Social Adjustment and Psychological Wall-Being and Human Life

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Social adjustment is an effort made by an individual to cope with standards, values and needs of a society in order to be accepted. It can be defined as a psychological process. It involves coping with new standard and value. In the technical language of psychology "getting along with the members of society as best one can" is called adjustment.

Nature of Social Adjustment:

As Plato says 'Man is a social animal.' we live in a society and form opinion about others and others have opinions about us. we try to behave according to the norms of the society so that we can adjust with others. But it is not an easy talk because the personality of each individual is a unique organization. This organization has to make special efforts to adjust with other unique organization which well society. Social adjustment is the direction, we, the teacher try to instill adjustment skill in our students: Teacher should emphasize on the adjustment of the student in the school. They should help the student scope with the existing situations of the school. They should contribute to improving the social environment of the school. Psychologists use the term adjustment of varying conditions of social and interpersonal relation in the society. Thus adjustment can be called the reaction to the demands and pressures of the social environment imposed upon the individual.

Perception and Social Adjustment:

There is need of impractical perception for social adjustment. The processes of behaviour e.g. learning, maturation, sensation, perception and motivation contribute to the process of adjustment.

The way we interact with people depends, to a great extent, upon how we perceive them and how we interpret their behaviour. The perceptions about people-what we think, what they like-influence the way we respond to them.

Our social perceptions of others are initially based on the information we obtain about them-in some instances the attribution inference we make about the cause for their behaviour. It is of course, important to have accurate knowledge of others before deciding on the kind of possible interaction with them.

Impression Formation and Social Adjustment:

Impression formation is the process by which information about others is converted into more or less enduring cognition or thoughts about them. when we first meet someone, we usually have access to information how the person looks and where he or she works and what he or she says.

There facts form the basic cognitive framework by which we understand others and try to adjust with them.

Other Processes in Social Adjustment:

There are certain other processes which we can use for social adjustment as under:

(i) Stress and Adaptation:

Environmental factors which make it hard for an individual to live are called stress. The stress is experienced as irritation as discomfort. At a slightly more advanced level stress is explained as the anticipation of harm.

In human beings certain kind of stresses produces anxiety. Anxiety some times produces defensive response. Defenses are generally regarded as poor methods of adjustment.

(ii) Social Influence:

The process of social influence contains two critical elements. These are as under:

(a) Someone's intervention

(b) Inducing change in other person.

The phenomena of influence, which also includes imitation conformity and obedience, always contain an agent which has caused a change in the focal person (FP).

Influence situations can be differentiated by noticing the different characteristics of agent and of the behaviour that makes up the intervention.

The following five concepts help us understand the process of social influence, better.

1. Social Facilitation:

In a group situation the presence of others would always influence performance and thus the efforts to bring changes in performance of an individual are called social facilitation. The presence of others increases an individual's arousal level which in turn, enhances performance of well learned responses.

For example, a well trained singer would, according to this theory i.e. social facilitation, performs better when others are present bulla beginning would make more mistakes when giving a recital in front of others than when practicing at home.

2. Imitation:

Imitation involves change in focal person's behaviour that matches as copies others' behaviour. Student imitates the behaviour of social personalities for getting the recognition.

3. Compliance to Others:

Human being as a social being has to adjust himself in the social environment in his daily life, he commands others and works according to his one or other's rules and regulations.

In a family every member is dependent 'on each other. Sometimes even parents obey the rules of their children. This type of situation influences them to adjust in social environment.

4. Conformity to Norms:

Conformity is the situation wherein individuals change their behaviour so that they may become more similar to those of the other members of the group.

5. Obedience:

Obedience is the situation wherein the agent has legitimate light to influence the focal person and the focal person has the obligation to obey.

STUDIES ON SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

Jha (1970) concluded that there was a significant positive relation between achievement in science and adjustment of students in secondary schools. Sharma's (1972) results showed that there weresignificant differences among theoverachievers, average achievers andunderachievers with regard to their adjustment in school, home and social fronts. The overachievers were better adjusted than the underachievers in all their areas of adjustment. BadamiandGoswami (1973) found that social adjustment is significantly associated with school achievement and that social adjustment may be attained through efforts.

Soman (1977) noticed a considerable influence of social adjustment on mathematics achievement of seconday school students. Iyer (1977) in his study of factors related to underachievement in mathematics among seconday school children of Kerala found that social adjustment has a significant role in differentiating between under and non-under achievers in mathematics. In a study, Singh (1978) noticed that the superior children did not differ from the average children in their social adjustment.

Saxena (1979) noted that underachievers in schools were significantly poor in adjustment in their social surroundings than the overachievers. Poduska (1980) concluded that adjustment is the ability to select appropriate and effective measures to meet the demands of the environment while maintaining a healthy attitude towards the circumstances.

Saun (1980) studied the adolescents of high school and intermediate colleges and noted that the male high achievers were more adjusted than the low achievers but a significant difference existed between the high and low achieving females in their social and educational areas or adjustment.

Somasundaram (1980) noticed a positive relation between social adjustment and school achievement. Srivastava (1980) found that educational, social and emotional adjustment have positive correlation with high school achievers. Nair (1983) found that the social adjustment exerted a significant influence on secondary school biology achievement.

Annamma (1984) came to the conclusion that women are better adjusted than men in most or the adjustment areas. Sex is a greater problem to women. Ahluwalia and Kalia (1987) found that high achievers have less adjustment problems in the school adjustment area in comparison to 1ow achievers. No significant differencewas observed on social adjustment between these groups. Female high achievers were found to be better adjusted socially.

Poulose (1987) found that social adjustment does not have any significant influence on process outcomes in physics of university entrants. Sarojini (1987) conducted a study on personality problems of pupils of the age group 8-16 years and found that during the years 14-16 boys had more adjustment problems than girls. Adjustment problems were more for pupils in co-educational institutions.

ingh and Singh (1987) observed that higher caste students differ in social adjustment but not in emotional and educational adjustment. Punithambal(1990) found that there is a significant positive association between adjustment and academic achievement for both disadvantaged and non- disadvantaged groups.

Thirugnanasambandam (1990) noticed that adjustment is a person's interaction with his environment. Boys have significantly greater scores on the social adjustment scale than the girls. Tribal difference was also found in social adjustment. Vasishtha (1991) noticed that high achieving boys demonstrated better social adjustment than their high achieving Female counterparts. Alexander and Rajendran (1992) concluded that female students are better adjusted than male students. Parents' education influences their children's adjustment, students of well- educated parents are better adjusted than students of poorly educated parents.

Monrow (1995) conducted a study to find out the relationship between personality variables and achievement of elementary school children. It was found that the relationship between social adjustment and achievement is positive and significant.

Sabu (1996) pointed out that rural pupils are having poor social adjustment than urban pupils. Secondary school pupils are facing several problems and these problems have a significant relationship with their social adjustment.

Nair (1999) compared personality variables of pre-degree students of regular and correspondence stream and found that regular students are socially well adjusted than the correspondence students. In another study. Nair (1999) compared over and underachievers in science with their social adjustment and found that there exists no significant difference of overachievers and underachievers in science with their social adjustment.

The Psychological well-Being:

The literature on psychological well- being has progressed rapidly since the emergence of the field over five decades ago. As recent surveys show psychologists and other social scientists have taken huge steps in their understanding of the factors influencing psychological! subjective well-being.

Psychological Well-being refers to how people evaluate their lives. According to Diener (1997), these evaluations may be in the form of cognitions or in the form of affect. The cognitive part is an information based appraisal of one's life that is when a person gives conscious evaluative judgments about one's satisfaction with life as a whole. The affective part is a hedonic evaluation guided by emotions and feelings such as frequency with which people experience pleasant/unpleasant moods in reaction to their lives. The assumption behind this is that most people evaluate their life as either good or bad, so they are normally able to offer judgments. Further, people invariably experience moods and emotions, which have a positive effect or a negative effect. Thus, people have a level of subjective well-being even if they do not often consciously think about it, and the psychological system offers virtually a constant evaluation of what is happening to the parson

Current social indicators can capture phenomena such as crime, divorce, environmental problems, infant mortality, gender equality, etc. Thus, they can capture aspects of quality of life that add to the description drawn by economic indicators. However, these social indicators fail to capture the subjective well-being of people because they do noreflect the actual experiences such as the quality of relationships, the regulation of their emotions and whether feelings of isolation and depression pervade in their daily life. On the other hand, economic indicators fail to include side effects and the tradeoffs of market production and consumption. For example, the environmental costs of industries certainly are not observed from the national accounts. Another disadvantage of economic and social measures in terms of their links to psychological well-being is that they are based on models of rational choice, whereby people follow a set or logical rules when making development plans. However, works by Kahneman (1994) in psychology and economics reveal that people do not always make rational choices, and that these choices do not necessarily enhance psychological well- being.

Currently in Bhutan, economic and social indicators are available and frequently updated as most organizations do some research on it. Even the media and policies provide emphasis on such indicators, while no national measures of psychological well-being exist. The measurement of Psychological well- being has advanced so much ova the years that it is time to give a privileged place to peoples well-being in policy debates. A GNH society calls for the inclusion of well-being indicators at par with economic ones. Media should provide attention to how a society is progressing in tams of Psychological well- being and politicians should base their campaigns on that plans for reducing distress, increasing life satisfaction and happiness level.

Psychological well-being leads to desirable outcomes, even economic ones, and does not necessarily follow from them. In a very intensive research done by Diener and his colleagues, people who score high in psychological well-being later earn high income and perform better at work then people who score 1ow in well-being. It is also found to be related to physical health. In addition, it is often noticed that what a society

measures will in turn influence the things that it seeks. If a society takes great effort to measure productivity, people in the society are likely to focus more on it and sometimes even to the detriment of other values. If a society regularly assesses well-being, people will provide their attention on it and learn more about its causes. Psychological well-being is therefore valuable not only because it assesses well-being more directly but it has beneficial consequences.

Studies on Psychological Well-Being:

The well-being of university students is an important research endeavour. Experiencing high levels of subjective well- being is considered to be a central criterion or positive mental health (Diener l984]). In addition to this, well-being has been found to not only be an outcome of favourable life circumstances such as academic success and satisfying relationships, but also a predictor and part cause of these outcomes (Lyubomirsky et al. *[2005]).* Consequently, the well-being of students at university is important for influencing students' later attitudinal and career outcomes, but also outcomes that benefit communities and society at large.

Subjective well-being (SWB) is described as a broad category of human experience made up of two distinct components: an affective component that consists of the relative frequency of Positive and negative affect, and a cognitive component that is concerned with judgements or life and global satisfaction (Diener[1984]; Diener et al. [1991]). People with high levels of SWB report frequent positive affect, infrequent negative affect and high levels of satisfaction (Diener [1994]; Diener et al. [l99l]).

The Personality traits of extraversion and neuroticism are strongly and consistently linked with the positive and negative affective components of SWB respectively (DeNeveand Cooper [199x]; Steel et al. [2008]). Several explanations have been given to explain this link, but these can be classified into two general classes: instrumental and temperamental (McCrae and Costa [1991]).

According to instrumental explanations, personality traits affect SWB indirectly, through choice of situations or the experience of life events. In contrast, temperament theories propose that there is a direct link between personality and affect that does not arise from life events or life experiences. Many of these theories link extroversion and neuroticism to affect through reward and punishment psychobiological systems (e.g., Cantor and Sanderson [1999]; Carver and Scheier[1990]). In addition to personality, SWB has also been found to be influenced by life circumstances and external environmental influences such as marital status (Diener et al. [20001], culture (Oishi and Schimmack[2010]; Triandis and Suh[2002]) and income (Diener et al. [2010]; Kahneman and Deaton [2010]).

University students are reported to have insufficient financial resources to meet their needs, fee as though they are heavily burdened by assignments, exams and presentations, and are at significantly higher risk of mental health problems (Ansari et at. [2011]; Stallman [2o10]). At the same time, it is possible that certain aspects of the university environment have the potential to be protective and enhance student well-being. For instance, tertiary study provides students with rich opportunities for socialisation, to pursue personally meaningful goals, and to 1earn and apply knowledge and skills.

Although student adaptation at university has been studied in some detail. most of this work has concerned academic success, with surprising little research being focused on subjective well-being. Of the work that has been completed a range of intriguing findings have been found. Lounsburyct at. ([2o09]) reported that values in Action character strengths (Peterson and Seligman [2004]) were significantly and positively related to life satisfaction. Norvilitis and Reid ([2012]) examined academic, circumstantial, and personal predictors of four categories of college success including life satisfaction.

They found that life satisfaction was predicted by parental encouragement of intellectual curiosity and fewer symptoms of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Gilbreath et al. ([2011]) conducted a study investigating the relationship between student-university fit and well-being in two universities in the USA. They theorised that university "fit" would be an important consideration in increasing student well-being and performance. Their results indicated that student well-being and satisfaction increased as the university environment increasingly met their needs and that the physical environment (e.g., an aesthetically pleasing environment) was more important than the social (e.g., enjoyable social life) or academic environment (e.g., a scholarly/intellectual campus climate).

When considering predictors of university students' well-being, it may also be useful to consider models that have been developed in related fields such as the workplace and schools. Research has shown that employment has a significant influence on SWB in adults (Fryer [1986]; Jahoda[1982]). As well as providing financial benefits, Jahoda's([1982]) latent deprivation model suggests that employment satisfies a number of psychological needs that she claims are inherent to well-being. Jahoda attributes the decreases in SWB observed in unemployed adults to the absence of the enforced time structure provided by the workplace, which creates a sense of purposeless in the unemployed individual. Warr's ([i987]) model of

well-being builds on this understanding of the psychological benefits of employment by suggesting that certain characteristics of the workplace can either facilitate or constrain personally important processes and activities important for well-being and mental health. These broad environmental features (termed principal environmental influences, PEIs) may include: the extent to which a person can control activities and events: the clarity of expectations and feedback: the opportunities provided for the person to use and develop his or her skills: the degree to which goals are generated by the environment: the extent to which there is variety in tasks to be undertaken: the quality and quantity of interpersonal contact the environment affords:

and the extent to which the environment provides the individual with valued social status, money, and physical security. These PEIs have been found to have predictive utility in the context of employment and unemployment (Haworth [2004]), as well as in other environmental contexts such as in family life and retirement (warr[1987]). Waif suggests that, well-being is influenced by the environment in a non-linear manner analogous to the effect of vitamins on physical health. Like vitamins, some PEIs such as availability of money can improve mental health, but not beyond a certain level. Other PEIs such as externally generated goals produce benefits up to a certain level beyond which increases would be detrimental (Warr[1986], [2007].

Warr's model is consistent with other theories of well-being that suggest that there are universal human needs and that fulfillment of them is likely to enhance a person's feelings of well-being (e.g., Ryan and Deci[2000]; Ryan and Keyes [1995]).

Horstmanshof et al. ([2008]) applied the waif model of well-being to a sample of Australian year 12 high school students. These authors found that when personality variables were controlled, school-related environmental factors contributed a significant amount of the variance in the well-being of school students. The school environment was found to provide similar opportunities and context to the work environment through structuring students' time, providing opportunities for social contact, and providing students with a valued social role. The most significant predictor of students' affective well-being scores was found to be time structure, which supports

Jahoda's ([1982]) emphasis on the psychological benefits of structured time in giving purpose and meaning to an individual's daily life.

Jahoda ([1982]) suggested that the psychological benefits that are gained from employment may be present, to a lesser degree, in other societal institutions and contexts. Although this has been tested in high school students (Horstmanshof et al. [2008]), it has yet to be investigated in the university context. One of the goals of the present study was to build upon the foundation of work on university student wellbeing by applying warr's ((1987]) PEI model to better understand how the well-being enhancing opportunities provided by the university environment compares to those in the school and workplace.

The concept of psychological flexibility may also be useful when considering students' well-being since it is purported to account for how individuals can navigate complex situational demands and engage in valued pursuits (such as university study) despite objective hardship or psychological distress (Kashdan and Rottenberg[2010]). Psychological flexibility refers to the ability to persist or change behaviour while being aware of and in contact with thoughts and feelings, understanding the demands of the situation, and behaving in a way that is consistent with one's values (Hayes et al. [1999]). Individuals displaying psychological flexibility are willing to experience unwanted thoughts and feelings while pursuing important personal goals and values and tend to display healthier personal and social functioning (Kashdan and Rottenberg[20 10]).

Psychological inflexibility is the term used to describe the opposite of these processes. It refers to attempts to avoid or alter the form, frequency, or intensity of difficult private events which arise when pursuing goals or values. Psychological inflexibility is associated with a number of quality of life outcomes including poor job performance, and increased psychopathology, stress, pain, and negative affectivity (Kashdan and Rottenberg[2010]).

All above mentioned studies help to understanding the relation between social adjustment and psychological well-being. And the prime aim of this review paper is that define social adjustment and psychological well-being and criticize or comment on recent and previous studies on social studies and psychological well-being.

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