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# UNIT 1 RELEVANCE OF PSYCHOLOGY IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

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## 1.0 OBJECTIVES

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The objective of this unit is to provide you a basic and introductory understanding of the relevance of psychology to social work practice together with a definition of psychology. Further, you will be acquainted with social work and human behaviour.

After reading the unit you should be able to:

- Understand the nature of the subject of psychology;
- Get to know the main areas of psychology; and
- Understand the need of psychology for social workers.

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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

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Psychology and social work are two different disciplines. Psychology is predominantly academic in its approach while social work is predominantly applied in its orientation. But despite such differences, they are so closely related to each other that it becomes quite often impossible to think of their distinct existence and practice in many respects. Psychology incepted much earlier to social work and provided many fundamental concepts and theories for developing tools and techniques for social work. Both these disciplines deal with components of human personality, human nature and needs, human abilities, behavior and problems. Both have their own ways of tackling human problems, whether physical, mental or social, but in many respects they

are more or less similar. Methodologies of helping people in both disciplines involve similar tools and techniques to a considerable degree. It is therefore, but natural to know about the interdisciplinary relationship of these two profession-oriented disciplines.

## 1.2 INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY

Many of the fundamental assumptions, concepts, principles, theories, methods, techniques and tools of social work are based and derived from psychology since human welfare and development are the ultimate aims of social work. Psychology is the science that studies the behavior of man and is the outcome of theories and practical experiments pertaining to different components and factors having an influence on the individual's personality and behaviour patterns. We will take up some of the quite commonly used concepts, tools and techniques in psychology relevant for social work practice.

The word *Psychology* has been derived from Greek literature and is a combination of two words, i.e., 'Psyche' and 'Logos' which mean 'soul' and 'the study of'. It shows that initially psychology was perceived as a study of the soul or spirit. The word *soul* was vaguely used and interpreted in many ways. Later the word mind replaced the term soul. With the passage of time, the nature of psychology has undergone many changes. Its methodology has changed from sheer speculation to a scientific approach and it is today considered a science that studies the mind, consciousness and behaviour of human beings. Behaviour has a comprehensive meaning and includes all types of behaviour of all living organisms. Psychology has thus passed through different stages starting with pure speculation to a discipline with scientific rigour and specific research methods. Psychology is now considered as the science of behaviour.

### Psychological Schools

Schools	Contributors	Subject Matter	Basic Premise
1) Behavioural 1913- present	John B. Watson Ivan Pavlov	Effect of environment on the overt behaviour	Only observable events (stimulus-response relation) of human and animals can be studied scientifically.
2) Psychoanalytic (1900- present)	Sigmund Freud Carl Jung Alfred Adler	Unconscious determination of behaviour	Unconscious motives and experience in early life govern personality and mental disorder.
3) Humanistic	Carl Rogers	Unique aspects	Human beings are

(1950- recent)	Abraham Maslow	of human experience	free rational being with the potential for personal growth, and they are fundamentally different from animals.
4) Cognitive (1950- recent)	Jean Piaget Noam Chomsky Herbert Simon	Thought: Mental processes	Human behaviour cannot be fully understood without examining how people acquire, store and process information.
5) Biological (1950- present)	James Olds Roger Sperry	Physiological bases of behaviour in humans and animals	An organism's functioning can be explained in terms of the bodily structures and biochemical processes that underlie behaviour

### Check Your Progress I

**Note:** a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) How is psychology relevant to social work practice?

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2) Spell out the meaning of the word 'psychology'.

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### 1.3 DEFINITION OF PSYCHOLOGY

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Definitions of psychology have been changing with its evolution and development. The focus of psychology has been changing and accordingly new definitions have been formulated. Some of the popular definitions are given below:-

- 1) Psychology is the science of the activities of the individual in relation to the environment<sup>1</sup>  
— Woodworth
- 2) Psychology may be defined as the science that studies the behaviour of man and other animals.<sup>2</sup>  
— Hilgard
- 3) J.B. Watson has defined psychology as positive science of behaviour.
- 4) Psychology is the study of human nature<sup>3</sup>.  
— Boring
- 1) Psychology deals with response to any and every kind of situation that life presents. By responses or behaviour is meant all forms of processes, adjustment, activities and expressions of the organism<sup>4</sup>.  
— Skinner
- 6) Psychology is the positive science of the conduct of living creatures<sup>5</sup>.
- 7) James Drever has defined psychology as the positive science which studies the behaviour of man and animal.

The above definitions reveal that psychology is a science: it is a positive science of the activities of individuals and human beings and other animals: it is a science of behaviour in relation to the environment: it is a science of human nature, it deals with responses to any situation that life presents and expressions of organism, and psychology studies and explains conscious, subconscious and unconscious responses.

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### 1.4 USEFULNESS OF PSYCHOLOGY TO SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

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Psychology deals with human behaviour, emotions and projections. It also deals with some of the factors responsible in the formation of behaviour patterns. We know about the individual's development through psychology. Cognition, learning and memory are core subject matters for psychology. Knowledge of socialisation process is dependent upon psychology. We get to know about social process from psychology. The individual's reactions and behaviour, to a great extent, are based upon projections, which is a psychological phenomenon. Psychology studies the interaction pattern between heredity and



environment and explains to us the reasons for individual differences in physical and mental traits and abilities.

During social work practice we seek the help of psychology to understand and analyse human behaviour. When a social worker makes an effort to bring about a change in personality through functioning or behaviour modification, he has to look for help from psychology. In resolving problems related to adjustment, psychology helps social work.

The method of social case work of social work profession is dependent on psychology. Group work derives many social and psychological elements to be used in practice for group strengthening and betterment, from psychology. Social psychology studies group morale, leadership qualities and traits, behaviours of crowds and audiences which are useful in group work and to some extent, in community organisation.

Psychology provides considerable help in the field of social work practice. Many of the contexts mentionable are:

- Dealing with individual and family problems; case work helps in modification of individual's personality
- diagnosis and treatment planning for children with problem related to schooling (behavioural therapy and school counseling)
- dealing with an individual's adjustment with primary and secondary groups (social psychology)
- dealing with patients' accommodation with medical requirements and adjustment with others (health psychology and social medicine)
- helps in understanding, diagnosing and modifying group behaviour and developing leadership qualities (organisational behaviour)
- ego analysis and strengthening and understanding defense mechanisms of individuals (psychoanalysis) and
- counselling and guidance for enhancement in functioning and positive adjustment and fulfillment of needs of individual and society.

### Check Your Progress II

**Note:** a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) Give any two definitions of psychology.

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2) Write briefly on the usefulness of psychology to social work practice.

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## 1.5 SOCIAL WORK AND HUMAN BEHAVIOUR

An understanding of human behaviour is essential for the profession of social work in order to deal with psychosomatic or socio-economic problems faced by people. The social worker has to understand the behavioural pattern of the clientele at the individual, group or community levels in order to help them. Client-positive behaviour like cooperation, free dialogue or conversation, participation, assistance, coordination, and an interest and willingness to resolve problems help the social worker to make a proper diagnosis of the problem and plan an action for treatment. Negative behaviour like unwillingness, non-cooperation, escapism, isolation, hiding facts and biases, etc., create trouble and impediments to the successful practice of social work profession. During case work, a social worker has to handle his client along with the parents, siblings, other family members, neighbours, friends, school mates, colleagues and others who have some influence on the client. The behavioural interaction patterns of all these have to be kept in mind. Though in casework the focus is on the individual, the actions of others play a significant role. The person-in-environment approach views the individual and his/her environments as forming an ecosystem, consisting of the individual, all the system with which the individual has reciprocal relationships, the wider environment in which the individual acts, and all the mutual interrelationships that occur between the individuals and the various subsystems (Hare, 2004). Within this ecosystem, individuals are influenced by the influence of their environments through their actions (Johnson & Yance, 2001; Kondrat, 2002).

A group worker may help a group in its formation and harmonious functioning if its members act in a cooperative and democratic manner. The dynamics in a group might result in cooperation and sometimes in conflicts. An understanding of group dynamics and small group theory helps in working with groups.

In community organisation, the behaviour of community people, community leaders, existing organisational personnel and others who in some way or the other influence the community, play an important role in helping the organisation work in the desired direction. The nature of their behaviour determines the quality and quantity of the community

worker's role and function. Behaviour dynamics exposing biases, cultural, social or religious difference, professional or economic reservations, political rivalries and unequal resource distribution may create hurdles in the community work. An understanding of social psychology helps in intervening with groups and larger communities.

Though it is a difficult task to have an in depth understanding of the behaviour of individuals, the social worker should make an effort to know it in order to be more successful in attaining the goals and objectives pertaining to the client.

### Check Your Progress III

**Note:** a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) How is social work related to human behaviour?

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## 1.6 GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY

The branch of psychology which deals with the psychological aspects of a normal human being is known as general psychology. In general psychology we focus on concepts, theories and methods related to heredity and environment, growth and maturation, physiological bases of behaviour, sensation, perception and attention, feelings and emotions, learning, remembering and forgetting, thinking and reasoning, intelligence and personality including individual differences, aptitudes and reaction time.

Some of the above concepts used in general psychology are explained below.

One of the major concepts in the discussion is growth and development. Growth denotes an increase in size and tissue mass, attributed to the increase in cells and intracellular structure. It is structural and physiological and hence is regarded quantitative in nature. Growth is the progressive increase in the dimensions-size and diameter-of a child or part of a child; e.g., weight, height, head circumference, mid upper arm circumference (MUAC), etc. Growth is quantitative in nature. Development is progressive acquisition of various skills (abilities), e.g., head support, that accompanies growth, and is regarded as a function of maturity and learning (Liebert et al, 1979). Development happens by

way of integration of structure with functions resulting in optimal functioning; hence, development is regarded to be qualitative in nature.

The term *maturation* denotes a state of development as well as a process. A certain level of maturation is necessary in the individual before a given behaviour can appear. Maturation is accompanied by learning that happens as a result of interaction with the environment. Learning refers to the relatively permanent change in behaviour that engenders optimal functioning in a given environment.

There has been a debate on what determines growth and development. This is largely attributed to nature and nurture, where nature refers to inheritance, while nurture refers to the biophysical and social environment. Biological inheritance is derived from genes located in chromosomes. There are 46 chromosomes. A child gets 23 chromosomes from each parent but the large number of possible arrangements and combinations of the genes causes members of even the same family to differ sharply in hereditary constitution. That is why each person is unique. The wide gaps in ability are to be attributed to heredity. Differences in physique, intelligence and aptitude are more affected by inheritance than are social behaviour and personality traits. There is the aspect of environment that would impede or encourage the manifestation of the genetic potential. However, the relative role of heredity and environment in some of the above characteristics is still under debate among psychologists.

Sense organs receive impressions from stimuli which are energy changes in the environment. Stimuli received by the receptors, i.e., the sense organs, are communicated by the nervous system to the effectors (muscles and glands). Impressions from the receptors are carried to the effectors through pathways in the connecting mechanism, the central nervous system. The most important part of the nervous system is the brain. Functions like movement, speech, sight, learning, taste and smell have been located in specific areas of the brain. Complex functions like perception, memory and learning involve the entire brain and are not localised.

Feelings are complex sensations. Feelings vary from person to person and preferences depend on factors such as age, sex and training. Emotions are feelings which involve force and tension. Emotions have an emergency value and prepare the body for action. The ability to control emotions is desirable. Emotions may be controlled by manipulating the stimuli which initiate them.

Motives are drives. Motives range from inborn organic tensions to complex acquired needs. Hunger, thirst, sex, rest and sleep are most important organic needs. Motives develop conflict. When conflicts are severe and persistent one may need a counsellor's help to resolve the difficulties.

Learning is the result of focused physical and mental activities which leads to new and changed responses. The usual condition for learning is

a state of need and high motivation. It proceeds through a trial and error period to a final selection of the appropriate responses. Satisfaction or reduction in need which follows the effective response is called *reinforcement*. In human learning the goal is important. Efficient learning is added by careful planning, instruction and through insight development. *Habits* are sequences of behaviour and automatic. Many habits are maladaptive and they may be eliminated through a variety of devices. For learning, some motivation or drive is necessary. Curiosity and interest facilitate learning. They may be measured in relation to personal lives, those that have a direct application to everyday life. A good student makes use of outlines, notes, rules, tables, etc., and avoids studying when fatigued or bored.

Remembering and forgetting refer to the effect which the passing of time has on something learned earlier. The environment also facilitates learning; therefore, modification of the environment facilitates learning. Aspects of memory are classified under four heads:

- i) fixation or the act of learning itself,
- ii) retention or the storing of the impression,
- iii) recall and
- iv) recognition

Theories of forgetting have attributed memory loss to (i) passive decay and (ii) interference of the old with the new.

Thinking is a behaviour which is often implicit and hidden and in which symbols like images, ideas and concepts are ordinarily employed. Thinking is not confined to the head but may involve the whole body. Though the brain is primary in thinking and reasoning, muscular activity during thought indicates that many parts of the brain are involved.

The experimental psychologist measures the facts of behaviour and expresses the results in statistical terms. These statistics serve to summarise a set of scores in succinct form. The important aspect of mental measurement is concerned with the relations among traits.

Intelligent behaviour may be abstract, mechanical or social. The abstract is concerned with the ability to deal with symbols: the mechanical, with the manipulation of physical objects such as tools, machines, etc., and the social with the skills in personal and social affairs.

People differ from one another in physical, mental and personal characteristics. There is considerable variation among the traits within an individual. Sex differences show that at maturity, by and large, men are stronger and heavier than women but the difference in respect of mental ability is insignificant. Differences in temperamental and emotional traits are far greater within either sex than aptitude traits. Aptitude examinations measure present competence as well as estimate

potential ability. On the basis of standard aptitude tests, psychological and social work counsellors provide valid information to their clients in order to create self-awareness and for probable success in the field of work the person has chosen.

Personality includes attributes like physique, appearance, intelligence, aptitudes and characteristics of social behaviour. Personality traits are not similar to abilities. Personality is revealed in the typical ways in which the individual reacts to his surroundings. Personality traits become character traits when given a moral or ethical interpretation. From birth to maturity, the personality is shaped by society within the limits imposed by biological factors. Normality is the behaviour which is tolerated by society.

A major consideration for general psychology is the response of organisms towards stimuli presented. Reaction time is the time taken by the organism to respond to the stimuli. There are specific instruments in psychology to measure reaction time. These are useful in identifying persons for specific occupations which require high degree of alertness and attention.

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## 1.7 CHILD PSYCHOLOGY

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Child Psychology is the branch of psychology which deals with the childhood of a human being. Psychologists consider a human as a child till the age of 12 years. From 12 to 18 years human beings are considered adolescents. The development of a human being from the moment of conception to the attainment of the age of 18 years is the subject matter of child psychology. The total childhood and adolescence of an individual has been divided into five categories i.e. pre-natal period, infancy, babyhood, childhood and adolescence. The first period is from conception to birth. The second one is from birth to fifteen days, the third one is from fifteen days to two years, the fourth one is from two years to eleven years and the last one is eleven years to eighteen years. Another categorisation is as follows— (i) Prenatal (from conception to birth), (ii) Oral (birth to one year), (iii) Anal (one year to three year), (iv) Oedipal (three year to six year,) (v) Latency (six year to eleven year), (vi) Adolescence (eleven year to eighteen year).

Child psychology deals with stages of growth, development and maturation, environmental influences on growth and development and psycho-social interactions between the child and other members of primary and secondary social groups and the society. An individual is constantly changing from conception till death. Throughout childhood and adolescent years, a child develops his physical and mental structure. Development is a continuous process and changes in the individual may not be always visible. Changes are rapid in childhood. All developmental changes are not of the same nature. They influence the process of growing up in different ways. Changes during development have been divided into four major groups:

- i) Changes in size: Changes in size can be observed in physical growth but they can be also observed in mental growth. During normal growth height, weight and circumference of a child increase. Internal organs and structures such as the heart, intestine and stomach grow larger to meet the increasing needs of the body. The child's vocabulary, ability to reason, remember and perceive, and the creative imagination expand during growth years,
- ii) Changes in proportion: A child's physical development is not confined to changes in size of the body but also of other organs proportionately. Mental development in childhood is also apparent. The interests of a child change from concentration on himself to other children and in adolescence to the opposite sex,
- iii) Disappearance of old features: The third important change which takes place in the development of the individual is the disappearance of certain features. As the child grows older his thymus gland located in the chest disappears, the pineal gland at the base of the brain, baby hair, and baby teeth also disappear. Mental traits like bobbing, different forms of speech, impulsive action, creeping and crawling and sensory keenness in regard to taste and smell gradually disappear,
- iv) Acquisition of new features: Many new physical and mental features are acquired through learning but some of them are the result of maturing or unfolding of native traits not fully developed at birth. The physical features include, among others, teething, growth of hair, characteristics related with reproduction, etc. Mental traits include curiosity about sex matters, sex urge, knowledge, moral standards, religious beliefs, knowledge of language and neurotic tendencies.

Development is not a uniform process. It is extremely rapid during the prenatal period. From fertilisation to birth, increase in weight is estimated at 11,000,000 times and from birth to maturity the increase is 22 times. From three to six years the growth rate continues to be rapid though not as rapid as in the preceding three years. The development follows a pattern and occurs in orderly fashion. Each stage is the outcome of the one preceding it and a pre-requisite of the one following it. From four to sixteen weeks, the body gains control of his/her twelve loco-motor muscles. From sixteen to twenty eight weeks, the child acquires control over the muscles which support the head and can move the arms. The child then begins to reach out for things. From twenty eight to forty weeks the child gains control of his/her trunk and hands. This helps in sitting, grasping, transferring and manipulating objects. From forty to fifty two weeks, he/she extends the ability to control his legs and feet, four fingers and thumb. He can now stand upright, poke, and pluck. During the second year, he walks and runs; articulates words and phrases, acquires bowel and bladder control and develops a rudimentary sense of personal identity and of personal possession. During the third year he speaks in sentences and uses verbs as tools of

thought. He displays a propensity to understand his environment and to comply with cultural demands. During the fourth year he asks innumerable questions, perceives analogies and displays a tendency to generalise and conceptualise. In the routine of home life he is nearly independent. At the age of five years a child is well matured in motor control.

Development follows a pattern of specific phases of development. Development proceeds from general to specific responses. Individual differences in rate of development remain constant. Development occurs at different rates for different parts of the body. Most traits are co-related in development. Each developmental phase has characteristic traits. Development may be predicted. Many forms of problem behaviour are normal behaviour for the age in which they occur. Every individual passes through each major stage of development.

By now, we have familiarised ourselves with different tasks and characteristics of infancy and childhood (birth to six years). Now we will consider the tasks of middle childhood that last from six to twelve years. These are as follows:

- i) Learning physical skills necessary for ordinary games.
- ii) Building wholesome attitudes towards oneself as a growing organism.
- iii) Learning to get along with age mates.
- iv) Learning an appropriate sex role.
- v) Developing fundamental skills in reading, writing and calculating.
- vi) Developing concepts necessary for everyday living.
- vii) Developing conscience, morality and a scale of values.
- viii) Achieving personal independence.
- ix) Developing attitudes towards social groups and institutions.

During adolescence (13-18 years) the child behaves inconsistently. Sometimes he behaves like a child and sometimes like a grown up person. He suffers from internal conflict between social values and sexual freedom. Studies show that several characteristics of different stages appear in this period of life. Adolescents need freedom in many respects and do not appreciate the interventions of others in their affairs. Adolescents are attracted to the opposite sex but they try to hide this feeling and show that they are not interested in the opposite sex. The significant changes in body are rapid development of muscles, increase in weight and height, rapid development in glands, appearance of pubic hair and enlargement of breasts, menstruation in girls, while nocturnal emission and masturbation among boys. The intelligence reaches an average level at the end of this stage and acceptability and projection capability of ego develop considerably, but the decision-making ability lags behind. In some adolescents, agitation appears and they look tired. Emotional tension is also an important feature of this period. The basic



needs of this stage are a balanced diet, ten hours sleep, recognition and encouragement.

## 1.8 DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

Developmental psychology studies and describes physical, mental, emotional and behavioural changes which happen with change in age. Physical and behavioural changes occur more rapidly in the early years of life, and mental and social traits and abilities develop quicker in later stages of life. Many psychologists use child psychology as a synonym for developmental psychology. Child psychology includes a study of all those basic elements which are responsible for human personality development during childhood while the same approach after childhood may be considered as developmental psychology. Contrary to this view, other psychologists argue that the development of a human being is not over after childhood and in many respects, the individual's abilities and traits increase and decrease in later phases of life. A broad understanding is to understand development from in utero (womb) till death (tomb). Hence, developmental psychology attempts to understand the biophysical, psychological and sociocultural changes occurring in a human being during the entire life span, from birth till death.

You have gone through the main features of child psychology in the previous sub-unit 'Child Psychology'. Here we will take up salient features of the development between childhood and the old age. You have become aware of stages of childhood and the old age. As we have discussed in the previous section, you are aware of stages of childhood, i.e., Pre-natal period (conception to birth), infancy (birth to fifteen days), babyhood (fifteen days to two years), childhood (two years to eleven years) and adolescence (eleven years to eighteen years). The span of life between adolescence and old age has been divided into three main categories, i.e., (i) Pre maturity (between 18 years to 25 years), (ii) Maturity (between 25 years to 45 years) and (iii) old age (above 45 years). During pre-maturity, individuals develop maximum physical strength, vigour and emotional control. The basic needs of this stage are a balanced diet, regular physical exercise, recognition and favour of elders, etc. During maturity he remains somewhat static in his physical and mental abilities but goes on learning, adapting and developing skills and knowledge requisite to his job, profession or social norms and attains the desired possible status. The basic needs of this stage are for the sustainability of physical strength, regular exercise, love and affection of spouse and family members and care. In old age, a decline of physical and mental abilities takes place. Physical strength and vigour diminishes, organs of body weaken and gradually different inabilities develop. Auditory, visual, eating and digestive/ excretory organs gradually become weak. Memory loss and incoherence in physical and mental activities becomes apparent. Anxieties and worries about future life increase. Insecurity regarding income and health develop during old age. Menopause occurs in females in the initial years of this period. Individuals in old age need appropriate reading

material, visual equipment, clubs and forums for exchanging views, economic and social security, a nutritious diet, medical facilities, etc. Difficult situations of this last stage are death of own child, death of spouse, severe and prolonged illness of close family members and extreme poverty.

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## 1.9 CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

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The complexity of modern life is affecting members of society. It has become difficult for many of us to adjust to the new social setting. We need help for proper adjustment with our social components. Clinical psychology provides assistance to us for better adjustment. Clinical psychology also deals with those aspects which are related to some type of deviancy. It is also concerned with the enhancement and betterment of community life and prevention of mental disorders. Clinical psychology associates itself with problems like maladjustment between employee and employer, generational gap and poor individual relationship within groups. Many times, the scope of clinical psychology overlaps with the scope of counselling, psychology, psychiatry and social work.

For scanning the nature of clinical psychology, we should consider activities of clinical psychologists. Counsellors, psychiatrists and social workers use psychological concepts in helping people to adjust. They differentiate themselves from clinical psychologists on the basis of the focus of the problem. Vocational counselling is concerned with an individual's adjustment with his job and likewise educational counselling is concerned with the adjustment of the individual with the educational setting. There is much overlapping between clinical psychology and psychiatry. Both deal with broad characteristics of mental illness or personality disturbance. They differ in respect of training of practitioners and the approach to problems. A clinical psychologist is trained to approach mental disturbance by examining earlier experiences and learning while the psychiatrist approach these disorders by considering them as specific diseases and by applying appropriate treatments. Even then, in many cases psychiatrists and clinical psychologists use similar approaches to solve the problem. Clinical psychologists usually deal with the individual case. They may extend their concern to the family, secondary group and community which affect the individual's adjustment to the environment. They observe ongoing behaviour and the living situation of the people to help the individual. Clinical psychology and practice of medicine have an important relationship with each other and that is why clinicians call them patients in a medical setting while in a non-medical setting they are called clients. A large number of clinical psychologists work in a medical setting in co-operation with psychiatrists and other physicians. The role of clinical psychologists is not confined to only mentally ill persons. They also work with people not seriously maladjusted. They take an interest in mental health as well as deviant behaviour. When a clinical psychologist works with a mental patient, he applies abnormal

psychology. But they also work for schools, industries and communities and deal exclusively with human problems of a normal nature.

Community health programmes aim at prevention as well as cure of mental problems. Clinical psychologists identify factors which may lead to mental problems and take steps for their prevention. The knowledge of psycho-pathology is significant for clinical psychologists. Though there is overlapping between clinical psychology and counselling psychology, they have different approaches. Counselling is basically concerned with decisions and choices of individuals whereas clinical psychology is concerned with the specific and difficult problems of the individual.

Clinical psychology and social work profession have a close relationship as they both help the individual to solve his/her problems related to adjustment, deviance and psycho-somatic ailments. In social work we deal with the individual's ego strengthening, insight development, perception and decision making, etc. Clinical psychology also deals with these aspects but its approach is more in-depth, wide and has a psychoanalytical base. Adjustment problems between individuals, individual and group, and individual and community are handled by both professions. In clinical psychology, greater stress is given to the individual's personality traits and his/her responses to social factors whereas in social work more emphasis is given to social factors and components. In extreme cases of mental disorders the help of psychiatrists is required and clinical psychologists only assist them. The social worker refers such cases either to a psychiatrist or clinical psychologist with the case history record of the patient. Following treatment, the social worker has the responsibility of assisting the patient to undergo psycho-social rehabilitation by liaising with the patient's family, work place and community, and also in facilitating community based rehabilitation (CBR).

#### Check Your Progress IV

**Note:** a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) Explain some of the important features of general psychology.

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2) Describe at least one feature of each developmental period of life after adolescence.

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3) Discuss in brief the main characteristics of a human being during childhood.

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4) Write a few lines on the nature of clinical psychology.

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### 1.10 LET US SUM UP

This unit provided you the introductory understanding of the relevance of psychology to social work practice. It also provided you a basic knowledge of general psychology and human behaviour as well as developmental psychology, child psychology and clinical psychology.

General psychology deals with psychological aspects of a normal human being. It studies concepts and methods, etc., related to heredity and environment, physical and mental growth and development and personality traits pertaining to normal human beings.

Child psychology studies the development of human beings since conception to the age of 18 years. Childhood has been divided into six stages or period of life known as (i) Pre-natal (fertilisation to birth), (ii) Oral (0-one year), (iii) Anal (one to three years), (iv) Oedipal (three to six years), (v) Latency (six to twelve years) and (vi) Adolescence (thirteen to eighteen years).

Developmental psychology studies human characteristics after adolescence to the end of life. It has been divided into three major periods known as (i) Pre-maturity (18 to 25 years), (ii) Maturity (25 to 45 years) and (iii) Old age (45 years to the end of life).

Clinical psychology deals with adjustment problems of human beings and also with those aspects which refer to deviancy, healthier community life and prevention of mental disorders.

You may observe that many of the fundamental assumptions, concepts, principles, theories, methods, techniques and tools of social work are based and derived from psychology. Psychology has been defined as the positive science of human behaviour. Human behaviour pattern influences interaction between the client and the worker and the procedural steps and methodology of psychology help in the process of interaction. A basic knowledge of psychology as provided in this unit will help you as a practitioner of social work. Such knowledge is a pre-requisite to social work profession because it will enable you to understand the behaviour of the individual and provide the necessary concepts and tools to help the individual cope with the problems in life.

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## 1.11 KEY WORDS

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<b>Brain</b>	:	The portion of central nervous system which lies within the skull.
<b>Case study</b>	:	A detailed description of a single individual, typically used to provide information on the person's history
<b>Client centred therapy</b>	:	An approach of therapy developed by Carl Rogers, in which the person seeking therapy act as equal partner in the therapy process.
<b>Conscious</b>	:	In Freud's theory, that aspect of the mind which contains those thoughts and feelings of which we are immediately aware at a given moment.
<b>Co-relation</b>	:	A pattern or relationship observed between two variables.
<b>Cross-section study</b>	:	A research design based on selecting representative groups who vary on a particular characteristic, when the characteristic is age, this design provides a means of making developmental comparisons.
<b>Developmental psychology</b>	:	The study of the processes which underline growth and range in behaviour over time.
<b>Evolution</b>	:	A theory to account for the development of species diversity by means of variations which are transmitted to offspring by inheritance.

Darwin's theory of natural selection proposed that variations which enhance adaptability, and thereby enhance survival and reproduction rates, are most likely to be transmitted.

**Field experiment** : An experiment done in a natural setting, usually without the explicit awareness of participants, as contrasted to experiments done in a laboratory setting.

**Group Psycho-therapy** : Method of treatment in which patients meet together to design and interpret twin problems in a framework conducive to learning experience, facilitating interpersonal growth and to the development of self expression and personal and social change.

**Heredity** : The biological transmission of characteristics from one generation to other.

**Introspection** : A method of gathering data in which the individual attempts to analyse the content of their conscious mind.

**Psychology** : The science of or scientific study of behaviour and experiences.

**Unconscious** : That portion of the subconscious which cannot be directly accessed by the conscious mind.

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## 1.12 SUGGESTED READINGS

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## 1.13 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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### Check Your Progress I

- 1) Many of the fundamental assumptions, concepts, principles, theories, methods, techniques and tools of social work are based on and derived from psychology. Psychology is the science that studies the behaviour of human beings and personality, environmental factors influencing interaction pattern and experience of human beings and thus, provides knowledge to social work practice to design its helping process and make it more rewarding and appropriate for the solution of the problem.
- 2) The word psychology has been derived from Greek literature and is a combination of two words, i.e., 'Psyche' and 'logos' which mean 'soul' and 'the study of'. Initially, psychology was confined to the study of soul or spirit.

### Check Your Progress II

- 1) i) Psychology may be defined as the science that studies the behaviour of men and other animals.  
ii) Psychology is the positive science of behaviour.
- 2) During social work practice, we seek help of psychology to understand and analyse the client, personality traits and human behavior patterns. Case work is dependent on psychological concepts and assumptions. Group work method derives many socio-psychological elements to be used in practice for group strengthening and betterment. Social Psychology studies group morale, leadership qualities and traits, behaviour of crowds and audiences which are useful in group work and to some extent in community organisation.

### Check Your Progress III

- 1) To help individual, group or community to cope with the problems, the social worker has to understand the behavioural pattern of his clients. The client's positive behaviour helps the social worker to make a proper diagnosis of the problem and develop plan of action for treatment. Negative behavior creates impediments to proper practice of social work profession.

### Check Your Progress IV

- 1) General Psychology deals with psychological aspects of normal human beings. In general psychology we study concepts, theories and methods related to heredity and environment, growth and

maturation, physiological bases of behaviour, development of personality stages, sensory and motor system, emotions, learning, remembering, reasoning, intelligence, measurements, aptitudes, psycho-social environment and reaction time, etc.

- 2) During pre-maturity, the individual develops maximum physical strength and vigour and emotional control. During maturity, he remains somewhat static with regard to his physical and mental abilities but goes on learning, adapting and developing skill and knowledge requisite to his profession and social norms and attains desired possible status, commodity and opportunity. In old age, a decline in physical and mental abilities takes place. Body organs gradually become weak and incapacitated. Menopause occurs in females in the early years of this period.
- 3) Changes in size, weight and shape take place rapidly at this stage of life. Internal organs and structures like heart, lungs, kidney, intestine, brain, etc., develop to meet the increasing needs of the body. Vocabulary, reasoning and other qualities are acquired through learning and the individual moves towards socially accepted norms and behaviour. Mental characteristics include curiosity about sex matters, moral standards, religious beliefs, language and neurotic tendencies. Between four weeks to forty weeks, a baby gains control over loco-motor muscles and the muscles supporting head and movement of arms, he gains control of his trunk and hands, he is able to sit, grasp, manipulate objects, he extends to control his leg and feet and may stand upright, poke and pluck. Later he walks and runs, articulates words and phrases, acquires bowel and bladder control. He gradually displays a propensity to understand environment and culture. Gradually he becomes self dependent and mature in motor control. Learning increases to meet personal and social needs and requirements. During this period adolescents develop attraction to the opposite sex. Menstruation in girls and nocturnal emission/masturbation in boys are natural phenomena of this development period.
- 4) Clinical psychology provides assistance for a better adjustment with the environment. Clinical psychology also deals with aspects of deviancy, healthier community life and prevention of mental disorders. Clinical psychology is related to psychiatry and social work. Although psychiatry and clinical psychology have the same goal, they differ in their approaches. Whereas psychiatrists pay greater attention and are more concerned with the functioning of the brain and nervous system and medicinal therapeutic devices, clinical psychologists are concerned with knowledge and analysis of hereditary traits, environmental factors, behaviour patterns and counseling. Social workers are concerned with enabling devices like counseling, ego support and insight development, environmental modification, awareness building and referral services.