Block 4
Challenges Related to Youth, Gender and Identity

BLOCK 4 INTRODUCTION

Block 4 – Challenges related to Youth, Gender and Identity highlights the various concerns and challenges faced by the youth. These challenges are important to address as they impact the health and the future of the youth. *Block 4 consists of two Units*.

Unit 8 Aggression, Violence and Mental Health among Youth focuses on the issue of aggression and violence among youth which has become a major concern in the present day society. The theories of aggression are described and the risk factors leading to aggression are explained. Finally, the ways to address this crucial issue were highlighted.

Unit 9 Challenges Related to Work Life Balance, Equity and Equality points out the issues related to work life imbalance, equity and equality. It explains the various models of work life balance. Challenges of work life balance may have various consequences such as physical, psychological, social and organizational. Finally, the Unit discusses ways of addressing the work life challenges and promotion of equity and equality.

UNIT 8 AGGRESSION, VIOLENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH AMONG YOUTH*

Structure

8.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through the Unit, you will be able to:

- Know the meaning of aggression and violence;

- Explain the theories of aggression;

- Discuss the factors determining aggression; and

- Learn to deal with aggression and violence.

8.2 INTRODUCTION

Aggression has become a part of our modern day life, especially in the urban areas. We are exposed to aggression and violence every day directly or indirectly through print, media and online. As stress in various degrees has become an integral part of our life, one of the fallout of it has been aggressive behaviours and violence among the youth, especially when the youth is at such a stage of

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life where they face uncertainty and challenges with regard to their developmental aspects, educational plans and future careers. Establishing an identity of their own is a major task in youth. Confusion and difficulties pertaining to having an identity of their own, mis-guided identity or a negative identity may lead them to manifest violent and aggressive behaviours. Youth violence is a major public health issue which has been addressed by our National policies as well as international bodies like World Health Organization and UNICEF.

In the present unit we will discuss about the nature and definition of aggression and violence. The theoretical Perspectives on aggression and violence will also be explained. The unit will also discuss factors determining aggression and violence and focus on dealing with aggression and violence.

8.3 NATURE AND DEFINITION OF AGGRESSION AND VIOLENCE

Sujata was driving back home after office and there was traffic on the road. An auto behind her car was constantly honking to give way. Sujata wondered, can the auto driver not see that there is traffic and she can't help but move slow. She got a little irritated as the auto person was constantly blowing the horn. After some time, when the traffic eased a little bit, the auto squeezed in the little space and moved ahead, passing Sujata's car and shouting abuses and making derogative comments at her.

Mohan was playing basket ball with his friend Atul in school break. One senior student Kartik came and forcibly took the basket ball and started playing on his own. When Mohan protested, he pushed him hard on the ground.

An article in a newspaper reported that some anti-social elements beat up a shopkeeper and destroyed the things in his shop when he refused to give coke bottles for free.

When Rahul's girl friend did not get along with him any more and decided to break up with him after a heated argument with him, he posted some obscene photos of her on the internet which he had taken earlier.

When you look at the above situations, you can see that these are cases of aggression, and the degree and form of aggression differs in each of these cases. While it is verbal abuse in the first situation, the second and third scenarios involve physical aggression. The extent of aggression is more in the third situation and involves destruction of properties also. When we talk of aggression, we mostly visualize someone causing physical harm or injury to the other person. But aggression, as evidenced in the first example, can be verbal also. Further, as shown in the last case, aggression can be indirect. In the present digital age, information can spread in the lightning speed and it is so easy to spread humiliating and malicious things about someone and tarnish their image in the public. This public humiliation is also another form of aggression.

Aggression, in simple terms, is thus causing harm or hurting others. It can be verbal as well as physical and direct as well as indirect. Violence is more extreme form of aggression, causing severe injury and even death. Thus aggression and violence can be said to be on a continuum where the extreme end is violence,

for example, terrorist killings, murder, rape etc. All violence include aggression, but not all aggressive acts are violent.

Although aggression involves causing harm to others, not all instances where the other person gets hurt are cases of aggression. For example, while Sajid was bursting fire crackers, it fell on the person going on the road and injured him. Can we call it as aggressive behaviour by Sajid? No, it was accidental and Sajid did not intend it. Thus, intention is an important aspect of defining aggression.

Various researchers have defined aggression. Let us see some of their definitions below.

As Robert and Deborah (1994) have pointed out, aggression can be defined as any form of behaviour directed towards the goal of harming or injuring another living being who is motivated to avoid such treatment.

Baron and Richardson (1994) have also defined aggression on similar lines. They define aggression as behaviour that is intended to harm another individual who does not wish to be harmed.

Other researchers (Bushman & Anderson 2001; Geen 2001) define human aggression as any behavior directed toward another individual that is carried out with the proximate (immediate) intent to cause harm. In addition, the perpetrator must believe that the behavior will harm the target, and that the target is motivated to avoid the behavior.

Thus, as we see in the above definitions, two main things characterize aggression:

- The perpetrator intends to cause harm
- The target tries to avoid the hurt, pain or suffering caused

In addition to aggression being *physical* and *verbal,* as mentioned earlier, it can also be instrumental or impulsive. In case of *impulsive or emotional aggression,* it happens on the spur of the moment or heat of the moment. It is also called as hostile or reactive aggression. However, *instrumental or cognitive aggression* is more planned, thought out and is a means to an end or aims to achieve some goal, for example, bullying, a planned murder, hired assassin or terrorism. It is more pro-active rather than reactive in nature. There are cases of domestic violence and violence against women also.

8.4 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON AGGRESSION AND VIOLENCE

Biology or Psychology – what determines aggression? Are our genes responsible for it? Do we have an aggressive personality? Or the nurture factor influence aggression? Our environment including the social and cultural factors and the situational factors can play a role in causing aggressive behavior. Various theoretical perspectives have been advocated to explain aggression.

8.4.1 Biological Theories/ Perspective

Being aggressive has evolutionary roots where the human beings needed to be aggressive for survival. As civilizations grew and societies formed, human beings

needed to stand for their own rights, beliefs and culture which required to aggressively defend one's traditions and culture.

Aggression is thus an innate biologically determined instinctual drive. Freud has talked about aggression in terms of having an innate self-directed death instinct or 'thanatos' as opposed to life instinct or 'eros'. Thanatos which is self-destructive gradually gets directed at other beings. Unless properly addressed/channelized, it results in violence and aggressive behavior.

Genetic research (Dorfman, Meyer-Lindenberg and Buckholtz, 2014) shows that the MAOA gene plays a role in aggression. They found that the gene makes the individual susceptible to environmental risk factors for aggression. The MAOA gene regulates the level of serotonin which plays an imp role in controlling aggressive behavior (Caramaschi, de Boer & Koolhaus, 2007). Further, it affects the functioning of the prefrontal cortex which controls aggressive impulses (Buckholtz & Meyer-Lindenberg, 2013).

The presence of a genetic factor for a particular form of behavior, though, does not guarantee the expression of that behavior. It indicates the possibility of such behaviour given the right environmental inputs. The sociocultural factors influences to what extent the genetic potential will be realized.

8.4.2 Drive Theories of Aggression

In contrast to the internal instinct for aggression as proposed by Freud, the drive theories of aggression posit the formation of an internal drive to harm others because of adverse environmental/external situations and conditions. Thus aggression is caused by external situations that creates the motive to harm others. The most famous of these theories is the *Frustration-aggression hypothesis* (Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowerer & Sears, 1939) which states, in simple terms, that frustration causes aggression. It says that frustration results when we cannot reach our goal. This leads to the arousal of a drive with a motive to harm the perceived source of the frustration. You may have seen instances where your friend was so frustrated that she could not get selected for a role in the college drama, started abusing her competitor for the role. Frustration may also be due to economic reasons or social background and discriminatory practices in the society. Thus, the source of frustration may not always be direct. This theory has been criticized also as frustration does not always directly lead to aggression and many other factors may play a role in causing aggressive behaviour.

8.4.3 Modern Theories of Aggression

Modern theories of aggression propose that, a multitude of factors play a role in aggressive behavior. It is not a single factor such as instinct, drive or frustration that causes aggression; rather variety of factors determine violence and aggressive behavior. Thus, they are more comprehensive than the earlier theories.

8.4.3.1 Social Learning Theories

According to social learning theory (Bandura, 1997), aggressive behaviours, like any other behavior, are learned. The theory focuses on how individuals observe and imitate the behavior of others. A child, for instance, may acquire certain behaviours through direct learning/observation (for example, in family

or at school) or indirectly through television or violent video games or movies. You may have come across instances of children imitating and displaying aggressive behaviours shown in the movies. Thus through observation and imitation, individuals (especially children) could learn about the how, when and where of aggressive behaviour, that is, how to show the aggressive behaviour, in which forms; whom to direct the aggressive behavior at; when can they show or not show aggressive behaviour; which actions by others justify aggression etc.

8.4.3.2 General Aggression Model

Anderson and Bushman (2002) have proposed the General aggression model which is the most comprehensive of all the theories of aggression. It takes into account a host of factors that may cause aggression in the individual. However, it also talks about the mediating influence of our cognition and decision making processes to determine the actual aggressive behaviour. The model given below (Fig. 8aF) depicts that there are various person related and situation related variables such as personality, frustration, provocation, use of alcohol, violence in media etc. that combine and have an impact on the current internal states of the individual. That is, they lead to heightened arousal level, generate hostile emotions and create negative/ hostile thoughts in the individual. The individual then interprets the current situation, that is, engages in appraisal of the situation and accordingly decision making is done which leads either to an impulsive action (aggression) or thoughtful action. Thus, the initial input variables progress through the routes of affect, cognition and arousal and reach the outcome of aggression or no aggression through the mediating influence of appraisal and decision processes.
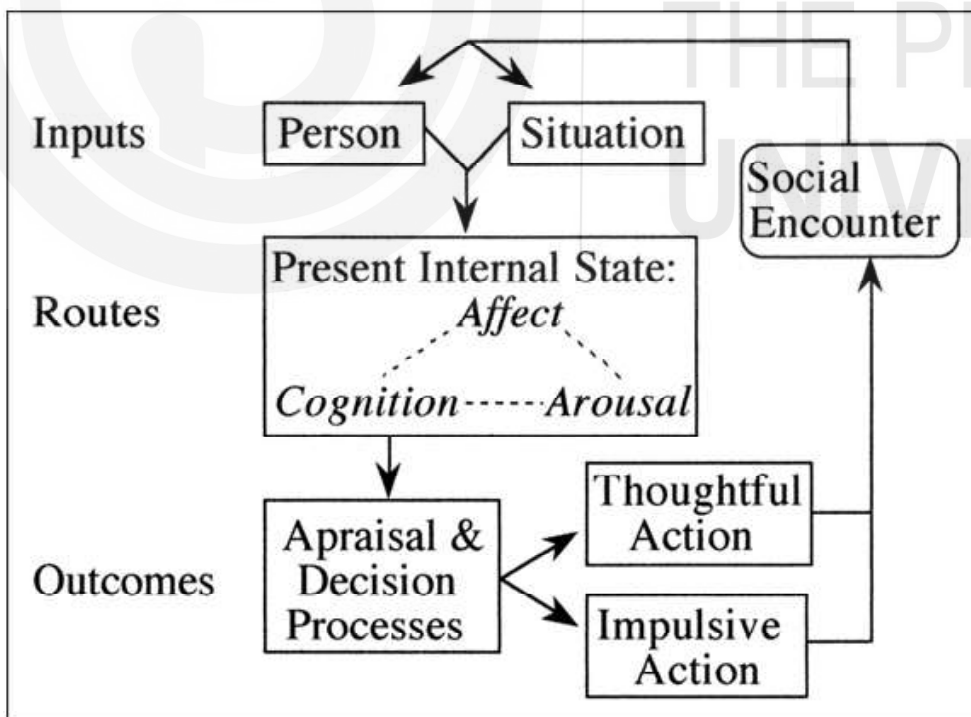

Figure 8aF: General Aggression Model (Anderson, C.A, & Bushman, B.J. (2002)

Self Assessment Questions I

1) Provide the definition of aggression as given by Robert and Deborah (1994).

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2) What is 'thanatos'?

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3) Explain social learning theory by Bandura.

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8.5 FACTORS DETERMINING AGGRESSION AND VIOLENCE

There are several factors that affect the expression of aggressive behaviour. Even though the genes play a role or behavior is governed by Freud's thanatos instinct, development and expression of aggressive behaviour and violence is influenced by a multiplicity of factors. It mainly includes factors related to family, socialization process, peer influence, media, social influence, and situational factors.

Theses can be categorized as personal, sociocultural and situational. We will now discuss each of these below.

8.5.1 Personal Factors

Gender differences

The psychology of sex differences point out the hormonal differences between the genders playing a role in aggression. Testosterone hormone in the males make them engage in more aggression and violence as compared to the females. Being in aggressive situations may also lead to increase in testosterone level

amongst males. In addition to the differences in hormone, gender differences in aggression may also be due to the patriarchy system and the gender socialization process. In the patriarchal system of society, males are valued more and they have more controlling power. Boys and girls are also raised differently. Child rearing practices accord more autonomy and control to the male gender, thus encouraging aggressive behavior in them. Whereas, females are expected to be less aggressive and even submissive.

Personality

Personality refers to characteristic traits of the individual that are more or less stable. Individuals with Type A personality pattern with features of being extremely competitive, being in a constant state of hurry and being irritable tend to be more aggressive as compared to Type B personality who are more relaxed, less competitive and remain calm in adverse situations.

Alcohol use

Alcohol assumption and aggression are found to be correlated. Increased physiological arousal and lessened inhibition lead to aggressive behavior, especially in the males.

8.5.2 Sociocultural Factors

Parenting and Family Practices

The first major influence on a child's life is his/her parents and the family. How do the parents interact with each other and solve conflicts? What is the mechanism of discipline adopted/practiced in the family? Is the family cohesive enough? Are there frequent family discords and disturbances or family relationship is marked by close bonding? All these questions are relevant when we discuss about how parents and family may have in determining a child's behaviour, including aggressive and violent behaviours.

Parents are also the first role models who influence the child pick up patterns of behavior. The parenting practices and the socialization process impacts the learning of maladaptive patterns of behavior and determines acquisition of aggressive behaviours.

Domestic violence, intimate partner violence and abuse in the family also impacts the development of the child negatively. When the close relationships in the family, between the parents, between parent and child, and between siblings are marked by violence and aggressive behaviours, it can cause aggressive behavior in the child as well. The principles of observational learning, modeling and reinforcement operate here to influence the development of aggressive behaviour in children.

Peer Relationship

The peer group also has a crucial role in determining aggression in the adolescents. As such, adolescence is characterized by peer influence and peer pressure. They want to dress up the way their peers do, behave in similar ways, and do the things that the peer group prefers doing. The governing factor here is to avoid peer rejection. Individuals at any stage of life, particularly at the adolescence stage, want to avoid / fear social rejection or ostracization.

Individuals are driven by the need for belongingness to the group. Adolescents may succumb to the peer pressure and may learn to engage in various forms of aggression, even abuse, rape and violence.

Provocation

Direct provocation, physical and verbal, is an important determinant of aggression. When individuals are provoked, it threatens their self esteem and identity and they may retaliate with aggressive gestures. Teasing also may lead to aggression when the individual perceives hostile motives or a desire to embarrass or annoy by the perpetrator (Campos, Keltner, Beck, Gonzaga and John, 2007). An innocuous teasing done just for simple fun is different from a deliberate teasing done intentionally to shame, belittle or ridicule others which affects the public image of the person.

Frustration

As discussed earlier in the frustration-aggression hypothesis, frustration has been viewed as an important determinant of aggression. When there is thwarting of goals and desires of the individual, s/he experiences frustration. This view/ position needs to be qualified. It may be noted that frustration may also lead to sadness, depression, withdrawal, and other reactions, not necessarily aggression only. Further, many other factors will influence whether this experience of frustration will lead to aggression or not. Thus, frustration can be discussed as one of the factors or determinants of aggression, not as a causal factor.

Social exclusion

Sameer, a 20 year old boy studying in a college located in a rural area, has always been uncomfortable with regard to his gender identity and knew that he does not fit in with the assigned gender category. Of late, he gathered courage and came out of it, that is, expressed his identity. The classmates made fun of him and isolated him and he was excluded from college activities as well. Sameer felt very hurt. Similarly, people belonging to other minority groups and disadvantaged background may face social rejection and ostracization. For example, there are instances where lower caste people are not allowed to sit with or share the same platform with people from higher caste. This rejection at the society level causes hurt and pain in the individual/s.

Disadvantaged situations like poverty, unemployment, disabilities, minority background etc. may lead to discrimination, stigma and injustice. These may lead to experiencing of violence themselves and also causing violence to others.

It can be noted here that the outcome of social rejection can happen at two levels: emotional and cognitive. It leads to negative emotions and emotional distress. However, this may not cause aggression. The cognitive outcome mostly is responsible for causing aggression. To explain further, social rejection leads to creation of a hostile cognitive mind-set. It refers to perceiving others actions as having hostile motives, even when it is not. This hostile cognitive bias activates cognitive structures in our minds that lead us to perceive ambiguous or neutral actions by others as hostile in nature, and to perceive aggression as common in social interactions and as an appropriate kind of reaction (Tremblay & Belchevski, 2004). Thus social exclusion and humiliation makes the excluded person to develop a hostile cognitive mind-set or bias towards the other group and may lead to aggression.

Media

Media also has a significant impact in the aggressive behaviours of the youth. Print media, radio, television to the all-pervading digital media (mobile, internet etc.) is influencing the behavior of the young people like never before. Digital violence is on the rise as it provides easy accessibility, convenience, quickness and anonymity.

Media has a powerful influence on the behavior of human beings. The effects of media violence are real, lasting and substantial (Baron and Branscombe, 2016). Several research studies have pointed out that exposure to media violence increases the likelihood of violence and aggressive behavior by people exposed to them (Anderson, Berkowitz et. al., 2004; Bushman and Anderson, 2009). Media violence consists of the harmful effects of violent content on television, films, video games and internet. The youth, at a stage characterized by action, curiosity and hero worship, easily fall prey to the excitement of violent actions in the media.

The earliest research on media violence was the Bobo Doll experiment by Bandura, Ross, and Ross, 1963a, 1963b). They designed an experiment in which an adult showed aggressive attacks against an inflated toy, 'Bobo doll' by kicking, hitting, punching the doll. In another group, there was no such violence. Both the programs were shown to nursery school children and then both the groups were left in a room with several toys. It was clearly seen that the group exposed to violence exhibited more aggressive behaviours towards the toys. Thus children learn aggression by watching violent film and television content.

Playing violent video games have also been found to be related to aggressive cognitions (thoughts related to harming others), aggressive affect (feelings of hostility, anger and revenge), and subsequent aggressive behavior (Anderson et. al. 2010).

In the present digital age, accessing violent content has become easy at the click of a mouse from the safe haven of one's home. Thus wide spread/extensive and repeated exposure to violence and association of it with pleasure and enjoyment leads to desensitization of the individual towards violence (Anderson et al 2003). Neuroscientific evidence also points at this loss of sensitivity to violence and increased aggression (Krahe et. al. 2011; Bartholow, Bushman & Sestir, 2006).

Cultural practices

Cultural beliefs, norms and practices generally govern a person's behavior. It influences our thinking and emotions. If a culture encourages practices of aggression, it is considered appropriate and required. For example, the cultures of honour talks about those cultures where there are strong norms for engaging in aggression in case of assault to one's honour. Thus it is a culturally sanctioned practice. In India, you can find such honour killings in cases of inter-caste marriage, or inter-religion marriages where people from one religion or caste feel they are superior and their daughter marrying in the other religion/ caste is an insult to their honour, and it is appropriate and required that one aggresses against the other group to save one's honour.

8.5.3 Situational Factors

Situational factors refer to the factors operating in the particular situation or context. For instance, extreme heat or cold temperatures may lead to negative emotions and raise the survival instinct of the individual and may give rise to aggressive behaviours. Similarly the individual may show aggressive behavior under the influence of alcohol in a particular situation.

Research on heat and aggression by Anderson, Bushman and Groom (1997) have found that indeed aggression is linked to rising temperature. Individuals in hot temperature get irritated and may lash out at others. However, the relationship is not so simple and direct (Rotton and Cohn, 2000). Research on heat-aggression relation also looks into aspects like magnitude of heat, timing of the day, short term and long term effect etc. Other factors present at the time, for instance, any provocation or alcohol etc. may get the person to aggress. Though studies abound on aggression linking it to hot temperatures, similar studies on aggression and extreme cold temperatures are lacking and it would be interesting to explore the relationship.

Self Assessment Questions II

1) How does gender differences account for aggression?

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2) Explain the influence of peer group on youth aggression?

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3) Describe the Bobo doll experiment.

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8.6 DEALING WITH AGGRESSION AND VIOLENCE

Aggression and violence among youth has a huge cost to the individual as well as the society and nation. It has negative impact on the development of the person and his/her family. The first great impact is on the health of the individual, both physical as well as mental health. It can also affect the relationship with family and peer group. Further, it affects negatively the learning and academic performance as well as career prospects. Society also bears the negative impact of the youth violence which creates a culture of mistrust, intolerance and lack of patience and peace; added to this is the economic cost by destruction of properties, infrastructure and facilities.

Violence inflicted on vulnerable population (for example., women, people with disabilities, minorities such as scheduled caste, scheduled tribes, transgender etc.) and its impact on them also needs to be considered and appropriate steps be taken to address this significant concern.

In this section we will highlight different ways of dealing with aggression and violence and measures to prevent and control it.

One of the ways to prevent aggression is to first assess the risk factors in the youth so that necessary steps and awareness can be developed. One such method is The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) which monitors six types of health-risk behaviors such as,

- Behaviours that contribute to unintentional injuries and violence
- Sexual behaviors related to unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection
- Alcohol and other drug use
- Tobacco use
- Unhealthy dietary behaviors
- Inadequate physical activity

These risk behaviours on the part of the youth may lead to negative emotional states and difficulties/problems in relationships, and may cause aggression.

Punishment: Punishment has always been used as a deterrent for violence and aggressive behaviours in the family, school as well as at societal level by the law and order system of the country. For cases of violence and aggression, people are locked up in jails and even given life sentence or capital punishment. Though it has always been debatable whether these punishments are justified on ethical grounds, the main purpose behind it is that the perpetrators or the criminals deserved this.

Thus, punishments are used for two main reasons – to act as a deterrent for further violence and crime, and the reasoning that the aggressors/ criminals deserved it. A few considerations while giving punishment are: it should be seen as a punishment by the aggressor; it should be clear-cut that punishment will follow certain acts of aggression; delivery of punishment should be

consistent; punishment should be immediate; and the magnitude of punishment should be in accordance to the severity of aggression and violence.

Catharsis: Catharsis involves release of the negative emotions that build up inside the body. Expressing these pent-up feelings and emotions will help reduce angry feelings and aggressive behaviours. However, these need to be expressed in a harmless and constructive way rather than ruminating over it. Rumination involves thinking about the negative emotions and the source of the pain and distress. Focusing on one's negative mood only acts to strengthen it more and may cause aggression. On the contrary, engaging in some constructive things such as gardening or physical exercise may help reduce the sense of anger. Thus catharsis may also be used in dealing with aggressive behaviour. Though, as Baron and Byrne (1995) point out, studies have provided mixed findings on catharsis hypothesis.

Cognitive Strategies: Aggression occurs both on impulse and as a well thought out plan. Hence there is a need to focus on the thinking and cognition of the individual to change hostile thought patterns. One needs to be aware of the automatic thoughts that come to our mind that later on forms the basis of aggression. Analyzing the situation/incident, giving justification and providing reasonable explanations help to reduce the anger mood, thereby preventing aggression.

Social Skills Training: People engaged in aggressive behavior often lack in relevant social skills. They may lack in proper and relevant skills required in social interactions with other people.

8.6.1 Promotion of Mental Health in Youth

One of the major ways in which aggression in the youth can be addressed is through promoting mental health. As explained by the WHO (2014), mental health refers "to a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his/her potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his/her community". When an individual is functioning optimally, leading a happy productive life, s/he may not have any reason to aggress. Mental health is not the mere absence of mental disorders. It goes beyond it, that is, it indicates absence of mental disorders and also a state of flourishing and functioning optimally. Even when a person does not have any mental disorders, s/he may not have good mental health which enables him to function effectively, form satisfying relationships, working towards a goal, adapt to different situations and in general is full of hope and energy and have a flourishing state. Hence, it is very important to focus and promote mental health in youth.

Positive Emotions: For achieving a good mental health, one of the key aspects to emphasize is our emotions. We have discussed various factors in previous section 8.5 that determine aggression. You can note that in all the cases, it leads to negative emotions, be it social rejection, heat or frustration. These negative emotions further generate aggressive intentions and aggressive behaviour. If we nip these negative emotions in the bud, that is, counter the negative emotions with positive ones, then chances of aggression are likely to be reduced. The positive emotional states and responses will be incompatible with the existing

negative ones, and thus reduce these. Like when you are relaxed, you cannot be stressed and vice versa. Similarly, when you are experiencing positive emotions, it lessens your chances of getting angry and further occurrence of aggression. Hence it is required to focus on positive emotions both at home and the school setting where the formative years of a child are spent.

Emotion Regulation: In addition to positive emotions, one also needs to learn how to manage or regulate the negative emotions that are bound to be generated in the day-to-day interactions and situations. Lack of emotion regulation or ineffective managing of emotions leads to consequences/outcomes such as frustration, provocation, anger and aggression. This further affects our social relationships and interactions. In a review study, Roberton, Daffern and Bucks (2012) highlighted three skills thought to underlie deliberate emotion regulation: emotional awareness, emotional acceptance and proficiency in a variety of emotion regulation strategies. They indicated that treatment encompassing all of these skills may improve an individual's ability to regulate difficult emotion states more adaptively and thereby lessen aggressive behavior.

Positive Role Models: Our young generation is susceptible to what they see and observe in significant others in their life and prominent figures in the society. They identify with their role models and try to imitate them. Hence it is very important to examine what kind of role models and what aspects in the role models they get attracted to. We need to identify people having good qualities and encourage our young to observe and follow them.

The negative behaviour shown by the role models have more impact on the young people than the positive behaviors in them. For instance, Hurd, Zimmerman and Reischl (2011) in their study, investigated the relationships between role model prosocial behaviour, role model antisocial behaviour, adolescents' attitudes toward violence, and adolescents' violent behavior on 331 African American seventh and eighth graders from low-income neighborhoods in an urban, Midwestern city. They found the following: (a) Role model prosocial behavior is indirectly related to less violent behavior through adolescents' attitudes toward violence, (b) role model antisocial behaviour is directly linked to increased violent behavior and indirectly linked to increased violent behaviour through adolescents' attitudes toward violence, and (c) role model antisocial behavior appears to have a stronger effect on African American early adolescents' violent behavior than role model prosocial behaviour.

Self Assessment Questions III

1) What are the things that need to be considered while providing punishment?

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2)   What are the key skills of emotion regulation?

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8.7   LET US SUM UP

In this Unit, you learned about aggression and the various forms in which it can be manifested including the extreme form, that is, violence. Various theoretical explanations were provided as to why aggression occurs. It was also discussed that aggression is not a unitary phenomenon that is influenced by a single factor only. Rather, it is a multi-factor phenomenon, having multiple determinants which we need to be aware of so that prevention and intervention steps can be taken accordingly. The personal, socio-cultural and situational factors affecting aggression were also presented. Finally, you learned about how to deal with aggression and violence. Specifically, the promotion of mental health in youth as a catalyst to aggression was discussed.

8.8   KEY WORDS

Aggression	:	can be defined as any form of behaviour directed towards the goal of harming or injuring another living being who is motivated to avoid such treatment (Robert and Deborah, 1994).
Instrumental or cognitive aggression	:	is more planned, thought out and is a means to an end or aims to achieve some goal, for example, bullying, a planned murder, hired assassin or terrorism.
Hostile or reactive aggression	:	is impulse-based and happens on the spur of the moment or heat of the moment.
Frustration-aggression hypothesis	:	states that frustration causes aggression (Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowerer & Sears, 1939).
Catharsis	:	involves release of the negative emotions that build up inside the body.
Mental health	:	refers "to a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his/her potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his/her community" (WHO, 2014).

8.9 ANSWERS TO SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Self Assessment Questions I

1) According to Robert and Deborah (1994), aggression can be defined as any form of behaviour directed toward the goal of harming or injuring another living being who is motivated to avoid such treatment.

2) Thanatos is the self-destructive death instinct as given by Freud.

3) According to social learning theory (Bandura, 1997), aggressive behaviours, like any other behavior, are learned. The child acquires these behaviours through direct learning/observation (eg., in family or school) or indirectly through television or violent video games or movies.

Self Assessment Questions II

1) Testosterone hormone in the males make them engage in more aggression and violence as compared to the females. However, it may be that being in aggressive situations increases their testosterone level.

2) Individuals at any stage of life, particularly at the adolescence stage, want to avoid / fear social rejection or ostracization. Individuals are driven by the need for belongingness to the group. The governing factor here is to avoid peer rejection. Hence, succumbing to the peer pressure, the adolescents learn to engage in various forms of aggression and even abuse, rape and violence.

3) The earliest research on media violence was the Bobo Doll experiment by Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1963a, 1963b). They designed an experiment in which an adult showed aggressive attacks against an inflated toy, 'Bobo doll' by kicking, hitting, punching the doll. In another group, there was no such violence. Both the programs were shown to nursery school children and then both the groups were left in a room with several toys. It was clearly seen that the group exposed to violence exhibited more aggressive behaviours towards the toys. Thus children learn aggression by watching violent film and television content.

Self Assessment Questions III

1) It should be seen as a punishment by the aggressor; it should be clear-cut that punishment will follow certain acts of aggression; delivery of punishment should be consistent; punishment should be immediate; and the magnitude of punishment should be in accordance to the severity of aggression and violence.

2) Emotional awareness, emotional acceptance and proficiency in a variety of emotion regulation strategies.

8.10 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1) Discuss the critical influence of media on youth aggression in the present digital age.

2) How are personal factors responsible for aggressive behavior?

3) Discuss the social learning theory of Bandura to explain aggression.

4) Explain how mental health is important in case of youth aggression.

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UNIT 9 CHALLENGES RELATED TO WORK LIFE BALANCE, EQUITY AND EQUALITY*

Structure

9.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you will be able to:

* Explain the concept of work-life balance, equity and equality;

* Learn the models and theories of work-life balance, equity and equality;

* Learn the importance of work-life balance, equity, and equality for individuals, and society;

* Identify the factors affecting work-life balance, equity, and equality;

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- Know the existing policies, and legislations regarding work-life balance, equity and equality; and

- Learn the ways of promoting work-life balance, equity and equality.

9.2 INTRODUCTION

Do you have a young mother in your extended family who works full time? Have you ever noticed her routine? Have you ever travelled in a daily commuter's (who commute daily to the place of their work) compartment in a train? Have you paid attention to the different activities they engage in during the train travel? Well in the first example, the young mother is always hassled and in stressed condition, running around to meet her responsibilities as a mother, an Indian wife, a working professional and her desire to keep her hobbies alive. In the second example, you must have seen some people may play cards, some must be answering pending mails, some may engage in some personal work so that they can take care of some of the familial duties. In short, with changing times, and increasing demands on individuals, balancing work and personal life is becoming a challenge.

A challenge is a call to participate in a competitive situation or fight to decide who/what is superior. For example, somebody can be challenged to establish his/ her superiority in terms of ability or strength. Additionally, under normal circumstances, we accept the challenge only when it is important for us in spite of being difficult to be achieved. This chapter considers work-life balance, equity and equality as challenging phenomena for the society and discusses these issues briefly.

Thus, when we are talking about work-life balance we mean to say that it is a call for the individual to participate both in work-life and personal life which are competing in terms of the demand for time, and energy need to be spent on both. In the current societal condition, it is profoundly visible that majority of professionals are not able to find a balance between their personal and professional lives. They have to make tough choices between their work and personal life many a times. This disequilibrium has resulted in stress, burnout, frustration, depression and many other psychological problems. These problems in turn have become the causes for the increasing life style related diseases like diabetes, hypertension, blood pressure, cardio vascular diseases and many others.

The changing economic conditions and social demands have changed the nature of work throughout the world. Originally, work was a matter of necessity and survival. Over the years, work has acquired different meanings and the nature of workforce has also become varied. Today, work is widely viewed as a source of personal satisfaction. A good balance in work and life can play a phenomenal role in the attainment of personal and professional goals of individuals and can contribute to the development of the society.

9.3 CONCEPT OF WORK LIFE BALANCE

Work-life balance refers to devoting time and energy to work as well as personal life in a balanced manner. By and large, the notion of work has been based on the notion of paid work and personal life has been understood as individual's engagement with family demands, pursuance of hobbies, social life etc. The

challenge of work-life balance revolves around balancing the following activities in one's life:

- What the person is doing for his self enhancement, like doing exercise, participating in sports, maintaining a good healthy lifestyle, with regular hours of meals, sleep etc.

- Good effective job performance and a healthy interpersonal relationship at the work-place.

- Being useful to the family, taking care of the children and elderly members of the family, spending quality time with the family.

- Spending time in leisure activities and with friends.

- Community activities.

- Activities pertaining to religious/ spiritual and philosophical pursuance of individuals.

While being good at work contributes to our self-esteem and social respect, attending to all other aspects listed above contributes to our subjective well-being. Work-life balance is achieved in different ways by different people. Somebody may try to balance their caring responsibilities for children with work, while somebody else may want more time to themselves, engaging in leisure activities.

Hudson (2005) defines work-life balance, as a satisfactory level of involvement or 'fit' between the multiple roles in a person's life. Work life balance is not necessarily an equal balance between work and life. It is about achieving a sense of harmony and happiness among different roles one plays at different stages of life. Work-life balance is a broad concept and can be defined as proper prioritizing between "work" and "life" by deciding the amount of time you spend on both aspects. Work includes one's career and ambitions in the work field/profession. Life includes one's family, friends, social relations, health, leisure, pleasure, religious and spiritual aspects. Kaza (2012) also reported that work life balance is about understanding your priorities, both at personal and professional level. Somebody may work 8 hours a day and still make time to pursue highly fulfilling hobbies. Work life balance is about making time for what you think is important and has no relation to how many hours you work in a day/ week.

Self Assessment Questions I

1) Based on what you understood about work life balance, carry out the following:

   a) Ask a working woman in a govt. sector what kind of work-life balance challenges she faces in her day to day life.

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   b) Ask a man working in private sector corporate about the challenges of work-life balance he faces in day to day life.

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   c) Compare and understand the gender differences, and occupational differences in the challenges posed by work-life balance.

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9.4   IMPORTANCE OF WORK LIFE BALANCE

As mentioned earlier, something becomes a challenge when it is important for the subject (individual or society) in question and becomes difficult to achieve.

According to Singh and Khanna (2011), work life balance has gained importance due to following reasons:

a) *Changing Social Scene*. In today's world maintaining work-life balance is the greatest challenge employees' face. They have realized that their personal lives have an effect on their work life. Hence they are striving hard to maintain a balance between the two.

b) *Changing Work Culture*. There is a shift in the organizational work culture. Today's work culture provides flexible work hours, focus on results and recognition of achievements. This has made the workplace even more competitive as employees are always expected to give their best.

c) *Increased Work Time (Effect of Globalization)*. With globalization, organizations are working 365 days, 24 hours and 7 days a week irrespective of the time zones. Even the technology has added to the speed of work but the workload remains the same.

d) *Dual Income Families*. The shift in attitudes, work styles and cultures has disturbed the work-life balance. Working mothers have major responsibilities of managing both home and workplace. This makes it all the more important to balance work and life.

Balancing professional and personal life can be a challenge in today's demanding workplace. With the recession pushing many professionals to work harder than ever and technology enabling work around the clock, achieving work-life balance is more important - and elusive - than ever. According to Abercromby (2007), it seems that this problem is increasing over time due to high female labour force

Globalisation and changing workforce profile
increasing participation of women in workforce, multinational companies with differential and extended working hours deregulation of labour shortages

Family and socio-demographic changes
nuclear family structure
ageing population in need of care
dual earning couples
single parent families
sandwich generation

Work Life Balance

Changes in organizations and work-place charecteristics
increased workload.performance based incentative system and career progression Multitasking telework, BPOs, LPOs, etc

Changing Societal and institutional relationships
Increased demand on families
difficult to care for marginalised
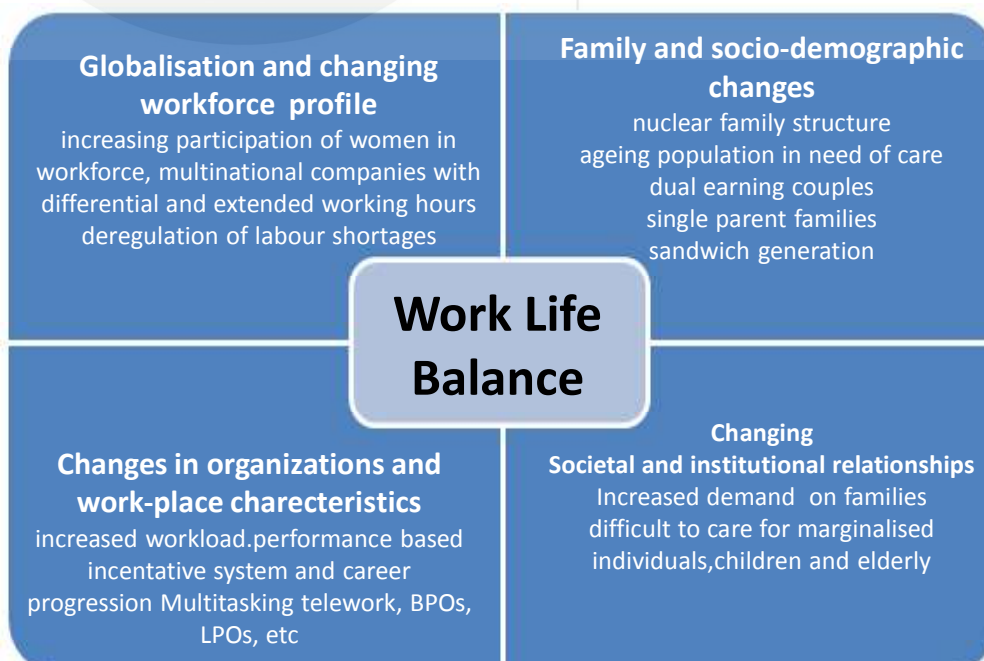individuals,children and elderly

Figure 9aF: Challenges of Work-Life Balance

participation rates, increasing numbers of single parent families, the predominance of the dual-earner family and emerging trends such as elder care. It is further exasperated with globalization, an aging population, and historically low unemployment.

In today's competitive world, organizations aim at retaining their valuable human resources by positively impacting their lives in various ways and try to keep pace with workplace trends. Three factors — global competition, personal lives/ family values, and an aging workforce – present challenges that exacerbate work-life balance. All the above reasons compelled individuals and companies to focus on the importance of work life balance and bring it at the priority levels. The following Figure 9aF depicts the socio-economic demographic factors which make work-life balance a challenge in today's world.

Work life balance can also be understood in terms of three perspectives. First, the *organizational perspective*, where the organization takes a lead role to help employee maintain their work-life balance & tackle various work related issues; second, the *individual perspective*, where the individuals makes efforts to maintain balance at work by consciously working towards it and third, the *family perspective*, it considers individuals as a family member working towards providing better life to its members (Saima & Zohair 2016).

9.5 MODELS OF WORK LIFE BALANCE

Different theories and models have been forwarded to explain work-life balance, which you will learn in this section.

9.5.1 Spill Over Model

The spillover model hypothesizes that there is a spill over from one world, i.e., work to the other world, family and vice versa. Spill over is a process through which an individual's experiences in one domain affect the experiences in the other (Lavassani & Movehedi, 2014). There are two types of spill over; positive or negative. It is related to the spreading of the state of well-being from one area to another (Lakshmipriya & Ramakrishna, 2016). Positive spill over refers to the fact that positive outcomes and accomplishments in one domain may bring the same satisfaction and experiences in the other domain. Similarly, negative spill over refers to the fact that difficulties and problems in one domain may lead to the experience of negative emotions and may also get transferred to the other domain (Xu, 2009)

9.5.2 Compensation Model

In contrast to the spillover model, Piotrkowski (1979) established another view of understanding work and family which is known as compensation model. It proposes that one domain can compensate for the lack in the other domain. For example, if work is routine and not exciting enough for an individual, s/he may compensate for it by engaging in community activities outside the work area. Compensation model defines the behavior of an individual who makes an effort to defy negative experiences in one area by increasing efforts for positive experiences in other areas of life. According to Lambert (1990) the theory perceives the employee as an individual who is looking out for more satisfaction

from either the work or personal lives due to dissatisfaction in the other (Lavassani & Movehedi, 2014).

Compensation theory is also understood in two ways called the supplemental and reactive compensation. The supplemental compensation occurs when the individual who is dissatisfied in one role, shifts to another satisfying role to gain more fulfilling experiences; whereas reactive compensation occurs when an individual has undesirable experiences at work and compensates it by engaging in desirable experiences in non-work domain (Zedeck, 1987).

9.5.3 Segmentation Model

The segmentation model hypothesizes that work and non-work are two distinct domains of life. They do not influence each other and are lived separately. This view is based on the theory of work and family by Blood and Wolfe (1960), which assumes that both the work and family do not affect each other as they are separate and independent from each other (Lavassani & Movahedi, 2014). Industrial revolution made the work sphere and the personal life aspects essentially different in terms of space, time and functions (Vijaya Kumar & Janakiram, 2017). However, this may be a difficult proposition to achieve and the model may not have empirical support.

9.5.4 Instrumental Model

The Instrumental model proposes that activities in one sphere facilitate success in the other. For example, most of us work (even if it is not satisfying or mundane and lacks flexibility and creativity) because it makes possible procuring facilities, pleasures and luxuries in life, like cars, properties, world trips etc.

9.5.5 Border Theory

Clark (2000) proposed a different perspective explaining the work-family domain called as the Border Theory. According to this theory individuals are daily crossing the boundaries making transitions between their two worlds. The main proposition of the theory is that work and family constitute different domains but one that influence each other. Border theory hypothesizes work and family as two different but interactive environments that people have associated with in terms of different guidelines, emotions, values, thought processes and their behavior (Karassvidou & Glaveli, 2014). How much and how many times the individual crosses over the boundaries between their personal and work life have an impact on their level of integration and also determines the ease of transitions between these domains and the conflicts associated with it as they are closely related (Vijaya Kumar & Janakiram, 2017) When the domains are integrated, transition in them becomes easier, and may lead to work- family conflict; on the other hand, when these domains are segmented or separated then the same transition takes more effort and reduced work-family conflict is seen (Bellavia & Frone, 2005 as cited in Vijaya Kumar & Janakiram, 2017). The more the permeability and flexibility the more is the blending that takes place (Clark, 2000).

Self Assessment Questions II

1) Describe the two aspects of compensation theory.

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2) Explain the instrumental model of work life balance.

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9.6 WORK LIFE BALANCE AND ITS CHALLENGES

The outcomes which arises out of work-life imbalance can be categorized into four main facets:

*   Psychological consequences

*   Societal consequences

*   Organizational consequences

*   Physical outcomes.

9.6.1 Psychological Consequences

a) *Frustration*: When the individual fails to achieve the target at work and any goals set at individual level, blockage of goals leads to frustration.

b) *Stress*: the constant pressure of unfinished tasks at home front and work-front, the overload, creates stress in the individual.

c) *Anxiety*: the individual remains tormented by the irrational fear that if I can not finsh this work, or can not achieve that goal, then what? It makes him suffer from anxiety

d) *Depression*: a nagging feeling of unfinished tasks, unaccomplished targets affects the self-esteem of the person, which ultimately leads to depression.

9.6.2 Societal Consequences

a) *Life roles and well-being*: Chan (2007) in her study on work life balance focused to investigate on conflict and facilitation of life roles, namely work, family/friendship, leisure/recreation and how these affect psychological

wellbeing. She reported that non-work role based facilitation that is the enriching effects of engagement in family/friendship and leisure /recreation roles have been found to be significant in promoting well- being of individuals. Work role based facilitation was found to predict leisure satisfaction on a positive manner

b) *Work-family conflict*: When either the work conflicts with the familial responsibility or when the family responsibilities interfere with work, it is known as work-family conflict. Aslam, Shumaila, Azhar and Sadaqat (2011) in their study explored the relationship between work family conflict (WFC), family work conflict (FWC) and turnover intentions of employees in three public and three private sector organizations from services sector of Pakistan. They found positive but insignificant relationship between work-family conflict (WFC), family-work conflict (FWC) and turnover intention of employees. Nadeem & Abbas (2009) in their study explored the relationship between work life conflict and job satisfaction in Pakistan and found that job satisfaction is significantly negatively correlated with work to family interference and family to work interference. Reddy, Vranda, Ahmed, Nirmala & Siddaramu (2010) in their study explored the work life balance of married employees with specific reference to the factors that affected work – family conflict and family work conflict. The study was conducted on 90 working married employees between the age group of 20 yrs to 50 yrs. All the studies suggest that organizational support to maintain work-life balance will reduce work-life conflict and enhance job satisfaction of employees.

c) *Disturbed families*: Work family imbalance hits the families of the employees in the worst possible manner. Family is often overlooked when the individual struggles with time to achieve the organizational targets. The number of broken families and divorces has gone up drastically in last decades. The dual earning couples with high work demand are not able to spend enough time with each other. Due to high stress and fatigue, the fertility levels of young couples are getting affected. The single parent families are on increase because of spousal conflicts and fight.

d) *Unethical practices*: To handle the stress in the organization and the family-related issues as well, employees tend to adopt unethical practices like boozing, smoking, drugs, improper relations like work-place romance, etc. Also, there is a high probability that employees may resort to unfair means to get their work done ultimately by hook or crook.

e) *Work hangover*: Like "Alice in the Wonderland", employees tend to stay in their professional world (mentally) though they are physically at home. Not only this, the effect of professional anger is also carried on to their personal life. For example, if there is a conflict in the organization, the irritated behavior of the individual may reflect in the family thereby igniting many negative effects in the family.

f) *Need for home based care for elderly*: Work life imbalance affects negatively the elderly care needs in the family. As India is facing the problem of ageing population, and the working couples need to balance their home and work responsibilities, there is an emerging need for home based care of elderly.

9.6.3 Organizational Consequences

a) ***Work life balance and organizational citizenship behaviour*:** It has been seen that when employees have work-life balance they engage in more helpful behaviour towards their co-workers and organization (Organizational Citizenship Behaviour) as a whole. Lambert (2000) in her study found that added benefits of work-life benefits when provided by the organization are perceived positively and as a result there was an increase in the frequency of helping behaviour. Pradhan, Jena & Kumari (2016), in their study on MNC employees also found similar results. They found significant effects of work –life balance on citizenship behaviour.

b) ***Under performance*:** The work life imbalance results in under performance of employees. Employees perform much below their actual potential because of their stress and fatigue. It happens because of the preoccupation with unaccomplished targets and problems, which affects their concentration and focus. They try to balance both but in vain, and get into a frustrated mode and cannot give their best to their profession.

c) ***Lack of job satisfaction and organizational commitment***: Work life imbalance results in job dissatisfaction. Once the employees are not satisfied with their job, they also start losing interest in the job, and the organization. It affects their commitment towards organization.

9.6.4 Physical Outcomes

Lack of work life balance and the psychological problems resulting from it, in long run gives rise to various physical ailments. The most common ones are tension headaches, migraine, blood-pressure, diabetes etc. Apart from this, now-a-days many working women are having problems of polycystic ovaries, fertility issues also. Men also get affected with muscular pain and fertility related issues.

9.7 ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF WORK LIFE BALANCE

Organizations and workplaces should actively get engaged in creating opportunities to support work-life balance of their employees. One of premium pan global HR consultancy organization Randstad; in their 2018 India Country Report has reported that work-life balance has been rated as the second most important values that employees look for at their potential work places (India Country Report, Randstad, 2018). Fourty four percent of respondents in survey perceived it as an important value. The interesting thing is that Randstad in its India Country report in 2015 had reported it as the third most important value that employee would look for at their potential work places.

There have been extensive research outputs identifying factors which can be worked upon to improve work life balance. Most of such research talk about the factors which the organizations can have control over to create opportunity for the employees to balance work and life. Saima & Zohair (2016) reported that personal and work factors played a very important role in work life balance. They highlighted factors like management policies, work arrangements, family support, health & cultural factors, work hours, managerial support and so on.

Similar outcomes were found by Chandel & Kaur (2015), where they found 12 factors through factor analysis which contribute to effective work life balance. These were 1) *better industrial relations*, 2) *health promoting activities*, 3) *eco-friendly environment*, 4) housing and child care facilities which they labeled as *employee welfare activities*, 5) *safety and security* concerns, 6) *satisfaction with personal life*, 7) *performance appraisal system*, 8) *scope for advancement* and *job satisfaction, 9) monetary incentives, 10) social relationships, 11) recruitment and grievance redressal system and lastly 12) decision making*. They reported that all these factors when provided by the organization lead to effective performance of the employee and provides work life harmony, satisfaction and improved performance.

Other factors that contribute to work-life balance are perceived job flexibility – employees who perceive that they are provided with flexibility in time and location are better able to balance their work and family and also are able to work for long hours. It was proposed that flexitime may contribute to quality time at work and family both as it may reduce the stress that is associated with long work hours as well as long hours of commute (Hill, Hawkins, Ferris & Weitzman, 2001).

Generally it is assumed that individuals try their best to balance their work and personal life; and a lot of responsibility is attributed to the organizations to support their employees and create opportunities for them to balance their work and family life. It is always believed that work should be pro-human, and should not be in any way detrimental to the well-being of individuals. In the last decade, lots of research are being done to assess the culture of the organization as it supports the work-life balance of its employees. Below are given some questions which can be used to measure to what extent an organization provides opportunity to its employees to combine work and family. The respondents are asked to respond to the questions on a five point scale to show their agreement and disagreement, where 1 shows complete disagreement and 5 shows complete agreement. Higher the score, higher the work-family balance and vice-versa. The items which need to be reverse coded are marked by R against the item. These items are part of the scale 'Work-Family Culture Items' (Thompson, Beauvis & Lyness, 1999). You can see examples of some of the test items in the box given below.

Examples of Test Items in Work-Family Culture Scale

1) This organization is supportive of employees who want to switch to less demanding jobs for family reasons.

2) In this organization it is generally okay to talk about one's family at work.

3) In this organization employees can easily balance their work and family lives.

4) This organization encourages employees to set limits on where work stops and home life begins.

5) In this organization it is very hard to leave during the workday to take care of personal or family matters. (R)

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6)	Many employees in this organization are resentful when their co-workers take extended leaves to care for newborn or adopted children. (R)
7)	In this organization employees who participate in available work–family programs (e.g., job sharing, part-time work) are viewed as less serious about their careers than those who do not participate in these programs. (R)

Source: 'Work-Family Culture Items' (Thompson, Beauvis & Lyness, 1999)

Gender and work-life imbalance

Post independence, modern India promoted the emancipation of women from the traditional ethos. Increased participation of women into vocations that were largely the preserves of men, have added on to their responsibility outside home whereby disturbing the smooth operations of home assignments. They almost work like machines in fixed schedule of 16 to 18 hours of work. Now, this calls for equal distribution of work and responsibilities between men and women, reconstructing the traditional roles. This is otherwise known as gender equality. Thus the challenges of work life balance can only be addressed by addressing the challenges of equity and equality in organizations and also in society at large. This is not limited to gender only, we need equality and equity for other social categories also to have a healthy and progressive nation.

In the next section, you will learn the concepts of equity, equality and the challenges posed by these issues in the society.

Self- Assessment Questions III

1) What are the psychological consequences of work life imbalance?

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2) What is work-family conflict?

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3) How does work life imbalance result in underperformance?

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9.8 CONCEPT OF EQUITY AND EQUALITY

Equity is a higher order of virtue. It is a virtue of being just, fair and even-handed and impartial. Equality is like a state, where everyone gets the same deal. For example, when we are talking about gender equality, it means that men and women are treated equally, given the same treatment and have access to same resources. Equity is considered as a means to an end, which can be equality. Having an equitable attitude will bring equality in the society. Equity is closely linked to distributive justice. It talks about fair distribution of resources. When we say fair distribution, we indicate that the resources should be distributed according to the need and requirement of people. When we say equality, the resources are distributed evenly. All the subsidies that government gives to the poor and needy people in the society are examples of equity. Take the example of LPG gas subsidy. Many poor people, who could not afford cooking gas, are enjoying this and it has saved a large chunk of women in the country from the danger of respiratory problems, because of the equitable attitude of the government. They desperately needed it, and they got it for low, affordable prices, whereas; people who could afford were requested not to avail subsidy. Equality talks about treating everybody in the same way and equal way, e.g., our law which provides equal opportunity to all citizens of India irrespective of their caste, religion, gender or ethnic identity.

Why Equity and Equality are Important?

India has a social rubric with multiple layers of segregation and differences. The society is extremely heterogeneous and diverse. The socio-cultural demographic variables which makes it layered and so differentiated are,

- Caste
- Religion
- Ethnic indigenous group
- Language and cultural diversity
- Wide range variation in socio-economic status/ social class
- Gender

Historically and traditionally, we have been a society to offer differential treatment to all these groups with multiple ethnic, religious, caste, gender identities. You must have studied in your school text books how these groups hold prejudices, stereotypes against each other, which reflects in the discriminatory behaviors they show towards each other. After Independence, Indian Constitution has tried to take care of this inequality and differences by having constitutional laws and acts against such discriminatory actions based on cast, creed, gender and class. We will talk about these laws a little later. The constitution has tried to make the society equitable by responding to the unequal distribution of resources and social status by bringing reservation policies for scheduled castes, and scheduled tribes. It has been further added by reservations for other backward castes.

Equity basically recognizes the differential needs and requirements of people and attempts to counteract the unequal individual opportunities. Equality, on the other hand talks about treating everybody in the same equal way. Equity ensures people get what they need. Equity is an attribute which manifests system

of justice and fairness. It offers evenhanded treatment to individuals by understanding and appraising their needs and requirements and then provides the resources accordingly.

Equity demands fairness across all kinds of situation. Whether it is distribution of resources or benefits, or distribution of burdens and responsibilities, principle of equity believes that it should be shared equally by all stakeholders Therefore people are treated fairly but differently as their constraints are considered empathetically. An example is different tax grades for people having different incomes. Moreover, the small businessmen and the farmers are sometimes exempted from paying taxes. The equity principle is translated into law of equal opportunity where it creates possibility for all citizens of India to achieve their fullest potential.

Equality is important because it assures equal treatment to all irrespective of their caste, creed, religion, gender etc. It assures same status to everybody and hinders differential treatment on the basis of their social identity. It helps people feel equally valued, by the power of the law of the land. It is a situation, all individuals are granted equal rights to and responsibilities towards all the resources the country has, irrespective of the individual differences. Freedom of speech and right to dignity are two basic things which propounds the principle of equality. As a democratic country, all of us, irrespective of our caste, gender, religion, ethnicity have equal rights to voice our opinion. Same way, each one of us has the equal rights to live with dignity irrespective of our profession, socio-economic status and other socio-demographic status.

Equality is also important because, it is the lifeline of democracy and helps the society to boast of its democratic values. It helps us to prevent any kind of discrimination against anybody on the basis of his/her socio-demographic origin or status like race, caste, sex, creed, nationality, disability, age, religion and so forth, and thus assures equal treatment and equal access to resources.

Self Assessment Questions IV

1) Define equity and equality and highlight their differences. Provide real life examples of applications and manifestations of equity and equality.

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9.9 THE LAWS AND POLICIES FOR EQUITY AND EQUALITY

Indian constitution encapsulates social safeguard measures for all citizens of India in Article 14, Article 15 and Article 16. Article 15 mandates prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. Article 16 mandates equal opportunity in matters of public employment. Article 16(2)

further states that no citizen shall, only on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, descent, place of birth, residence or any of them, be ineligible for, or discriminated against in respect of, any employment or office under the State. Government of India (GOI) promotes equal employment opportunities and a workplace that is free of all forms of discrimination. Equal opportunity means that all staff experience fairness, impartiality and equal access to all career initiatives, and it promotes an inclusive work environment that values and accepts the diverse cultural and social backgrounds of its staff.

In the wake of equal opportunity, inclusive work environment, and diversity management has become an important issue for the organizations. Organizations which encourage in their policy and practice to hire people from different genders, cultural backgrounds, ethnic backgrounds etc are perceived as progressive organizations and are considered as attractive workplaces for most of the potential employees.

Articles in Indian Constitution affirming Equity and Equality

Article 14. The State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India.

Article 15. (1) The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them.

Article 15 (3) Empowers the State to take affirmative actions in favor of Women

Article 16. (1) There shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State.

Article 16. (2) No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, descent, place of birth, residence or any of them, be ineligible for, or discriminated against in respect of, any employment or office under the State.

This article is also known as article for Prevention of Atrocities against SC/ST candidates or other minority groups on the basis of discrimination against their social categories. The scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes (prevention of atrocities) amendment act, 2018 no. 27 of 2018 [17th august, 2018.]

When we discuss about equity and equality, the biggest challenge the world is facing today is Gender Equality. Gender equality has been one of the United Nation's (UN) sustainable development goals since 2015. The UN sees gender equality as a fundamental right, necessary for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world (UN, 2012). According to the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), gender equality refers "to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys" (EIGE, n.d.). According to EIGE, "equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female."

In spite of these wide spread effort, it still remains a fact that gender issues are important all over the world. The *Global Gender Gap Report* (World Economic Forum, 2017) annually measures the relative gaps globally between women and men across (*a*) economic participation and opportunity; (*b*) educational

attainment; (*c*) health and survival; and (*d*) political empowerment. India's is in 108th position, which shows the wide disparity in the status of the men and women.

In India, 29 per cent of all women and 83 per cent of all men participate in the labour force (ranking 136) (World Economic Forum, 2016). More women than men in India work in the informal sector (94.7 per cent of women versus 91 per cent of men), and women are more often employed in low-level occupations than men (Raveendran, 2016). Women in India earn far less than men do, "especially among those with low levels of education and in higher age groups", but the difference in wages "is relatively less among formal workers" (Raveendran, 2016). India is ranked 129 in wage equality for similar work.

While we can measure the magnitude of gender inequality, the equitable relationship between the genders is not measured always. The World Health Organisation (2010) defines gender equity and gender equality as follows:

Gender Equality is understood as the equal treatment of women and men in laws and policies, and equal access to resources and services within families, communities and society; sometimes referred to as formal equality.

Gender Equity involves fairness and justice in the distribution of resources and responsibilities between men and women; sometimes referred to substantive equality. It often requires women specific programs and policies to end existing inequalities. (World Health Organisation 2010, Violence prevention: The Evidence. WHO, Geneva)

9.10 PROMOTION OF EQUITY AND EQUALITY

In order to address the challenges of equity and equality, India, in its own rights as a democratic society has been striving hard. India is a huge country, and to implement anything uniformly throughout the country, legislation and formalization has been proved to be an efficient way. With the two examples described below, we would see that how the equal opportunity and equitable quality of life can be ensured among citizens of a country.

Access to equitable education can be considered as the backbone of a country. Developed societies have always strived to achieve equality and equity in the area of health, education and gender. As India is mostly an agrarian society, and the rich poor divide is very wide, availing and continuing education has always been a challenge for children from poor families, and rural areas. Having equitable access to education then demands requirement of some special provisions to be made so that these children from poor households and rural areas could get educated. Here, let us talk about our own struggle to handle the challenge to achieve equity in the area of literacy and primary education. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which represents the consequential legislation envisaged under Article 21-A, means that every child has a right to full time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school which satisfies certain essential norms and standards. Article 21-A and the RTE Act came into effect on 1 April 2010. The title of the RTE Act incorporates the words 'free and compulsory'. 'Free education' means that no child shall be liable to pay any kind of fee or charges or expenses which may

prevent him or her from pursuing and completing elementary education. 'Compulsory education' casts an obligation on the appropriate Government and local authorities to provide and ensure admission, attendance and completion of elementary education by all children in the 6-14 age group (Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, GOI retrieved from http://mhrd.gov.in/school-education).

The Indian Constitution has also strived for a long time to empower women, improve their position and ensure equality for them (Raveendran, 2016). For example, the main objective of the Factories Act of 1948 is to ensure adequate safety measures and to promote the health and welfare of workers employed in factories (ILO, n.d.). The act also makes provisions regarding the employment of women and young persons (including children and adolescents).

In order to reduce the disparity between the sexes, and promote gender equity, in the year 2001, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India launched a National Policy for Empowerment of Women. The specific objectives of the policy are as follows:

- Creation of an environment through positive economic and social policies for full development of women to enable them to realize their full potential.

- Creation of an environment for enjoyments of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on equal basis with men in all political, economic, social, cultural and civil spheres.

- Providing equal access to participation and decision making of women in social, political and economic life of the nation.

- Providing equal access to women to health care, quality education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupational health and safety, social security and public life etc.

- Strengthening legal systems aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

- Changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women.

- Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development process.

- Elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and the girl child.

- Building and strengthening partnership with civil society, particularly women's organizations.

(Retrieved from http://socialjustice.nic.in/writereaddata/UploadFile/PoA_Act_2018636706385256863314.pdf- on 15th October, 2018)

However, the civil society and the individuals should also respond to and reciprocate the efforts made by the government to translate equity, and equality into day to day life. For example, at workplaces, we can support equity by generating equality and respect among the employees. Organizations should strive to build a supportive and equitable workplace culture. A work-place which provides opportunities for work life balance, promotes equality and equity can be characterized by:

- Creating awareness among employees about the importance of gender equality and respectful relationships and their current performance.

- Create a conducive environment to talk about gender inequality, gender stereotypes, and violence against women.

- Openness to do things differently and creatively.

- Commitment to take actions, form policies and practices to build a fairer workplace. In families and communities, work-life balance, equity and equality could be realistic possibilities when we strive to,

- Create more awareness about the equal rights and legal/ constitutional provisions to avail education, health, and safety facilities?

- Create opportunities to fight and abolish discrimination in any form against individuals based upon their membership in particular social, ethnic, caste, gender groups

- Be more open and inclusive in our attitudes and behavior towards the members of social groups which are different than ours. In our attitude, emotion and action we have to be more tolerant towards the wide range of socio-cultural diversity

- Teach and learn ways to reduce prejudices, stereotypes and discrimination against each other

- Commitment to respect our as well as other's fundamental constitutional rights and responsibilities.

Although there are several constitutional provisions, we need to translate these through our attitudes, behaviors and actions in terms of our day today interactions and dealings in family, workplace, neighbourhood, community and larger societies. Our exemplary constitution makes provisions, and offers protection to Indian nationals with regard to equality and equity. However, the gap between the legislation of the country and the real life situations needs to be bridged. When we talk about translating the policies into practices, there are three major processes which can facilitate this (Biswas, Allard, Pousette, & Harenstam, 2017).

These processes are described below.

Communication: We should try to create awareness and communicate openly about the issues of worklife balance, equality and equity. For example, organizations in its open forum openly discuss the issues and bottlenecks to achieve these. Social media can play a role to initiate debates, discussions on relevant topics related to these issues. A case in hand is the "*me too*" movement, where some women took the help of social media to voice their grievance against the sexual harassment and molestation of men at work places. These kinds of transactions in the open forum remind individuals and society about their rights and responsibilities.

Formalization: Certain standardized best practices should be formalized to promote work-life balance, equality and equity, whether it is in the organizational or social context. Policies and strategies to have maternity and paternity leaves, balance the gender at workplace vertically and horizontally across job hierarchies and job types, having separate toilets for women at workplace are some examples

of this. In family context, division of work, and sharing child care responsibility could be some examples. This when adopted seriously will bring in normative changes in families and societies.

Implementation: Implementing best practices to maintain work life balance, equality and equity will only be possible by reducing prejudices, stereotypes (racial and gender stereotypes) and engaging in non-discriminative behavior in interpersonal, familial, and community interactions in day to day transactions. All the socialization agents like parents, family members, teachers, schools, work places should consciously and continuously keep a watch on, and monitor the behavior of individuals in their formative years and later on at the work places to help internalize the equitable attitude, values and norms for a progressive and equal society.

Self-Assessment Questions V

1) Think about three things that you can start practicing to promote more equity and equality in your classroom/ work place.

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2) List two practices that educational institutions should practice to promote gender equality.

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3) List five characteristics of an organization which you would consider as the one promoting gender equality and equity.

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9.11 LET US SUM UP

This Unit introduced you to the concept of work life balance, equity and equality in our day to day existence and in our society. We have learned that for a healthy democracy to evolve as a progressive nation, equity, equality and work-life balance are of utmost importance. Various models of work life balance were described. The challenges of work life balance were pointed out in terms of four-fold consequences: psychological, societal, organizational and physical outcomes. Finally the various ways in which the challenges to work life balance, equity and equality can be addressed, were discussed including the laws and policies related to equity and equality.

9.12 KEY WORDS

Work life balance : refers to devoting time and energy to work as well as personal life in a balanced manner.

The spillover model : hypothesizes that there is a spill over from one world, i.e., work to the other world, family and vice versa.

Work-family conflict : refers to when either the work conflicts with the familial responsibility or when the family responsibilities interfere with work.

Equity : is a virtue of being just, fair and even-handed and impartial.

Equality : refers to distribution of resources evenly or equally.

9.13 ANSWERS TO SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Self Assessment Questions I

1) You will ask the concerned individuals as asked in the question and compare the differences in the work life challenges faced by them.

Self Assessment Questions II

1) Compensation theory has two aspects such as supplemental & reactive compensation. The supplemental compensation occurs when the individual who is dissatisfied in one role, shifts to another satisfying role to gain more fulfilling experiences; whereas reactive compensation occurs when an individual has undesirable experiences at work and compensates it by engaging in desirable experiences in non-work domain (Zedeck, 1987).

2) The Instrumental model proposes that activities in one sphere facilitate success in the other. For example, most of us work (even if it is not satisfying or mundane and lacks flexibility and creativity) because it makes possible procuring facilities, pleasures and luxuries in life, like cars, properties, world trips etc.

Self Assessment Questions III

1) The psychological consequences of work life imbalance are frustration, stress, anxiety and depression.

2) When either the work conflicts with the familial responsibility or when the family responsibilities interfere with work, it is known as work-family conflict.

3) Work life imbalance results in under performance of employees because they experience stress and fatigue. They are also preoccupied with unaccomplished targets and problems, which affects their concentration and focus.

Self Assessment Questions IV

1) Equity basically recognizes the differential needs and requirements of people and attempts to counteract the unequal individual opportunities. Equality, on the other hand talks about treating everybody in the same equal way. Equity ensures people get what they need. Equity is an attribute which manifests system of justice and fairness. It offers evenhanded treatment to individuals by understanding and appraising their needs and requirements and then provides the resources accordingly. Equity is a means towards an end, that is, equality.

Self Assessment Questions V

1) You will learn and understand the concepts of equity and equality and answer the question numbers 1, 2 and 3.

9.14 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1) Define work life balance and discuss the theories and models of work life balance. Think and write examples of individuals, where each one of the theories /models of work life balance gets applied.

2) Discuss the factors affecting work –life balance in Indian society. List five things that the organization should do to create opportunities for work life balance. List five things for the person to do to maintain work life balance.

3) Discuss the consequences of work life imbalance with suitable examples.

5) Discuss the importance of equity and equality in Indian society. Give examples of various inequalities in our society.

6) Discuss gender equality and gender equity with the help of various definitions given to explain it.

7) Describe various articles and constitutional provisions (Acts and Laws) which try to ensure equity and equality in Indian Society.

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