

Social Harmony and Prosocial Behavior: Two Aspects of One Coin

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Abstract

India is an origin of different ethnic society and divided into a number of castes and communities and people belonging to various religious faiths but living together in peace. Thus, India is call spiritual-cultural land of 'unity in diversity' that can accommodate differences. But, it has also been witness to some communal disturbances in the name of religion, caste or community. One of the foremost reasons for communal disturbances is social disharmony, due to feeling of insecurity and mistrust among them-selves. Because of this, social harmony is necessary for Indian society. Actually, it is like a tool, which reduces social conflict and develops mutual trust, tolerance, co-existence. But, another question raise in our mind, how can be developed social harmony in Indians? Which tool is the best tool to develop social harmony? Lots of theory or principle available but not effected properly, because of this lots of disturbances come out in Indian society, which is vast challenge in front of Indian society. Hence, we need that type of instrument, which deeply works with human persona and give better output. Prosocial behavior becomes an effective tool to develop social-harmony because it is positive action or pattern of behavior, which is voluntarily done by an individual for others welfare. Thus, this paper focuses and searches answer of these questions- what is concept of social harmony? what is concept of prosocial behavior? what is relation between social harmony and prosocial behavior? And what is role of prosocial behaviour to develop social harmony in the context of family, society and education.

Key words: Social harmony, Prosocial behavior.

India is a pluralistic cultural country. There are so many religions, caste, creed, languages etc. and their people believe, trust, ethos is different from each other. Although diversity is identity of Indian culture. But, some time these diversity create challenges in front of Indian society. Therefore, India becomes always witness of shameful communal violence.

Indian is a democratic country and respects all the diversity. Indian constitution also provides equal right in Article 14 and 15 for all Indians (Upadhayaya, 2006). That is why Indian society needs such type of social system, which promotes equalities and builds up mutual understanding among all the cultures, caste, creed, religions etc. But, question is how Indian society tackles this problems and minimized social conflicts.

Social disharmony is vast cause for communal violence and social disturbance. Therefore, social harmony is necessity of Indian social construction. Mutual trust, tolerance, co-existence is main element of social harmony, which reduce social conflicts and helped to develop sound environment. In fact, social harmony is soul of Indian culture and 'unity in diversity' is based on social harmony, but question is how can be developed social harmony among Indians? and which tool is becomes more effective to develop social harmony? Prosocial behavior becomes a effective tool to develop social harmony because it is a behavior of volunteer positive behavior for others wellbeing and can promote sound habits among the citizen of India from early childhood to adolescence.

This paper has another important objective to analyze how both concepts complement each other and becomes two aspects of one coin? So that, this paper is focusing to search these questions,

such as- What is the concept of social harmony? What is the concept of prosocial behavior? What is relation between social harmony and prosocial behavior? and what is role of prosocial behavior to develop social harmony in the context of family, society and education?

Concept of Social Harmony

Basically Social Harmony concept involves two words first social which represent society and second harmony which represent mutual understanding, believe in equality, respect all religion, caste, creed, gender, culture, rituals, believes without any biasness and prejudice. Mandal (2005) describe social harmony and say “Social harmony is a state of affairs where social strife is minimized through cooperation, compromise and understanding”. According to Semashko and Snitko (2005, as a website mission) “Social harmony is an integrative value in a global, information society, which unites in itself love, peace, justice, freedom, equality, brotherhood, cooperation, nonviolence, tolerance, humanism and other universal values and prioritize children”. Organizing committees of general conference of ICOM 22nd (2009) approved a proposal “Museums for Social Harmony” and say, “The main feature of social harmony is dialogue, tolerance, co-existence and development, which are based on pluralism, diversity, competition and creativity.”

Hence, social harmony is a concept which refers to respect for different religions, cultures, caste, creed, rituals, believes and emphasizes on mutual understanding, accepting diversity as positive way, tolerate each other and most important reduce social conflict. It is clear that social harmony is soul of any multi-cultural country.

Main elements of Social Harmony

Above all discussions show that response of social harmony depends upon some important elements, without its dearth social harmony can not be promoted among the people. These elements are:

1. Mutual understanding is first demand of social harmony because it gives space to develop others.
2. Social harmony develops through Cooperation.
3. Believe in equality is very important element of social harmony, which play vital role to decrease discrimination.
4. Tolerance develops capability to accept others.
5. Co-Existence emphasizes to accept other existence in their society, which make friendly environment.
6. Social harmony depends upon nonviolence.
7. Humanism is soul of social harmony and believes welfare for all human being.
8. Respect for all religion, community, culture, believe, rituals, custom.
9. Motive of social harmony is to reduce social conflict.
10. Acceptance of diversity develops optimistic approach toward diversity, which emphasizes social harmony.
11. Social harmony emphasizes social interaction and dialogue because interaction and dialogue fill gap of society slowly-slowly.
12. Social harmony believes in universal values and says about all welfare.

Concept of Prosocial behavior

Prosocial behavior is a new concept of social psychology used by Wispe in 1972 (Penner et al. 2004). It is positive action or pattern of behavior for other welfare. It is a volunteer individual help for others without any professional or institutional obligation. It emphasizes other benefit rather than self-benefit. It depends upon moral and social value. Marion (2003) divided prosocial behavior into three distinct categories: sharing (dividing up or bestowing), helping (acts of kindness, rescuing, removing distress), and cooperating (working together to reach a goal). Prosocial behavior can be generally confused with the term altruism, but both are different concept where Prosocial behavior refers a pattern of activity, on the other hand altruism is motivation to do something for others wellbeing.

Eisenberg and Mussen (1989) defined prosocial behavior as, “voluntary action that are intended to help or benefit another individual or group of individuals”(as cited in Knickerbocker, Roberta L.,2003). and Baron & Byrne (1987), refer “Prosocial behaviour refers to acts that have no obvious benefits for the individual engaging in them and even involve risk and some degree of sacrifice. Such acts...are based on ethical standards of conduct.” Dovidio (1984) considered prosocial emphbehavior in term of action and defined, it as action of the individual that benefits other without necessarily providing any direct benefit to the person who performs it.

Above these definition Prosocial behavior is a positive action which is developed by empathy, moral value and emphasize a sense of personal responsibility for others benefits. Prosocial behavior may include sharing, cooperation, comforting, rescuing, and helping.

Main elements of prosocial behavior : From discussion of above, important elements of prosocial behavior come out, which help to promote prosocial behavior among the people. Important elements of prosocial behavior are:

1. It is positive action or pattern of behavior.
2. Prosocial behavior is voluntary individual helping behavior for others welfare without any professional and institutional obligation.
3. To express concern for others in difficult situation and something do for his betterment.
4. Prosocial behavior emphasizes cooperation for others because it promote friendly environment.
5. To promote sharing nature is another element of prosocial behavior, through this people learns to live and do together.
6. Scarifies is important element of prosocial behavior because its promote others benefit rather than personal benefit.
7. Through cooperating, sharing, donating prosocial behavior emphasizes social interaction and promotes sound relationship among the people.
8. It is based on social and moral values.
9. Prosocial behavior emphasizes rescuing for others wellbeing in emergency.
10. It is promoted comforting others in difficult situation.
11. Prosocial behavior also emphasize sense of social responsibility, which is indirectly promote others welfare.

Relation between Prosocial behavior and Social harmony

After the discussion of concept of social harmony and prosocial behavior, it is clear that element of both have similarity and prosocial behavior become a better tool to develop social harmony. Before further discussion, it is necessary to analyze previous related study to see how it becomes beneficial to promote social harmony.

Parkhurst & Asher, (1992) and Schnert-Reichl,(1999) found in his study prosocial behavior and social acceptance are highly correlated. Radke-yarrow et al.,(1983) find out children who has prosocial-cooperative, is more sensitive for others, express concern and help for others in difficult situation. Eisenberg and Fabes (1998) said in his study prosocial-cooperative behavior promote positive consequence and enhance social and academic adjustment. So many other researches show that prosocial behavior enhances sociability, minimized social anxiety and promote to help others (Diener & Kim, 2004; Eisenberg, Fabs, Karbon, Murphy, Carlo, et al., 1996; Hart et al., 2003; Howes & Farver, 1987; Russell et al., 2003; Silva, 1992; cf. Farver & Branstetter, 1994). Sawyer et al. (2002) obtained significant results between prosocial behavior and socially appropriate behavior. Marsh, Serafica, & Barenboim, (1981) and Warden & Mackinnon, (2003) found in his study prosocial behavior and social problem solving skill are positively correlated. Some other study shows prosocial behavior enhance positive social interaction with peers (Farver & Branstetter, 1994; Howes & Farver, 1987; Warden & Mackinnon, 2003). Caprara et al., (2000) obtained in his studies and show that highly prosocial children have more friends and liked by group of peers and teacher. Clark and Ladd (2000) also find out prosaically oriented children have more and close friends in his peer.

This literature review shows that prosocial behavior is more effective to develop social harmony and plays vital role in India to develop social harmony among Indians.

Role of Prosocial behavior to develop Social harmony

For development of social harmony through prosocial behavior in Indians, family, society and education can play vital role because a person socialization done by this, which play important role in personality development. Thus, it is necessary to develop social harmony through prosocial behavior in the development stage of human context of family, society and education. These are:

(a) Role of Family

Family is first institution for any child and family affects his whole life. In the development stage early childhood experience play vital role in the life of child because learning of child start in this age. In fact, it is a make foundation for personality building and as you know that strong personality building based on strong foundation and family provide this foundation. Therefore, according to cognitive theory of Piaget (1920-1930) early five year of life is very important in the developmental age of personality (Singh, A.K., 2002). Child learns from their environment and his family members, thus it is family's responsibility to provide healthy environment for their child growth. For this family should provide and promote these activities:

- (1) To promote sharing their things with other children
- (2) To reinforce helping behavior
- (3) To cooperate others
- (4) To reinforce prosocial activity
- (5) To develop respect for all religions, cultures, communities, creed, castes etc.

- (6) Become a role model form their child
- (7) Give conformity only right
- (8) Avoid discriminate behavior
- (9) Tell example through story power is in unity
- (10) To show concern for others and do something for their betterment
- (11) To promote socially acceptable behavior

(b) Role of Society

Society is another institution, where human being lived. Human being is man of society and without society, we can not imagine about human. Society makes some rules and goals and to achieving this target, it makes many institutions and every institution worked for its betterment. Therefore, to develop social harmony, society should promote such prosocial activities, which promote social harmony. These activities are:

- (1) To develop helping culture among the people
- (2) To trained people in tolerance technique and accept co-existence of others in society
- (3) To promote law of equality from moral values, which say every human is son of God and every one have equal right, no one is greater nor inferior.
- (4) To promote and recognize helping behavior by the society
- (5) To arrange social get to gather time to time, where member of different community is invited and have opportunity to develop mutual understanding among them
- (6) To organize workshop and seminar, where they have opportunity to interact others community members and develop social concern for other people
- (7) To emphasize or promote universal social and moral value, which based on welfare for all
- (8) To find out those religious thought in different religion, which say welfare of all human beings
- (9) To encourage donation for poor and society welfare
- (10) To aware for social responsibility for sound society
- (11) To develop social cooperation among the people of different community through different social activities

(c) Role of Education

Education is main institution of society and educational institution play vital role in human life. Its main work is to develop child personality according to society norms. Thus, education can play important role to develop social harmony and to achieve this target and facilitate such type of prosocial environment and activities in educational institution and classroom practices, which promote social harmony. For this, educational institution can be used so many prosocial techniques, these techniques are:

1. To facilitate positive interaction
2. To develop democratic classroom

3. To develop social skill
4. To develop cooperative environment
5. To make sensitive about society
6. To reinforce helping behavior
7. To emphasize social and moral values
8. To assign group project
9. To arrange cooperative games
10. To develop self-assessment skill
11. To develop healthy relationship
12. To present him/herself as a role model
13. To organize co-curriculum activities

Conclusion

Above all discussions show that prosocial behavior and social harmony all most have same elements and closely intercorrelated and prosocial behavior definitely support to enhance social harmony. Thus, it is clear that prosocial behavior and social harmony is two aspects of one coin and when one (prosocial activities) increase another one (social harmony) also enhance. In Indian context prosocial behavior, become an effective tool to reduce social conflict and develop mutual respect among the Indians. For this family, society and education can play vital role to promote and provide prosocial activities to minimized social anxiety and enhance social harmony among the Indians.

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