

# MODULE 4

# Behaviour Modification



UGANDA

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# MODULE 4

## BEHAVIOUR MODIFICATION

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## FOREWORD

African Ministers of Education have long been aware of the growing number of social problems which affect the lives of young Africans, particularly girls, and determined some time ago that their education systems had to play a much more active and positive role in promoting the growth and development of the young people entrusted to their care.

Before taking action they took into account the declarations and recommendations of the Pan African Conference on the Education of Girls (Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 1993) and the Fourth World Conference on Women, (Beijing, China, 1995) and other international gatherings on matters related to women. They then convened a series of technical meetings in English and French-speaking countries, at both the regional and the national level, to decide in greater detail what should be done. The consensus reached was that Guidance and Counselling should be an integral part of the education of children and should be included in the teacher training programmes.

This co-ordinated effort resulted in the establishment in April 1997, of a Board of Governors, made up of African Ministers of Education, who would be responsible for policy decisions and for establishing procedures in the development of the Guidance and Counselling Programme. In preparing the programme African countries would collaborate so that it would benefit from the best African expertise. It was also agreed that **'The Guidance Counselling and Youth Development Centre for Africa'**, designed to provide training for teacher trainers and youth and social workers from all over the continent, would be set up in Malawi. While this programme was intended for use with boys and girls, its content and organization are such that special attention is given to the needs and requirements of girls.

Assistance is being given by a number of international and regional agencies such as UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA, FAWE, (the Forum for African Women Educationalists), DANIDA, the Rockefeller Foundation and from countries such as Finland and the USA.

A training Package on Guidance and Counselling has been prepared by African specialists from various countries in consultation with other competent persons. It consist of eight training modules – ***Guidance, Counselling, Social Work, Behaviour Modification, Gender Sensitivity, Guidance and Counselling Programme Development, Adolescent Reproductive Health, and Workshop Administration and Conduct Guidelines***. The modules encourage the use of non-threatening approaches,

particularly with regard to sensitive issues, and are accompanied by charts, transparencies and video films as teaching aids. Supporting materials are also drawn from other relevant programmes being implemented in the respective countries. Although intended for use in the training of trainers, the suggested activities are also generally suitable for use with school-age children. Each module is comprised of units and sets out objectives and activities for small and large groups. Because of the shortage of appropriate reference materials for Guidance and Counselling, each module includes additional reading.

This module '*Behaviour Modification*', prepared in Uganda, defines what is meant by 'behaviour', describes the causes of different kinds of behaviour and attitudes and of the problems which may result. It provides guidance on ways in which changes and modification in behaviour can be brought about, and on the intervention techniques that can be used for this purpose. It gives special attention to the relationships between children and parents, and children and teachers.

Colin N.Power  
Deputy Director-General for Education  
UNESCO

## Acknowledgements

Mr Moses C. Otyek, Senior Inspector of Schools and Head of Career Guidance and Counselling in Uganda, led the team that prepared this Module. The members comprised:

Mr Gaston Byamugisha – Lecturer in the Institute of Teacher Education Kyambogo (ITEK)

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Ms Lenrose Dube – Secretary, Swaziland

The richness and coverage of the Module is evidence of the variety of inputs, which were made. Mr Otyek has been with the programme from its inception and has shared its evolution through all its stages. He has been the trainer in Behaviour Modification in the regional programme for the trainers of trainers, which is held in Malawi each year.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank Mr Otyek and his team for their contribution, and I hope that he will continue to be a key contributor to the programme.

I must also express my thanks to the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP for their contributions, both in cash and in kind, to the preparation of this module.

Winsome Gordon  
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# MODULE 4

## Behaviour Modification

### ***INTRODUCTION***

Welcome to Module 4, Behaviour Modification as a Tool for Guidance and Counselling Tutors. This module will introduce you to the relevant knowledge and skills that you can use to guide and counsel your pupils.

There are three units in this Module.

- Unit 1. Introduces you to the root causes of different behaviour, attitudes and behaviour problems;
- Unit 2. Discusses behaviour change; and
- Unit 3. Deals with selected intervention techniques.

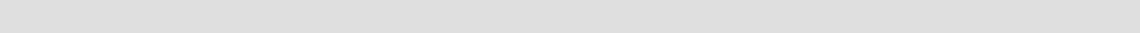
### **Study Requirements**

The module requires you to have an interest in promoting the status of girls. You are expected to be more observant and learner-oriented in your schools, and to keep on searching how best to guide and counsel your pupils. You are also expected to make brief notes as you go through the text.

The modules have various activities. Some of the activities require you to work together, and read or reflect on key issues, which influence the life patterns of girls in institutions and homes. Make sure that you go through the text before you attempt any activities.

Reading through the text without doing the practical work will not help. Activities are designed to help you go through the text and check learning blocks. Be honest if you are required to mark your own activities or compare your views with those provided. Checking answers/responses beforehand has no learning value.

These units are arranged in a logical order. You will need to study from units 1 to 3, in that order.



Finally, you will learn best if you treat learning as a cognate activity. There is a lot you can learn by asking, enquiring and sharing ideas with others. The text is selected for teachers who have undergone training in either Teacher Education Institutes/Colleges or Teachers' Colleges. If you have not, and you happen to be using the module, you need to read the books referred to in the text, and especially **Units 2 and 3.**

# UNIT 1

## Introduction to Behaviour

### ***RATIONALE***

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**T**he aim of this unit is to introduce different behaviour patterns that make your pupils perform, or behave differently, from one another.

You may have heard on many occasions teachers' comments on the way children behave in schools. For example, they say, 'Muwanga's behaviour is terrible. Kariuki's behaviour is quite good. Lucy does not behave well towards her teachers'. So behaviour is a matter of concern to teachers. This is because behaviour can determine good or bad school performance. It is necessary for teachers to know and understand the meaning of behaviour.

### ***LEARNING OUTCOMES***

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**B**y the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- explain why some pupils behave differently from their peers;
- help pupils identify their behaviour problems;
- identify behaviour patterns;
- prevent behaviour problems from developing;
- promote good behaviour patterns.

### ***CONTENT***

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**T**his unit includes the following:

Topic 1. Behaviour Differences

Topic 2. Behaviour Problems



## **Topic 1.**

### **BEHAVIOUR DIFFERENCES**

#### ***What is Behaviour?***

Behaviour can be defined as the way in which an individual behaves or acts. It is the way an individual conducts herself/himself.

Behaviour should be viewed in reference to a phenomenon, an object or person. It can be seen in reference to society norms, or the way in which one treats others or handles objects.

Behaviour, therefore, is the way an individual acts towards people, society or objects. It can be either bad or good. It can be normal or abnormal according to society norms. Society will always try to correct bad behaviour and try to bring abnormal behaviour back to normal.

#### ***Root Causes of Behaviour Differences***

The following are the root causes of behaviour differences:

1. individual differences
2. differences in family patterns
3. impairment/disabilities
4. environmental factors
5. psychological factors.

Each of these is discussed in detail below.

#### ***1. Individual Differences***

Pupils change because of growth and development. This is likely to cause differences in them. Key aspects of these differences include:

- a) Sex differences
- b) Intellectual differences
- c) Physical differences
- d) Personal and emotional differences.

How do they cause behaviour differences? You are invited to examine each of them.

##### **a) Sex Differences**

Each of us is born a boy or a girl, and this in itself is a difference. However, the real differences are anatomical and physiological, i.e., the organs of the body

and physique. These cause many differences in behaviour. While girls are regarded as soft and tender, boys are regarded as strong and vigorous. This tends to influence the kind of activities they indulge in when in school, and hence cause behaviour differences. Boys may tend to choose physical activities, e.g., a four hundred metre race, while the girls do not.

However, the problem is that women are often regarded as the weaker sex, and considered unable to perform as males in several fields. Such misconceptions and attitudes sometimes influence women assuming pre-determined roles.

**b) Intellectual Differences**

You should be aware that there are intellectual differences among individuals. Some are bright, others dull, while some are geniuses.

You may have noticed that those with low marks suffer from an inferiority complex. Others suffer from a superiority complex, and think highly of themselves. For your pupils to be able to work in harmony, you will need to guide and counsel both groups.

**c) Physical Differences**

People differ in:

- Physical appearance
- Facial features
- Growth and development rate
- Energy
- Posture
- Height, weight and volume.

You may have observed that physical differences make some people dull, others active, more able, etc. Similarly with intelligence, those who are weaker may feel inferior and vice versa. This inferiority may result in behaviour problems, e.g., isolation from peers.

**d) Personal and Emotional Differences**

You may have observed that pupils differ in interests, ability, aspirations, belief, attitudes and other personality traits. If a pupil fails to develop his personality, he may fail to reach his goals. Such failure usually leads to emotional outbursts; and a pupil may become frustrated or desperate.

***Comments:***

Whereas most of the differences discussed are due to biological factors, physical characteristics are present in the genes, and mental ability and emotional responses can be inherited. All these hereditary tendencies have a great influence on behaviour. It therefore follows that abnormal or disordered behaviour can also be inherited, e.g., aggressiveness and quarrelsomeness.

**2) *Differences in Family Patterns***

Parents have traditionally been held responsible for their children's behaviour or character, until they reach adolescence. When youngsters misbehave, the natural tendency is to blame it on parental mismanagement or family disintegration.

You should, however, note that your pupils' behaviour patterns can be influenced by family patterns and practices. These include:

**a) *Maintenance of large families***

A large number of family members may lead to a shortage of domestic resources and frustration.

**b) *Socio-economic status of the family***

Poverty is a major factor which affects the education of boys and girls in Eastern and Southern Africa. However, girls tend to be affected more because of the attitude of society towards them. When there is limited income, the parents will usually direct the little money they have towards the education of their male children. Girls are left at home to wait for marriage and provide labour. This attitude has seriously reduced access to schooling for girls in the region.

Poor families find it difficult to provide balanced diets for their children. Food is often inadequate, and this results in malnutrition, which has a bearing on the education of children, both boys and girls.

Health services are too expensive for poor families and diseases are common. Many children die or drop out of school because of this.

In many cases, boys and girls are sent to school but parents are unable to keep them there. In such circumstances, girls are tempted to indulge in sex with rich people who can afford to meet their material needs. This may result in pregnancy

and eventual dropping out from school. It may also result in a sexually transmitted disease which interferes with their concentration on studies and affects their academic performance.

**c) Structure of the family**

Even when both boys and girls in a family are in school, girls still tend to be disadvantaged. When children go back home after school, the girls assume household responsibilities, e.g., washing dishes, fetching water, cooking and bathing children. Boys, on the other hand, are relatively free and have time to read or do their homework. This seriously affects the performance of girls in schools because they have limited time to concentrate on their studies.

A similar situation exists in the choice of subjects in school. Girls are regarded as weaker than boys and unable to do well in certain subjects. Mathematics is usually regarded as a subject for males, as are sciences such as Physics, Chemistry and Biology. Hence, girls study art subjects such as languages, history, music, dance and drama.

Such attitudes are even extended to courses. Girls are expected to pursue educational courses like nursing, teaching, music and law, while technology, medicine, architecture, botany or zoology are regarded as the preserve of boys. Such attitudes are also prevalent among teachers. This tends to limit chances for girls in education and their chances of fair competition for job opportunities.

The emphasis on family discipline affects girls even more than boys. Stricter discipline is placed on girls than on boys. Emphasis on respect for men tends to be extended in schools, where girls are often afraid of the opposite sex and are shy to speak in class, all of which have negative effects on their achievements. In this respect, the composition and interaction of family units are important. It should, however, be noted that, as with biological factors, family factors also cause behaviour problems.

Pupils may live happily or under stress, depending on the kind of family they come from. The youngest child in the family may find herself/himself over-protected. Such a pupil is bound to become dependent and problematic in school.

***Activity 1.1: Influences in Behaviour***

1. What contribution did your family make to your behaviour?
2. What role should you play as a teacher to help develop acceptable behaviour?
3. Discuss your findings with a friend.

### 3. ***Impairment/Disabilities***

Certain of your pupils may have a disability of some kind. Some disabilities are pronounced, e.g., motor-impairment (physical disability) while others may be mild, e.g., a hearing impairment or poor vision (not seeing some things clearly). Some disabilities can be caused by biological factors.

The nervous and endocrine systems together co-ordinate the behaviour of human beings and animals. As stated earlier, biologists have long established that genetic factors are potentially responsible for variations in human behaviour. Disordered behaviour may, therefore, be a result of genetic accident, bacterial or viral disease, parasitic infection, brain injury, brain dysfunction or biochemical imbalance. The biological factors, however, cannot be considered in isolation because they interact with other social and environmental factors.

These biologically-oriented problems can be medically cured and may not have direct implications for educators. Nevertheless there are some biological factors which contribute to some of the behaviour problems summarized below:

#### a) **Genetic Accidents**

Children inherit characteristics from their parents through genes. Genes have been suggested as the causes of behavioural difficulties, from hyperactivity to criminality. Environmental factors, particularly social learning, play an important role in modifying inherited behavioural predispositions.

#### b) **Brain Damage or Dysfunction**

The brain can be traumatized in different ways before, during, or after birth: during birth, in an accident, prolonged high fever, infectious diseases (such as meningitis), toxic chemicals (such as drugs or poisons taken by the child or by the woman during pregnancy), or hypoxia (reduced oxygen availability).

#### c) **Nutritional Errors**

Severe malnutrition in young children leads to retardation in brain growth, irreversible brain damage and mental retardation. Apathy, social withdrawal and school failure are possible long-term outcomes.

#### d) **Hyperactivity**

There is no supporting data that this is caused by biological factors.

#### e) **Physical Illness or Disability**

A child who is physically ill is more prone to irritability, withdrawal or other behaviour problems. Some physical illnesses are transitory.

Physical illnesses believed to be caused by an individual's psychological state are called psychosomatic or psycho-physiological. Disorders that are assumed to be psycho-physiological involve disruption of normal biological processes, e.g. breathing disorders such as asthma. The following are examples of disorders which have an impact on an individual's behaviour:

- eating disorder  
e.g.: Anorexia nervosa - self-starvation; bulimia - eating followed by purging, vomiting or extreme dieting; pica - eating non nutritional substances like paint, paper and cloth.
- elimination disorders  
e.g: Encopresis - releasing urine or faeces at inappropriate times or places, a lack of control of the bladder or bowel function.
- movement disorders  
e.g: Tics - sudden, repetitive and involuntary movements.
- sleep disorders  
e.g: Sleep walking and night terrors.
- difficult temperament  
Classroom research does not indicate that temperament is the direct result of biological factors, but it suggests that students exhibit consistent behavioural styles that teachers recognize, and should consider, when planning instructional materials.

***Comment:***

It should be clear that pupils with the characteristics listed below usually have special educational needs. A specific group to note includes:

- Mental retardation
- Visual impairment/blind
- Hearing impairment/deaf
- Motor-impairment/physical disability
- Language and communication problems.

Some pupils might have multiple disabilities. Each child with a disability has unique behaviour. A blind child may tilt his head, look up at the roof, or whistle in public places, in an attempt to gauge his orientation. In the company of a child with a hearing loss in one ear, you may notice that he tilts his head towards the speaker using the better ear.

A pupil might, due to the severity of the disability, resign himself/herself and resort to dependence on friends. To the non-handicapped, this behaviour is unwelcome. Help is needed to fit such children into society.

#### **4. *Environmental Factors***

Environment has a significant influence on the development of the individual and on his/her subsequent behaviour and attitudes. For normal development, there must be a good environment. A bad environment will adversely affect normal development and behaviour. The following types of environment can be identified:

##### **a) *Physical Environment***

This may consist of geographical factors: climate, physical features, an urban or rural environment - all affect the development of the individual. They affect personality, character and outlook. They affect ways of talking, ways of dressing and even ways of walking, behaviour and attitudes.

##### **b) *Social Environment***

This is provided mainly by the people around the child. The voices the child hears, the food he/she takes or drinks, all have an influence on the way the child develops. Good care will make a child feel that he/she belongs somewhere and is secure. A poor social environment, on the other hand, contributes to maladjustment in child behaviour.

Cultural habits such as the manner of dressing, building, dancing, training, etc., are important for shaping behaviour and attitudes.

As noted earlier, behaviour and attitudes in the community seriously affect girls' performance and personal development, though society does not regard them as problems. These arise mainly out of cultural traditions.

Traditionally, women were meant to be housewives. Their duty was to produce children and look after the family. Men were regarded as the bread winners and superior to women. Because of this, the education of girls tended not to be taken seriously. Parents usually think that girls will get married and go to live with their husbands. So they prefer to educate the boy who remains at home. This attitude and belief seriously limited girls' access to education. So when in school, a girl did not concentrate on her school work, knowing well that schooling was restricted for her.

#### **5. *Psychological Factors as Causal Explanations of Behaviour***

The most important factor is motivation.

Motivation is channelling or directing behaviour towards satisfying a need or needs. It is a drive or urge to do something. Every individual has motives, driving forces behind his or her actions, needs or intentions. The needs can take different forms.

The satisfying of a need plays an important part in behaviour. When the need is fulfilled the individual is satisfied, confident and happy. When the need is not satisfied, the result is frustration. These considerations determine the behaviour patterns of an individual. The extent to which the individual is happy or frustrated will depend greatly on personality.

This may include timidity, shyness, fear, failure in class, retardation, isolation, stature, speech handicaps, health hazards and physical handicaps, suffering, worry, poor memory, and poor self-image.

### ***Activity 1.2: Behaviour Differences***

1. Explain what behaviour is.
2. Give the major root causes of behaviour differences.

Compare your answers with those found in the Answer Key on page 24.



## Summary

To sum up, you should be aware of the factors that contribute to pupils' behaviour, and of the possibility of cultural bias in evaluating behaviour. It is often difficult to disentangle isolated factors from the variety of circumstances and conditions associated with disordered behaviour.

The peer relations of rejected and neglected pupils are perhaps the most important considerations for your daily work. These may play an important role in the prevention of social adjustment problems.

Children, families and teachers are influenced by the standards and values of the wider culture in which they live and work. Conflicts between cultures can contribute to children's stress and to their behaviour problems.

You should also note that stress among pupils is mainly caused by environmental pressure, which they may not be able to control.

The Ministry of Education, Uganda (1995), Module on Guidance and Counselling, sums up such stress to include:

- Rising unemployment and reduced occupational opportunities for their parents, brothers, sisters and relatives.
- Rising cost of education and the introduction of cost sharing.
- Increase in family break-ups.
- Lack of the essentials of life for themselves and their families, namely food, shelter and clothing.
- Lack of leisure because they are too busy with classroom work.
- Increased alcoholism and drug addiction.
- Involvement in religious cults which interferes with study.
- Increased street crimes where they live or work.
- Stress due to body growth and developmental changes, e.g., menstruation, pimples, breaking voices.
- AIDS which kills many of their close relatives or directly affects them.

## **Topic 2.**

### **BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS**

#### ***Meaning of Behaviour Problems***

Each society has accepted ways of life which are known as norms. The way one conforms to, or deviates from, these norms will form good or bad behaviour. In African communities, greeting is one sign of good manners. Even a stranger must be greeted. Someone who passes another without a greeting has bad manners.

Other things regarded as part of good behaviour include: not talking while eating, respecting others, respecting property, taking responsibility for the old, etc.

In a school, there are rules which govern everyday operations, and all school members have to adhere to them. Any member who deviates from these rules has misbehaved, and is usually reprimanded or punished. Such a member also qualifies as having a behaviour problem.

Much behaviour may be considered normal, abnormal, or disordered. The difference between normal and disordered behaviour is usually of degree rather than kind. No sharp line can be drawn between them.

A non-disturbed boy or girl does everything that a disturbed boy or girl does. The difference is that they do these things at different times and under different conditions, at different rates or in different degrees. For example, crying, fighting, screaming, urinating, shouting, are all behaviour indulged in by non-disturbed boys and girls. These are also indulged in by disordered or disturbed boys and girls, but to different degrees.

The behaviour of a non-disturbed boy or girl is usually regarded as reasonable and acceptable by the community. However, that of a disordered boy/girl goes beyond what is considered normal, and is regarded as abnormal and unacceptable.

#### ***Causes of Behaviour Problems***

There are three major causes of behaviour problems:

1. cultural factors
2. school factors
3. religious factors.

Each of these is discussed in detail below.

## **1. Cultural Factors as Causal Explanations of Behaviour**

Neither families nor schools provide all the social influences that determine how children behave. Children, families and teachers are part of a larger culture that moulds behaviour. Parents and teachers tend to hold values, and set behavioural standards and expectations, consistent with those of the cultures in which they live and work. Children's attitudes and behaviour lean towards the cultural norms of their families, peers, and communities.

When a child's family or school values or expectations conflict with other cultural norms, behavioural development may be adversely affected. Different cultural forces pull the child's behaviour in different directions, and create conflicting expectations and increase the probability that he/she will violate cultural norms and be labelled a deviant.

### **Conflicting Cultural Values and Standards**

Do you consider that conflicting cultural values and standards cause stress in young children and youth?

Pupils are likely to behave in the way they do because of the challenges they face. We should also appreciate that there are many conflicting and widening choices in the modern world. Let us examine the following:

#### **a) Mass Media**

Television shows, video shows, movies and magazines glamourize the behaviour and values of conspicuous models that are incompatible with the standards of many families. Imitation of these models results in parental disapproval.

#### **b) The Community**

Religious groups may preach against certain behaviour that is normal in the larger community (e.g. dancing and dating). Children and young people who conform to these religious teachings may be rejected by peers, stigmatized or socially isolated, while those who violate religious teaching may feel extreme guilt.

#### **c) Intermarriages**

Children of inter-racial marriages may have difficulty developing a sense of identity, especially during adolescence. They may have major problems reconciling their mixed blood into a single, personal identity that affirms the positive aspects of each heritage, while acknowledging society's ambivalence towards bi-racial persons.

#### **d) Teenage Sexuality**

In the area of sexuality, consider the cultural forces that foster teenage pregnancy, and society's responses to it. Sexual morals have changed over the years, so that

adolescents now have much greater freedom and greater responsibility for preventing pregnancy. Society today tempts adolescents and offers them freedoms and responsibilities they are not equipped to handle, yet does nothing to help them deal with them, and punishes them for abusing freedom and behaving irresponsibly.

Teenagers often pressure their peers to become sexually active, while conservative politicians attempt to restrict sex education, and make contraceptives less readily available to teenagers. Education for family life and child rearing is not widely available. The many pressures on teenage girls to become sexually active and to become pregnant (i.e., the presence of sugar daddies) and the penalties teenage mothers must pay, must be taken into account.

The conflict that exists between cultural and social inducements for teenagers to become sexually active, and the penalties teenage parents pay in the form of limited education, employment and health risks for mothers and children, cannot be ignored. Cultural beliefs and taboos inhibit giving sex education to children.

There are other problems which expose pupils to either new hopes or none at all. They may cause increased stress and create more conflicts as pupils grapple with new challenges. These other aspects include:

- Child abuse
- Ambitions/aspirations
- Rural-urban migration
- Parental separations, broken homes/divorces
- Being homeless and orphaned
- Lack of information on sex
- Living with people of the opposite sex
- Racism
- Recognition of minority groups

### ***Activity 1.3: Teenage Sexuality***

When a schoolgirl is made pregnant by a fellow schoolboy, the girl is dismissed from school, but the boy is allowed to continue his education.

1. Discuss the origin of such an attitude towards girls.
2. How can this problem be tackled by educators?

## A Multi-Cultural Perspective

Besides the conflicts that different cultural standards create, children's and adults' perception of others, and problems of bias and discrimination, have serious implications for evaluating a child's behaviour. Consequently, nearly all behavioural standards, expectations and adjustments regarding behavioural deviance are based on culture. Value judgements cannot be entirely culture-free.

### ***Activity 1.4: Effect of Gender Bias on Behaviour***

There may be behaviour which society believes suitable for girls and others only for boys.

1. Identify such behaviour patterns
2. Is such a belief acceptable? Give reasons for your answer.

## **2. *School As A Root Cause of Certain Behaviour***

Beside the family, the school has probably the most important socializing influence on children and young people. You need to examine carefully the role of the school in the development of behaviour, because the school environment is where the teacher, educators and school administrators have direct control.

Conditions outside the school can influence student behaviour in school. Some children do develop certain behaviour before they begin school. But if a child already has a behaviour problem, you should consider how the school might decrease or eliminate it. Many children, for example, do not show behaviour disorders until they go to school. Again, you must consider the possibility that the school is the cause of this.

An ecological approach to understanding behaviour includes the assumption that all aspects of a child's environment are intermingled. Changes in one element of the ecology have implications for the others. For example, success or failure in school affects behaviour at home and in the community. Consequently, success at school assumes even greater importance if a child's home and community environments are disadvantaged. You should consider the elimination of possible school contributions to behaviour before labelling pupils adversely.

Schools can contribute to disorders. Below average intelligence and inadequate academic achievement are characteristic of pupils with behaviour disorders. Conduct disorder, low intelligence and achievement, provide gloomy elements for adulthood. Although school failure is not known to cause behaviour disorders, it usually goes hand in hand with maladjusted behaviour. On the other hand, it can be argued that maladjusted behaviour makes academic success unlikely and contributes to school

failure. Logically, it can be accepted that the school can contribute to both social difficulties and academic incompetence.

The demands of the school and a pupil's social and academic ability probably affect each other. Pupils who are healthy, intelligent, socio-economically advantaged, with good self-esteem and interpersonal skills, attract others to respond to them positively. These advantaged students are sensitive to the responses of others towards them and are able to use their intelligence to enhance their personal power and social status. Intelligence and achievement produce acceptability, self-esteem, accurate social perception and status, and in turn induce positive social responses from others and facilitate achievement.

On the other hand, pupils with conduct disorders are caught in negative reinforcement traps among their peers, and in their interactions with teachers and administrators. Teachers (like parents), and classroom peers (like siblings), can become entangled in escalating contests of aversion, in which the individual who causes the greater pain is the winner.

How the school affects a pupil's emotional or behavioural development depends on his or her characteristics when entering the educational system.

The same type of interaction between the pupil's temperament and the parent's child-rearing techniques also occurs between the student's temperament and the social and academic demands of the school. The student who is slow to approach others, has irregular working habits, is slow to adapt to situations, and is predominantly negative in mood, is most likely to have difficulty in school. Any temperamental characteristic is susceptible to modification.

The school, as with family and biological factors, does not affect behaviour unilaterally to determine the student's behavioural development. But classroom conditions, and teacher reactions to pupil behaviour, make behavioural problems more likely to occur, or reduce the likelihood of behaviour disorder developing.

There are six ways in which the school can contribute to the development of disordered behaviour and academic failure:

- a) insensitivity to students' individuality;
- b) inappropriate student expectations;
- c) inconsistent management of behaviour;
- d) instruction in non-functional and irrelevant skills;
- e) destructive contingencies of reinforcement;
- f) undesirable models of school conduct.

You must be prepared to work with pupils who are intellectually and academically deficient, as well as deviant in their social behaviour. As a preventive agent, your tasks are to foster success and lessen the student's anti-social conduct by making his life more

meaningful. Academic failure and anti-social behaviour presage limited future opportunities and probably future maladjustment.

### ***Activity 1.5: Influence of the School on Behaviour***

1. In what ways may the following factors cause behaviour problems for pupils in schools?:

- a) Teacher-student relationships  
Classroom relationships  
Personal relationships
- b) Teacher-teacher relationships
- c) Administration-student relationships
- d) Administration-teacher relationships
- e) Curriculum organization
  - Academic activities
  - Co-curricular activities

**\*Note:** Pay particular attention to girls.

2. Organize yourselves into five groups. Each group should select one of the five aspects of the question, discuss it, and report to the class.

3. The class should discuss each of the reports and note down all the good points given.

The school environment is important not only for social development but is the factor over which educators have direct control.

### ***3. Religious Factors***

A number of new religions have been, and are being, introduced. Some are moderate but many are extremist in their teaching. Young boys and girls find some religions appealing. In most cases, however, they are misled by extreme religious groups that tend to undermine the spirit of hard work and self-realization.

Most religions tend to maintain a belief in the inferior status of women and this has implications for girls' self confidence and striving for excellence on equal terms with boys. It affects their aspirations to enter careers where they have to compete with men.

The attitude of some churches on social and ethical issues tends to cause problems for the young, and especially girls, e.g., the attitude towards contraceptives and birth control. This creates confusion and anxiety in the young. If they have to continue their education, they have to protect themselves against the sex urge. Otherwise they stand the risk of pregnancy. Yet, some churches are against the use of condoms and other birth control measures.

### ***Activity 1.6: Influence of Religion on Behaviour***

1. Identify some of the gender stereotypes due to religious influence in African communities.
2. What consequences do they have for girls in your community?
3. How can girls be helped to establish their identity and develop positive concepts of themselves?

### **Common Behaviour Patterns Among Young Boys and Girls**

Having defined behaviour and discussed the causes of behaviour, it is now fitting to examine the common patterns of behaviour among young boys and girls and especially those in school. Most of this behaviour ultimately hinders their education. These are:

#### **1. Stealing**

This is bad behaviour. It includes stealing money and school property or stealing fellow students' belongings. In many schools, stealing is a punishable offence and can easily lead to dismissal.

A number of factors lead to stealing. They are:

- The child is not satisfied with what he has while at school.
- Some family members steal.
- His/her peers encourage it.
- He/she is not aware that stealing is bad.



## 2. **Truancy**

This includes staying away from school for no justifiable reason and loitering or wandering. This leads to losing valuable study time and may ultimately lead to failure. Dissatisfaction with a school programme, for example, can lead to this.

## 3. **Disobedience and Insubordination**

This can be disobedience, rebelliousness, sarcasm, etc., to teachers and school authorities (very common in urban schools). It may also lead to dismissal from school. Rigid or poor relationships between teachers and pupils can cause disobedience.

## 4. **Lying**

Lies are told to classroom teachers, head-teachers and prefects. Sometimes parents report cases of lying. A rude teacher who gives unfair punishment is likely to be lied to.

## 5. **Fighting**

This may be common in your school. Fighting can be over food or over a boyfriend or girlfriend. Pupils who have not been taught the value of respecting others, or living in harmony as a group, are likely to fight.

## 6. **Cheating**

You may have found pupils cheating in your schools. Young people cheat at examinations, tests, and in many school activities.

## 7. **Lateness**

Coming late is a failing you pay for. Pupils usually come late when schools start a new term, or go to class or to the dining hall, etc. Inability to value and observe programmes results in pupils coming late.

## 8. **Rudeness**

This includes rudeness to teachers, prefects, servants in the dining-hall, watchmen, and others. Rudeness can be copied from people in the community. It is also traceable to hereditary factors though it can be controlled.

## 9. **Destructiveness**

This includes malicious destruction of school property during strikes or unrest, or even on ordinary school days. Pupils' dissatisfaction with school rules, welfare, etc., usually causes strikes. Some pupils may also be rebellious by nature and motivate others to strike.

## 10. **Sex offences/harassment**

This includes hitting girls, attempted rape (for boys), rape and sexual acts with teachers. This can lead to dismissal from school, sexually transmitted diseases and becoming pregnant. Pupils who have not had enough, or any, sex education are subject to this.

## 11. **Cruelty**

This includes bullying younger boys and girls, cruelty to animals and children who trespass in the school compound. Pupils who lack information on the value of the environment or life do this.


## 12. **Smoking and drinking alcohol**

No child is born smoking cigarettes or opium, drinking alcohol and taking other drugs.

Selling and buying drugs is something you may know about. Pupils who involve themselves in this 'business' end up as thieves, robbers, idlers, etc. Pupils who become involved are usually those who are dissatisfied with, or fail in, family relationships, and may have been encouraged by peers or adults who do such things.

There are many types of behaviour problems. However, in your school young boys and girls may face, among others, the following:

1. Inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors. A girl or boy is known to have the capacity to learn and do well in class but does not live up to expectations.
2. Inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.
3. Inappropriate types of behaviour or feelings under normal conditions, e.g., anxiety, rationalization and displacement.
4. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.

- 
5. A tendency to develop physical symptoms, pains or fears associated with personal or school problems.

Other types of behaviour problems common at this age may include:

1. excessive indulgence in sex
2. drug taking
3. difficulty in adjusting to conflicting cultures
4. inability in adjusting to stereotyped sex-oriented roles
5. conflicting motives
6. difficulty in adjusting to the generation gap, etc.

### ***Activity 1.7: Common Behaviour Problems***

1. Give the common behaviour problems among boys and girls that may need intervention.

## Summary

This last part of the unit highlights common behaviour patterns in pupils that you could modify. The behaviour concerned is specific behaviour that is not acceptable in schools or in 'healthy' communities, including the home. As a teacher interested in developing good personalities in your pupils, you should watch out for such behaviour. It will be easier for you to handle bad behaviour if it is identified earlier rather than later.

## Answer Key

### Question 1.

1. Behaviour is the way in which an individual behaves or acts towards people, society or objects. It is the way he/she conducts himself/herself.
2.
  - Sex
  - Intelligence
  - Physical (Biological features)
  - Emotions
  - Family
  - Environment
  
  - Physical (Biological features)
  - Emotions
  - Family
  - Environment
  - Culture/Religion
  - School

### Question 2.

Stealing, disobedience and insubordination, lying, fighting, cheating, lateness, rudeness, destructiveness, sex offence/harassment, cruelty, smoking, and drinking alcohol.

**Behaviour Change*****RATIONALE***

Having examined and learnt about behaviour types, problems, and causes, this unit introduces you to the ways in which pupils can be helped to change from disordered behaviour and move towards healthy conduct.

One particular theory may not be applicable to all ages and situations. You need to develop informed opinion to select a potentially effective theory for your needs.

In this unit, therefore, you will examine the:

- meaning of behaviour change
- fundamentals of behaviour change
- stages of assessment and management of behaviour problems
- role of parents in managing behaviour and special educational needs.

Now read the text. At the end of each theory, you should:

1. Provide a situation to which it can be applied, and
2. See what role the pupils themselves play in making a positive change in their behaviour.

***LEARNING OUTCOMES***

By the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- explain behaviour change;
- state the fundamentals of behaviour change;
- identify the basic steps in behaviour change;
- specify the role of parents in managing behaviour and special educational needs.

***CONTENT***

This unit includes the following:

Topic 1. Behaviour Change (Modification)

Topic 2. Behaviour Theories

Topic 3. Steps or Stages of Assessment and Management of Behavioural Change

Topic 4. Strategies to Modify Behaviour

Topic 5. Liaising with the Home and the Community in Effecting Behaviour.

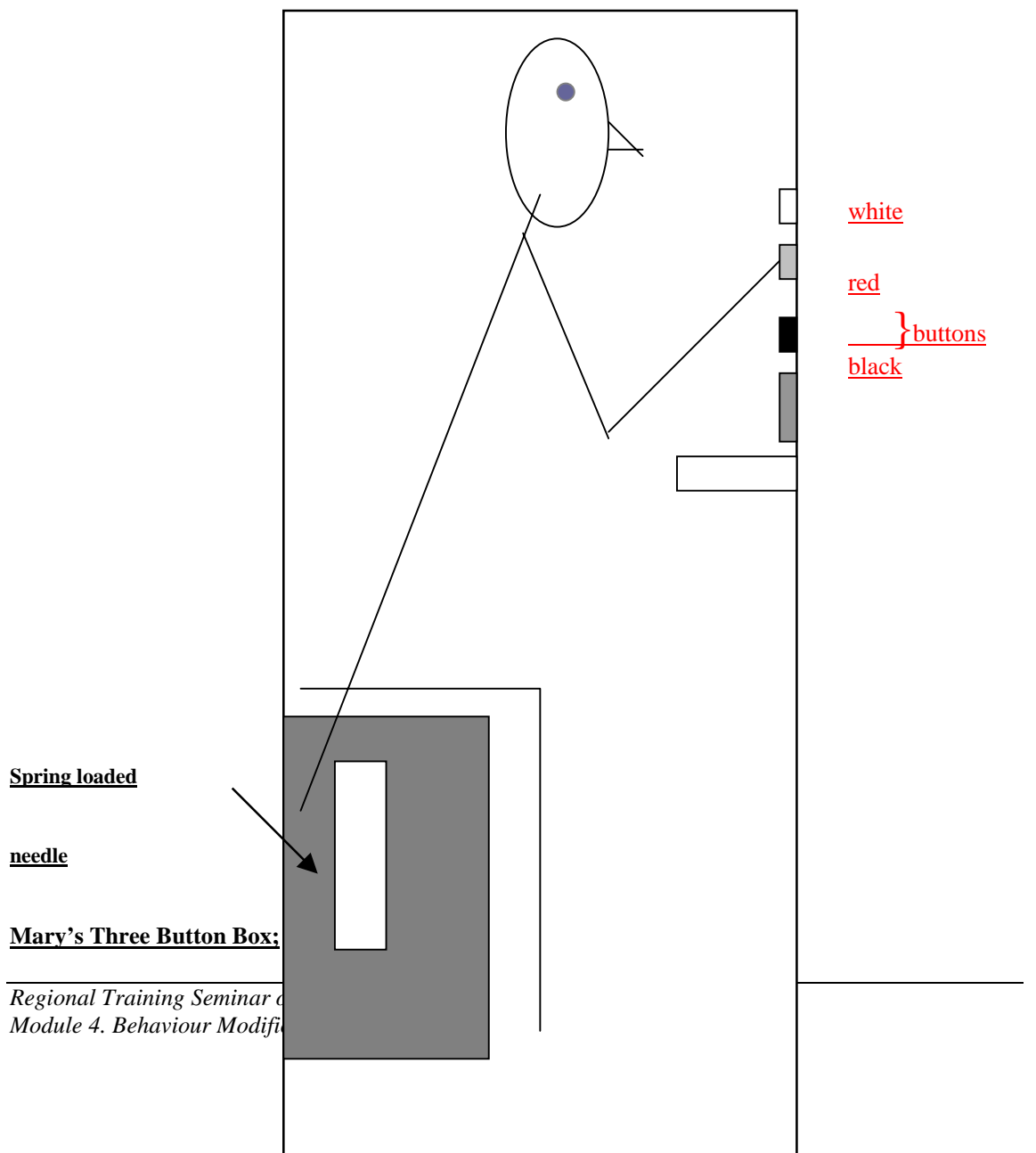
## Topic 1. BEHAVIOUR CHANGE OR MODIFICATION

### *What is Behaviour Change or Behaviour Modification?*

Behaviour change is based on a simple idea of learning. It is based on the idea that behaviour followed by reward is more likely to be repeated, or retained, than not. On the other hand, behaviour which results in an unpleasant outcome tends to be quickly dropped or disappear.

Behaviour change is based on the idea that behaviour is, in part, controlled by its consequences. The idea has been demonstrated in both humans and animals. Of course, people have more complex interactions between physical, emotional and cognitive reinforcements than animals. But many of the principles are still relevant. To illustrate this, let us look for a moment at an example of classical conditioning in a hypothetical experiment.

ILLUSTRATION OF MARY'S BOX



### ***Mary's Box***

Imagine a hollow, solid, concrete box, big enough for a small girl called Mary to sit in. No light, sound, smell or stimulus can penetrate the box unless the necessary equipment is installed, which can easily be done.

Little Mary sits in the box in front of three buttons which are white, red and black (see sketch diagram) respectively. Little Mary is curious; she is also particularly partial to milk. The atmosphere in the box is hot and dry, and Mary is strapped into her seat with a belt.

The experiment is one-hour long, and Mary is told to be free to press whichever of the three buttons she likes. Within a minute or so Mary presses the white button. She waits, nothing happens. She presses it again, still nothing. After three more tries she loses interest in the white button and presses the red one. Immediately the small door opens and milk pops out. Because she likes milk, she drinks it quickly. She again presses the red button and is rewarded by another round of milk. After two more presses, Mary is satisfied and rests for the time being. However, her attention turns to the black button which she presses. Immediately a needle plunges into her buttocks and she shrieks. She decides never to touch the black button again and turns to the red button for milk to calm her nerves.

What conclusion can you draw from this imaginary experiment?

Compare your conclusion with the one below.

The conclusion is that little Mary's behaviour was controlled by what happened to her in different circumstances. She learnt that when she did different things (by touching the buttons), very different things happened to her. For the white button, nothing happened at all, and she lost interest in it. Touching the red button brought a pleasant outcome. She, therefore, touched it again and again, and only stopped when she had had enough milk. When touching the black button, she had a very nasty experience so she did not touch it again.

#### ***Activity 2.1: Behaviour Change/Modification (1)***

1. In your own words, and from knowledge of the imaginary experiment, explain behaviour change (modification).

The example of the three buttons is representative of the ways in which consequences are thought to affect behaviour. In this example of classical conditioning, the behaviour of pressing the white button is said to have been extinguished, because it was not rewarded by a pleasant consequence, but it took a number of repetitions before the lack of consequence took effect. The second behaviour (pressing the red button) was positively reinforced, because it was repeatedly rewarded. In this example learning took place rapidly. In the third case, the behaviour was punished, because it was followed by such an unpleasant consequence that Mary did not risk it again. In this example, learning also took place rapidly.

### ***Activity 2.2: Behaviour Change/Modification (2)***

1. Think of simple examples from your own work or experience with pupils which illustrate the points in the imaginary experiment.
2. Write and discuss them with your colleagues.

#### ***Comments:***

This kind of behaviour-change technique is usually adopted by parents, teachers and administrators to teach children by showing their understanding of how consequences affect behaviour. They reward behaviour if they want a child to do something more often. If they want a child to stop doing something, they ignore it or punish it.



## **Topic 2.**

### **BEHAVIOUR THEORIES**

You should be acquainted with some behavioural theories which will help you in your work. Three of these theories are mentioned here briefly. You are advised to read more about these theories. References are given at the end of the unit.

#### **1. Respondent Learning**

This theory was formulated by a Russian psychologist called Ivan Pavlov. It is known as classical conditioning and is based on a stimuli-response formula.

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#### **2. Operant Conditioning**

This theory is based on the work of B. F. Skinner, who drew on the idea of classical conditioning, but thought individuals to be more active in the learning process than that theory allowed. For learning to occur, it is essential that the person be an active participant. In this theory, when learning is rewarded, behaviour is perpetuated or maintained, while punished behaviour is removed. (Refer to little Mary's box.)

#### **3. Social Modelling:**

This is based on the work of Albert Bandura, who thinks that most learning is a result of copying or imitating what others do, i.e. vicarious learning. The social modelling theory emphasizes the importance of external reinforcers, and allows learning to occur independently of reinforcement.

#### ***Fundamental Principles of Behaviour Change***

The central theoretical positions underlying the professional efforts of behavioural counsellors can be summarized in a number of propositions, among which are the following:

- a) Human behaviour is caused by learning, therefore it is guided by the laws of learning.
- b) Human behaviour is the product of learning, and can be assumed to be liable to unlearning or correction.
- c) Human behaviour is influenced by consequences, and is strengthened when followed by rewards, and spoilt when followed by negative consequences.

- d) Human behaviour is controlled not only by internal factors, but also by external factors, such as the presence of significant role models and other social rewards like praise or prizes.
- e) Maladjusted behaviour may be changed by changing the circumstances which maintain it.
- f) Human beings begin life with a clean slate on which nothing has been written. In effect, they inherit good or bad habits at the time when they enter the world.
- g) Behaviour is learnt in life individually, or by watching others learn, or by training or conditioning.
- h) Students who need help may show observable negative behaviour they wish to eliminate, or observable positive behaviour they wish to promote.

Having gone through these propositions, behavioural modification appears to be different from other approaches, which promote effective mental health by addressing cognitive or emotional problems. Behaviour modification uses all the effective principles of learning which influence behaviour.

### **Topic 3.**

## **STEPS OR STAGES OF ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE**

When dealing with problem behaviour, it is good to use some systematic strategies and steps. These steps can be categorized as follows:

### **1. Identification of the Problem**

The problem is identified through observation, reviewing students' records, or through the concerns of the student herself.

### **2. Goal Setting**

The problem is defined in behavioural terms and focus is placed on the goals to be achieved or the solution of the problem.

### **3. Establishment of the Baseline**

Assessment is made of baseline data regarding the occurrence and intensity of the problem being considered.

### **4. Selection of Intervention**

An appropriate treatment, expected to lead to the achievement of the goal, is chosen. This is a plan of action. With older children, this is usually most effective when done in co-operation with the student himself/herself.

### **5. Evaluation**

This is a follow-up to find out whether the intervention was successful. Modified behaviour is compared to the goals set.

### ***Activity 2.3: Application of Behaviour Modification***

1. Think of a behavioural problem you have observed in a school-age girl.
2. Go through the above steps to see how the problem might be addressed using behaviour modification.

## **Topic 4.**

### **STRATEGIES TO MODIFY BEHAVIOUR**

There are a number of strategies you can use to modify your pupils' behaviour. Several of these will be explained in the following pages:

#### **1. Positive Reinforcement**

This is applied where there is a need to promote desirable behaviour. You want to encourage a student to keep tidy books. You observe the target behaviour, and reward it with praise or a prize.

#### **2. Extinction or Ignore Technique**

This is applied when a student's behaviour (usually self-defeating), is best eliminated. The undesired behaviour is simply ignored rather than punished or reinforced.

One particular pupil in your class often attracts your attention by calling out 'Sir, Sir,' instead of putting up his hand. Calling out to you is distracting, especially if all pupils do it at the same time. You could ignore such a pupil, until he puts up his hand. Drawing the student's attention to the strategy may increase its effectiveness, as will consistency in application.

#### **3. The Modelling Technique**

You could use this technique to help your pupils adopt new behaviour. The pupil is made to observe a role model (usually someone she admires or an authority) demonstrate desirable behaviour, or condemn undesirable behaviour. A pupil in an upper class can, for example, be a model for pupils in a lower one. By observing him/her, other pupils may learn to do the same.

#### ***Activity 2.4: Modelling Technique***

1. Do you have model pupils in your school? Think of them and write what other behaviour these pupils exhibit that could be copied.

NOTE: If you do not readily have a pupil or person in the school who can be a model for behaviour, you can use symbolic models. They may be found in literature or a media presentation of desirable activities performed by a popular, respectable person. It is best to follow a reading with interactive discussion.

With this technique, you can also use a modelling exercise. Assist a pupil to deal with a particular behaviour situation through role-playing or exercises. For example, you could use a 'disciplined pupil', as a model of desirable behaviour. You could then proceed to ask your pupil to imagine that she is a disciplined pupil, and then act as she believes that person would, like a role in a play. Later, you can ask her how she felt and follow this up with a dialogue.

***Comment:***

The model should address conflict in your pupil(s).

- The model should be easy to understand.
- Modelling is a way of showing your pupil positive behaviour.

***Activity 2.5: Applying the Modelling Technique***

1. Practice with a friend the modelling exercise technique. Become a caring, compassionate teacher and act as she would when dealing with a troublemaker who disrupts your lesson. Discuss your performance.

***NOTE:*** If you feel that you require more information on Modelling Techniques, go through Reading 2.1, Stages in Modelling, on pages 43-44.

***TRANSITION:*** We have learnt three strategies which can be used to modify behaviour. These are: Positive Reinforcement; Extinction or Ignore Technique; and the Modelling Technique. We will now continue with other strategies.

**4. The Punishment Technique**

This is used when it becomes necessary to apply an aversion stimulus to correct undesirable behaviour. When you see the many techniques available for modifying behaviour, you may realize that this technique has been over used. Schools have been known to use good, honest work as 'punishment,' leading to stigmatization in students' minds. Examples of this may include cutting grass or digging in the school garden.

## **5. Systematic Desensitization Technique**

This technique is effective when dealing with anxiety and other fear-related problems. The individual is given small doses of what is feared until a relaxed response is built up. For example, a student who fears to speak in class may first practise speaking only with the teacher. When she is comfortable with that, she may be given an opportunity to speak with the teacher and two classmates. After that, she may try to become involved in a small discussion group, and so on until her fear is mastered and she gains the confidence to speak in class.

## **6. The Technique of Over-Correction**

This technique is used when a mild punishment is administered for purposes of reducing disruptive behaviour. As Achebe (cited in Nwoye, 1990) has explained, it requires the culprit to restore the environment he has damaged to a better condition than existed before his disruptive behaviour occurred. This is effective when a student writes on a wall or carves on a school desk. Scrubbing, painting or sanding damaged property may produce effective behavioural changes in the future.

### ***Activity 2.6: Technique of Over-Correction***

1. Cite an example of disruptive behaviour in a home which can be modified using the technique of over-correction.

## **7. The Time-out Technique**

Time-out is used to control the occurrence of undesirable behaviour in pupils by the withdrawal of privileges in the event of the occurrence of undesirable behaviour. A student who disrupts classmates in the library, for example, will probably do so because he is reinforced by doing so. The loss of library privileges, or sitting alone for a period of time while others are together, may help to eliminate the problem behaviour.

## **8. The Technique of Negative Reinforcement**

Negative reinforcement is used to encourage the occurrence of desirable behaviour by removing obstacles against recurrence. Bed-wetting is often caused by late-night drinks. Eliminating after dinner drinks, and perhaps instituting a waking late at night for going to the toilet, may help achieve a dry bed.

## 9. The Response Cost Technique

This technique is used to eliminate undesirable behaviour by making the culprit forfeit something valuable. When a student fails to eat canteen food, he may lose access to canteen privileges.

## 10. The Shaping Technique

Shaping develops desirable complex human behaviour. This is related to the above example of systematic desensitization. Small successful steps are linked together to produce major behaviour changes. A dirty student may first be taught to bathe daily, and after a consistent behaviour change is made, hair combing may be addressed, laundry care, etc.

## 11. Assertiveness Training

Assertiveness training is used to help pupils control excessive shyness, and other fear-related problems, that impede their ability to live fully.

Assertiveness training is a widely used behavioural technique. It is based on a combination of modelling and operant reinforcement approaches. Its purpose is to teach people how to stand up for themselves without being aggressive. Exploitation depends on the compliant behaviour of the person exploited.

Assertiveness training can be carried out with individuals or in groups. It is relevant for a wide range of interpersonal problems. You can use it to increase assertive skills and reduce aggressiveness in favour of assertiveness.

### ***Activity 2.7: Behaviour Modification Techniques***

1. Which of these 11 behaviour modification techniques do you find readily appealing for use in your classroom or school?
2. Provide reasons for choosing these techniques.

### ***Activity 2.8: Assertiveness***

Go through Reading 2.2, Assertiveness, on pages 44-48 and do the following exercises to check what you have read so far.

1. Using no words, mime a response to an invitation to a party you do not want to attend, non-assertively, aggressively and assertively.
2. Have a friend react to your performance verbally.

### ***Activity 2.9: Simple Assertive Discrimination Exercise***

Your spouse or friend arrives late and the meal you prepared is spoiled. You feel annoyed. You say:

Response	Tick one
1. Hello, have you been busy? You must be hungry, what can I get you to eat?	(a) assertive (b) non-assertive (c) aggressive
2. I have been waiting for an hour and the meal I made is spoiled now. What happened to make you so late?	(a) assertive (b) non-assertive (c) aggressive
3. I wonder why you bothered to come home at all, where the hell have you been? This is the last time I'll ever cook for you. You're just too inconsiderate to bother with.	(a) assertive (b) non-assertive (c) aggressive

1. How did you find the exercise?
2. Compare your answer with those found in the Answer Key on page 42.
3. You may now continue with Reading 2.2 on pages 44-48.



**Table 3.1****Summary of Main Response Control Techniques**

TECHNIQUE	MAIN FEATURES	APPLICATION
Modelling	Demonstration of key elements in behaviour likely to prove useful to the child. Usually coupled with positive feedback on successive approximations from the child.	Used for learning deficiencies of all kinds and the vicarious extinction of fears.
Social Skills Training	As above, but with extra emphasis on rehearsing social and conversational skills and deciding when a given performance is appropriate.	Used for withdrawn and unconfident children, the mentally handicapped, psychiatric patients, children and delinquents.
Assertiveness	As modelling above, but with extra emphasis on fears associated with assertiveness and on discriminating between assertive and aggressive behaviour/responses.	Used with excessively shy or withdrawn individuals. Often used in groups.
Self-management Techniques	Programmed learning. Self paced, resource based.	Used with individuals.

***Selected Basic Principles of Child Management and Behaviour Modification*****Maintaining Discipline in the Classroom:**

Almost all classroom teachers are concerned with the problem of maintaining 'discipline' in classrooms. Discipline means freedom to teach and interact with students, without interruption from students who misbehave. Guidelines for general classroom management consistent with the principle of behaviour management are as follows:

1. Specify a clear and concrete set of classroom rules. In some cases, involve the students in the formulation of rules, so that they have a sense of ownership.
2. Specify a clear set of consequences for rule violations and consistent with the application of these consequences, as outlined in A THREE-CHANGE-PLAN (Wielkiewicz, 1986, p. 370). The first time a rule is broken, a warning is given, which can be merely stating the rule. The second time a rule is broken, the warning is repeated, and the consequence (such as extra work or detention) explained. The third time a rule is broken, the consequences are enforced.
3. Often the most effective way of dealing with annoying behaviour outside the classroom is to ignore it. It should be remembered that reprimands frequently increase misbehaviour.

4. Most educators believe that teaching should provide an environment in which the learning of new skills takes place. This is best accomplished when students receive generous amounts of positive reinforcement for academic achievement. Furthermore, when a student is reprimanded or punished for misbehaviour, cessation of misbehaviour does not mean that the student is learning.
5. Keep in mind the advantages of employing an assertive style of interaction with students, and avoid aggressive and non-assertive behaviour.
6. When behaviour management becomes difficult or a student exhibits signs of a serious behaviour problem, seek help and consultation from other services. (See below).

## **Topic 5.**

### **LIAISING WITH THE HOME AND THE COMMUNITY IN EFFECTING BEHAVIOUR CHANGES**

Generally, teachers and administrators handle the behaviour problems of young boys and girls in schools. There are, however, other persons, groups and organizations which can help. These may be social workers, religious leaders, counsellors, psychologists, community leaders, elders, doctors or nurses. But one group that plays a very significant role in behavioural counselling is parents, whether real or adopted. Because of their importance, a closer look should be taken at the role they play.

#### ***The Role of Parents***

A problem boy or girl is one with a problem that is unsolved. Such a young person is disruptive, provocative, unco-operative, isolated, fearful, tearful, unhappy, ignorant or reserved. Before the child can be helped, there is a need to understand and inform the child. Parents are a source of information on the child. They can co-operate and supply information on the:

- a) Social history of the child;
- b) Emotional reaction towards the child; and the
- c) Family's:
  - i) understanding of the child, and his or her problems,
  - ii) ideals, values and aspirations with regard to the child,
  - iii) control and disciplinary methods, and
  - iv) attitudes towards school, teachers and learning.

In addition to supplying such information, parents should work together with the school to formulate a plan of action to effect positive change. For most of the time children are at home with their parents. It is important that they take an interest in observing the behaviour and attitudes of their children. They are, in effect, the child's first counsellors. Any abnormal behaviour that they notice should immediately be communicated to the school.

The provision of a good environment is important in the development of the child and is the responsibility of the parents. They should try to give adequate provision for the child's well being. The environment at home should:

- a) be peaceful, healthy and clean;
- b) provide adequate food;
- c) provide adequate clothes and bedding;
- d) give good shelter and safe surroundings; and
- e) provide consistent, loving discipline.

It is the lack of these that contribute to behaviour problems among young boys and girls.

***Activity 2.10: Influence of Home on Behaviour***

1. Imagine a home in which there is a lack of peace, cleanliness, and where there is inadequate food, etc.
2. Let a group dramatize the behaviour problems that come from the home.

## Summary

In this unit, we learned the meaning of behaviour change or behaviour modification with the help of an imaginary experiment in Mary's box.

Next, we learned about behaviour theories which will help you in your work. They are the theories of Respondent Learning, Operant Conditioning, and Social Modelling. We learned the theories and the fundamental principles of behaviour change.

Then we learned about the steps for dealing with problem behaviour. These steps are identification of the problem, goal setting, establishment of the baseline, selection of intervention, and evaluation.

In topic 4, we learned a number of strategies which can be used to modify behaviour. They include positive reinforcement, the extinction or ignore technique, the modelling technique, the punishment technique, the over-correction technique, the time-out technique, the technique of negative reinforcement, the response cost technique, the shaping technique, and assertiveness training.

Finally in the last topic, we learned how to liaise with the home and the community in forming behaviour. It realizes the significant role that parents play in a child's behaviour.

<b>Note:</b> Unit 3 depends on prior knowledge of units 1 and 2. If you think that you have grasped the two units and are ready, then go to unit 3.
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**Good Luck!**

## Answer Key

### Question 1.

1. Non-assertive: feelings are disguised and there is a pretence that nothing of importance has happened.
2. Assertive: feelings are expressed about the inconvenience caused, and the consequences of it are spelled out (dinner is spoiled), but there is an opportunity to explain.
3. Aggressive: sarcasm, threats and denunciation are used and there is also a reference to general feelings.

## Readings

### Reading 2.1 STAGES IN MODELLING

Modelling theories attempt to explain how new responses are developed by observation. In most programmes, modelling is used with rehearsal and feedback on performance.

#### *Stages in Modelling:*

When modelling is used in this way, with feedback and appropriate reinforcement, the process normally passes through the following stages:

1. Identifying specific problems resulting from gaps in the pupil's behaviour, and deciding what new behaviour could be developed to fill them.

2. Dividing the target response into its component parts. For example, a shy person may need to learn how to come into a room full of people; decide who to stand next to, and what to say; introduce oneself; enter a conversation; etc.
3. Demonstrating to pupils what a competent performance looks like; repeating any problematic parts of the performance, or go through it slowly and deliberately; emphasizing options and decision.
4. Encouraging the pupil to perform simple activities with a helper, and shaping and correcting them as required.
5. Developing more complex performance by joining different sequences.
6. Paying attention to problems of discrimination; that is, identifying any difficulties the client may have in knowing whether certain behaviour is appropriate.
7. Gradually introducing difficulties found in real-life as the student becomes more competent to deal with them, and eliminating reinforcement gradually.
8. Supervising practical assignments on which the pupil reports back. For example, asking the pupil to initiate short conversations or to ask for clarification of a homework assignment.

## **Reading 2.2**

### **ASSERTIVENESS**

#### ***Definition of Assertiveness***

Assertiveness involves a direct expression of feelings, preferences, needs or opinions, in a manner that is neither threatening nor punishing towards another person. In addition, assertiveness does not involve an excessive amount of anxiety or fear. Assertiveness is not a way to get what one wants, nor is it a way of controlling or subtly manipulating others.

Assertiveness is the direct communication of one's needs, wants and opinions without punishing, threatening or humiliating another person.

Assertiveness enables others to know where they stand. It ensures clear messages about intentions, desires and opinions. Above all, such a style of behaviour is likely to condition the behaviour of others. An appropriately assertive style produces important internal effects, so that we are likely to think and feel differently about ourselves and realize what we can do. It is an example of a behavioural technique which follows research into the relationship between attitudes and behaviour, and suggests that the best way to improve self-esteem is to demonstrate and train clients in good behaviour.

Techniques mentioned in the text do not work in isolation. They tend to work together to solve complex problems. Below is an example of a combination of techniques contained in assertiveness training

1. **Discrimination training procedures**

These can be used to teach the pupil to discriminate accurately between assertiveness, false compliance and aggression.

2. **Modelling and rehearsal**

In this approach, you show your pupil step-by-step how to behave with different degrees of assertiveness, in different situations. The pupil then rehearses and attempts to adopt this behaviour himself, under guidance .

3. **Reinforcement**

You should reinforce the required behaviour. Pay attention to the grading of tasks and assignments, so that your pupil experiences success rather than confirmation of fears of failure.

4. **Desensitization**

You should progressively remove the fear associated with certain behaviour. You should do this by gradually exposing your pupil to such situations. The pupil should learn to be relaxed.

5. **Generalization**

You should take active steps to ensure that interventions generalize the everyday experiences and problems of your pupil. Let the pupil experience more realistic settings progressively.

***Key Differences between Non-Assertive, Assertive and Aggressive Behaviour***

**Non-Assertive**

- Complying with illegitimate requests.
- Agreeing with opinions you do not share.
- Avoiding people because they may ask you to do things and you find it difficult to say 'no'.
- Failing to express your own opinions.
- Failing to make requests or ask favours of others.
- Avoiding forthright statements - giving mixed, vague or confused messages.

### **Aggressiveness**

- Expressing strong feelings for your own gain.
- Dominating conversation with threats and demands, and adopting a behavioural style that is domineering, pushing, and demeaning to other people.
- Showing no consideration for other people's rights, needs or feelings.
- Resorting to verbal abuse and making an attempt to humiliate another person.
- Failing to acknowledge, or act upon, the other person's point of view.
- Adopting a threatening bodily stance with eye contact which is intense and glaring, gestures which appear to indicate physical attack.

### **Assertiveness**

- Expressing feelings directly, but without accompanying threats.
- Politely refusing unreasonable requests or threats.
- Making reasonable requests.
- Expressing opinions while not automatically disagreeing with those of others.
- Standing up for your own rights and needs, and making wants clear, while making no attempt to infringe those of others.
- Performing this behaviour without undue fear or anxiety. Being relaxed when asking for what is legitimately due to you.
- Expressing anger or other emotions as appropriate.
- Maintaining appropriate eye contact.
- Matching body posture to mood.

<b>Note:</b> Let us pause for a while and reinforce the learning of what we have read so far. Please go back to the text and do Activities 2.8 and 2.9 on page 37.
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## ***Modelling Assertive Behaviour***

The non-verbal factors that make up a successful performance are as follows:

### **1. Stance and Posture**

It is difficult for your pupil to begin to make an assertive response unless she/he faces the person she/he is to address. If seated, leaning forward slightly demonstrates interest, concern and lack of fear.

### **2. Eye contact**

If the pupil finds eye contact difficult, you should persuade him/her to practise it at a distance, and gradually move closer to the other person for increasingly long periods of time.

Another way of beginning is to get him/her to focus on some other part of the face and progress gradually towards eye-to-eye contact. We are not trying to achieve a stare, which is often perceived as aggressiveness. But appropriate eye contact, conveying sincerity and lack of fear, is an important characteristic of assertive behaviour.

### **3. Facial expression**

Your pupil can practise this alone in front of a mirror. Using this method will teach him/her the difference between what he feels like inside and thinks he is conveying and what he actually looks like. Sometimes the difference is marked.

### **4. Use of gestures**

Confident but not exaggerated hand gestures do much for social performance. There is the aggressive hand gesture, such as striking the palm of the hand. As with facial expressions, gestures should be compatible with other behaviour. This is a matter of practice and appropriate feedback.

### **5. Voice level and tone**

Children with loud voices, who think it unlikely that they can be heard, may be encountered, as well as children with squeaky voices who think themselves perfectly audible to anyone really interested in listening. Tape recorders are a useful way of dealing with this problem, as the child can hear and try to improve after playbacks. In addition to an appropriate voice level, appropriate inflection adds conviction to performance.

## 6. **Accent**

Many of your pupils may be afraid to speak up because they are ashamed of their accents, as is common with many people. Cognitive restructuring is indicated here. Express the view that dialect adds richness and colour to language, and that an important consideration is whether a person speaks clearly and can get his meaning across.

## 7. **Reinforcement Procedures**

Before the pupil undertakes complex assignments, or tries out his/her new skills in situations which really matter, it may be useful to equip him/her with a range of responses for dealing with rebuffs and unexpected reactions.

## 8. **Desensitization as Part of Assertiveness Training**

Another reason why people feel unable to assert themselves is that they fear the emotional and behavioural consequences of doing so. Therefore, to a limited extent it may be useful to try to analyze with the child exactly what she expects to happen as a result of self-assertion, and point out any inconsistencies or exaggerations in her beliefs.

Children often believe that their shyness is in-born or an unalterably fixed part of their personality. While this is not so, a life-long experience of being dependent on other people is not easily set aside. Fear and anxiety will be partly conditioned through previous bad experiences, and any escape or alternative ways of reducing anxiety must be employed.

Once new assertive responses have been learnt, they may be regularly reinforced, since their deployment will reduce both anxiety and 'bottled up' feelings. It is best to pre-plan the assignments with the child. Pre-planning involves sorting out on paper the likely sequence of events, together with possible variations. For example, how to deal with ridicule from an adolescent peer group when the child decides not to go along with them.

## ***Decisions about assertiveness***

The important point to stress throughout training is that an assertive reaction is an option. Sometimes relationships can be improved, by one party deliberately refraining from self-assertion in conditions where the other person knows fully well that he/she has no right to expect more tolerance or forbearance. Through assertiveness training, we extend the child's choice of available responses, so that he/she can assert himself/herself when necessary.

**Practical Application*****RATIONALE***

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We have more or less come to the end of module 4. In the first two units of the module, we have attempted to define behaviour and discussed its causes. We have also discussed behaviour problems and behaviour changes. These topics should have given a clear picture of the common types of behaviour problems we have in schools. In this last unit, we look at the management of behaviour identified by the use of appropriate techniques or methods of control.

In this unit, you will learn about intervention and case study techniques.

***LEARNING OUTCOMES***

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By the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- diagnose behaviour problems;
- identify intervention techniques in behaviour management;
- appreciate the importance of case study as a tool in behaviour management.

***CONTENT***

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This unit includes the following:

- Topic 1. Intervention Techniques
- Topic 2. Models of Intervention
- Topic 3. Case Study.

## **Topic 1.**

### **INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES**

#### ***Diagnosis***

Before you can apply any intervention technique in the management of behaviour, the problem must first be clearly defined and understood. You can do this through **diagnosis**.

Diagnosis means applying specific procedures and measures to establish the cause of a problem, which may not be apparent. In behaviour modification, the term is used to describe what you do to find out the cause of problem behaviour. It is similar to what a medical doctor does when trying to find out the cause of a disease.

#### ***Methods of Diagnosis***

There are two methods of diagnosis discussed here, viz: the interview and biographical data. A counsellor may use either, or both, to identify and understand a behaviour problem.

##### **1. Interview**

You must have been interviewed by a board or a panel. Can you think of what actually happened during the interview?

Compare notes with the explanation below.

An interview is a face-to-face interaction between persons in which one party tries to collect information which may be of use for understanding the other. In behaviour modification, the term is applied when the counsellor organizes a face-to-face interaction, either with the child or the parents, in order to learn more about problem behaviour.

#### ***Activity 3.1: Interview***

1. Go through Reading 3.1, Methods of Interview, on pages 62-64.
2. Formulate a series of questions which would lead to the identification of a problem.
3. Identify a child who has an emotional problem which has been diagnosed by you.

#### ***Activity 3.2: Parents Versus the Problem Behaviour of Their Child***

1. Write down five questions which you would ask parents to use to identify the problem behaviour of their child.
2. Make a list of measures you think parents use to control the behaviour of their children.
3. Discuss each measure with your colleagues.

## 2. Use of Biographical Data

Sometimes you may use a baby biography in order to obtain information relating to the causes and effects of a child's problem behaviour. A baby's biography is a day-to-day account of the development of a child. Information collected in this way is called biographical data.

With this method, you follow, observe and record the behaviour of the child in order to establish a fairly reliable behaviour pattern. You should observe and record a variety of circumstances over a period of time.

Examples of records which contain biographical data are ante-natal, under-five and hospital records. From such records, it is possible to obtain information which may give a clue to the cause of problem behaviour.

### ***Activity 3.3: Biographical Data***

1. Design a set of questions which you would use to establish the cause of problem behaviour.

## **Topic 2. MODELS OF INTERVENTION**

One of the fundamental processes in behaviour management is appropriate intervention. This needs to be done systematically if it is to be effective.

Any intervention in problem behaviour must be based on a clear understanding of the source of the problem and of all the forces that sustain it.

This makes it easy for the practitioner to select and implement those models of intervention which are likely to yield positive results.

Since behaviour is situational and varies, anyone attempting to modify the behaviour of another needs to understand the various models of intervention, their characteristics and application. This helps in the selection and implementation of measures that are likely to bring about the desired change.

This unit discusses the various methods of intervention and their application.

Have you ever intervened in a behaviour problem?

If you are now ready, go to the text. Compare your experiences with the techniques proposed.

## ***Methods of Intervention***

### **1. The psychodynamic model**

This model is based on Freud's ideas regarding personality development. It places emphasis on the need to understand the child's unconscious motivation for problem behaviour. The model assumes that memories, motives and conflicts resulting from an individual's instinctual drives cause neurosis. Once the motive behind such neurotic behaviour is understood, it is easy to remedy it.

Originally, the following principles were used in this type of model:

**a) Free association**

The individual is encouraged to say what comes to mind freely.

**b) Dream analysis**

It involves the interpretation of dream symbols. For example, after writing an examination a student may dream of failing to cross a river. This to Freud would indicate that the student is worried about the examination results.

**c) Analysis of resistance**

This is when a student avoids talking or thinking about certain experiences. Such behaviour may indicate that the experience in question is the cause of the problem and therefore needs to be explored.

**d) Analysis of transferences**

This is when a pupil transfers his/her past experiences to you. For example, a child who has had bitter experiences with his/her father may refuse to be assisted by a male teacher. Having noted such behaviour, the counsellor uses this opportunity to help the child change his/her behaviour.

Psychodynamic techniques used by Freud are now found to be time-consuming and expensive. For this reason, less costly techniques are preferred and used. The one that is commonly used is Short-Term Dynamic Therapy.

**Short-term dynamic therapy** demands that you interview the student. During the interview, you ask a series of questions about the child's past experience relating to a specific incident. As the pupil answers the questions and expresses his/her feelings, unconscious conflicts which may be the source of the problem behaviour are revealed. You then use the information to assist him/her.

Other theorists prefer the use of **Expressive Art**. This requires you to create an appropriate opportunity for the student to express freely his/her personal feelings and emotions in creative activities. For instance, the

student may express his/her feelings in role-playing, puppetry and free play. You then ask the student to say what he/she is trying to depict.

## 2. Behaviourism Model

The behaviourism model is based on the assumption that behaviour is influenced by the consequences of the responses an individual makes to the environment. It focuses on the modification of observable and measurable behaviour. It uses the learning principles of either classical or operant conditioning in changing behaviour.

### *Activity 3.4: Behaviourism Model*

1. Go through Reading 3.2, Behaviourism Model: Classical and Operant Conditioning, on pages 65-67.
2. What is classical conditioning?
3. List the steps you would follow to assist a child who fears cats to overcome this problem.
4. What is operant conditioning?

## 3. Cognitive Model

This is one of the more recent models of behaviour modification. It uses strategies based on the cognitive model of human behaviour which emphasizes an individual's ability to process, store, and retrieve information.

The cognitive model of intervention assumes that a behaviour problem can be changed by helping an individual to process, store and retrieve information related to the cause of the problem. It focuses on the application of cognitive learning principles to change problems that are associated with beliefs, thinking and feeling. You can help your pupils to change the thinking patterns which lead to the behaviour problem.

The main technique that this model uses is **Rational-Emotive Therapy**.

This technique is based on the assumption that human beings have behaviour problems as a result of faulty understanding. For instance, guilt, anxiety and depression result from the faulty use of information relating to the causes of such problems. To change such behaviour, you need to show the pupil that these problems are based on irrational thinking and are, therefore, inappropriate. The pupil should change them.

You should observe the following steps.

- a) Ask the pupil to describe beliefs/emotions/perceptions.
- b) Discuss the beliefs with the pupil in order to analyze the problem intellectually.
- c) Show the pupil a realistic approach to the problem in question.

### ***Activity 3.5: Cognitive Model***

1. To which pupils' behaviour problems that you have met, could you have applied this model?
2. What are the limitations you are likely to meet when employing this model?

#### ***4. Humanistic Model***

The Humanistic Model of intervention is based on the principles of humanistic learning. These are cited by Gage and Berliner (1988) as:

- a) Individuals learn what they need and want to learn.  
This implies that people learn what satisfies their needs, wants or curiosity.
- b) Responsibility for learning lies with the learner.  
The learner wants to know how to learn and not what to learn.
- c) Self-evaluation  
The individual is encouraged to take responsibility for deciding what is important to him/her, what goals to achieve and decide the extent to which such goals have been achieved.
- d) Importance of feeling  
The humanistic approach attaches learning to the acquisition of facts and feelings. They argue that learning facts is as important as learning how to feel.
- e) Students learn better in a non-threatening environment.

#### ***Comments:***

If you are to apply this model to behaviour modification, this would mean that:

1. problem behaviour is learnt through self-direction;
2. you consider the pupil has the potential to make decisions;
3. the relationship between the pupil and you is based on mutual respect and trust;
4. the type of intervention you use when trying to modify your pupil's behaviour is pupil-centred.



### ***Activity 3.6: Humanistic Model***

1. Go through Reading 3.3, Main Techniques of the Humanistic Model of Intervention, on pages 68-69. It contains useful information on the:
  - a) Client-centred technique;
  - b) Existential technique; and
  - c) Gestalt technique.
2. What are the advantages of these techniques?
3. What are the limitations of the techniques?
4. For what school-going age is each technique suitable?
5. What type of problem behaviour is suited for each technique?

### ***Activity 3.7: Applying the Humanistic Model***

1. Read the following conversation between a pupil and his teacher and answer the questions that follow:

Child : I hate my teacher.  
Teacher : Let us pretend you are sitting in that empty chair. What do you want to say to her?  
Child : Leave me alone. Don't trouble me.  
Teacher : Now sit in the other chair and pretend you are the teacher.  
Child : I have told you to stop making a noise.  
Teacher : Now be yourself again.  
Child : I am not the one making noise.  
Teacher : Now be your teacher.  
Child : This is the last time I am telling you. You had better stop that type of behaviour.  
Teacher : Now be yourself.  
Child : You don't care about me. You don't care how I feel. You just worry about noise in the classroom.
2. Now answer the following questions:
  - a) What could this conversation lead to?
  - b) Indicate the lines in the conversation that suggest empathy.
  - c) In your informed opinion, is this the right choice for a teacher? Give reasons.
3. Compare your answers with those found in the Answer Key on page 61.

### **Topic 3.**

## **CASE STUDIES**

Welcome to the last topic of the module! Our concern is to improve the lives of our children. The best thing is to examine case studies provided by you. As you go through this text, check if your case studies are relevant and meaningful.

### ***Meaning of Case Study***

A case study refers to an intensive examination of a single instance. The unit, however, is not always restricted to an individual. A case study may be made of a single school, a school system, a single community or a single event. Sometimes the approach is known as a study in depth. The purpose of a case study is to discover and describe the laws of behaviour concerning the instance under examination.

### ***Distinctive Features of Case Studies***

1. Whenever learning seems to go wrong, a case study can be undertaken to find the reason behind it, so that measures to improve the situation can be considered and adopted.
2. In pursuing a case study approach, the investigator has freedom regarding the type and amount of information and procedures to be used to collect data.
3. Case studies may not lead to well-established conclusions, but may lead to empirically developed hypotheses, which lead to further rigorous studies.

### ***Limitations of Case Studies***

As a scientific method of investigation of problems, case studies present difficulties. The study of a single case, even with a high level of homogeneity, is likely to provide only the most tentative and crude generalizations. Such studies can, however, provide insight into the dynamics of human behaviour and its antecedents. They probably make their greatest contribution to the understanding of an educational phenomenon, which is the source of the hypothesis. This hypothesis can later be verified by a more rigorous method, i.e., by using a scientific method of inquiry. But unless a sufficient number of cases is used to permit the isolation of crucial factors, the extent to which case studies can lead to valid generalizations is limited.

### ***Use of Case Studies in Behaviour Management***

As stated earlier, a case study is an intensive examination of a single event or phenomenon. In our case, it is an intensive study of a behaviour problem. There are many types of behaviour problems that young boys and girls face in schools. However, a school may identify a common or prevalent behaviour problem among students, for example, drug taking or pregnancy, and may need to find out the nature and causes of the problem. A case study can then be carried out. This will be an in-depth study covering all related areas of the problem.

In alcohol drinking, the home backgrounds of the children are investigated, along with the suppliers of alcohol, their sources and the nature of the environment. Are the teachers involved? What situations in the school could contribute to this? The dynamics of this behaviour and its antecedents are looked at, to obtain as much information as possible and make generalizations.

However, those who use case studies as a tool for behaviour management should be aware of its limitations. Otherwise a case study tries to answer the fundamental question of ‘why is it happening this way?’ It can, if appropriately used, be a very useful tool for behaviour management.

#### ***Activity 3.8: Case Study, Behaviour Problem***

1. Identify one behaviour problem prevalent among young boys and girls in your school.
2. Attempt to make a case study of the problem.

## Summary

In this unit, we have learned that to be an effective counsellor, we need to learn how to diagnose children's problems. This can be done through the use of interviews and biographical data.

Behaviour management demands that you introduce appropriate intervention procedures in problem behaviour. This may be difficult to do if the source of the problem behaviour is not known. It is important to have an understanding of the source of the problem first. This makes it easy for you to select and implement the models of intervention. We learned four models of intervention, viz: the psychodynamic model, the behaviourism model, the cognitive model, and the humanistic model.

Finally, we learned about case studies and how they can be a useful tool for behaviour management, if appropriately used.

## Key Terms

Clinical exploration - systematic examination

Contingency contracting - getting someone to do what you want him/her to do.

Intervention model - an approach to the introduction of a corrective measure.

Psychodynamic - pertaining to internal motives, unconscious forces and other aspects of mental functioning.

Rational-Emotive therapy - direct and forceful therapy in which clients learn to abandon irrational self-defeating behaviour

## Evaluation

1. Select any five principles of operant conditioning which a counsellor may use in behaviour modification, and show how each principle can be used in modifying the behaviour of a child who disrupts learning.

## Answer Key

1. Could lead to some form of compromise and then change in behaviour.
2. Be your teacher, be yourself.
3. Yes, lets the child express his feelings vis-à-vis the feelings of the teacher.

# Readings

## Reading 3.1 METHODS OF INTERVIEW

### 1. *Life Space Interview*

This is an intervention that focuses on the child's direct experiences, which in most cases are the causes of distortion of his/her perceptions of existing realities. It is psychodynamic in nature.

In most cases, this type of intervention is conducted if the pupil regards you as a significant other. You should provide your pupil with the opportunity to structure an event which he/she considers to be the source of the problem behaviour in order to change it. You should act as a facilitator. By critically exploring the child's emotional experiences, you should be able to give on-the-spot assistance. By helping the child reconstruct his/her previous experiences, you may become aware of the distortions he/she has of existing realities, pathological behaviour characteristics, hidden social and moral values, and standards or reactions to behaviour and group pressure.

Walker and Shea (1988) view this method as appropriate for:

- providing instant help in relieving unusual stress.
- reducing the frustration level of the child.
- supporting the child in an emotionally charged situation.
- reinforcing existing behaviour/social limits and realities.
- assisting the pupil to find solutions to everyday problems of living and emotionally charged incidents such as aggression, fights, etc.

#### a) **Basic Steps**

There are certain basic steps which need to be followed when using the life space method of interview. Walker/Shea (1988) suggest the following:

1. The interview should start from an incident in the child's experience (life space).
2. Encourage the child to state his/her personal perceptions of the incident in order to determine the importance of it.
3. You should listen patiently to the child as he/she reconstructs the incident in question. No moral judgement should be made at this stage.

4. After listening, help the child to resolve the conflict without giving any moral judgement. Where that helps to solve the problem, the interview may be terminated. If the problem is not solved, continue the process.
5. You and your pupil should develop jointly a plan of action for dealing with present and future problems.

**b) Principles of Effective Use of the Life-Space Interview**

To promote effectiveness in your use of the life space method, avoidance of embarrassment should be your aim. It is therefore important for you to understand and practise the basic principles of this method.

These according to Walker and Shea (1988) are:

- Be polite to the pupil.
- Establish appropriate eye contact with the pupil and talk with, instead of talking to, him/her.
- Use information which you have personally obtained from the child/parent. Avoid rumours or second-hand information.
- Ask appropriate questions to avoid embarrassing the child.
- Listen to the child's perception of the incident.
- Encourage the child to ask questions and respond to such questions appropriately.
- Minimize feelings of guilt and shame when you notice them.

## **2. *The Psycho-Situational Assessment Interview***

This is a type of interaction between the parents of the child and yourself, for the purpose of trying to discover the effects of the environment on the child's problem behaviour. It is the process by which you try to determine the extent to which the environmental factors enforce and maintain problem behaviour and how the manipulation of the environment in question can modify it.

The assumption behind this method is that problem behaviour is a result of an individual's inability to respond to certain situations. It is because an individual cannot respond to a situation appropriately that the problem behaviour develops. Emphasis, according to the proponents of this view, should be on restructuring the situation in which the problem behaviour occurs. For instance, some pupils may misbehave in the classroom because there is no teacher. The treatment that the child gets at home may also be the source of problem behaviour.

This method demands that you should analyze the setting in which the behaviour occurs in relation to:

- the child's behaviour, which in this case is the behaviour to be modified.

- the environment or situation which refers to the places and circumstances in which the behaviour occurs.
- the feelings and emotions of the parents. Parents sometimes make irrational demands and express unwarranted expectations, and feelings which may cause problem behaviour.

Walker/Shea (1988) suggest that during this type of interview the following tasks need to be accomplished.

- a) Defining the target behaviour. This involves taking note of its:
  - frequency rate
  - intensity
  - duration

This is done to increase perception of the problem and then focus on it. It makes the problem sufficiently clear to be remedied.

- b) Obtaining information about the situation in which the behaviour occurs, e.g. home, playground.
- c) Exploring the contingencies and consequences of the behaviour. This helps the parents to recognize their share in the problem.
- d) Detecting any irrational behaviour in the parents.

To obtain information that is required, it is necessary that you should design a set of questions under each interview task. Refresh yourself with Activity 3.2 on page 51 in the text.



## Reading 3.2

### BEHAVIOURISM MODEL: CLASSICAL AND OPERANT CONDITIONING

#### *Classical Conditioning Techniques*

Classical conditioning techniques are based on stimulus substitution. You teach the pupil to substitute one stimulus for another. The main techniques used under this type of intervention are:

##### **1. Aversion Therapy**

This is the process by which you teach your pupil to associate a negative emotional response with an undesirable habit. For example, subjecting a person who is an alcoholic to some mild shock as he/she is about to take a drink, may eventually help such an individual to associate beer-drinking with pain, and then avoid it. However, this method is often used only as a last resort.

##### **2. Desensitization**

We have already discussed desensitization in unit 2. In this unit, we examine some critical aspects of desensitization for practical purposes. We saw it as systematically reducing a specific learned fear or phobia using increasing levels of stimulus. This approach creates a reduction in sensitivity to such stimuli leading to the unlearning of the phobia. You can use this method to help a student overcome such problems as fear of animals, public speaking, water and examinations.

Basically, it follows the steps suggested by Wolpe:

- Training the subject in muscle relaxation
- Constructing an anxiety-evoking hierarchy of stimuli
- Counterpoising relaxation and anxiety-evoking stimuli

Walker and Shea (1988) quoted research by Kravetz and Forness in which a 6½ year old child, who could not verbalize in the classroom (e.g., read to the class), was helped. The helping process involved using the following levels of stimuli:

## Steps

- Reading alone to the investigator.
- Reading alone to a classmate.
- Reading to two classmates.
- Reading to the teacher and classroom aides.
- Reading to the teacher, classroom aides and a small group.
- Reading to the entire class.
- Asking questions or making comments.

## *Operant Conditioning principles*

Operant conditioning principles of behaviour intervention were developed by F.B. Skinner through systematic laboratory research. The process involves learning from one's actions as one operates the environment. The student's behaviour is modified by the consequences of his/her responses.

The main principles of behaviour modification that operant conditioning uses are:

1. **Positive reinforcement** - This involves the use of rewards for positive responses in order to strengthen the new behaviour.
2. **Non-reinforcement** - No reward is given to the client for undesirable behaviour. This helps to diminish problem behaviour.
3. **Extinction** - The counsellor may stop rewarding established behaviour in order to let the pupil stop responding the way he/she does.
4. **Punishment** - This involves the presentation of some form of discomfort or unpleasant consequence to a response that the pupil makes. The idea is to suppress the response.
5. **Shaping** - This is the process of rewarding successive responses which are viewed by you, the teacher, as being closer to the desired one.
6. **Stimulus control** - This technique requires that the teacher should control the situation in which the behaviour occurs.
7. **Token-Economics** - You use a system of giving the pupils symbolic reinforcers for desirable behaviour, which are later exchanged for genuine reinforcers. For instance, children may be awarded points for good behaviour which are exchanged for a prize.
8. **Time out** - In this technique, you remove an individual from the source of the problem in order to help him/her change. This can be done in three main ways.
  - a) **Observational time** - The child is withdrawn from a reinforcing situation. For instance, the child is placed outside the perimeter of the activity. Sometimes the child can be asked to put his/her head on the desk.

b) **Exclusion** - In exclusion, you ask the child to leave a reinforcing situation to one which is non-reinforcing. For example, a child who misbehaves while watching a game can be removed to a place where it may not be possible for him/her to watch the game.

c) **Seclusion** - You put the child in an isolated room where he/she is alone.

### ***Comments:***

You should ensure that each time a technique is used, data is recorded in order to establish the effectiveness of the intervention programme. It is also important for you to observe the following factors that agree with the suggestions of Cuemi and Harris:

- Characteristics of your pupil. It has been established that time-out works with aggressive and group-oriented children.
- Consistency of application. You must be consistent in using the technique in order to avoid confusing the pupil.
- The pupil needs to understand the rules of such techniques.
- Characteristics of the time-out should be such that the place is non-reinforcing.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of time-out. You can do this by analyzing records of time-out incidents. (Shea, 1988.)

## **Reading 3.3**

### **MAIN TECHNIQUES OF THE HUMANISTIC MODEL OF INTERVENTION**

The main techniques of the humanistic model of intervention are:

#### ***1. Client-Centred Technique***

This is associated with Carl Rogers and is known as the person-centred approach. It is based on the understanding that what is good for you in helping the child, may not necessarily be good for it. The pupil should be the centre of the technique. You should create an atmosphere of growth based on the following principles.

- Unconditional positive regard: The pupil should be accepted as he/she is. There should be no moral judgment made about problem behaviour. This promotes self-acceptance.
- Empathy for the pupil: You should try to see the problem or situation from the child's perspective.

- Need for authentic relationship: There should be an authentic relationship between you and the pupil. The relationship should be based on mutual trust and respect. This creates a non-threatening atmosphere.
- Reflection of the pupil's thoughts and feelings: You should not make interpretations, give solutions or offer advice. You should restate what the pupil has said.

## **2. *Existential Technique***

The existential technique of the humanistic model of intervention is based on the assumption that human existence provides unavoidable problems such as death, choices and responsibility. Man must be assisted to deal with these problems realistically. The existential technique aims at helping to restore meaning and vitality to life, so that the individual has the courage to make rewarding and socially constructive choices.

If you apply this technique, the basic element is confrontation. You challenge your pupil to examine and evaluate the quality of his/her attitudes towards life, and the need to take responsibility for such behaviour. This enables your pupil to reappraise problem behaviour and decide on a new course of action to remove it.

## **3. *Gestalt Technique***

Gestalt therapists believe that a problem is caused by the gaps in experience, which are created by an individual's attempt to turn from experiencing unpleasant feelings. In order to change an individual's behaviour, such gaps need to be filled so that there is complete experience.

This technique aims at helping an individual to rebuild thoughts, feelings and actions in connected wholes. You must help the pupil to expand his/her personal awareness of the problem, and accept responsibility for his/her own thoughts, feelings and actions. Having reached this decision, he/she should fill the experience gaps.

For instance, a pupil who has been scolded by the teacher may feel unhappy. He/she may then decide not to answer questions in class. This creates a gap between the teacher and pupil which blocks emotional health. The block needs to be removed if the child is to learn effectively.

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