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SOCIAL SCIENCES & HEALTH BEHAVIOR

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INTRODUCTION

- Health cannot be isolated from its social context
- Involves an understanding of the behaviour of individuals and groups who live together and also share certain values of life.

SOCIOLOGY

- **Sociology** is the study of society and human social action.
- Cluster of sub-fields that examine different dimensions of society.
- Sociologists study society and social action by examining the groups and social institutions people form.

◦ **Behavioral science** - encompasses all the disciplines that explore the activities of and interactions among organism in the natural world.

-It involves the systematic analysis and investigation of human and animal behaviour through controlled and naturalistic experimental observations and rigorous formulations.

(E. D. Klemke, R. Hollinger, and A. D. Kline, (1980))

CATEGORIES OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Neural-Decision sciences

- Psychology
- Cognitive
- Organization theory
- Psychobiology,
- Social neuroscience.

Social- Communication sciences

- Anthropology
- Organizational
behaviour
- Organization
studies
- Sociology

Convergence of behavioral sciences and public health

- Public Health has come to a stage in its development where it is confronted with emerging problems involving social and cultural behaviors at a time when the behavioral sciences have developed to the point of having something substantial to offer and a disposition to help.
- There is, in the developing relationships a considerable potential for benefit for both groups.

- Social and cultural behaviors are important factors in the **etiology, prevalence, and distribution of many diseases**
- Public Health is a **social and cultural activity**
- Statistics show that **health is largely a behavioral phenomenon** and that interventions to change behavior are effective and can dramatically improve health

- The leading diseases, such as **cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cancer**, are good examples of problems that cannot be understood or treated without integrating social and behavioral sciences research into a systems approach.
- Contributions can also be made through research on the social, cultural, or psychologic characteristics of target populations, and on the relations of these populations with Public Health activity.

Behavioral sciences in Dental Public Health

- More we know about behavior, the better we will be able to solve behavioral problems in dentistry.
- **Rejection of fluoridation**
- **Dental Audio Analgesia**
- **The cleft palate problem**
- **Extraction for children**

- *The prime significance* - demonstrate that dental and orofacial conditions and their management could be altered by introducing into the technically oriented profession a **biopsychosocial model** reflecting new awareness of the **interaction between biologic processes and behavioral and social forces.**

The social sciences contributed

*dissemination
of
information*

*design of
effective
survey
instruments*

*teaching
materials*

- Socio-dental research can contribute to enhancing quality of life threatened by emerging or chronic dental and orofacial conditions.
- **Lois and a small team of social scientists** organized a social and behavioral science research agenda for dentistry around two foci that reflected the most urgent problems of the day facing dentistry:
 - (1) Disease prevention, and**
 - (2) Deployment of dental manpower.**

- Early seminal research in other key arenas of public health dentistry shed light on *attitudes toward personal dental health, attitudes toward professional dental care, and, presaging the current era by several decades, attitudes of the public toward prepaid dental health care.*

THE KNOWLEDGE AND BEHAVIORAL CHANGE MODEL

- Unawareness
- Awareness
- Self-interest
- Attitude
- Belief
- Commitment
- Action



THE INDIAN SCENARIO

- **The status of Public Health discipline in India is not satisfactory.**
- **The main challenges for public health institutions in India are to:**
 - ✓ **Reflect social responsiveness/social accountability**
 - ✓ **Developing quality assurance,**
 - ✓ **Keeping pace with advancing technology**
 - ✓ **Developing an interface with the community & health care delivery system.**

CONCLUSION

- Knowledge in the area of behavioural science is important for health care professionals.
- Dentist is key personnel in dental care, as they are often in a position to introduce the child into the world of dentistry.
- The first sessions in the dental chair may be of major importance for the child's future perception of coping with dental treatment.

- A dentist with knowledge about communication, basic psychology, dental fear, treatment principles and social theory of behaviour will be well qualified to have this important responsibility.
- There is only one additional assumption; the dental health professionals have to work in a team where the dentist also has sufficient qualifications and engagement in patient care.

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