide social cognition. A schema is defined as a mental structure that provides a framework, set of rules or guidelines for processing information about any object. Schemas are the basic units stored in our memory and in case of social cognition; the basic units are social schemas. Most of the schemas are in the form of categories or classes.

Schemas that function in the form of categories are called prototypes.

Schemas reduce time and mental effort required in cognition.

A **stereotype** is a cluster of ideas regarding the characteristics of a specific group. They are category-based schemas about a group of people. For example, a stereotype that Americans are hard-working. If you hear positive things about a group, the social schema about the group would be positive while when you hear negative things about the group, your social schema about the group would be in the form of negative stereotype.

The effects of stereotypes are that they give rise to prejudices and biases about specific groups.

Q. 4. Discuss factors influencing impression formation. Explain actor-observer effect in attribution. [CBSE Delhi 2015]

Ans. Impression formation is influenced by:

- i. Nature of information available to the perceiver.
- ii. Social schemas in the perceiver (including stereotypes).
- iii. Personality characteristics of the perceiver.
- iv. Situational factors

The process of impression formation is influenced by the above factors which are in turn influenced by

Primacy effect

Recency effect

Halo effect

We assign causes to the behavior shown in specific social situations. This process is called attribution. A distinction is made between the attribution that a person makes for his/ her positive and negative experiences (actor-role) than the attribution made by another person's positive and negative experiences (observer-role). This is called actor-observer effect.

When an individual attributes his/her own success, he/she emphasizes on internal factors but for failures to external factors; whereas when he/she attributes success of others he gives emphasis to external factors and for failures to internal factors.

	Internal Factors	External Factors
Stable Factors	Ability	Fate
Unstable Factors	Efforts, Hard work	Task, Characteristics

Wiener's Classification of Causal Factors

Q. 5. State the factors which influence pro-social behaviour. [CBSE (AI) 2012, 2013]

Ans. The factors influencing pro-social behaviour are:

- i. It is based on the inborn natural tendency in human beings.
- ii. It is influenced by learning. Individuals from family environments which emphasise helping as a value and praise helpfulness show more pro-social behaviour.
- iii. Some cultures encourage people to help the needy and distressed.

- iv. Pro-social behaviour is expressed when the situation activates certain social norms that require helping others. The norms are:
 - a. **Norm of Social Responsibility** which states that we should help anyone who needs help.
 - b. **Norm of Reciprocity** which states one should help those persons who have helped us in the past.
 - c. **Norm of Equity** which states that we should help others whenever it is fair to do so. For example, it is fair to help a person who has lost all belongingness in a flood than to help a person who has lost everything through gambling.
- v. People may not help the needy because they feel that the person might feel insulted or may become dependent.
- vi. Pro-social behaviour is more likely to be shown by individuals who have a high level of empathy.
- vii. Pro-social behaviour is reduced by factors such as bad mood, being busy with one's own problems, or feeling that the person to be helped is responsible for his/her situation.
- viii. Pro-social behaviour is reduced when people are part of a large group. For example, when there is a road accident each person thinks that it is not his/her responsibility alone to give help and that someone else may take the responsibility which is not the case when the person is alone. The people are thus influenced by the phenomenon of the diffusion of responsibility.