Chapter – 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Although psychologists have been interested in the study of prosocial behaviour for decades, only since the late 1960s, has the study of helping behaviour become more of the central areas of research in social and developmental psychology. Scientists characterized by the pre-occupation with improvement of life quality in the 1960s and early 1970s as well as the pioneering studies of Leon and Berkowitz about socially responsible behaviour of individuals towards others who were dependent upon them for their goal attainment (Rai and Gupta, 1996;), (Sharma and Rosha, 1972) (Berkowitz 1972) and of John Darley and Bib Latane about bystander’s intervention in emergency situations (Latane and Darley 1970), directed psychologists attention to the study of helping behavior

In psychological literature altruism is identified as donating behaviour, helping behavior, rescue behavior related welfare act, sacrificing behavior and behaviour related with social service. The man who exerts influence in others through altruistic act is attributed with benefactor and his action of altruism indicates his positive mental health. Therefore altruism may be an indicative factor of an individual’s mental health
Many variables have been studied as determinants of altruism namely recipient characteristics such as gender (Fisher, Depaulo and Nadler, 1980;) resource characteristics such as cost and reward of helping behaviour (Piliavin and Rodin, 1975; Freeman, 1977; Kerber, 1984;) cultural characteristics (Gorgen Ellsworth, and Seipal, 1975, Cohen 1978;) situational characteristics (Latane and Darley, 1970; Latane and Nida 1981; Shotland and Heinold, 1985,) benefactor’s characteristics such as gender (Lowe and Ritchey 1973; Shigeton, Hartmann and Guilford 1981; Ford and Lowery, 1986;) Race (Brigham and Richardson, 1975) personality variable such as social responsibility of self esteem (Aronoff and Witson, 1984); cooperation (Sawyer, 1966); extroversion and warm heartedness (Smith and Nelson, 1975); Locus of control and self actualization have been found to influence to altruism.

On the basis of above discussion, it can be stated that a number of socio-psychological, personal and economic variables can contribute significantly to the emergence and development of altruistic behaviour among the individual. This is also a fact that all the possible factors of altruistic behaviour cannot be reviewed in a limited campass of doctoral dissertation. Keeping this point in view only those variables are reviewed in the present section which are included in the present research. Consequently, the sex difference, SES and physical handicapping as affecting variable of altruism are reviewed here.
Gender difference and Altruistic Behaviour

Male and female students differ from each other in many respects, like, physical, social, psychological, temperamental, values and so on. There have been several studies which show the effect of gender on altruistic behaviour, but the findings of these studied showed inconsistent results. Some of the studies report no difference regarding the altruistic behaviour of male and female normal sighted individuals. Gita & Kanna, Rajesh, 1991; P.K. Jha. Yadav & Usha Kumari, 1997; Vandana Sharma, 1999; Manorama Tyagi, (1995;) found that girls scored higher than boys on measures of helpfulness. Gruder and Cook, 1971; Rubin and Schneider, 1973; Krebs and Sturrup, 1974; Rushton, 975; Rushton and Wiener, 1975; Dunn & Munn, 1986). Krebs (1970) in his review of the studies of gender difference in altruistic behaviour reported that out of 17 studies 11 showed on sex differences. These studies were conducted on children. Some other studies (e.g. Gaertner and Bickman. 1971; Wispe and Freshley, 1971; Pomazal and Clore, 1973; Feinman, Shigetonia, 1980;) found gender differences in altruistic behaviour.

Other research (Midlarsky and Bryan. 1972; Dlugokinski and Fireston,1974; Shigetoni and Carol, 1981; Underwood & Moore, 1982; Radka-Yarrow et. all., 1983 Magoo, found gender differences in altruistic behaviour in favour of females.. Pakaslahti, Laura, Karjalainen, Anu & Kelti Kangas – Jarvinen, Lissa, (2002;) reported that 14 yrs old girls achieved higher scores on
both prosocial strategies and behaviour than the boys or the 17 yr. olds. O’Bryant and Brophy (1976) reported that 11 years old girls helped a younger child with a task significantly more than 11 years old boys did. S. Karin & Moely, (1976) found the effect of gender on altruistic behaviour of 192 males and females and found that females generally obtained higher altruism scores than males. Nadler et. al. (1979) assessed attitudes of social responsibility and prosocial behaviour and found that females had higher social responsibility scores and gave more help than males. Girls tend to be viewed as more altruistic than boys by peers and teachers Block, 1973; Berman, 1980; Hartmann, & Gelfand, 1981; Eisenberg & Lennon, 1983) Ahlgreen and Johnson, (1979;) found consistent gender differences in cooperative and competitive attitudes from the 2nd through the 12th grades. Females showed consistently more positive attitudes towards cooperation in school, and males showed consistently more positive attitudes toward competition.

Hoffman, (1977) indicates that females do indeed appear to be more empathic than males. They do not appear to be more adept at assessing another person’s affective, cognitive, or spatial perspective, however. There is also evidence to suggest that empathy in females may be a part of a prosocial affective orientation that includes the tendency to experience guilt over harming others, but it does not at least in early childhood, appear to be part of a large, inter personal sensitivity that includes egocentric concerns about the feelings of others toward the self. It is suggested that females may have a greater tendency
to imagine themselves in the other’ place, where as males have more of a set toward instrumental ameliorative action.

In other studies conducted on adults found, females more than males tend to refuse help in situations that may be embarrassing or ambiguous e.g. Latane, (1970), Levy et. al. (1972), Moss and Page, (1972) because they involve more costs for females than for males. Latane and Darley, (1970) and Schwartz and Clausen, (1970) found that women came to the rescue less frequently than did men in emergency, helping situations. Piliavin & Piliavin, (1972) investigated that in emergency situation, 94% of the first helpers were male. Prabha Gupta, (1984, Graurhaiz & Elizabeth, (1989) found result in favour of boys. They suggest that boys are more generous in the altruistic condition. Similar results were obtained by Borofsky, Stollok and Messe, (1971) Eagly & Crowly, (1986). Erder, Steptien, Sansom, Moira, Cale, Mark, (1971) Eagly & Crowly, (1986). Erlder, Steptien, Sansom, Moira, Cale, Mark, R. & Heapy, Nelson, (1993) described that women were found to score higher than men on low-risk, low physical strength and low than men on high risk, high physical strength helping behaviour. Neithre Latane and Darley, (1970) nor Rushton, (1978), however found and gender differences in aiding passerby on the street who made such minor requests for assistance as asking for directions and change for a quarter. Piliavin, Rodin and Piliavin, (1969) found no differences between men and women in going to the aid of people of who had apparently collapsed on the New York subway. A possible explanation for this discrepancy may lie in the
nature of the required act of help manipulated in the studies. Altruistic act that do not fit the female role or involve physical effort are costly for females to carry out, and therefore they tend to refuse help.

Altruistic behaviour is also affected by the sex of both the factor and the recipient involved in altruistic behaviour. Latane and Dobs (1975) investigated the effect of sex, group, size and helping in three cities. In picking up the objects, females received more help than males and male gave more help than did females. Clore & Pamuzil, (1973) also found the same result. Both males and females were less likely to help as the number as people present increased. Nadler et. al., (1982) found that males sought less help from a physically attractive female than an unattractive female and female sought more help from a physically attractive than unattractive male. Bihm, Gaudet and Sale (1979), Zambatany, (1985) found that females assisted females more than male assisted females. Collaham (1979) investigated the extent to which the sex of the allocated. The sex of the partner and knowledge of the partner’s expectation influence the distribution of rewards. Results showed that 55 tended to allocate more of the rewards to female partners.

In the process of socialization, the gender of the model may also play an important role. Several experiments have been conducted to know the effect the sex of the model on altruistic behavior. Michel & Grusec (1966). Mussen Harris, Rutherford & Keasy, (1970), Grusec & Brinker, (1972), found that gender of the model has an effect on the sharing behaviour of children Master, (1968) found
that children pass their infancy and childhood period more in contact with their mothers. By their daily contact they not imitate the observed behaviours, but also adapt the mother’s attitude, beliefs and ambition like “having done one’s best or during a good deal etc.” Thus when faced with a new situation in which the mother was never observed, the benefits and attitude adopted by the child prompt him to infer how the mother would have acted had she been in the present situation. Poonam Bhargava & Prabha Gupta (1980) also found the same results.

Some studies have indicated that differences between sex of the model and sex as the child influenced the extend to which imitative behaviour would be elicited (Bandura Ross & Ross 1963). Some researcher found that the gender of the model has no effect (May 1966, O’ Connell 1965).

In many studies males have been found to be more helpful than females (Eagly & Crowley, 1986). Bibb Latane and Jarmes M. Dabbs (1975) described that males were more likely to give help but they were less likely to receive it. Probably because the indices used often have been based on instrumental, rescuing actions (e.g. helping to change a tire) or have involved potential danger (e.g., picking up a hitchhiker) or chivalrous behavior Grauerholz, Elizarbeth, (1989) indicate that man are more altruistic when the effect of dependency, gender role, traditionalism and relationship seriousness were considered.
**SES and Altruistic Behaviour**

Socio-economic status has been used for prediction of altruistic behaviour. Vandana Sharma (1990) reveal that children of high socio-economic status not only stated but also actually donated more than children of lower SES. Diener et al. (1973), Prabha Gupta, (1982) also found that middle class children were more helpful than lower class. Sarita (1985) found that overall’ emotional, social and educational adjustment of visually handicapped was poor than the sighted students. Sinha, (1982) and Rai, (1988) attempts to examine personality adjustment of the blind and found that blind children are as good in adjustment as others.

Bhargava and Lavania, 1981; Goel & Sen 1985; Bhatnagar, 1985; described that the blinds were significantly more anxious, dependent, emotionally unstable, reserves and the sighted were significantly more relaxed and independent in comparison to each other.

Singh, (1985) demonstrated that congenitally blind and adventitiously blind differed significantly on intelligence score. Kapoor & Sen, (1984) indicated that the congenitally and adventitiously blind groups do not differ significantly from each other.

Muir and Weinstein (1962) reported that in United States upper middle class females tend to deal with other people according to exchange principles. They tend to cut off help from people who failed to repay their debts and felts
especially obliged to do favours for people who had helped in the past. On the other hand, lower-class females tended to help when they are able. The investigators concluded that members of lower-class tend to extend to each other “mutual aid …. especially since exchanges appeared to be family centered”. Members of the middle class are guided by reciprocity principles parallel to financial exchanges that characterize business transactions.

Doland and Adelberg, (1967) predicted on the basis of social learning theory opportunity to observe generosity behaviours in others and to be reinforced for their own. They found children drawn from a nursery school in an upper-middle class were more willing to share valued pictures than children drawn from a welfare situation. This relationship help whether sharing was measured either before or after the child was cued to expect any social approval for it or had observed an altruistic model. In other studies, differences favoring children of higher social class status have been reported (e.g. Berkowitz, 1968; Payne, 1980; Ravi & Bar-Tal, 1981).

Ugurel Semin, (1952) found that poor children from Israil were less selfish than children from middle class or rich families. The middle, class children were least generous, and the children from rich families shared eventually least often. In India, children from rich families shared eventually least often. In India, unexpectedly, the low-status victim was rated higher than the high-status victim. It appears that in a clear case of victimization the low status victim as the traditional underdog receives more sympathy and appreciation than
the high status victim. So they are more willing to gave more sympathy which they receive past. Several findings favor children lower in family socio-economic status. Friechrich & Stein., (1973) Knight & Kagan, (1977), Madsen, (1977) found the same results.

Dreman and Greenbaum, (1973) found that middle class children, particularly males, tend to rely on reciprocity principles in their donations. Sawyer, (1966) described that students of lower-middle class indicated their willingness to retreat generosity to friends and strangers. Sharabany, (1973) found that altruistic behaviour was greater in the city and in the Kibbutz. Berkowitz (1968) investigated social class differences in reciprocity orientations using 192 paired 13 to 16 years male students from the state schools as Oxford, England and found that working class boys worked hardest for those who had previously helped them, especially when their helpers came from a different social class. Kohn (1959) suggested that the working class is more concerned with immediate consequences of their children’s behavior than the inoculation of abstract moral principle.

Littlepage, Glenn E. & Whiteside, Horold D. (1976) conducted a study on social class difference in altruism and indicated that cost factors may not be related to a altruism. Yarrow et. al. 1973; Nelson & Madsen 1969; De Palmo, 1974; also found the same results.

Some studies shows, family socio-economic status do not appear to have any consistent effect on children’s predisposition’s to altruistic behaviours. No
social differences in helping, sharing or cooperative behavior are found (Nelson & Madsen, 1969; Yarrow et al. 1973; De palma, 1974;)

**Physical Handicapping and Altruistic Behaviour**

There are very few studies which deal with the influence of blindness on their personality adjustment. Brieland (1950) and Barker (1953) revealed that there is significant relationship between blindness and personality and personality adjustment. Brieland (1950) found that the blind students were significantly inferior in health, social and emotional adjustment while home adjustment did not show any significant differences. Barker (1953) reviewed fifteen studies in which various personality inventories were used. Out of these studies, six indicated that the blind had greater maladjustment than seeing group while nine did not demonstrate any consistent and significant differences between blind and seeing groups.

Mussen & Newman (1958); Kaur, Singh and Jain, (1984) conducted a study on social adjustment of normal and blind adolescents and found no significant difference.

Blindness gives rise to a sense of insecurity and strain in social relationship. When blindness is congenital, experiences the world in his own Way, which is different from that of most other children. He is more likely to be under nervous strain and to harbor feelings of insecurity and frustration. Robert (1975) describes that congenital blindness does not preclude
normal affect and ego development. Singh & pathak, (1984) found that congenitally blind subjects are more emotional than sighted subjects. Congenital blind and sighted groups did not show any significant difference on personality.

Nisat, (1990) found that the congenitally blind children have been found superior in academic performance than the adventitiously blind children and congenitally blinds are found more extroverts than their counterparts, Wenar (1956) inferred that the handicapped child does not have the type of self-control, which enabled him to hold negative feelings in check, and function more objective and realistic basis. According to Cutsworth, (1950) the problem of ego-development in blind people has a dual pattern. Firstly, when he develops compensation reaction to show that inadequacy does not exist in him, he grows along the line of compulsive personality. Secondly, he develops a false sense of security by failing to meet life aggressively and it results in hysterical responses which only add convection to his feeling of inadequacy. This dual patter, writes Cutsworth, “makes the child apparently erratic” in consistent and difficult.

Hardy, (1986), Miller (1970) found a general increase in anxiety with increasing grade level. Miller attributed the increased anxiety to the older child’s Zaidi, (1985) showed that visually impaired children did no differ significantly on anxiety test.

Visually impaired are perceived as helpless and dependent. Bakers, Larry, Reitz and Joseph (1979) investigated whether blind persons would be helped more than sighted persons in situations in which sight was not essential to the
person’s plight is and shows that help was given frequently to the blind than to the sighted caller. Harrewell (1995) conducted a study on effects of blind pedestrians on motorist and found that the motorists were significantly more likely to stop for a blind pedestrian than for a sighted pedestrian. This finding is consistent with the norm of social responsibility.

Similarly other handicapping, like hearing disability, speech disability and orthopaedic handicapping were also researched by many as variable of personality and intellectual development. Hearing loss can have profound consequences for some aspects of a person’s behavior and little or no effect on other characteristics. Contrary to the popular notion, deaf children are found not necessarily slower in intellectual development than the normal children (Furth, 1965). Thinking process of normal and deaf children are found to be similar (Furth, 1964, 1971).

The cognitive abilities of deaf children are essentially unimpaired except in those which involve language experience (furth,1961). Hearing impaired children are frequently handicapped in varying degree with regard to educational achievement (Furth, 1973).

Speech impaired children face many problems in daily life. For these children, maladjustment is very common. These children show aggressive tendencies, anxieties and fears. There is a dearth of empirical findings, So for as orthopedic handicapping is concerned, generally they have average or above average intelligence. there are evidence of orthopedic handicapped being
superior when they are currently being served both in regular and special programmes (Sharma, 2009). Dykes (1984) suggests 85% of health impaired and 35% orthopaedically handicapped children are served in special schools and classes.

On the behalf of above discussion, it can be said that gender difference, SES and physical handicapping are significant contributor of altruistic behaviour of the respondent. But it is also a fact that there is a dearth of empirical findings in respect of the role of physical handicapping in altruistic behaviour.

Gender difference has been considered an important factor of altruistic behaviour. On theoretical grounds, we might expect to find that boys and girls would differ in pro-social activities as they do many personality and social characteristics. Review of several studies conducted in India and abroad, revealed some inconsistent results regarding the effect of gender on the altruistic behaviour. In some studies, females show more altruism behaviour, while some other studies reported males to be more altruistic. It is therefore felt that further studies are required in this direction. Therefore gender was taken as a variable.

Likewise, studies on socio-economic status and altruistic behaviour are also inconclusive. Some of the studies reported middle class persons are more altruistic, whereas, as some other shows lower class more altruistic. Therefore the present study is also an attempt to find the effect of SES on altruistic behavior.