

## UNDERSTANDING HUMAN BEHAVIOUR- SERIES- 13

Lecture: 13

(Duration: 1 hour)

### GROUP: FACTORS RELATED TO GROUP EFFECTIVENESS AND BEHAVIOUR IN POLICE

Groups are formed in order to satisfy some needs and their behavioural patterns are developed to achieve the needs. The patterns are developed to achieve the needs. The patterns of behaviour of a group is, therefore, only a means to achieve a goal, the goal being the human needs. In order to achieve the goal each group develops strategies which are effective. There are many factors which help group effectiveness. They are:

#### 1. MORALE

Morale means the moral or mental condition of a person or up with respect to cheerfulness, confidence etc. Group-morale of the police means that the members of the service are optimistic about the changes of attaining their goals. And the goals of the police are "the prevention and detection of crime and criminals" as they are envisaged by the Indian Police Act- 1861. Now, the goals of the police have been enlarged by the government and also by the National Police Commission 1977 to include many more ends which the police service in a democracy should have. Do such objectives set out for the police motivate them in their group behaviour? The report of law commissions, various state and the National Police Commissions, study reports of researches, observations of the courts of law and what appears in the media etc. are not in favour of asserting that the morale of the police in India is enviable indeed. The members of the group are said to have low morale if they are pessimistic, cynical, apathetic, resentful or simply unable to take the goals of the group seriously. A high Morale can activate group

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behaviour to a desirable direction just like a weak morale can lead it to wrong directions. Once, a State government took serious action against a number of policemen who were responsible for the custody death of a man. Immediately, the policemen raised their voice telling that the government action against the police would be responsible for the loss of police morale. They threatened saying that such actions would make the police inactive and indifferent in their job- performance. Is this approach correct? Here the policemen try to give pervert interpretation of the concept of morale by causing confusion in the minds of police.

#### 2. GROUP CLIMATE

Group behaviour is considerably influenced by the climate in which it works. It can work effectively only if it is given a conducive atmosphere to work. This is called the work- climate.

Why do the police behave the way they do? National police commission says that the climate in which the policemen have to work is not which can demand better group behaviour from them. Some studies conducted about the climate in which the policemen are to work seems to be far away from being satisfactory. The climate is pregnant with authoritarianism, suspicion, defensiveness cruelty, vengeance, aggression, hostility, insecurity, cynicism and inflated ego- concepts. The member of the group exposed to this sort of work- climate are likely to behave in terms of their perception of the prevailing atmosphere or climate. If the group- behaviour of the police manifests hostility, it means that the policemen are exposed to a climate wherein hostility is seen in a projected way. And so are the cases with aggression, cruelty, cynicism and vengeance.

### **3.LEADERSHIP**

Leadership improves group behaviour. It may also worsen the group behaviour. Leadership may be 1. autocratic, 2. democratic, 3. laissez- faire or a combination of more than one. Researches done

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elsewhere have shown that autocratic leadership produced two kinds of work- climate i.e. either aggressive or apathetic. Aggressive climate was characterised by rebellious behaviour and apathetic by extreme dependence on the leader and a low capacity for initiating group action.

The laissez- faire climate produced the greatest amount of disorganisation and the lowest amount of time spent in constructive work. It produced more discontent, more hostility and less friendliness.

The democratic climate was characterised by a high level of friendliness among the group members and toward the leader. The level of work was found to be satisfactory.

The feeling is that the work climate in police is managed by autocratic leaders at every rank followed by laissez faire and then by democratic leaders. The result has been that the work climate suffers from the characteristics enumerated above.

Police as a group is a leader dominated community. As such, the members are often likely to look to the leader for guidance. They think that it is the leader's task and responsibility to find out solutions in everything. The policeman looks at the sub- inspector for everything to be done in the police station and the inspector to his superior. Nobody is prepared to take up the responsibility. In such a set- up, if a subordinate member makes a suggestion he is likely to do it apologetically, otherwise, he may not be tolerated.

Autocratic leaders can make the group more productive and efficient. In such a situation, the morale may be fine and cohesiveness will be strong. Nevertheless, researches show that an

autocratic leader creates needs, for example, by bringing to the group fear, insecurity and frustration by which they were not

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originally stimulated. In police, still, there exists authoritarian leadership and sociologists say that such a leader will need to emphasise obedience focused particularly on himself. Krech, Cruthfield and Ballechey have expressed this need of "the authoritarian leader by saying that he must maintain segregation within the group and must see that intergroup communication is kept to the minimum except in so far as it is through him and focused upon him".

### **GROUP EFFECTIVENESS IN POLICE**

Effectiveness is defined "as the accomplishment of the recognised objectives of co-operative action". There are two ways by the help of which a group can be evaluated as effective and they are:

1. performance and 2. Satisfaction.

Are the police effective? What about their performance? Do the members of the service get satisfaction? The performance is evaluated and measured in terms of their output which may be represented by their success in investigation, detection, law and order management and health obtained by the individual members of the group. Are the constables satisfied as the higher echelons in police ? Are the group members prepared to sacrifice their satisfaction in order that there must be a winning for the group ? These are the issues that should be researched further.

### **CLASS ROOM EXERCISE**

1. Enumerate more factors for the group effectiveness in police department.

### **DISCUSSION**

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#### **NOTES**

1. The Random House College Dictionary, Revised Edition, 1956.
2. Quoted in Leadership by Cecil. A. Gibb, from A Handbook of Social Psychology. Gardiner Lindzey and Elliot Aronson (eds), Amerind Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd. Delhi, 1975.
3. Cecil A. Gibb on op. Cit.
4. Quoted in E.P Hollander, Principles and Methods of Social Psychology. Oxford University Press, London, 1971.