# NATURE AND SCOPE OF OB

Organizational Behaviour is concerned with the understanding, prediction and control of human behaviour in organizations. It focuses on the individuals, the groups and the organization and also on their interactional relationships. It is the study and application of knowledge about how people act with organizations.

It is a human tool for human benefit. It applies broadly to the behaviour of people in all types of organizations. Wherever organizations are, there is a need to understand organizational behaviour.

**Features (Characteristics) of OB**

1. OB is a part of general management and not the whole of management. It represents behavioural approach to management.
2. OB contains a body of theory, research and application associated with a growing concern for people at the work place. It helps in understanding human behaviour in work organizations.
3. OB is a human tool for human benefit. It helps in predicting the behaviour of individuals.
4. OB is inter-disciplinary field of study. It tries to synthesize knowledge drawn from various behavioural and social sciences such as Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, Political-science, Economics, etc. In fact, OB is an applied behavioural science.
5. OB involves three levels of analysis of behaviour-individual behaviour, group behaviour and behaviour of the organization itself.
6. OB is an action-oriented and goal-directed discipline. It provides a rational thinking about people and their behaviour
7. OB is both a science and an art. The systematic knowledge about human behaviour is a science. The application of behvioural knowledge and skills clearly leans towards being an art.
8. OB seeks to fulfil both employees’ needs and organizational objectives.

**Scope of OB**

The scope of OB may be summed up in the words of S.P.Robbins as follows:

“OB is a field of study that investigates the impact that individual, group, and structures have on behaviour within organizations, for the purpose of applying such knowledge towards improving an organisation’s effectiveness”.

The scope of OB involves three levels of behaviour in organizations: individuals, groups and structure.

1. **Individual Behaviour**
   1. Personality
   2. Perception
   3. Values and Attitudes
   4. Learning
   5. Motivation
2. **Group Behaviour**
   1. Work groups and group dynamics
   2. Dynamics of conflict
   3. Communciation
   4. Leadership
   5. Morale
3. **Organization: Structure, Process and Application**
   1. Organizational Climate
   2. Organizational Culture
   3. Organizational Change
   4. Organizational Effectiveness
   5. Organizational Development

**Key Elements in OB**

The key elements in organizational behaviour are people, structure technology and the environment in which the organizations operate. When people join together in an organisation to accomplish an objective, some kind of structure is required. People also use technology to help get the job done, so there is an interaction of people, structure and the technology as shown in fig.1. In addition, these elements are influenced by the external environment, and they influence it.

Fig. 1:Key elements in organizational behaviour

Organization

People

Environment

Technology

Environment

Environment

Structure

Each of the four elements of organizational behaviour will be considered briefly.

**People:** People make up the internal social system of the organisation. They consist of individuals and groups. There are formal and informal groups. Groups are dynamic. They form, change and disband. Organizations exist to serve people, rather than people existing to serve organizations.

**Structure:** Structure defines the formal relationships of people in organisations. Different jobs are required to accomplish all of an organisation’s activities. There are managers and employees, accountants and assemblers. These people have to be related in some structural way so that their work can be effectively co-ordinated. These relationships create complex problems of co-operation, negotiation and decision-making.

**Technology:** Technology provides the resources with which people work and affects the tasks that they perform. The technology used has a significant influence in working relationships. The great benefit of technology is that it allows people to do more and better work, but it also restricts people in various ways. It has costs as well as benefits.

**Environment:** All organizations operate within an external environment. A single organisation does not exist alone. It is part of a larger system that contains many other elements such as Govt, the family, and other organizations.

Organizational behaviour starts with a set of six fundamental concepts revolving around the nature of people and organizations. They are as follows:

**The Nature of people:**

* Individual differences
* A whole person
* Motivated behaviour
* Value of the person (human dignity)

**The Nature of organisations**

* Social systems
* Mutual Interest