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**F.Y.B.A.  
SOCIOLOGY PAPER - I  
FOUNDATION OF SOCIOLOGY**

**(Under Distance Education Council Grant)**

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**I**

**SYLLABUS**

**FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIOLOGY**

**F.Y.B.A PAPER - I**

**OBJECTIVES :**

1. To introduce students to the basic concepts in sociology.
2. to familiarize students with the theoretical aspects of different concepts.

**1. Sociology as a discipline (15 lectures)**

- perspectives in Sociology : Functionalist, Conflict, Interpretive, Critical
- Sociological Imagination-Developing a sociological outlook.
- Significance of sociology

**2. Culture (15 lectures)**

- Understanding culture
- Characteristics of culture
- Types of culture-Subculture, counterculture
- Ethnocentrism, Xenocentrism, Cultural relativism
- Components of culture
- Towards a global culture

**3. Society and Groups (15 lectures)**

- Evolution of society: Hunting, Food gathering, Feudal; Industrial, Post-Industrial
- Types of social groups
- In group, Out group
- Primary group, Secondary group
- Electronic community (networking)

**4. Social institutions: Concept and Significance (15 lectures)**

- Social Stratification
- Bases of Stratification: Caste, Class, Gender, Age
- Religion : Church, Sect, Cult
- Political Institution: State and Government, Types of States
- Economic Institutions: Capitalism, Socialism, Informal Economics.

## II

### 5. Socialization (15 lectures)

- Socialization as a process
- Agencies of socialization
- Development of self : C H Cooley, G H Mead
- Gender socialization
- Political socialization
- Resocialization

### 6. Social Change (15 lectures)

- Theories of Change : Evolutionary, Functionalist, Conflict
- Factors of Social change
- Resistance of change
- Environment, Sustainable development and social change

**Note: Topics I to III will be done in the first term and topics IV to VI in the second term.**

### READING LIST

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## **SOCIOLOGY AS A DISCIPLINE**

### **Contents :**

\*Perspectives in sociology: - Functionalist, Conflict, Interpretive, Critical.

\*Sociology Imagination: - Developing a sociological outlook

\*Significance of sociology

### **Unit Structure :**

1.0 Objectives

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Definition

1.3 Subject matter of sociology

1.4 Is Sociology a science ?

1.5 Nature of sociology

1.6 Scope of sociology

1.7 Early thinkers

1.8 Perspectives in sociology

1.8.1 Functionalist perspective

1.8.2 Conflict perspective

1.8.3 Interactionist perspective

1.8.4 Critical perspective

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### **1.0 OBJECTIVES:-**

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- To give a basic understanding of sociology.
- To know the meaning and subject matter of sociology
- To understand the nature of scientific study
- To know the nature and scope of sociology
- To study the contribution of early thinkers towards the development of sociology

- To familiarize the students with various sociological perspectives

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### 1.1. INTRODUCTION:

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In the family of social sciences, Sociology is comparatively a new entrant. But because of its dealing with social problems, social relationships and social interactions the importance of the study of this subject has considerably increased. It has considerably developed in methodology, scope and approach. Attempts are now being made to study every social problem scientifically and objectively, eliminating subjectivity to the extent possible a distinctive way of examining human interactions. **Sociology** is the systematic study of social behavior and human groups. It focuses primarily on the influence of social relationships upon people's attitudes and behavior and on how societies are established and change. As a field of study sociology has a very broad scope. It deals with families, gangs, business firms, computer networks, political parties, schools, religions, and labor unions. It is concerned with love, poverty, conformity, technology, discrimination, illness, alienation, overpopulation and community.

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### 1.2. DEFINITION:

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Sociology is being defined differently by our sociologists and other's each one of course, has its own news about the nature and scope of the subject, as he conceives it.

According to **Ward** "**Sociology is science of society**".

**George Simmel** opines that **it is a subject which studies human inter-relationship**.

**Giddins** is of the view that "**Sociology is scientific study of society**".

**Max Weber** has viewed sociology as "**Science which attempts imperative understanding of social actions**".

**Sorokin** is of the opinion that **sociology is a study first of all the relationship and correlations between various classes... second between the social and non social aspects of life and third it studies general characteristics common to all classes of society**.

**Ogburn** has said that, "**Sociology is concerned with the study of social life and its relations to the factors of culture, natural environment, heredity and group**."

**Durkheim** while defining sociology has said that, “**It is the science of collective representation.**”

We may thus **conclude** these definitions with the definition of **E.S. Bogardus** when he says that, “**Sociology may be defined as the study of the ways in which social experiences function in developing, maturing and repressing human beings through inter-personal stimulations.**”

From all these definitions it becomes clear that sociology is concerned with social relationships and studies society, human interactions, inter-personal and intra-personal relations. It tries to study scientifically social institutions, organizations and systems. These definitions also make it amply clear that sociologists view the subject differently and that there is no unanimity in this regard.

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### **1.3. SUBJECT MATTER OF SOCIOLOGY:**

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while discussing its subject matter of sociologist, **Sorokin** said that, “**It seems to be a study, first of the relationship and correlation between various classes of social phenomena**” (correlation between economic and religious, family and moral, judicial and economic, mobility and political phenomena and so on); second that between social and non social (geographical, biological) phenomena; third the study of general characteristics common to all classes of phenomena. Thus according to his view point sociology studies social events, relationships between social and non social phenomena and generalized study of facts common to all aspects of social life.

In his book ‘**Society, Culture and Personality**’ he has said that sociology is more or less concerned with the working of human beings. In this study he covers the study of human behavior, social organizations, social phenomena and social values. He is thus altogether opposed to formal school of thought.

#### **Check Your Progress**

1. Define Sociology.
2. Discuss its subject matter.

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#### 1.4. IS SOCIOLOGY A SCIENCE?

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There is a continuing controversy about the nature of sociology. According to some sociologists it is a science, while others strongly refute this claim.

**What is a scientific study?** For a scientific study it is essential that the whole study should be systematic and without any subjectivity. A scientist is supposed to have a clear vision and a pointed approach. He should have capacity to record unbiased decisions and properly classify data's. He should also have vision to collect only such data as is useful for his study. He should conclude his findings after verification of data's and not on morality or certain pre-supposed philosophies, nations and ideas.

The most important element of a scientific study is that a scientist should deal with bear facts and not with ideal situations. Thus this study should be both factual and systematic. Then another element is that its results should have universal application. Then in a scientific study there should be cause effect relationship and it should also be capable of making certain safe predictions.

**Is Sociology A Science?** Now a question arises as to whether sociology is science or not. Those who support the cause of sociology as science plead that a present day sociologists must be methodological. He must base his conclusions on impartially collected, analyzed and interpreted data. He should also be willing to get his data tested anywhere to established its validity. They also argue that like natural scientists, Sociologists are concerned with hard facts and not with ideal situations. They try to analyses facts of social life as these are. They also believe that there are many social facts and theories which the sociologists have developed after hard labor and these are universally applicable, under similar circumstances. They also point out that like natural scientists, the sociologists are very much concerned with cause effect relationship e.g. social stratification and social disorganizations are the outcome of certain causes, which have their effects as well. As with the natural scientists, so with the sociologists, it is equal true that like the former the latter can make some safe predictions. They thus argue that "sociology is a science which attempts the interpretative under-standing of social action in order to arrive at a casual explanation of its causes and effects."

**Sociology- Not a Science:** there is other side of the picture as well. Many believe that society is not a perfect science. Like the results of natural sciences, the results obtained by social scientists cannot be generalized and these also cannot be same under all circumstances and at all places. The conditions always differ from

society to society and social changes are unavoidable. These are also very complex. Then it is said that each human beings has his own limitations and he provides information keeping those limitations into consideration. He is not prepared to disclose secrets and thus the information provided is not factual. It is also said that the many situations are not within the control of sociologists and repeat experimentation is almost impossible.

Each sociologist has subjective approach to the problem under investigation. There is no stage of investigation in which there is no subjectivity. Each one has some secrets which he is not prepared to disclose to the investigators. Unlike natural scientist, a sociologist has no laboratory facilities and also has no control over material to be experimented i.e. human beings. Not only this, but it is not possible to repeat experiments. It is more or less not possible to make the safe predictions because nature of social problems with which the sociologists are not the same all over the world.

#### **Check Your Progress**

1. Is sociology a science? Discuss it through the difference between natural and social sciences

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#### **1.5. NATURE OF SOCIOLOGY:**

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What is real nature of sociology about this controversy is likely to continue. According to Robert Stead Sociology is a social science and not a natural science, because it deals with human beings and social phenomena. It is positive and not normative science because it studies social phenomena as it is and not as it ought to be. It is pure and not applied science because it studies underlying factors of a social phenomenon. Sociology is an abstract and not a concrete science because it studies society in general. It deals with society, which in itself is abstract and as such the subject cannot be concrete. It is a science of generalization and not that of particularization because it studies a social problem in general and not in particular way. It does not study a social phenomenon from a particular angle. It is an empirical or rational science because it tries to follow logical method of data collection.

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## 1.6 SCOPE OF THE SOCIOLOGY

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Sociologist and others differ what should be the scope of sociology. August Comte makes us believe that sociology should try to study social phenomena on scientific lines. He has thus laid stress on scientific approach. Emile Durkheim has tried to separate sociology from other social science subjects and also tried to give an independent status to this subject. In his own way Pareto has tried to give it scientific orientation. According to him in sociology there should be no place for inferences. He is sure that there is basic unity among various social phenomena. He is of the view that sociology is much of science and social problems should and can be scientifically studied. Max Weber has however said that sociology should merely be interpretative understanding of social actions and nothing beyond that.

**Former or Specialist School of Thought:** There are two main schools of thought about the scope of sociology. Formal school of thought believes that scope of sociology should not be generalized but confined to the study of some specific aspects of society. The exponents of this school wish to keep the subject pure and independent. According to them it should deal with social relationships, social activities and processes of socialization.

**Max Weber**, who is the chief exponent of this school of thought, has said that sociology should deal with interpretations of social behaviors only.

**Vier Kandt**, , who is another exponent of this school of thought, is of the view that sociology should confine itself to the study of formal and not the actual behavior of the people in the society.

**Simmel** has given an abstract concept of sociology, in which stress has been laid on social relationship and social inter-actions. For him, every society is the mix of this two. Social relations are nothing but social interactions between two individuals. He has said that society is not collections of individuals but it is essentially a psychic inter-action between the individuals. It is sum total of social relations between the individuals living in it.

According to Simmel sociology should not be made a general science devoted to the study of social relations in general. It should be confined to the study of specific social relations because now these are being studied in the context of social production and social heritage.

Vone Wiese is another exponent of this school of thought. He believes that subject matter of sociology is different from other social sciences. He does not agree with the idea that sociology is combination of social sciences but it is a subject which combines different social science subjects. For him sociology as a special science has more importance than general sociology.

It should separate its subject matter from other social sciences.

**Synthetic School of Thought:** The school of thought believes that sociology should study society as a whole and not confine itself to the study of only limited social problems. Auguste comte believes that the scope of sociology should be considerably widened. According to him the study of one aspect of society can lead to misleading results because all aspects of society, like parts of human body, are inter-linked. Hobb-House and Sorokin also contribute to this view point. They too believe that Sociology should study society as a whole. The supporters of this school of thought agree that in our modern times no social science subject can remain isolated altogether ignoring other subjects of study. The scope of sociology, they argue should be general and not narrow. Durkheim has gone to the extent of saying that "Sociology is science of collective representation."

**Sorokin is the main exponent of this school of thought.** He is not satisfied with the traditional views about sociology and thus wants to give it a new approach. According to him sociology is a systematic science and it has manifold inter-actions. It is concerned with general facts of social life. He is keen to give systematic interpretation of society.

### Check Your Progress

Examine the nature and scope of sociology in detail

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## 1.7. EARLY THINKERS:-

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### August Comte :

In France, the 19<sup>th</sup> Century was an unsettling time for the nation's intellectuals. French monarchy had been deposed in the revolution of 1789 and Napoleon had suffered defeat in his effort to conquer Europe. Philosophers and intellectuals were finding the ways out to improve the society. August Comte is considered as the most influential philosopher of the early 1800s. He believed that in order to improve society the theoretical science of society should be developed and a systematic investigation of behavior should be carried. He Coined the term sociology to apply to the science of human behaviors. The term Sociology has been derived from Latin word 'socius' means 'society' and Greek word '**logus**' means '**science**'.

Comte hoped that the systematic study of social behavior would eventually lead to more rational human interactions. In Comte's hierarchy of the Sciences, Sociology was at the top. He called it the "queen", and its practioners "scientist-priests."

### Emile Derkheim :

Durkheim is considered as one of the founding fathers of sociology. He made many pioneering contributions to Sociology including his most important theoretical work on Suicide. Durkheim (1858-1917) was son of a rabbi he was educated in both France and Germany. He has an impressive academic record and was appointed as one of the first professors of the Sociology in France. Durkheim asserted that behavior must be understood in the larger social context, rather an individual action.

Though intensive study of Arunta tribe, he focused on the important functions of religion in reinforcing group Solidarity. According to Durkheim the growing division of labor in industrial society and increasing specialization leads to what he called as Anomie. In the state on anomie the confusion and the inability to cope with the circumstances also results in cases of suicide.

### Max Weber:

Max Weber was born in Germany (1864-1920). He studied legal and economic history, but gradually developed an interest in sociology. Later he became professor and taught at various German universities. He taught the "Verstehen", to his students. He said that in order to fully comprehend behavior, we must learn the subjective meanings people attach to their actions- how they

themselves view and explain their behavior. He is also credited for his key conceptual tool: the Ideal type. The concept of ideal type can be used to study the family, religion, authority, and economic systems, as well as the analyze bureaucracy.

#### **Karl Marx:**

Karl Marx (1818-1883) was a critique of existing institutions that a conventional academic career was impossible. He was a revolutionary and spent most of his life in exile from his native Germany. He was very much influenced by the ideas of Friedrich Engels (1820-1895) with whom he formed a lifelong friendship.

Marx lived in extreme poverty in England. He pawned most of his possessions, and several of his children died of malnutrition and disease.

In Marx's analysis, society was fundamentally divided between two classes i.e. Bourgoise and Proletariate who have opposite interests. In his examination of industrial society, he saw the factory as the center of conflict between the exploiters (the owners of the means of production and the exploited (the workers).

Marx's influence on contemporary thinking has been dramatic. His writings inspired those who led the communist revolutions in Russia, China, Cuba, Vietnam, and elsewhere.

#### **Check Your Progress**

Briefly analyze the contribution of early thinkers to the development of sociology.

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#### **1.8. PERSPECTIVES IN SOCIOLOGY:-**

Sociologists view society in different ways. Some see the world basically as a stable and ongoing entity. They are impressed with the endurance of the family, organized religion, and other social institutions. Some sociologists see society as composed of

many groups in conflict, competing for scarce resources. To other sociologists, the most fascinating aspects of the social world are the everyday, routine interactions among individuals that we sometimes take for granted. The four perspectives that are most widely used by sociologists will provide an introductory look at the discipline. These are the functionalist, conflict, interactionist and critical perspectives.

#### **1.8.1. Functionalist Perspective:-**

Also known as functionalism and structural functionalism, functionalist perspective is based on the assumption that society is stable, orderly system. This stable system is characterized by societal consensus, whereby the majority of members show a common set of values, belief and behavioral expectation. According to this perspective a society is composed of interrelated parts, each of which serves a function and contributes to the overall stability of the society. Societies develop social structure or institutions that persist bcoz they play a part in helping society survive. These institutions include the family, education, govt., religion, and the economy. If anything adverse happens to one of these institutions or part are affected and the system no longer functions properly.

Talcott Parsons (1902-1979). a Harvard university sociologist was a key figure in the development of functionalist theory. Parson had been greatly influenced by the works of Emile Durkheim, Max Weber and other European sociologists. Under the functionalist approach, if an aspect of social life does not contribute to a society stability or survival- if it does not serve some identifiably useful function or promote value consensus among member of a society- it will not be passed on from one generation to the next.

As an example of the functionalist perspective, let us examine prostitution. Why is it that a practice so widely condemned continues to display such persistence and vitality? Functionalists suggest that prostitution satisfies needs of patrons that may not be readily met through more socially acceptable forms such as courtship or marriage. The “buyer” receives sex without any responsibility for procreation or sentimental attachment; at the same time, the “seller” gains a livelihood through this exchange.

Through such an examination, we can conclude that prostitution does perform certain functions that society that seems to need. However, this is not to suggest that prostitution is a desirable or legitimate form of social behavior.

### **Manifest and Latent Functions:-**

Manifest function are intended or overly recognized by the participants in a social unit. In contrast, latent function is unintended function that is hidden and remains unacknowledged by participants. For example, a manifest function of education is the transmission of knowledge and skills from 1 generation to the next, a latent function is the establishment of social relations and networks. Merton noted that all features of a social system may not be functional at all times, dysfunctions are the un-desirable consequences of any element of a society. A dysfunction of education in United States is the perpetuation of gender, racial and class inequalities. Such dysfunction may threaten the capacity of a society to adapt and survive.

### **1.8.2.Conflict Perspective:-**

According to conflict perspectives, group in society are engaged in a continuous power struggle for control of scarce resources. Conflict may take the form of politics, litigation, negotiations or family discussions about financial matter. Simmel, Marx and Weber contributed significantly to this perspective by focusing on the inevitability of clashes between social groups. Today, advocates of the conflict perspective view social continuous power struggle among competing social group.

Karl Marx viewed struggle between social classes as inevitable, given the exploitation of workers under capitalism. Expanding on Marx's work, sociologists and other social scientist have come to see conflict not merely as a class phenomenon but as a part of everyday life in all societies. Thus, in studying any culture, organization, or social group, sociologists want to know who benefits, who suffers and who dominates at the expense of other. They are concerned with the conflict between women and men, parents and children, cities and suburbs and whites and African Americans, to name only few. In studying such questions, conflict theorists are interested in how society's institutions-including the family, govt., religion, education and the media- may help to maintain the privileges of some groups and keep others in a subservient position.

Like functionalist, conflict sociologists tend to use the Macro-level approach. Obviously, through, there is a striking difference between these two sociological perspectives. Conflict theorists are primarily concerned with the kinds of changes that can bring about, whereas functionalists look for stability and consensus.

The conflict model is viewed as more "radical" and "activist" because of its emphasis on social change and the need for



redistribution of resources to eliminate existing social inequality. On the other hand, the functionalist perspective, because of its focus on stability, is generally seen as more “conservative” (Dahrendorf, 1958)

Currently, conflict theory is accepted within the discipline of sociology as one valid way to gain insight into a society.

One important contribution of conflict theory is that it has encouraged sociologists to view society through the eyes of those segments of the population that rarely influence decision making.

Feminist theory builds in important way on the conflict perspective. Like other conflict theorists, feminist scholars see gender differences as a reflection of the subjugation of one group (women) by another group (men). Drawing on the work of Marx & Engels, contemporary feminist theorists often view women’s subordination as inherent in capitalist societies. Some radical feminist theorists, however, view the oppression of women as inevitable in all male-dominated societies, including those labeled as capitalist, socialist and communist (Tuchman, 1992).

### **1.8.3. Interactionist or Interpretive:-**

The functionalist and conflict perspectives both analyze behavior in terms of society wide patterns. However, many contemporary sociologists are more interested in understanding society as a whole through an examination of social interactions such as small groups conducting meetings, two friends talking casually with each other, a family celebrating a birthday and so forth. The interactionist perspective generalizes about fundamental or everyday forms of social interaction. Interactionism is a sociological framework for viewing human beings as living in a world of meaningful objects. These “objects” may include material things, actions, other people, relationships and even symbols. Focusing on everyday behavior permits interactions to better understand the larger society.

George Herbert Mead (1863-1931) is widely regarded as the founder of the interactionist perspective. Mead was interested in observing the minutest forms of communication-smiles, frowns, nods of the head- and in understanding how such individual behavior was influenced by the larger context of a group or society.

Interactionists see symbols as an especially important part of human communication. In fact, the interactionist perspective is sometime referred to as the symbolic interactionist perspective. Such researchers note that both a clenched fist and a salute have social meaning which are shared and understood by the members

of a society. In the U.S, a salute symbolizes respect, while a clenched fist signifies defiance. However in another culture different gestures might be used to convey a feeling of respect or defiance.

Let us examine how various societies portray suicide without the use of words. People in the U.S point a finger at the head (shooting); urban Japanese bring a fist against the stomach (stabbing); and the south fore of Papua , New Guinea , clench a hand at the throat (hanging). These types of symbolic interaction are classified as forms of nonverbal communication, which can include many other gestures, facial expressions, and postures.

Erving Goffman (1922-1982) made a distinctive contribution by popularizing a particular type of interactionist method known as the dramaturgical approach. The dramaturgist compares everyday life to the setting of the theater and stage. Just as actors present certain images, all of us seek to present particular features of our personalities while we hide other qualities. Thus, in a class, we may feel the need to project a serious image; at a party, it may seem important to look like a relaxed and entertaining person.

#### **1.8.4.Critical Perspective:-**

This perspective says that we live in a society dominated capitalist society, based on exchange principles of value and profit. Capitalist society is not a peaceful society but based on unequal exchanges of power and privileges. Critical theory is a social theory whose aim is critiquing and changing society and culture, unlike traditional theory whose aim is only understanding or explaining it. For eg. Instead of seeing the behavior of homeless youth as of criminal behaviour, the critical perspective would ask why did the youth become homeless and why are they connected to criminal behaviour?

Critical theorists like Horkheimer criticized science calling it harmful and destructive as it is controlled by the elite and powerful. They also critique the role of media in society, as it diverts the attention of people and only makes them consumers.

#### **Check Your Progress**

1. Critically analyse various perspectives in sociology.

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**Summary :**

In the family of social sciences, sociology is a new entrant. Sociologists are not unanimous about definition of sociology. Wide variety of definition of the subject shows that there are differences of opinion about the scope of the subject. These definitions however make clear that sociology is concerned with human relations and social institutions.

There is a continuing controversy about the nature of sociology. Some claim sociology to be a science where as some refute this claim.

Views also differ about the scope of sociology. The formal school of thought believe that scope of sociology should not be generalized whereas synthetic school believes that sociology should study society as a whole.

August Comte is considered as the most influential philosopher of 1800s. He is called as the father of sociology. He hoped that systematic study of social behavior will eventually lead to more rational interaction.

Durkheim made pioneering contribution to sociology and is remembered as one of the founding fathers of sociology.

Weber is known for "Verstehen". He said in order to fully comprehend behavior we must learn the subjective meaning people attach to their action.

Marx's theory of class struggle is an incredible contribution to sociology in analyzing the conflict. His influence on contemporary thinking has been dramatic.

Sociologists view society in different way. The four perspectives i.e functionalist, conflict, interactionist and critical are most widely used by sociologists to give an introductory look at the discipline. Functionalist perspective is based on the assumption that society is stable, orderly system. Society is composed of interrelated parts, each of which serves a function and contribute to the overall stability of the society.

According to conflict perspective, groups in society are engaged in a continuous power struggle for control of scarce resources.

Many sociologists are more interested in understanding society through social interactions. The interactionist perspective

generalizes about fundamental or everyday forms of social interaction.

Critical perspective says that we live in a society, based on exchange principles of value and profit.

**Questions:**

1. "Sociology is a systematic study of social behavior and human group". discuss the statement with reference to various definition and subject matter of sociology.
2. What is meant by scientific study? Illustrate with examples to support the argument whether sociology is a science or not.
3. Critically analyse the nature and scope of sociology. Elaborate on Formative and synthetic school of thoughts.
4. Briefly highlight the contribution of early thinkers towards the development of sociology.
5. Discuss the various perspectives in sociology. Which one do you think is important and why?

**Reference and readings:**

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## **SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION**

### **Unit structure:**

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Sociological imagination.
- 2.2 Developing a sociological outlook.
- 2.3 Importance /significance and practical utility of sociology.
  - 2.3.1 Importance of study of sociology.
  - 2.3.2 Significance of sociology.
  - 2.3.3 Careers and specialization in sociology.

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### **2.0 OBJECTIVES:**

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- To develop a sociological outlook by enhancing the sociological imagination.
- To Know the importance of the study of sociology.
- To understand the significance of sociology.
- To make students aware of the practical utility of sociology in day –to-day life.
- To explore the various specialization and career opportunities in sociology.

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### **2.1. THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION:**

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Sociologist C. Wright (1959 b) described sociological reasoning as the “Sociological imagination- the ability to see the relationship between individual experiences and the larger society. This awareness enables us to understand the link between our personal experiences and the social context in which they occur. The sociological imagination helps us distinguish between personal trouble and social (or public) issues. ( Kendall ; 2007).

A key element in the sociological imagination is the ability to view one’s own Society as an outsider would, rather than from the limited perspective of personal experiences and cultural biases. Sociological imagination allow us to go beyond personal experience and in attempting to understand social behavior,

sociologists rely on an unusual type of creating thinking. C. Wright Mills (1959) described such thinking as the **sociological imagination**- an awareness of the relationship between an individual and the wider society. This awareness allows people (not simply sociologists) to comprehend the links between their immediate, personal social settings and the remote, impersonal social world that surrounds them and helps to shape them.

A key element in the sociological imagination is the ability to view one's own society as an outsider would, rather than from the limited perspective of personal experiences and cultural biases. Sociological imagination allows us to go beyond personal experiences and observations to understand broader public issues. Unemployment, for example, is unquestionably a personal hardship for a man or woman without a job. However, C. Wright Mills pointed out that when unemployment is a social problem shared by millions of people, it is appropriate to question the way that a society is structured or organized. Similarly, Mills advocated use of the sociological imagination to view divorce not simply as the personal problem of a particular man and woman, but rather as a structural problem, since it is the outcome of many marriages. And he was writing this in the 1950s, when the divorce rate was but a fraction of what it is today (I. Horowitz, 1983:87-108)

Sociological imagination can bring new understanding to daily life around us.

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## 2.2.DEVELOPING A SOCIOLOGICAL OUTLOOK

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The sociological imagination require us, above all, to 'think ourselves away from the familiar routines of our daily life in order to look at them a new. Consider the simple act of drinking Coffee. What could we find to say, from a sociological point of view about such an apparently uninteresting piece of behavior An enormous amount.

We could point out first of all that coffee is not just refreshment. It possesses Symbolic value as part of our day-to-day Social activities, Often the ritual associated with coffee drinking is much more important than the act of consuming the drink itself. For many westerners the morning cup of coffee stands at the centre of a personal routine. It is an essential first step to starting the day. Morning coffee is often followed later in the day by coffee with others-the basis of a social ritual. Two people who arrange to meet for coffee are probably more interested in getting together & chatting than in what they actually drink. Drinking and eating in all societies, in fact, provide occasions for social interaction and the enactment of rituals- and these offer a rich subject matter for sociological study.

Second, coffee is a drug, containing caffeine, which has a Stimulating effect on the brain. Many people drink coffee for the extra lift it provides. Long days at the office and late nights studying are made more tolerable by coffee breaks. Coffee is a habit – forming substance, but coffee addicts are not regarded by most people in Western culture as drug users.

Third the individual who drinks cup of coffee is caught up in a complicated set of social & economic relationships stretching across the world. Coffee is a product which links people in some of the wealthiest & most impoverished parts of the planet, it is consumed in great quantities in wealthy Countries, but is grown primarily in poor ones, and it provides many countries, with their largest source of foreign exchange. The production & transportation of coffee require continuous transactions between people thousands of miles away from the coffee drinker. Studying such global transactions is an important task of sociology since many aspects of our lives are now affected by worldwide social influences and communications.

Fourth, the act of sipping a coffee presumes a whole process of past social & economic development. Along with other now familiar items of western diets – like teas, bananas, potatoes & white sugar – coffee became widely consumed only from the late 1800s. Although the drink originated in the Middle East, its mass consumption dates, from the period of Western expansion about a century & a half ago. Virtually all the coffee we drink today comes from areas (South America & Africa) that were colonized by Europeans, it is in no sense a 'natural' part of the Western diet. The colonial legacy has had an enormous impact of the development of the global coffee trade.

Fifth coffee is a product that stands at the heart of contemporary debates, about globalization, international trade, human rights & environmental destruction. As coffee has grown in popularity, it has become 'branded' & politicized; the decisions that consumers make about what kind of coffee to drink & where to purchase it have become life style choices. Individuals may choose to drink only organic coffee, natural decaffeinated coffee or coffee that has been 'fairly traded' through schemes, that pay full market prices, to small coffee producers in developing countries. They may opt to patronize 'independent' coffee houses, rather than corporate coffee chains such as starbuck which is a brand in UK. Coffee drinkers might decide to boycott coffee from certain, with poor human rights & environmental records. Sociologist are interested to understand how globalization heightens people awareness of issues accruing in distant corners of the planet & prompts them to act on new knowledge in their own life.

**Check Your Progress**

1. What is meant by sociological imagination .Discuss the significance of sociological outlook in understanding and analysis of individuals existence in day to day society
2. Critically examine the usage of mobile phone in contemporary society through your sociological imagination

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**2.3 IMPORTANCE/ SIGNIFICANCE & PRACTICAL UTILITY OF SOCIOLOGY:**


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Sociology as a subject of study is a new comer in the family of social sciences but today it has occupied very important position, which signifies its utility. It has become very important because it is concerned with human beings who act and react in the Society.

Sociology studies human resources and determines their social strength. It is a body of knowledge which studies social relationships in a systematic way. Needless to say that these relationships are very important for proper conduct of human life.

**2.3.1.Importance of Study of Sociology:** Sociology is becoming quite popular subject of study because it has some obvious advantages. These may briefly be discussed as under:-

1. It is a subject which helps us in assessing available human resources and extent of human resources needed for solving our social problems. In this way sociology helps in human planning process which contributes significantly in economic problem.
2. It provides us basic and fundamental knowledge about human society, which includes strong and weak points of society, including human relationships. In this way it saves us from duping in the dark.
3. Each society is faced with social problems, which in turn create economic and political problems. Some of the social evils



are deep rooted and it is essential that these should be rooted out. Sociology helps us both in identifying those problems and finding out their solution. Without proper understanding magnitude of the problems, these can not be properly tackled.

4. It is sociology which helps us in conciliation and adjustment. Each society has diverse elements. These, if not properly reconciled, can result in dis-organization and de-stabilization of the society. It is sociology which helps us in understanding the extent of diversity and the way in which this diversity can be converted into homogeneity.

5. It is sociology which helps us in social reconstruction becomes easy.

6. Each society has its cultural heritage and wants to preserve that. It is sociology which high-lights and researches past culture heritages and also helps in the development and growth of cosmopolitan culture, so that there are no cultural clashes.

7. It helps in bringing family stability. It is sociology which helps us in identifying the causes of family instability and family disorganization. It is again sociology which tells us how emerging de-stabilizing trends in the family should be checked, so that strong family system continues.

8. It is sociology which helps us in understanding social problems. Many social problems remain unidentified and many with the passage of time become maladies. It is essential that these should be timely checked before their tackling becomes difficult. It is sociology which helps us in timely identifying of social problems.

9. It helps us in proper understanding the needs of social relationship and the way in which this relationship should be maintained.

10. It is sociology which makes us tolerant by telling us good points and healthy customs, traditions, norms and value of other societies. It enables us to appreciate what is the best in them which needs to be adjusted in our life style. Thus sociology helps us in tolerating others and appreciating their view point.

### **2.3.2.Importance of Study of Sociology in India :**

Study of sociology is very important for India . It is because we are a developing society and our rulers in the past not only tried to solve our social problems but also allowed these to get deep rooted.

The sociologists in India can help us in understanding deep rooted cause of casteism and regionalism, which today pose a great threat to our social, economic and political system. They can

also tell us to why really untouchability is not getting rooted out and corruption at all levels in our society is on the increase

Against sociologists in India can play a significant role in our national and emotional integration by identifying the areas where such integration can easily be possible. This can be done with the help of scientific study of customs and traditions. The sociologist can also help in knowing why efforts made so far to raise the living standard of weaker sections of society have failed. In fact in our society the sociologists can play a big role because it is passing through very difficult stages of social transition and when it on the cross roads, the sociologists alone can provide proper direction and give proper lead. As already pointed out task becomes difficult because our society is full of diversities and neither problems of all sections of society are same nor solution can be uniform.

### **2.3.2 Significance Of Sociology:-**

Sociology has many practical implications, for our lives, as C. Mills emphasized.

#### **1. Awareness Of Cultural Differences:-**

First sociologist allows us to see the social world from many perspectives. Quite often, if we understand how people live, we can have better idea about their problems. Policies, which are meant for solving the problems of people's may fail if they have not understood the life of people. Example – Policies regarding tribal, or slum dwellers rehabilitation or street hawkers shifting bar dancer's profession or even allowing shopkeepers to have late night business, all require practical knowledge of their life.

#### **2. Assessing The Effect Of Policies:-**

Many policies related to employment or rehabilitation of people failed miserable since they do not make use of the aims & real needs of people. Sociologist brings the basic needs, & objectives of people are concerned into light so that the government can understand the causes of failure. Unless people are involved in any programmed mean for them, the programme is not going to be successful. Sociological research points, out deficiencies, in the policy and discrepancy between the people's aims & the policy aims.

### 3. Self Enlightenment:-

Sociology provides, knowledge to understand self. Sociology helps us to know why we behave in a particular manner. Many self help groups- Alcoholics, dog lovers, Anonymous, environmentalist, Senior citizen group have learned to help themselves without being dependent on government.

#### Check Your Progress

1. Elaborate on the significance, importance and practical utility of sociology in everyday life.

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#### 2.3.3 Careers & Specialization in Sociology:

Sociology is not only an intellectual discipline, it is also a profession. When we speak of a profession, we refer mainly to such themes as the uses or applications of a body of knowledge. Sociologist plays a rich and varied role in today's society. They serve in a variety of capacities such, as consultant, teacher, policy maker, researcher, administrator, clinical counselor, social critic, interviewer, journalist, probation and parole worker, career counselor, social worker, recreation worker, programme evaluator, urban planner, marketing administration co-coordinator and personal manager etc. they work in areas as broad and diverse as the discipline they have chosen.

**Knowledge of sociology can be used in the following areas of social life:**

1. Teaching
2. Social research
3. Social work
4. Professions-medicine, law, engineering, business etc.
5. Industry
6. Rural and Urban planning

7. Public administration- civil services
8. Policy making
9. business consulting
10. Politics
11. Architecture
12. Child welfare and Health welfare
13. Gerontology (study of old age people)
14. Computer industry
15. Military intelligence and military
16. Entrepreneurship
17. International relations
18. Criminal justice
19. City management
20. New emerging careers: (a) action programme, and (b) development

#### **1.5.2. Specialization within sociology**

- Aging/ Social Gerontology
- Biosociology
- Collective Behavior/ Social Movements
- Community/ Rural Society
- Comparative Sociology/ Macro sociology
- Criminal Justice/ Corrections
- Criminology/ Delinquency
- Cultural Sociology
- Demography
- Development/ Modernization/ Social Change
- Deviant Behavior/ Social disorganization
- Economy and Society
- Education
- Environmental Sociology
- History of Sociology/ Social thought
- Human ecology
- Industrial Sociology

- International Development/ Third World
- Law and Society
- Leisure/ Sports/ Recreation
- Marriage and the Family
- Mass Communication/ Public Opinion
- Mathematical Sociology
- Medical Sociology
- Methodology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches
- Micro computing/ Computer applications
- Military Sociology
- Occupations/ Professions
- Political Sociology
- Race/ Ethnic/ Minority Relations
- Religion
- Sex and Gender
- Small Groups
- Social Control
- Social Networks
- Social Organization/ Formal/ Complex
- Social Psychology
- Socialization
- Sociological Practice/ Social Policy
- Sociology of Art/ Literature
- Sociology of Knowledge/ Science
- Sociology of Language/ social Linguistics
- Sociology of Markets
- Sociology of Mental Health
- Sociology of Work
- Stratification/ Mobility
- Urban Sociology
- Visual Sociology

### Check Your Progress

1. Discuss in detail the diverse specializations available in sociology directing one to opt for various careers in sociology

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### Summary:

The term sociological imagination was developed by C.Wright Mills to go beyond personal experience and to rely on an unusual type of creative thinking. The sociological imagination require us above all, to think ourselves away from the familiar routines of our daily life in order to look at them a new.

Today sociology has occupied very important position due to its significance and utility. Study of sociology is very important for India .It is because we are a developing society and our rulers in the past not only tried to solve our problem but also allowed it to get deep rooted.

Sociology makes us aware of cultural differences, help us in assessing the effect of policies and contribute to our self enlightenment. There are large number of specialization and career opportunities available in sociology.

### Questions:

- Examine in detail how sociological outlook and sociological imagination helps one to develop a better understanding of society and social problem.
- Highlight the significance of sociology in general and its importance in Indian society in particular.
- Write a detail note on significance and practical utility of sociology.

**Reference and readings:**

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## **CULTURE**

### **MEANING, FUNCTIONS, CHARACTERISTICS, TYPES**

#### **Unit Structure**

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Understanding culture
- 3.3 Meaning and definitions of culture
- 3.4 Functions of culture
- 3.5 Characteristics of culture
- 3.6 Types of culture
- 3.7 Subculture
- 3.8 Counter culture
- 3.9 Summary
- 3.10 Suggested readings
- 3.11 Questions

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#### **3.0 OBJECTIVES**

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- To enhance student's understanding of the concept of culture
- To acquaint them with the various functions and characteristics of culture
- To highlight the types of culture

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#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

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Culture is one of the most important concepts in social sciences. The study of human society immediately and necessarily leads us to the study of its culture. The study of society or any aspect of it becomes incomplete without a proper understanding of the culture of that society culture and society go together. They are inseparable. It is important to distinguish between the related concepts of culture and society. Sometimes the concepts are used



synonymously to mean all learned habits the total ways of life of a social group, or a group's social heritage.

In sociological usage, culture specifically refers to social structure and ideas that give meaning to human social structure, while society refers to social structure some what apart from underlying values and ideas. The study of the "society" or social structure, of a group, on the other hand, is primarily concerned with the patterns of organization and interaction built upon that cultural background. Although culture and society are closely related concepts that can never be wholly separated.

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### **3.2 UNDERSTANDING CULTURE**

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Culture is a unique possession of man. Every man is born into a society is the same as saying that "every man is born into a culture. Every man can be regarded as a representative of this culture. Culture is the unique quality of man which separates him from the lower animals. As used by sociologist to and cultural anthropologists, culture has a different meaning.

To a sociologist, a culture is a system of ideas, values, beliefs, knowledge, norm, customs and technology shared by almost everyone in a particular society.

Culture can be said to include all the human phenomena in a society. Culture includes all learned behaviour. Culture is a very board term that includes in its self all our walks of life, our modes of behaviour, our philosophers and ethics, our morals and manners, our customs and tradition, our religious, political, economic and other types of activities.

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### **3.3 MEANING AND DEFINITIONS OF CULTURE**

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All the human societies have complex ways of life that differ greatly from one to another. These ways have come to be known as culture in 1871. Edward Tylor gave us the first definition of this concept. Culture as defined by Edward refer "is that complex whole which includes knowledge belief, art, law, morals custom and other capabilities and habit acquired by man as a member of society".

Robert Bierstadt Simplified Tylor's definition by stating "culture is the complex whole that consists of all the ways we think and do and everything we have as member of society. "

In the word of MacIver and Page, culture is "the realm of styles of values of emotional attachments of intellectual adventures"

B. Malinowski has defined culture as the cumulative creation of man". He also regarded culture as a handiwork of man and the medium, through which he achieves his ends.

Culture is often referred as a "Sum total of behaviour traits which a person, comes to acquire through instruction and learning. It shapes an individuals reaction to external environment it provides the individual a structure of socially approved ideas and beliefs, norms and values.

#### **Check Your Progress**

1. Explain the relationship between culture and society
2. Define culture

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### **3.4 FUNCTIONS OF CULTURE**

Man is not only a social animal but also a cultural being. Man's social life has been made possible because of culture. Culture is something that has elevated him from the level of animal to other superior animal. Man can not survive without culture. It represents the entire achievements of mankind. Culture has been fulfilling a number of functions among which the following may be noted.

#### **1. Culture defines situation**

Culture defines social situation for us. It not only defines but also conditions and determines what we eat, and drink what we wear, where to laugh, weep sleep to make friends with, what work we do, what to worship etc.

#### **2. Culture is the treasury of knowledge**

Culture provides knowledge which is important for the physical, social and intellectual existence of man. Birds and animals behave instinctively with the help of instincts they try to adapt themselves with the environment. But man has greater intelligence and learning capacity with the help of these he has been able to adapt himself with the environment or modify it to suit

his convenience. Culture has made such an adaptation and modification possible and easier by providing man the necessary skills and knowledge. Culture preserves knowledge and helps its transmission from generation to generation through its element that is language. Language helps not only the transmission of knowledge but also its preservation, accumulation and diffusion. On the contrary, animals do not have this advantage, because, culture does not exist at sub-human level.

### **3. Culture provides behavior patterns**

Culture directs and confines the behavior of an individual. Culture assigns goals and provides means for achieving them. It rewards his noble walk and punishes the immoral ones. It assigns him status and roles. We see, dream, aspire, work, strive, enjoy, according to the cultural expectation. Culture not only controls but also liberates human, energy and activities. Man, indeed, follows his culture in every path of his life.

### **4. Culture defines attitudes, values and goals**

Attitudes refer to the tendency to feel and act in certain ways, values are the measure of goodness or desirability. Goals refer to the attainment which our values define as worthy. It is the culture which conditions our attitudes towards various issues such as religion, morality, science, family planning, prostitution, and so on. Our values concerning private property, fundamental rights representative governments etc. are influenced by our culture. Our goals of winning the target, understanding others, attaining salvation being respectful and obedient to elders and teachers being patriotic, loyal etc. are set forth by our culture. We are being socialized on these models.

### **5. Culture models personality**

Culture exercises a great influence on the development of personality. No child can develop human qualities in the absence of a cultural environment. Culture prepares man for group life and provides him the design of living. It is culture that provides opportunities for the development of personality and sets limits on its growth. As Ruth Benedict has pointed out, every culture will produce its, special type or types of personality. This fact has been stressed by her in her "Patterns of Culture" an analysis of the culture of three primitive societies. Yet another anthropologist by name Margaret Mead has stated that a culture shapes the character and behaviors of individual living in it.... This fact she has established in her "Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies- A study of New Guinea tribal life.

### **6. Culture decides our career**

What career, we are likely to pursue is largely decided by our culture. Whether we should become a politician, a social worker

a doctor, an engineer, a soldier, a farmer, a professor, an industrialist, a religious leader and so on is decided by our culture. Culture sets limitations on our choice to select different careers. Individuals may develop, modify or oppose the trends of their culture but they always live within its framework. Only a few can find outlet in the culture.

We can conclude that the individual is exposed to and molded by the culture of the group into which he is born. But the culture provides not only for “universals” but also for “alternatives”. There is not only conformity in cultural learning but also variations. Every individual is unique in any culture. The uniqueness may be based on individual differences in ability, aptitude and learning. The impact of culture on the individual is not always identical in every case. Every individual is soon or later exposed to influences which are not completely determined by culture. Traveling, books, radio, cinema, television, newspaper, exposes an individual to many influences outside the culture. Various biological and social factors bring about uniqueness of the individuals in any culture.

#### **Check Your Progress**

1. State the importance of culture in moulding personality of an individual
2. What are the various functions of culture?

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### **3.5 CHARACTERISTICS OF CULTURE**

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Most definitions of culture emphasize certain features. Namely, culture is shared, it is acquired not in born, the elements make up a complex whole, and it is transmitted from one generation to the next. Culture, can be said to be concept as all that human beings learn to do, to use, to produce, to know and to they grow to maturity and live out their lives in the social groups to where they belong. Culture is basically a blueprint for living in a particular society.

**It is necessary for us to know the main features of culture:**

**1. Culture is learnt**

Culture is not inherited biologically, but learnt socially by man. It is not an inborn tendency. There is no cultural instinct as such culture is often "Learned ways of behavior". Unlearned behavior such as closing the eyes while sleeping, the eye blinking reflex and so on, are purely physiological and not cultural. Shaking hands or saying "namaskar" or "thanks" on the other hand, are cultural. Similarly, wearing clothes, combing the hair, wearing ornaments, drinking from a glass, eating from a plate, etc. are all ways of behavior learnt by man culturally.

**2. Culture is social**

Culture does not exist in isolation. Neither is it an individual phenomenon. It is a product of society. It originates and develops through social interactions. It is shared by the members of society. No man can acquire culture without association with other human beings. Man becomes man only among men. It is the culture which helps man to develop human qualities in a human environment. Deprivation of company or association of other individuals to an individual is nothing but deprivation of human qualities.

**3. Culture is shared**

Culture in the sociological sense, is something shared. It is not something that an individual alone can possess. For example, customs, traditions, beliefs, ideas, values, morals etc. are all shared by people of a group or society. The inventions of Albert Einstein, the literary works of Kalidasa, the philosophical work etc, are all shared by a large number of people. As Robert Bierstedt said "Culture is something adopted, used, believed, practiced or possessed by more than one person. It depends upon group life for its existence."

**4. Culture is transmissive**

Culture is capable of being transmitted from one generation to the other. Parents pass on culture traits to their children, and they in turn to their children, and so on. Culture is transmitted not through genes but by means of language. Language is the main vehicle of culture. Language in its different forms like reading, writing, and speaking makes it possible for the present generation to understand the achievements of earlier generations. But language itself is a part a culture. Once language is acquired, transmission of culture may take place by imitation as well as by instruction.

### **5. Culture is continuous and cumulative**

Culture exists as a continuous process. In its historical, growth it tends to become cumulative. Culture is a “growing whole” which includes in itself, the achievements of the past and the present and makes provision for the future achievements of mankind “culture may thus be conceived of as a kind a stream flowing down through the centuries from one generation to another”. Hence some sociologists like Linton called culture “the social heritage” of man. As Robert Bierstedt writes, culture is the memory of the man race”. It becomes difficult for us to imagine what society would be like without this accumulation of culture, what our lives would be without it.

### **6. Culture is consistent and integrated**

Culture in its development has revealed a tendency to be consistent. At the same time different parts of culture are interconnected. For example, the value system of society is closely connected with its other aspects such as morality, religion, customs, traditions, beliefs, and so on.

### **7. Culture is dynamic and adaptive**

Though culture is relatively stable it is not altogether static. It is subjected to slow but constant changes. Change and growth are latent in culture. There have been many changes and growth from the vedic times to the present times. Culture is therefore dynamic.

Culture is responsive to the changing conditions of the physical world. It is adaptive. It also intervenes in the natural environment and helps man in his process of adjustment. Culture assists us to survive and adapt to the changes.

### **8. Culture is gratifying**

Culture provides proper opportunities and prescribes means for the satisfaction of our needs and desires. These needs may be biological or social in nature. Our need for food, shelter, and clothing on the one hand and our desire for status, name, fame, money etc. are all for example, fulfilled according to the cultural ways. Culture determines and guides the varied activities of man. In fact, culture is defined as the process through which human beings satisfy their wants.

### **9. Culture varies from society to society**

Every society has a culture of its own. It differs from society to society. Culture of every society is unique to itself. Cultures are not uniform. Culture elements such as customs, traditions, morals,

ideas, values, ideologies etc, are not uniform everywhere. Ways of eating speaking, greeting, dressing, entertaining living etc, of different societies differ significantly. Culture varies from time to time also. No culture ever remains constant.

#### 10. Culture is super organic and ideational

Culture is sometimes called “the super organic”. By “super organic” Herbert Spencer meant that culture is neither organic nor inorganic in but above there two. The term implies the social meaning of physical objects and physiological acts. The social meaning may be independent of physiological and physical properties and characteristics. For example the social meaning of a national flag is not just “a piece of coloured cloth”. The flag represents a nation. Similarly priest's, prisoner, professors and professional players, engineers and doctors, farmers and soldiers, and other are not just biological beings. They are viewed in their society differently. Their social status and role can be understood only through culture.

Further, every society considers its culture as an ideal. It is regarded as an end in itself. It is intrinsically valuable. The people are also aware of their culture as an ideal one. They are proud of their cultural heritage.

#### Check Your Progress

1. Highlight the different characteristics of culture which evolve from the definition
2. Explain in detail the various characteristics of culture
3. Culture is super organic elaborate on the concept

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### 3.6 TYPES OF CULTURE

The use of the phrase “a culture” may imply that each society has a single culture that is shared and accepted equally by every member. In reality this is not the case. What is called a society's culture is often only a common denominator of diverse

culture elements found within a society. In order to function, every social group must have a culture of its own-its own goals, norms, values, and ways of doing things. As Thomas Lasswell (1965) pointed out such group culture is not just a “partial or miniature” culture. It is a full blown, complete culture in its own right. Every family, community, ethnic group and society has its own culture. Hence every individual participates in number of different cultures. in the course of a day. Meeting social expectation of various cultures is often a source of considerable stress for individuals in complex, heterogeneous societies like ours. Many college students for example, find that the culture of the campus varies significantly from the culture of their family or neighborhood. At home they may be criticized for their clothing, their anti establishments ideas, and for spending too little time with the family. On the campus they may be pressured to open up and experiment a little or to reject old fashioned values.

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### **3.7 SUB CULTURE**

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When a group of people within a society have a style of living that includes features of dominant culture but also certain cultural elements not found in other groups their group culture is called sub culture. A sub culture may develop around occupations such as those in the medical or military fields. Sub culture may reflect a social and ethnic difference, as the sub culture of black Americans.

Certain groups, in every modern society, share certain complexes which are not characteristic of all the other groups in the society. Immigrant groups, for example bring along with them a few culture complexes of their native country and adopt a few from the host country. The mixture of two cultures thus emerging represents a “sub culture”. A dynamic and socially diversified society of today consists of such “sub culture” as the part of main cultural and social system. The individuals mainly live and function within the sub cultures.

Every complex society is made up of many sub culture. Individual members often function in more than one, and they pass through different sub culture as they progress through the stages of life cycle. Sub cultural traits are often passed outside the group from one sub cultural to another and into the cultural mainstream.

Sociologist use the term sub culture to refer to the distinctive lifestyles, values, norms and belief’s of certain segments of the population within a society. The concept of sub culture originates in studies of juvenile delinquency and criminality. However sociologists increasingly use sub culture to refer to the culture of



discrete population segments within a society. The term is primarily applied to the culture of ethnic groups as well as to social classes.

Several groups have been studied at one time or another by sociologists as examples of sub cultures. These can be classified roughly as follows

#### **1. Ethnic sub cultures**

Many immigrant groups have maintained their group identities and sustained their traditions while at the same time adjusting to the demands of the wider society. Example America's newest immigrants, Korea, India, Japan, Taiwan, have maintained their values by living together in tight knit communities in New York, Los Angeles and other large cities while at the same time encouraging their children to achieve success by American terms.

#### **2. Occupational sub culture**

Certain occupation seems to involve people in a distinctive lifestyle even beyond their work. Construction workers, police, entertainers, and many other occupational groups involve people in distinctive sub cultures. New York's Wall Street is not only the financial capital of the world; it is identified with certain values such as materialism or power.

#### **3. Religious sub culture**

Certain religious groups though continuing to participate in the wider society nevertheless practice lifestyle that set them apart. These include Christian groups, Muslim, Jews and many religious groups. Sometimes the lifestyle may separate the group from the culture as the whole as well as the sub culture of its immediate community.

#### **4. Political sub culture**

Small marginal political groups may so involve their members in such a way that their entire way of life is an expression of their political conviction. Often these are so called left-wing and right-wing groups that reject much of what they see in American society, but remain engaged in society through their constant efforts to change it to their liking.

#### **5. Geographical sub culture**

Large societies often show regional variation in culture. The United States has several geographical areas known for their distinctive sub culture. For eg, the south is known for its leisurely

approach to life its broad dialect and its hospitality California is known for its trendy and ultra relaxed or laid back life style and New York stands as much for an anxious elitist ,arts and literature oriented sub culture as for a city.

#### 6. Social class sub culture

Although social classes cut horizontally across geographical, ethnic and other subdivisions of society to some degree it is possible to discern cultural differences among the classes. Sociologists have documented those linguistic styles, family and household forms and values and norms applied to child rearing are patterned in terms of social class sub cultures.

#### 7. Deviant sub culture

As we mentioned earlier sociologist first began to study sub cultures as a way of explaining Juvenile delinquency and criminality. This interest expanded to include the study of a wide variety of groups that are marginal to society in one way or another and whose life style clash with that of the wider society in important ways. Some of the deviant sub cultural groups studied by sociologists include prostitutes, pick pockets, drug users and variety of criminal groups.

#### Check Your Progress

1. Define sub culture
2. Write a note on different types of sub culture

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### 3.8 COUNTER CULTURE

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A sub culture that is so different from the dominant culture as to sharply challenge it is Known as counter culture. Counter culture are typically found among the young. The hippie culture of the late 1960s for example strongly rejected traditional life styles and created a set of norms that directly opposed majority beliefs about work, patriotism and material possessions.

Counter culture is generally found among the young because they do not respect the existing cultural norms. Young people can adjust to counter culture but old people cannot. Counter

culture arises out of the need of some individuals to find a group support for their failure to follow the general or dominant patterns. For example unemployed youths take to antisocial activities by forming a group of their own. The growth of counter culture reflects the quality of frustration within society

Not all countercultures are nonviolent. In 1995, the federal building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, was blown up, killing 168 people and injuring many others. That horrific crime brought to light the existence of another counterculture in the United States: rural militants. While such groups go by several names, their members tend to be people who despise the U.S. government for what they see as its interference in the lives of citizens.

### **Counterculture and Politics**

In many parts of the world, ethnic, political, or religious groups within larger nations struggle for independence or dominance. For generations, the Basque separatist group ETA (Freedom for the Basque Homeland) in northern Spain has violently pursued the goal of independence for the Basque regions. In Northern Ireland, which is governed by Great Britain, Sinn Fein is a violent political organization whose stated goal is the end of British rule in Ireland. ETA and Sinn Fein are examples of countercultures

### **Check Your Progress**

1. With the help of examples explain counter culture

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## **3.9 SUMMARY**

All human societies have complex ways of life that differ greatly from one to the other. Each society has its own unique blueprint for living, or culture. Culture consists of all that human beings learn to do, to use, to produce, to know, and to believe as they grow to maturity and live out their lives in the social groups to which they belong.

Human are remarkably unspecialized, culture allows us to adapt quickly and flexibly to the challenges of our environment. Sociologists view culture as having three major components, material culture, non material culture and language.

Language and the production of tools are central elements of culture. Evidence exists that animals engage, or can be taught to

engage, in both of these activities. Does this mean that they have culture? Scientists disagree about how to interpret the evidence. With-out question, however it can be said that human have refined culture to a far greater degree than other animals & are far more dependent on it for their existence.

Every social group has its own complete culture. Sociologists use the term sub culture to refer to the distinctive lifestyles, values, norms & beliefs associated with certain segments of the population within a society. Types of subcultures include ethnic, occupational, religious, political, geographical, social class, and deviant subcultures.

People in all societies must confront and resolve certain common, basic problems. Cultural universals are certain models or patterns that have developed in all cultures to resolve those problems. Among them are the division of labour, the incest taboo, marriage, family organization, rites of passage, & ideology though the forms are universal, the content is unique to each culture.

By dividing the responsibility for completing necessary tasks among their members, societies create a division of labor. Every culture has established rites of passage, or standardized rituals marking major life transitions. Ideologies or strongly held beliefs & values, are the cement of social structure in that they help a group maintain its identity as a social unit.

Due to a lack of instinctual or biological programming, humans have a great deal of flexibility and choice in their activities. Individual freedom of action is limited, however, by the existing culture. Moreover, social pressures to act, think, and feel in socially approved ways inevitably generates individual dissatisfaction. There is thus a tension between the individual and society.

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### 3.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

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1. Schaeffer and Lamm [1998] ,Sociology (6<sup>th</sup> Edition). McGraw Hill
2. Macionis John [2005] ,Sociology (10<sup>th</sup> Edition) . Prentice Hall
3. Abraham Francis M [2010],Contemporary Sociology : An Introduction to Concepts and Theories. New Delhi: Oxford University Press

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### 3.11 QUESTIONS

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1. Define culture, write the function of culture?
2. Write a detailed note on the characteristic of culture?
3. Define Sub culture and highlight the different types of sub culture.
4. Distinguish between subculture and counter culture.



## **CULTURE ETHNOCENTRISM, CULTURAL RELATIVISM, XENOCENTRISM, COMPONENTS OF CULTURE.**

### **Unit Structure**

- 4.0 Objectives.
- 4.1 Cultural Universals and Cultural Variability
- 4.2 Ethnocentrism
- 4.3 Cultural Relativism.
- 4.4 Xenocentrism.
- 4.5 Cultural Change.
- 4.6 Components of Culture.
- 4.7 Knowledge.
- 4.8 Normative.
- 4.9 Material Culture and Non Material Culture
- 4.10 Towards and Global Culture.
- 4.11 Summary.
- 4.12 Suggested reading.
- 4.13 Questions.

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### **4.0 OBJECTIVES**

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- To make students acquaint with various aspects of culture.
- To highlight the components of culture.

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### **4.1 CULTURAL UNIVERSALS AND CULTURAL VARIABILITY**

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Culture is an abstraction, most of its elements cannot be seen or touched, we can only describe what people do and the explanations they give for their conduct. this chapter is entitled “The Cultural Context” to convey the idea that culture provides a blueprint or framework for social arrangements that regulate daily life and that meet personal and collective needs.

**Cultural Universals and Cultural Variability:**

Because every culture must deal with human limitations and possibilities, and because every group must solve the same problems of survival, certain types of arrangements are found in every culture. These are the Cultural Universals. The earliest pre humans had to find solutions to immediate problems of both personal and collective survival. Securing food, maintaining order, producing and training new members, and developing group unity . When organized into patterned regularities of behavior these necessary elements of individual and group survival are called institutional spheres, the society's economic system, its political structure, its family system, its educational processes, and its belief system.

But the content, the specific details of the institutional spheres, and the ways in which these traits are linked together will be different from one society to another, shaped by geography and history. These process accounts for Cultural Variability. The varieties of customs, beliefs and artifacts that human have devised to meet universal needs. For example, although the need for orderly reproduction has led to rules regulating courtship and marriage in all societies, these can range from a communal ceremony among individuals who may never live together to arranged marriages.

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**4.2 ETHNOCENTRISM**

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Ethnocentrism is the tendency to view ones own culture as the most superior. Here we apply our own cultural values to judge the behavior and beliefs of people of other culture. Ethnic groups have certain beliefs, values, habit, customs, norms and a common back-ground. They consider themselves different from others and special because they have different cultural features like their language, religion, historical experience, geographic isolation, kinship, race and a common descent etc. All this gives them a sense of solidarity. Ethnicity is identifying with and feeling groups because of their own affiliation. Ethnic diversity may leads to positive group interaction or co-existence or conflict. The positive group interaction will result in a pluralistic society but the conflict will lead to ethnocentrism. Modern society is multicultural. Root of ethnocentrism is ethnic conflict is prejudice and discrimination. Prejudice is devaluing, looking down at, a group for its values and attributes.

Ethnocentrism is a cultural attitude that ones own culture is the best. We evaluate other culture on the basis of our own cultural

perspective. It is the tendency to consider our cultural pattern as normal and therefore superior to all other cultural. It is a value judgment about oneself and others. By devaluing others we deny them equal opportunities in life. This prejudicial attitude was called by Sumner as ethnocentrism. It is taking for granted like superiority of one own culture. It is a view of things in which ones own culture is at the centre of everything and all others are scaled with reference to it. Not only different community groups are ethnocentric but even within a community there can be discrimination as high and low caste, educated and illiterate. There are no human groups or even individuals who are not ethnocentric at least to some extent. Ethnocentrism provides for group identity, unity and loyalty. For example it reinforces the spirit of nationalism and patriotism.

When looking at other cultures, we tend to evaluate their customs in the light of our own beliefs and values. Members of all societies assume that their way of life is the best and only correct way. Often, the very name of the group translates into "the people", implying that those who do not share the culture are not people, but "them" outsiders who are often identified by words that consciously dehumanize.

The belief that ones own culture is the only true and good way, and the tendency is called Ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism serves important functions for individuals and collectivities. Certainty about the rightness of one's culture reinforces the tendency to conform and to defend it.

People often make judgments about other cultures according to the customs and values of their own, a practice sociologist's call ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism can lead to prejudice and discrimination and often and results in the repression of domination of one group by another. Immigrants, for instance, often encounter hostility when their manners, dress eating habits, or religious beliefs differ markedly from those of their new neighbors. Because of this hostility and because of their own ethnocentrism, immigrants often establish their own communities in their adopted country.

To avoid ethnocentrism in their own research, sociologists are guided by the concept of cultural relativism, the recognition that social group and cultures must be studied and understood on their own terms before valid comparisons can be made, cultural relativism frequently is taken to mean that social scientists never should judge the relative merits of any group or culture. This is not the case. Cultural relativism is an approach to doing objective cross-cultural research. It dose not require researchers to abdicate their personal standards. In fact, good social scientists will take the trouble to spell out exactly what their standards are so that both researchers and reader will be alert to possible bias in their studies.



The problem of judging and relating to other cultures is not a problem for social scientists alone. Every child grows up to believe that his own culture is good and right. This outlook often leads to the conclusion that people who do things differently are bad or wrong, consequently, when member of one culture are exposed to another, unfamiliar culture, they may become hostile, suspicious or critical.

Ethnocentrism can serve a valuable function in societies, if the members of a society believe that the norms and values of their culture are right and good, they will be more likely to subscribe to them. But ethnocentrism also poses a danger in that it can lead to social isolation, inhibiting cultural exchanges that promote growth and development. The successful society must therefore have mechanisms for overcoming excessive ethnocentrism and facilitating cultural exchange.

Some primitive societies have made rituals of trade relationships with other groups to procure needed items for their economy and foster cultural exchange. An example of such a tradition is the once a year trip across the Sahara desert undertaken by men of the Tuareg tribe to buy salt. They go in a great camel caravan walking hundreds of miles each year, stopping at every oasis, along their route. The sale of the salt on their return furnishes them with enough money or goods to live on until the next year's trip. Obviously, there is an economic motive involved in this tradition but there is also a valuable cultural exchange carried on with all the tribes encountered during the trip. This exchange has kept the Tuareg, who live in extreme geographic isolation in the desert, in touch with technological progress and new ideas, and they have therefore been able to survive in the rapidly changing modern world.

In the world today ethnocentrism has become a serious political problem because nations are very interdependent, people from many societies and cultures must interact with one another, and world survival may depend on a greater appreciation of the practices of others. Modern societies rely on formal education to combat ethnocentrism and considerable proportion of every child's education is spent in the study of other cultures. But such education is not always effective or sufficient.

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### **4.3 CULTURAL RELATIVISM**

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Cultural Relativism is opposite of ethnocentrism. This is understanding other cultures not from one's own cultural standard but in the context of that culture only. This is trying to understand other cultures rather than criticizing them as 'Strange' less civilized

etc. Cultural relativism is value neutral and objective. Cultural relativism stresses the point that the variety in culture is due to different norms and values of a society. Cultural relativism emphasizes that there is no cultural superiority or inferiority but they are relative to their context, for example some societies do not approve pre marital sex experience where as some encourage it. In an African tribe a girl with a new child, referred as 'low and the calf' has a better chance of getting married than others because she has proved her bearing capacity. There are some societies who accept pre marital sex relations only conditionally, some disapprove of it mildly and some forbid it totally. Killing even an enemy is crime in our society but in some societies it is justified, cultural values of all societies are not same but different.

To avoid ethnocentrism in their own research, sociologists are guided by the concept of Cultural Relativism, the recognition that social groups and cultures must be studied and understood on their own terms before valid comparisons can be made. Cultural Relativism frequently is taken to mean that social scientists never should judge the relative merits of any group or culture. This is not the case cultural relativism is an approach to doing objective cross-cultural research. It does not require researchers to, abdicate their personal standards. In fact, good social scientists will take the trouble to spell out exactly what their standards are so that both researchers & readers will be alert to possible bias in their studies, cultural relativism requires that behaviors and customs be viewed and analyzed within the context in which they occur.

The social scientist rise above ethnocentrism and try to observe all cultures objectively. Aspects of any culture can be understood only in terms of the meaning attached to them in that society. This attempt to see the world through the lens of another culture is called **cultural relativism**. Value judgments are replaced by an appreciation of the content of others cultures. The social scientist does not ask if a culture trait is good or bad according to some absolute yardstick, but rather, why does this trait exist, how is it maintained, and what purposes does it serve for members of that society? The standard of evaluation is whether or not the culture pattern enhances the well-being of individuals and the survival of the collectivity.

The basic assumption of the cultural relativity model is that each society's solutions to the task of survival are as valid as any other's however unappealing such custom may seem to someone from another society. Above all, we must avoid the tendency to think of people in simple societies as less evolved or less intelligent than members of modern societies.

Every social group has its own specific culture, its own way of seeing, doing, and making things, its own tradition. Some cultures are quite similar to one another, others are very different. When individuals travel abroad to countries with cultures that are very different from their own, the experience can be quite upsetting. Meals are scheduled at different time of day, “**Strange**” or even “**repulsive**” foods are eaten, and the traveler never quite knows what to expect from others or what others in turn may expect. Local custom may seem charming or brutal. Sometime travelers are unable to adjust easily to a foreign culture, they may become anxious, lose their appetites, or even feel sick. Sociologists use the term **Culture Shock** to describe the difficulty people have adjusting to a new culture that differs markedly from their own.

Culture shock can also be experienced, within a person’s own society. Example the army recruits having to adapt to a whole new set of behaviors, rules and expectations in basic training a new cultural setting.

Among many anthropologists who use term culture to refer not only to values and ideas but also to social structure. The simplest unit or element of culture is called a **culture trait**. American culture traits includes the practices of attending church, using a fork, wearing a jacket and tie, and shaking hands, together with the belief in efficiency, the two-party political system, and individualism. A countless number of such culture traits exist in every culture but most are contained within a small number of **culture complexes** clusters of interrelated culture traits that function as distinct and separable units in a society. Some examples of culture complexes in the United States are the automobile complex, Christmas, football. Southern Baptists and the national political conventions. Cultural units can have both functional and day functional characteristics.

Functionalism points up the fact that a culture is not simply a random collection of traits but an intricate system in which the different parts must fit together for proper functioning .Family life, economic procedures, laws, defense measures, and the various other social activities or culture complexes are closely intermeshed with one another, a change in one of these activities of complexes may effect changes in each of the others. This fitting together of cultural units into a cohesive whole is known as **Cultural Integration**.

Ignorance about the cultural integration of societies has created many problems in dealing with Third World Nations. For example, in nation where people raise large herds of unhealthy cattle, programs introducing selective breeding to upgrade the quality of livestock have sometimes field to consider that an individual’s status may be determined by the size of his herd, not its

quality. The introduction of the new breeding methods may threaten customs and values woven into the fabric of the culture, and the day functional consequences could be serious.

Functionalism is merely a theoretical orientation for analyzing a culture and is not an easy one to carry out in practice. It requires extensive knowledge of the culture in question and painstaking examinations of the consequences of effects that one unit of culture has on other units or on the culture as a whole.

Cultural diversity can be easily overemphasized. The comparison of cultures indicates that all cultures share fundamental similarities in social structure and cultural meanings. These similarities arise because every human group finds itself facing common problems and living within universal limitations.

All human beings are alike biologically, which may account for many of the cultural universals that are found. For example, we all must eat and find shelter from the hostile elements. We all must take care of young and helpless children, deal with the problem of aging ill parents, and face ultimate death.

Another source of cultural universals is the necessary prerequisites of social living. In order to function, a society must fulfill certain requirements. It must replace personnel when they die, leave, or become incapacitated, it must teach new members to participate usefully, it must produce and distribute goods and services, it must preserve order, and it must maintain a sense of purpose. No society, if it is to survive, is exempt from these requirements.

A third source of cultural universals is the limitation and possibilities of the natural environment. There are only a limited number of edible and nutritious plants and limited methods of travel. Only certain objects make suitable weapons for hunting and self-defense. Every culture has turned to fire to provide a source of heat and also light at night. Nearly every society has created a form of bread. No group uses a square wheel, because it does not work.

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#### **4.4 XENOCENTRISM**

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Xenocentrism is the opposite of ethnocentrism which means a group of people prefers the ideas. "Xenocentrism" is the tendency to assume that aspects of other culture are superior to one's own. Xenocentrism is the preference for the products, styles or ideas of someone else's culture rather than one's own. The 18<sup>th</sup> century primitivism movement in European art and philosophy and its concept of the "Noble savage" is an example of xenocentrism.

Xenocentrism results from an attempt on the part of an individual to correct his or her own ethnocentrism.

Xenocentrism is a word which means “preference for a foreign culture. It is exact opposite of ethnocentrism. It is a belief that our own products styles or ideas are inferior to the ideas, styles of the other.

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#### 4.5 CULTURAL CHANGE

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Culture is not a static system, elements of culture change from time to time. Cultures have evolved over thousands of years. Societies have abandoned many of the belief systems and cultural practices which are not consistent with scientific evidence today. Empirical evidence provided by scientific investigation has exploded many myths and under mind numerous superstitious belief system. Think of how our cooking and eating habits have. Changed, and think of the numerous changes in the caste and joint family system over the years, changes in the field of education and politics, and the transformation in transportation and communication system.

Diffusion is the process by which elements of culture spread from one society to another. Developments in transportation and communication have brought the world closer together. Fast food, coca cola, blue jeans, and rock music have spread to all corners of the earth. Democracy, freedom, equality and human rights are now generally accepted values. Specialists is mass communication have written extensively on the diffusion of innovations and demonstrated how mass media play on important role in the spread of ideas and technology. Think of how western music dance, fashions, and food habits have made an impact on the campus subculture.

Culture lag is a concept introduced by William Ogburn to explain how various elements of culture change at a different pace and with what consequences. Usually the elements of culture related to technology change faster rate than non-material elements as a result of new invention. But society is considered to be system in equilibrium with interrelated parts. Therefore, when some parts of society change more rapidly than others, such changes cause disruption in the social system. It takes time for all related parts of society to change and adapt to the new situation. This delay, is known as cultural lag, affects every society. When the bicycles first came out with leather seats many Hindus refused to ride them because of the belief leather pollutes. Soon, the seat was covered with plastic or fabric. Birth control technologies are readily available but certain religious and cultural beliefs resist their

adoption. In some parts of India people still refuse vaccinations against polio and measles. In many cities people who use to pull manual rickshaws have changed over to auto rickshaws. Changes in technology bring about changes in occupation and lifestyles.

### Check Your Progress

1. Define ethnocentrism
2. Differentiate between cultural relativism and ethnocentrism
3. Cultural universal is a important prerequisite elaborate on this
4. What is xenocentrism

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## 4.6 COMPONENTS OF CULTURE

Culture is often described as the blueprint for living of a group (or society) whose members share a given language and territory, and who recognize their shared identity. Culture consists of

- (1) solution to the problem of survival
- (2) ideal and values that shape of conduct and
- (3) tools, weapons and other human made objects (artifacts, or material sculpture.)

We become functioning members of a society as we learn the content of its culture. Another way of looking at culture is to emphasize the way in which it shapes how we perceive the world and interpret out experience.

Any culture may be divided, for purposes of study and analysis, into three main components.

## 4.7 KNOWLEDGE

The cognitive component of culture consists of definition of what exists, or the reality of the world. Knowledge of one part of cognitive culture, refers to ideas and information that can be shown to have empirical, that is objective and factual support. The most highly refined knowledge comes from the physical sciences.

Knowledge that is less reliable less capable of empirical demonstration, is called beliefs -ideas or theories about the nature of the physical and social world. Beliefs also includes idea about supernatural reality, such as god, spirits and afterlife. A special kind of knowledge, which is directed toward practical application in the physical and social world, is called Technology. Technology includes the methods and techniques used to build the Golden Gate Bridge, it also includes the methods the federal government uses to try to control economic problems such as inflation or unemployment.

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#### 4.8 NORMATIVE

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The normative component of culture consists of definition of what ought to be. Included are values and specific rules of conduct (norms) by which human behavior is guided and regulated. Normative culture will be discussed in topic.

Many parts of culture contain both longitive and normative components. An ideology, for example, is a system of beliefs about the social world that is strongly rooted in a set of values and interests. The leading ideologies of our time democracy, capitalism, communism, socialism which directly or indirectly shape much human behavior in the world, are large systems of ideas that define both what is or exists, and what ought to be. They offer an analysis of how societies function and also a prescription for change.

##### (a) Norms

Norms are the rules of behavior of that are agreed upon and shared within a culture and that prescribe limits of acceptable behavior. The refine “**Normal**” expected behavior and help people all live predictability in their lives.

##### (b) Mores and Folkways

Mores (pronounced more ays) are strongly held norms that usually have a moral connotation and based on the central values of the culture. Violations of mores produce strong negative reactions, which are often supported by the law. Desecration of a church or temple, sexual molestation of a child, rape, murder, incest, and child beating all are violations of American mores.

Not all norms command such absolute conformity. Much of day-to-day life is governed by traditions, or folkways, which are norms that permit a wide degree of individual interpretation as long as certain limits are not overstepped. People who violate folkways are seen as peculiar or possibly eccentric, but rarely do they elicit strong public response. For example, a wide range of dress is now

acceptable in most theaters and restaurants. Men and women may wear clothes ranging from business attire to jeans, and open-necked shirt, or a sweater.

Good manners in our culture also show a range of acceptable behavior. Folkways also vary from one culture to another. In the United States, for example, it is customary to thank someone for a gift. To fail to do so is to be ungrateful and ill-mannered. Subtle culture difference can make international gift-giving however, a source of anxiety or embarrassment to well-meaning business travelers.

Norms are specific expectations about social behavior, but it is important to add that they are not absolute. Even though we learn what is expected in our culture, there is room for variation in individual interpretation of these norms that deviate from the ideal norm.

#### **(c) Ideal Norms and Real Norms**

Ideal norms are expectations of what people should do under perfect conditions. These are the norms we first teach our children. They tend to be simple, making few distinctions and allowing for no exceptions. In reality, however, nothing about human beings is ever that dependable. Real norms are norms that are expressed with qualifications and allowances for difference in individual behavior. They specify how people actually behave. They reflect the fact that a person's behavior is guided by norms as well as unique situations.

The concept of ideal and real norms are useful for distinguishing between mores and folkways. For mores, the ideal and the real norms tend to be very close, whereas folkways can be much more loosely connected. But we might violate a folkway by neglecting to say thank you, for example without provoking general outrage. More important, the very fact that a culture legitimizes the difference between ideal and real expectations allows us room to interpret norms to a greater or lesser degree according to our own personal dispositions.

#### **(d) Values**

Values are a culture's general orientation toward life and its notions of what is desirable and undesirable.

Values can also be understood by looking at patterns of behavior. For example, sociologists have frequently noted the different levels of violence in the northern and southern United States. Two researchers (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996) reached the



conclusion that southerners and northerners have different values about the appropriate use of violence not across the board, but in certain specific areas, all of which seem linked to notions of honor and respect. Southerners, they found, are more likely to agree that violence is acceptable in defense of home and family, and are especially likely to endorse violence as a response to insults and affronts, most of all when the honor threatened is honor lost and a response to the possible loss of honor is often necessary.

**(e) Language**

Language enables humans to organize the world around them into labeled cognitive and use these labels to communicate with one another. Language, therefore, makes possible the teaching and sharing of the values, norms and non material culture. It provides the principal means through which culture is transmitted and the foundation on which the complexity of human thought and experience rests.

Language allows human to transcend the limitations imposed by their environment and biological evolution.

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#### **4.9 MATERIAL CULTURE and Non Material Culture**

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The material component of culture consisting of machines, tools, books clothing, and so on is called the material culture. When archeologists dig up the remains of an ancient city, it is the material culture that they find, a broken pot a necklace carefully stored in a little wooden box, the foundations of a house from these artifacts; they are able to reconstruct some of the nonmaterial cognitive and normative components of the culture.

All material artifacts express some non-material cultural meaning, but the same artifact may have contrary meaning in different societies. For example, the colored piece of cloth that we know as the American flag is honored and revered by most Americans, but in some foreign, countries, and even within the United States, it has been torn up and destroyed. In a remote primitive tribe it might be considered a pretty price of material to be used for clothing.

Material culture is created and can be changed by humanity, but it is equally useful to think of it as a fixed part of society to which we must adjust throughout our lives. People design and build cities, but cities then have lasting effects on the lives of those who dwell in them. In this respect material culture is the same as nonmaterial culture human beings shape it, but it also shapes human beings.

**Check Your Progress**

1. Bring out the important component of culture.
2. Write the note on material components of culture

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**4.10 TOWARDS A GLOBAL CULTURE**

Changes in the world economy since the 1970s and 1980s have led to serious intellectual debates on postmodernism and post Fordism based on de monopolization of economic structure with the de regulation and globalization of markets, trade, and labour. Some of these changes are increase in the numbers of international agencies and institutions, the increasing global forms of communication explosion in travel and tourism industry, the acceptance of unified global time, the preponderance of global financial networks, the phenomenon of global competitions and prices, the development of standard nations of citizenship, rights and competition of humankind.

Postmodernism questions the earlier assumptions of cultural imperialism, Americanization, and mass consumer which alleged a homogenizing process leading to a proto universal culture.

Anthony Smith (Featherstone 1991) contends that intensification of contacts between cultures does not necessarily lead to tolerance for the globalization process. He emphasizes the resilience of the ethnic communities, the ethnic cores of nations, the pre-modern traditions, memories, myths, values, and symbols woven together and sustained in popular consciousness. According to him, a world of competing national cultural seeking to improve the ranking of their states, offers the prospect of global “cultural wars” with little basis for global projects of cultural integration, lingue francs, and ecumenical or cosmopolitan “unity through diversity” notions, despite the existence of the necessary technical communication infrastructures. In short, there is little prospect of a unified global culture, rather there are global culture in the plural. Yet ‘the intensity and rapidity of today’s global cultural flows have contributed to the sense that the world is a singular place which entails the proliferation of new cultural forms for encounters. While

this increasingly dense web of cosmopolitan local encounters and interdependencies can give rise to third culture and increasing tolerance, it can also result in negative reactions and intolerance.

Indeed, the onslaught of globalization has not only failed to weaken or homogenize local cultures but in fact there has been a resurgence of localism. In recent years many ethnic groups around the world have sought to revive their traditional cultures and reaffirm their identity. Regions and communities now embrace the idea of cultural renewal or reaffirmation. Wolfgang Sachs coined the term cosmopolitan localism to refer to the assertion of diversity as a universal right and the identification as globally formed.

Peasants in India, Peru, Mexico and many other places are recovering and implementing traditional present culture and technologies rooted in indigenous ecology. For example, in 1993, the Karnataka farmers association protested against the intention of Cargill seeds to patent germplasm and launched a campaign to encourage grass roots organization to resist the development of transgenic crops and to promote regional varieties. Similarly in 1996 a small village in Kerala (Pattuvam) declared its absolute ownership over all genetic resources within its jurisdiction. A group of young villagers came up with the idea of documenting local plant species and crop cultivators growing within the villages boundaries.

#### Check Your Progress

1. Write a note on towards a global culture

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#### 4.11 SUMMARY

Culture refers to the system of values and meaning shared by a group or society, including the embodiment of those values and meanings in material culture. Culture and society are two related but analytically distinct aspects of social reality. The study of culture focuses on the values and ideas that mold group structure and give it meaning whereas the examination of society is concerned with patterns of organization and interaction built upon that cultural background.

The human ability to create and learn a culture is based on people's ability to create and manipulate symbols, especially those of language. The way people use symbols shapes their perception of reality. The structure of language for example, contains a set of unconscious assumptions, giving people a particular perspective that makes it easier to convey some ideas of concepts than others.

In order to study a culture's major values and norms and determine how these are reflected in social behavior, anthropologists and sociologists examine a culture as a unified whole through careful, in-depth observation and participation. A first principle of cultural analysis is cultural relativity, the idea that every culture must be understood and judged on its own terms. Social scientists strive to avoid ethnocentrism, the attitude that one's own culture is by nature superior, and the tendency to evaluate another culture in the terms of one's own. Excessive ethnocentrism can inhibit exchange with other cultures and promote isolation or conflict as societies become increasingly interdependent. Modern societies rely on formal education to combat ethnocentrism. However, even with preparation and forewarning of cultural differences, exposure to another culture often produces culture shock, disorientation, or psychological stress.

Since each culture is adapted to meet a specific set of physical and social circumstances, each culture is relatively unique and distinctive. However, cultural diversity can be easily overemphasized. The comparison of many cultures reveals fundamental similarities: the natural environment, and certain requirements of social living impose common problems and universal limitations on all human groups.

A society's culture is often only a common denominator of the diverse cultural elements found within a society. When a group within a society has a life style that includes features of the dominant culture and also certain cultural elements not found in other groups, the group culture is called a subculture. A subculture that is so different from the prevailing culture as to sharply challenge it is termed a counterculture. Every complex society has a variety of subcultures, and an individual may participate in more than one. Sometimes passing through several in his lifetime.

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#### **4.12 SUGGESTED READING**

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1. Schaeffer and Lamm [1998], *Sociology* (6<sup>th</sup> Edition). McGraw Hill
2. Macionis John [2005], *Sociology* (10<sup>th</sup> Edition). Prentice Hall

3. Abraham Francis M [2010], Contemporary Sociology: An Introduction to Concepts and Theories. New Delhi: Oxford University Press
4. Giddens, Anthony, [2001] Sociology (4<sup>th</sup> Edition). Polity Press
5. Marshall, Gordon. Dictionary of Sociology. New Delhi: Oxford University Press

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#### 4.13 QUESTION

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1. Define culture elaborate on the characteristics of culture?
2. Write a note on components of culture?



## SOCIETY AND GROUPS

### Unit Structure

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Evolution of society
  - 5.2.1 Hunting and food gathering
  - 5.2.2 Horticulturists
  - 5.2.3 Agricultural and feudal
  - 5.2.4 Industrial
  - 5.2.5 Post Industrial
- 5.3 Questions

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### 5.0 OBJECTIVES

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- To bring awareness among students regarding the evolution of society
- To acquaint students with the different types of social groups

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### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

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Sir Charles Darwin in his thesis 'origin of species' traced the biological evolution of living organisms from simple unicellular amoeba to the most complex multi cellular organism like human being. Some of the earliest and greatest sociologists too viewed societies evolving from simple, food gathering societies to the complex, modern societies. This social evolution they traced through a set of stages and is called 'unilinear evolution'.

Society is a system of usages and procedures of authority and mutual aid, many groupings and division of controls of human behaviour and of liberties. This ever changing, complex system we call society. It is the web of social relationship.

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## **5.2 EVOLUTION OF SOCIETIES (based on the mode of subsistence OR the types of technology)**

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Our social world consists of thousand of human societies. It is said that there has been a general historical trend of socio-cultural evolution, a process which is more or less similar to biological evolution. A society like an organism has to adapt to its environment in order to exploit food resources. In this process of socio-cultural evolution some societies have evolved further and faster than others; some have become “stuck” at a particular level. In general, all have changed in ways that are unique to themselves.

Thus, it is on the basis of the level of technology or reliance on the basic type of subsistence strategy, societies can be generally classified-

### **5.2.1 HUNTING AND FOOD GATHERING SOCIETIES:**

As Gerhard Len Ski pointed out in his “Human Societies” (1970) the oldest and the simplest type of society is the hunting society. Such a society is characterized by a small and sparse population; a nomadic way of life and a very primitive technology. They have the most primitive tools such as stone axes, spears and knives.

Hunting societies consist of very small, primary groups and their number not exceed generally 40-50 members. They are nomadic in nature they have to leave one area as soon as they have exhausted its food resources. Family and kinship are the only interconnected social institutions which these societies have political institution are not found as all people are considered to be equal as they virtually have no property. Division of labour is limited along the lines of age and sex. Men and women, young and old perform different role, but there are no specialised occupational roles. There is gender based division of labour, but there is no gender inequality as such, production is communal and cooperative and the distribution system is based on sharing. Religion is not developed among these people in to a complex institution. They tend to see the world as populated by unseen spirits that must be taken into account but not necessarily worshipped.

The economy of hunting and food gathering societies is subsistence based. They collect enough for the needs of their people and there is hardly any surplus in such a economy. The primary means of production consist of their hunting and gathering skills and their own labour. All able bodied bodies adults and children engage in hunting and food gathering activities. Sharing is one of the central economic characteristics of a hunting and food gathering society. The most common type of social relationship is

co-operation. Co-operation is important because hunting and gathering activities need group efforts. The sharing of the produce is common. There is no competition and conflict too is minimal as there is no accumulated surplus to fight over. The concept of private property as it applies to personal possessions is absent. Hence, private property as we understand it did not exist in hunting and gathering societies.

The rate of social change in nomadic hunting and gathering societies was very slow. A few such societies still exist, for e.g the Bushmen of South Africa, some Eskimo tribes etc.

Around 10 to 12 thousand years ago, some hunting and food gathering groups began to adopt a new subsistence strategy based on the domestication of herds of animals. Many people living in deserts of other regions which are not suited for cultivation, adopted strategy and started taming animals such as goats or sheep which could be used as a source of food. Pastoral societies still exists today in the modern world. These societies are larger in size and may have hundreds or even thousands of members, and these societies provided an assured food supply. Even in these societies, like the hunters and gatherers people are nomadic in nature because of their seasonal need to find sufficient grazing areas for their herds.

### **5.2.2 HORTICULTURAL SOCIETIES**

Horticultural societies first came into existence in the Middle East about 4000 BC and subsequently spread to China and Europe; those that survive today are found mainly in sub Saharan Africa.

Horticultural society is associated with the elementary discovery that plants can be grown from seeds. While herding is common in areas with poor soil, horticultural is more common as means of subsistence in regions with fertile soil. Horticultural societies first appeared at about the same time as pastoral societies. Examples for horticultural societies are Gururumba tribe in New Guinea and Masai people of Kenya.

Horticultural societies are just subsistence societies like hunting gathering societies. They specialise in growing plants such as wheat, rice and the horticulturists is typically based on a 'slash and burn' technology. This is a type of strategy in which people clear areas of land, burn the trees and plants they have cut down, rise crops for 2 to 3 years until the soil is exhausted and then repeat the process else where. Unlike the pastorists, horticulturists have larger population and stay in one place longer before they migrate in search of better conditions.



As this society assures better food supply there is an existence of surplus which leads to specialisation of roles which supported production and trading of variety of products such as boats, salt, pottery etc. This allowed some wealthy individuals to become more powerful than others and lead to emergence of political institutions in the form of chieftainships. Warfare became more common in these societies and horticultural societies are also the first known societies to support the institution of slavery. As these people had a permanent settlement they could create more elaborate cultural artifacts like houses, thrones etc.

### **5.2.3 AGRICULTURAL OR FEUDAL SOCIETIES**

Agricultural societies first arose in ancient Egypt and were based on the introduction of the harnessing of animal power. The mode of production of the hunter gathering society which produces none of its food, and the horticultural society which produces food in small gardens rather than big fields. Invention of the plough had enabled people to make a great leap forward in food production and has enabled a person to achieve great productivity. It also made it possible to work on land which as been previously useless for food production. Size of the agricultural societies is much greater than the horticultural or pastoral communities. The full time specialists who engage themselves in non-agricultural activities tend to concentrate in some compact places which lead to the birth of cities.

In course of time, agricultural societies led to the establishment of more elaborate political institutions. Power was concentrated in the hand of a single individual and a hereditary monarchy emerged who became powerful. Court system providing justice also emerged and these developments made the state a separate powerful institution. For the first time, two distinct social classes those who own the land and those who work on the land of others made their appearance and this created major differences between the strata. Warfare became a regular feature and for the first time, full time permanent armies made their appearances. Proper roads, waterways were developed and such developments brought the previously isolated communities into contact with one another. Since more food was produced than is necessary for subsistence, agricultural societies were able to support people whose sole purpose is to provide creative ideas to the culture. Hence poets, writers, artists, scientists were encouraged and new cultural artifacts such as paintings, statues, buildings and stadiums came into existence. Hence the agricultural societies had a more complex social structure and culture compared to the earlier societies.

Feudal societies emerged in Europe at that stage when the state was unable any longer to exercise direct control over the population. Political power was decentralised in the sense that warriors were able to claim rights over a local territory and enforce their own brand of justice by means of military might. Unarmed peasants were unable to challenge the power of the warrior (or noble) who had personal supporters with horses and weapons. Military power was linked to wealth, which meant, in this case, agricultural land. The greater a noble's military power, the more land he could control; and the larger his estates, the more warriors he could support in order to secure his domain.

Production activity was carried out by peasants, who lived on and cultivated the land which was controlled by the feudal lords. The lords compelled the peasants to hand over a considerable portion of the agricultural goods that they produced and also to perform customary personal services for the benefit of the lord.

In the early periods of feudalism, the link between a noble and his peasants was maintained in the form of a personal agreement which ended upon the death of either party. But eventually the condition of the peasants and the privileged status of the nobles became hereditary, passing down from one generation to another.

The nobility and the serfs thus emerged as two distinct strata in feudal society and the clergy formed a third stratum. The Catholic Church had enormous secular power, since it possessed the right to income from vast expanses of land. As men of learning, clergymen were taken for granted by most of the population, a world view which included the notion that the supremacy of the king, the privileges of the nobility and the lowly position of serfs were all ordained by God. Thus the power of the Church was used to legitimate the system of social inequality.

In Europe from the twelfth century onward, feudal society was affected by the gradual transformation of local markets into permanent towns, with important implications for the emergence of a fourth stratum. Eventually the townsmen (or burgesses), using wealth acquired from trade strengthened the economic power of the burgesses as against that of the nobility.

Thus, feudal society came to comprise four distinct social strata: the nobility and the clergy, who controlled most of the land and enjoyed the agricultural surplus; the serfs, who cultivated the land and were bound to it; and the burgesses. These classes were, by and large, closed; access to the nobility or the peasantry was determined by birth, though occasionally peasants could escape from feudal bondage to the towns, and rich merchants were

sometimes able to purchase titles and estates. The clergy was, of course an exception to the rule of hereditary classes and they had no legal heirs.

Hence the agricultural and feudal societies had a far more complex Social Structure compared to the earlier societies.

#### **5.2.4 INDUSTRIAL SOCIETIES**

The industrial mode of production began in England about 250 years ago. It became a very successful one and has since spread all over the world. Industrial societies have existed only in the very modern era, dating from the industrialisation of Great Britain in the late 18 century. The most advanced industrial societies today are found in North America, Europe and East Asia including Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and South Korea. Countries such as India, Mexico, Brazil and some African countries have also become industrialised to a great extent.

Industrial Revolution spanning the later 18<sup>th</sup> to the early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries is an event of great socio-economic and historical significance. Technology based on modern scientific knowledge lead to higher rate of technology innovation. These innovations in turn brought about a flood of social changes. New technologies such as steam engine, electrical power, atomic energy brought about a lot of changes in the society. this stimulated population growth with increasing members living in cities and metropolitan areas where most jobs are located. New medical technologies and improved living standards served to extend life expectancy.

Division of labour became highly complex and tens of thousands new specialised jobs were created. The family lost many of its function as it no longer remained as a producing unit but had to be content with as a unit of consumption. Various technological and scientific developments made religion lose its hold in controlling the behaviour of the people. Education evolved into an independent and distinct institution and formal education became a compulsory rather than a luxury for a few. Hereditary monarchies died out giving place to more democratic institutions. State assumed the central power in the industrial society ad was more known for its welfare activities.

Industrial societies gave rise to a number of secondary group such as corporations, political parties, business houses and orgainsations of various kind. Primary groups tend to loose their importance and more social life takes place in the context of secondary groups. New life styles and values created a much more heterogeneous culture which spread its influence far and wide.

Families and kinship as social institutions tend to lose their importance. The family lost many of its functions. It no longer remained as a producing unit but has to be content with as a unit of consumption. It lost the main responsibility of educating the young ones. Kinship ties are weakened. Kinship does not play an important role in unifying and controlling people.

Religious institutions are no longer playing an important role in controlling the behaviour of the people. People hold many different and competing values and beliefs. The world no longer remains as the God – centred world for it is looked upon as the man-centred one. Various technological and scientific developments have made religion lose its hold as an unquestioned source of moral authority.

For the first time, science emerges out as a new and very important social institution. Science is looked upon as a promising and an effective means of socio-economic progress. Similarly education has evolved into an independent and distinct institution. Any industrial society for that matter requires a literate population to understand and make use of the modern technological innovations. For the first time, formal education becomes a compulsory thing for majority of people rather than a luxury for the few.

State which assumed the central power in the industrial society is more known for its welfare activities than for the regulative functions. State is increasingly involved in the economic, educational, medical, military and other activities.

Industrialism is normally associated with the emergence of the two social classes the rich and the poor between whom sharp inequalities are found. They are referred to by Marx as the haves and the have nots.

Industrial societies give rise to a number of secondary groups such as corporations, political parties, business houses, government bureaucracies, cultural and literary associations and special purpose organisations of various kinds. New life styles and values created a much heterogeneous culture which spread its influence far and wide.

#### **5.2.5 POST INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY**

The concept of Post Industrial Society was first formulated in 1962 by Daniel Bell and subsequently in his seminal work (Coming of post industrial Society – 1974). It described the economic and social changes in the late twentieth century. According to Bell in the economy this is reflected in the decline of goods production and manufacturing as the main form of economic activity, to be replaced

by services. With regard to class structure, a new class of professional and technical occupations have come in to existence.

In all spheres like economic, political and social decision making this new class influenced in making a new intellectual technology. The post industrial society is predominated by a manufacturing based economy and moved on to a structure of society based on the provision of information, innovation, finance and services. The economy underwent a transition from the production of goods to the provision of services and knowledge became a valued form of capital. Through the process of globalisation and automation, the value and importance to the economy of the blue collar, unionized work, including manual labour (eg-assembly- line work) declined and those of professional workers) grew in value and prevalence. Behavioral and information sciences and technologies are developed and implemented.

Thus through these different types of societies we have understood that the type of society in which man lived in the beginning is very different from the type of society in which he lives today. The story of human social life has undergone several forms and changes. Historically, societies have taken number of different forms and have changed in ways that are unique themselves.

#### **Check your Progress**

1. Discuss the features of hunting and food gathering society.
2. Explain the characteristics of Agricultural or Feudal societies.
3. Industrial society existed in the late 18 century – discuss.

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#### **5.3 QUESTIONS**

1. "Societies have passed on from one stage to another – Discuss



## SOCIAL GROUPS

### Unit Structure :

- 6.0 Objectives
- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Social Groups
- 6.3 Importance of social groups
- 6.4 Classification of Social Groups
- 6.5 Primary In group and out group
- 6.6 Primary groups and secondary groups
- 6.7 Questions

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### 6.0 OBJECTIVES

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- To introduce the different social groups to the students existing in the society.
- To understand the importance of society.

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### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

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**Man is a social animal:** No man lives alone. He is basically a social creature. The great Greek Philosopher- Aristotle said long back that man is a social animal. He further remarked that he who does not live in society is either a beast or a angel. Wit the exception of hermits, shepherds, lighthouse keepers, prisoners in solitary confinement and possibly a few others, all human beings live in groups. Men everywhere live in groups. Man's daily life is made up largely by participating in groups. Not only our life becomes boring and unbearable without fellow human beings but also our very survival becomes problematic. Total ostracise from one's group is probably the cruelest punishment – short of only death. Throughout his life, the individual belongs to temporary and permanent groups which are organised for specific or general goals.

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## 6.2 SOCIAL GROUPS

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**Definition and characteristics of group:** Harry M. Johnson says that 'A social group is a system of social interaction' Marshal Jones is of the opinion that a social as 'any collection of human beings who are brought into human relationships with one another'

**Characteristics of Social Groups:**

The main characteristics of social groups are as follows:

1. **Collection of individual:** Social groups consists of people. Without individuals there can be no groups. Just as we cannot have a college or a university without students and teachers we cannot have a group in the absence of people.
2. **Interaction among members:** Social interaction is the very basis of group life. Hence mere collection of individuals does not make a group. The members must have a interaction. A social group, is in fact a system of social interaction. The limits of social groups are marked by the limits of social interaction.
3. **Mutual Awareness:** Group life involves mutual awareness. Group members are aware of one another and their behaviour is determined by this mutual recognition.
4. **'We – feeling':** We feeling refers to the tendency on the part of the members to identify themselves with the groups. It represents group unity. 'We – feeling creates sympathy in and fosters cooperation among members. It helps group members to defend their interests collectively.
5. **Group Unity and solidarity:** Group members are tied by the sense of unity. The solidarity or integration of a group is largely dependent upon the frequency, the variety, and the emotional quality of the interactions of its members. A family or a friends group, or a religious group is highly united and integrated, because its members are related by several common interests and have frequent social contacts with one another and express a high degree of morale and of loyalty. Unity is maintained more often by conscious efforts.
6. **Common Interests:** the interests and ideals of group are common. Groups are mostly formed or established for the fulfillment of certain interests. Form of groups differs depending upon the common interests of the group. Hence are political groups, religious groups, economic groups, and so on.

- 7. Group Norms:** Every group has its own rules or norms which the members are supposed to follow. These norms may be in the form of customs, folkways, mores, traditions etc. They may be written or unwritten norms or standards. Every group has its own ways and means of punishing or correcting those who go against the rules.
- 8. Size of the groups:** Social groups vary in size. A group may be small as that of dyad (two members' group e.g. husband and wife family) or as big as that of a political party having lakhs of members.
- 9. Groups are Dynamic:** Social groups are not static but dynamic. They are subject to change whether slow or fast. Old members die and new members are born. Whether due to internal or normal pressures, groups undergo changes.
- 10. Stability:** Groups are stable or unstable; permanent or temporary in character. Some groups like the crowd, mob, audience, spectators' group etc are temporary and unstable. But many groups are relatively permanent and stable in character.

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### 6.3 IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL GROUPS

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The study of human society is essentially the study of human groups. No man exists without a society and no society exists without groups. Groups have become a part and parcel of our life.

1. Survival becomes problematic without Groups: Groups have become so necessary that our very survival becomes problematic and doubtful in their absence. Man by birth itself has the biological potentiality of becoming man the social being.
2. Man becomes man only among men: Various studies have convincingly proved that man fails to develop human qualities in the absence of human environment. The biologically blossoms only in the context of groups.
3. Groups help Social survival also: Man by engaging himself in constant relations with others he learns things and mends his ways. In brief, from birth to death, man is engaged in the process of socialization which helps him to develop a personality of his own.

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### 6.4 CLASSIFICATION OF SOCIAL GROUPS

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Social groups have been classified in various ways. Some classifications are simple and some are elaborate. Various writers



have chosen different bases of classifying groups such as racial features, religious beliefs, territory, nature of government, size, caste, sex, age, class, occupation, blood relationships, nature of social interaction, range of group interests, permanent or temporary nature, degree of mobility and so on.

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### **6.5 IN GROUP AND OUT GROUP**

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American Sociologist W. G. Sumner in his book "Folkways" has classified groups into "in groups" and "out groups". This classification depends more on psychological factors rather than external physical factors. The groups which an individual belongs (or feels that he belongs) to is an "in group" and the rest of the groups are "out groups". Example: One's own family, peer group, friendship group, religious groups, caste group, linguistic group etc 'in groups' and other groups are "out groups".

#### **In group and out group relationship are overlapping**

In the simple tribal societies 'in and out group' relationships are very simple and direct as those who belong to the same class or totemic group, or kin group are identified as members of in groups and others as outsiders.

In modern society, people belong to so many groups that a number of their in group and out group relationships may overlap. For example, a person in the urban neighborhood may consider the people (who belong to different social classes, caste groups, religious groups, political groups, linguistic groups etc) living in his neighborhood as members of his 'in group' for some limited purposes. When the question of his caste interest or religious interest arises the same person may consider people who belong to his own caste or linguistic or religious interest arises the same person may consider people who belong to his own caste or linguistic or religious interest arises the same person may consider people who belong to his own caste or linguistic or religious group members of his in group and others as outsiders.

#### **Relative Influence of In group and Out groups**

In group and out group relations lead to some consequences. Members tend to regard their own group, the in group as being something special, more worthy, more intimate, helpful, dependable, and so on. On the contrary, an out group to which other people belong, is considered less worthy, less intimate, not dependable, and it may be viewed with hostility.

### **In group and out groups affect behaviour**

In groups and out groups are important because they affect behaviour. From fellow members of an in group we expect recognition, loyalty and helpfulness. From outsiders our expectations varies with the kind of out group. We expect hostility from some out groups, a more or less friendly competition from some others, from still a few others a total indifference.

As far as in groups are concerned, they draw the members together and increase the solidarity and cohesion of the group. In the presence of a common enemy, real or imaginary, in groups play a vital role in uniting people against the common 'danger'.

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## **6.6 PRIMARY GROUPS AND SECONDARY GROUPS**

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### **The meaning or primary groups**

The concept of 'primary groups' is a significant contribution of C. H. Cooley to the social thought. Primary groups are found in all the societies. The primary group is the nucleus of all social organisation. It is a small group in which a few persons come into direct contact with another. These persons meet face to face for mutual help, companionship and discussion of common questions.

Cooley used the term 'primary groups' to mean a social group characterised by face to face relationship, mutual aid and companionship. By primary groups, Cooley meant the intimate personal 'face to face' groups in which we find our companions and comrades as the members of our family and our daily associates. These are the people with whom we enjoy the more intimate kind of social relations. The primary groups can be referred to as the 'We groups'. Cooley explained that a primary group involves the sort of sympathy and mutual identification for which we is the natural expression.

Primary groups are universal groups functioning in all stages of cultural development. Primary groups socialise the individuals. Examples for primary groups: Family, neighborhood, children's play ground, peer group etc.

### **Chief Characteristics of Primary Groups**

- 1. Dominance of face to face relations:** Primary groups are characterised by close and intimate relationships among the members. There exists a face to face relationship. In primary groups everyone knows everyone else; one's name and fame, one's status, wealth, occupation, level of education etc. Close

contact between them increases intimacy among the members. Face to face relations are commonly observed in small groups like family, neighborhood etc.

2. **The relationship is personal:** In the primary groups the interest of each is centred in others as persons. The relationship disappears if the particular person disappears from it. The relationship is non transferable and irreplaceable. The relationship between the husband and wife is such that no third person can replace any one of them.
3. **The Relationship is Spontaneous:** A purely primary relationship is voluntary. It is not planned. It is not based on any contract. Relationships develop between naturally. The relationships that develop between the mother and child, husband and wife are purely voluntary and spontaneous.
4. **Small size:** Primary Groups are smaller in size. Effective participation of the members is possible only when the group is of a small size. The character of the group tends to change with the size. The increase in the size of the group will have negative effect on the intimacy of the members.
5. **Physical Proximity or nearness:** Face to face relations can be found only when members reside in a more or less permanently. Seeing and talking with each other facilitates exchange of ideas, opinions and sentiments. Physical proximity provides an opportunity for the very development of primary groups.
6. **Stability of the group:** A primary group is relatively a permanent group. Social ties deepen in time.
7. **Similarity of background:** The members of a primary group must have more or less similar background. Each must have to something to contribute, to give as well as to take.
8. **Limited self interest:** Members of the primary group subordinate their personal interest to the interests of the group. The common interest of the group is strong enough to control individual interest. The commonness of interests provides mental pleasure and contentment to the members.
9. **Communication:** Communication in the case of primary group like family or children's play group, for example is very quick and effective. Direct face to face contact helps easy communication between the members.
10. **Direct Co operation:** Direct co operation characterises primary group. Members work directly and in cooperation with each

other to achieve their common interest. Work is essentially 'a mode of sharing a common experience'. The group is a unity in the performance of a function.

#### **The meaning of secondary groups:**

An understanding of the modern industrial society requires an understanding of the secondary groups. The secondary groups are almost opposite to primary groups. The social groups other than those of primary. Groups may be termed as secondary groups. MacIver and page refer to them as great associations. They are of the opinion that secondary groups have become almost inevitable today. their appearance is mainly due to the growing cultural complexity.

Ogburn and Nimkoff say that the 'groups which provide experience lacking in intimacy' can be called secondary groups.

Frank D Watson writes 'the secondary groups is larger and more formal, is specialised and direct in its contacts and relies more for unity and continuance upon the stability of its social organisation than does the

#### **Characteristics of the Secondary Groups:**

1. **Dominance of secondary relations:** Secondary groups are characterised by indirect, impersonal, contractual and non inclusive relations. Relations are indirect because secondary groups are bigger in size and the members may not stay together. Relations are contractual in the sense; they are oriented towards certain interests and desires.
2. **Largeness of the size:** Secondary groups are relatively larger in size. City, nation, political parties, trade unions, corporations are bigger in size. They may have thousands and lakhs of members. There may not be any limit to the membership in the case of some secondary groups.
3. **Membership:** Membership in the case of secondary groups is voluntary. For example, they are at liberty to join political parties, international associations like the rotary club, lion club, and business corporations and so on. However, there are some secondary groups like the state whose membership is almost involuntary.
4. **No physical Basis:** Secondary groups are not characterised by physical proximity . Many secondary groups are not limited to any definite area. There are some secondary groups like Rotary Club and the Lion Club which are almost international in

character. The members of such groups are scattered over a vast area.

5. **Specific Ends or Interests:** Secondary groups are formed for the realisation of some specific interests or ends. They are called 'special interest groups'. Members are interested in the group because they have specific ends to aim at.
6. **Indirect Communication:** Contacts and communications in the case of secondary groups are almost indirect. Impersonal nature of social relationships in secondary groups is both the cause and effect of indirect communication.
7. **Nature of social control:** Informal means of social control are less effective in regulating the relations of members. Moral control is only secondary. Formal means of social control such as law, legislation, police, court etc are made use of to control the behaviour of members.
8. **Group Structure:** The secondary group has a formal structure. Secondary groups are mostly organised groups. Different statuses and roles that the members assume are specified. Distinctions based on caste, colour, region or religion, class, language etc are less rigid and the greater tolerance toward other people and groups.

#### Check your Progress

1. Define and discuss the characteristics of social groups.
2. Discuss the characteristics of primary groups.
3. Discuss the characteristics of secondary groups.
4. Write a note on the importance of social groups.

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#### 6.7 QUESTIONS

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1. "An individual belongs to temporary and permanent groups all through his life" – Discuss.



## **ELECTRONIC COMMUNITY (Net working)**

### **Unit Structure**

- 7.0 Objectives
- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 Types of Virtual Community
- 7.3 Social Network Services
- 7.4 Advantages of internet services
- 7.5 Disadvantages of internet services
- 7.6 Summary
- 7.7 Questions

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### **7.0 OBJECTIVES**

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- To make the students understand about electronic community (Virtual Communities)
- To bring awareness about the types of virtual communities.
- To understand the advantages and disadvantages of internet communities.

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### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

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A electronic community is also called a **virtual community** which is a social network of individuals who interact through specific media, potentially crossing geographical and political boundaries in order to pursue mutual interest or goals.

Virtual or electronic communities have come into existence mainly after the explosive diffusion of the internet since 1990's and have taken the forms of social networking services and online communities.

The traditional definition of a community is of a geographically circumscribed entity (neighbourhoods, village etc). Virtual or electronic communities of course are usually dispersed geographically and therefore not communities under the original definition. Virtual communities resemble real life communities in the

sense that they provide support, information, friendship and acceptance between strangers.

One of the most pervasive types of virtual community include social networking services, which consist of various online communities. virtual communities are used for a variety of social and professional groups. It does not necessarily mean that there is a strong bond among the members.

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## 7.2 TYPES OF VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES

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### Internet message boards

An online message board is a forum where people can discuss thoughts or ideas on various topics. Whenever the user revisits the message board, he/she can make a response. Unlike a conversation, message boards do not have an instantaneous response and require that users actively go to the site to check for responses.

Anyone can register to participate in an online message board. A message board is unique because people can choose to participate and be apart of the virtual community, even if they choose not to contribute their thoughts and ideas. Registered users can simply view the various threads or contribute if they choose to. Message board can also accommodate can almost infinite number of users, something a chat room is limited to.

### Online chat rooms

Shortly after the rise of interest in message boards and forums, people started to want a way of communicating with their “communities” in real time. The downside to message boards was that people would have to wait until another user replied to their posting, which, with people all around the world in different time frames, could take a while. The development of online chat rooms allowed people to talk to whoever was online at the same time they were. This way, messages were sent and online users could immediately respond back.

Users can communicate as if they are speaking to one another in real life. This “like reality” attribute makes it easy for users to form a virtual community, because chat rooms allow users to get to know one another as if they were meeting in real life.

### Virtual worlds

Virtual worlds are the most interactive of all virtual community forms. In this type of virtual community, people are

connected by living as an avatar in a computer-based world. Users create their own avatar character (from choosing the avatar's outfits to designing the avatar's house) and control their character's life and interactions with other characters in the 3-D virtual world. It is similar to a computer game, however there is no objective for the players. A virtual world simply gives users the opportunity to build and operate a fantasy life in the virtual realm. Characters within the world can talk to one another and have almost the same interactions people would have in reality. For example, characters can socialize with one another and hold intimate relationship online.

In a virtual world, characters can do activities together, just like friends could do in reality. Communities in virtual worlds are most similar to real life communities because the characters are physically in the same place, even if the users who are operating the characters are not. It is close reality, except that the characters are digital. Second Life is one the most popular virtual worlds on the internet.

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### **7.3 SOCIAL NETWORK SERVICES**

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Social network services are the most prominent type of virtual community. They are either a website or software platform that focuses on creating and maintaining relationships. Facebook, Tittle, and Myspace are all virtual communities. With these sites, one often creates a profile or account, and adds friends or follow friends. This allows people to connect and look for support using the social networking service as gathering place. These websites often allow for people to keep up to date with their friends and acquaintances activities without making much of an effort on Facebook, for example, one can upload photos and videos, chat, make friends, reconnect with old ones, and join groups or causes.

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### **7.4 ADVANTAGES OF INTERNET SERVICES**

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Internet communities offer the advantage of instant information exchange that is not possible in a real-life community. This allows people to engage in many activities from their home, such as: shopping, paying bills, and searching for specific information. Users of online communities also have access to thousands of specific discussion groups where they can form specialized relationships and access information in such categories as: politics, technical assistance, social activities, and recreational pleasures. Virtual communities provide an ideal medium for these types of relationships because information can easily be posted and response times can be very fast.



Another benefit is these types of communities can give users a feeling of membership and belonging. Users can give and receive support, and it is simple and cheap to use. Economically, virtual communities can be commercially successful, making money through membership fees, subscriptions, usage fees, and advertising commission. Consumers generally feel very comfortable making transactions online as long as the seller has a good reputation throughout the community. Virtual communities also provide the advantage of disintermediation in commercial transactions, which eliminates vendors and connects buyers directly to suppliers. This eliminates pricey mark-ups and allows for a more direct line of contact between the consumer and the manufacturer.

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## **7.5 DISADVANTAGES OF INTERNET COMMUNITIES**

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While instant communication means fast access, it also mean that information is posted without out being reviewed for correctness. It is difficult to choose reliable sources because there is no editor that reviews each post and makes sure is it up to a certain degree of quality. Everything comes from the writer with no filter in between.

Identities can be kept anonymous online so it is common for people to use the virtual community to live out a fantasy as another type of person. Users should be wary of where information is coming from online and be careful to double check facts with professionals.

Information online is different from information discussed in a real life community because it is permanently online. As a result, users must be careful what information they disclose about themselves to ensure they are not easily identifiable, for safety reasons.

Now slowly we have transformed ourselves from more social creatures into community creatures and it is the only way that human evolution will be able to proceed.

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## **7.6 SUMMARY**

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Sociology is the study of social life, its forms and dimensions. Society is the largest distinguishable unit composed of individuals. Society has structure and continuity. Societies have taken different forms in human history and can be classified in two ways : according to their modes of subsistence and according to their patterns of social organisation. According to the first classification we can divide societies into hunting and gathering

societies, horticultural societies, agricultural and early industrial and post industrial societies.

Man as a social animal, leads a group life. He belongs to variety of social groups to collection of individuals who interact with each other. The individual identifies with the group, influences it in some cases and is influenced by it in others. The groups itself exert strong pressure to conform to the standards and behavioural patterns of the overall membership.

Groups, associations and institutions make up structural fabric of society, the largest meaningful group to which one belongs. However the most meaningful relationship is that which exists between the individual and the primary group, a small close and emotionally involved collection of people. Secondary groups are formal, less emotional and less intimate. Secondary groups include formal organisations with prescribed rules and duties.

Thus every individual's development as a human being as well as his existence depends upon his or her continued interaction with other people. Throughout an individual's life he or she belongs to temporary and permanent groups which are organised for specific or general goals.

#### **Check your Progress**

1. Discuss the characteristics of social groups?
2. Discuss the features of hunting and food gathering societies?

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#### **7.7 QUESTIONS**

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1. "Societies have passed on from one stage to another"-Discuss
2. Discuss the characteristics of primary groups and secondary group
3. Write note on In groups and Out groups
4. What do you mean by electronic community- Discuss

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## **SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS: CONCEPT AND SIGNIFICANCE.**

### **Unit Structure:**

- 8.0 Objectives
- 8.1 Social institution: Meaning
- 8.2 Social stratification
  - 8.2.1 Systems of stratification.
  - 8.2.2 Functions of stratification
- 8.3 Religion
  - 8.3.1 Elements of religion
  - 8.3.2 Types of religious organization
  - 8.3.3 Functions of religion
- 8.4 Summary

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### **8.0 OBJECTIVES:**

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- To understand the concept of social institution.
- To understand the meaning and functionality of social stratification.
- To critically look at the concept and significance of religious institution.

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### **8.1 SOCIAL INSTITUTION: MEANING.**

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A **social institution** is a complex, integrated set of social norms organized around the preservation of a basic societal value. Maclver defines institution as the established forms or conditions of procedure characteristic of group activity. The recognized established set of rules, traditions and usages of every organization is referred to as institutions. Institutions are means of controlling individuals with set rules and are there to satisfy the primary needs of man.

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## 8.2 SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

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In every society there is existence of some sort of inequality based on income, occupation, education or hereditary status. Throughout history societies have used some system of classification such as kings and slaves, lords and serfs, rich and poor, landlords and labourers, upper and lower castes etc. Social stratification refers to a system of structured inequality which rates and ranks members of a society based on select criteria and limits access to wealth, power, privileges and opportunities. It is not a classification of individuals based on their attributes but an established system of classifying groups. E.g. caste system in India.

**Raymond Murray** defines social stratification as “horizontal division of society into higher and lower social units”.

**Gisbert** defines social stratification as “division of society into permanent groups or categories linked with each other by the relationship of superiority and subordination”.

**8.2.1** There are 3 commonly recognized systems of stratification. They are estate, caste and class.

The **estate system** of stratification was part of the feudal system and prevalent in Europe during the middle ages. It is a closed system in which a person's social position is defined by law based land ownership, occupation and hereditary status. The estate system consisted of feudal lords, clergy, merchants and craftsman and serfs. Wealth was concentrated in the hands of the few who enjoyed hereditary status and prestige. On the whole the estate system involved a hierarchical order based on hereditary and social mobility was restricted.

The **caste system** represents a rigid form of stratification based on hereditary status, traditional occupation and restrictions on social relationships. Caste is hereditary, endogamous, usually localized group having traditional association with an occupation, and a particular position in the local hierarchy of castes. Caste as a traditional system has the following characteristics:

- a) Hierarchy
- b) Hereditary status
- c) Traditional occupation
- d) Endogamy
- e) Theory of pollution
- f) Restrictions on social interaction and access to opportunities
- g) Castes are localized groups

The caste system is in a hierarchical order with Brahmins at the top followed by the Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. The dalits are placed at the bottom of the hierarchy outside the fourfold system. The status is ascribed determined by birth. In the old system every caste followed a certain occupation which was handed down from one generation to the next. Louis Dumont believes that the three characteristics of hierarchy, heredity and traditional occupation are linked by religious orientation. These are not strictly in terms of power relations or economic domination. Caste system follows endogamy where individuals marry within the caste and in the past intercaste marriages were forbidden. Relations between castes were traditionally determined by the concepts of purity and pollution which asserted that lower castes are polluting to the higher castes. Lower castes were denied many opportunities such as access to public places, schools. Restrictions were placed on their movements as even their shadows used to be considered polluting.

While the above characteristics are attributed to caste system in general, the ground reality states that the actual functional units are the subcastes. Ghurye (1932) believed that although it is the caste which is recognized by the society at large, it is the subcaste which is considered more relevant by the particular caste and the individual.

However today with industrialization, urbanization and modernization traditional caste system has weakened though it is used very often to meet political ends

**Class system** refers to the classification of people based on their economic positions in society. Classes began to emerge as individuals started amassing wealth; social classes are not rigidly defined like estates and castes. It is an open system with increased social mobility. Though individuals born in wealthy families and influential families have better access to resources, class system is based more on achievement than birth; the status is achieved than ascribed. Sociologists rely on income, wealth, level of education, type of occupation, material possession and lifestyle to classify people into classes.

Stratification can also be based on **gender**. Historically women all across the globe have been accorded inferior position in comparison to men. Men have had and continue to have more physical and social power and status than women in the public sphere. Men hold public office, create laws and rules, define society and according to feminists also control women. Though strides have been made towards gender equality the position of women still remains inferior. Much of the inequalities in the public and private sphere are due to sexism- prejudice and discrimination

because of gender. Fundamental to sexism is the assumption that men are superior to women. Sexism has negative consequences for women and has caused them to avoid pursuing successful careers typically described as masculine. Sexism produces inequality between the genders particularly in the form of discrimination. Inequality and discrimination is found in the areas of education, work and politics.

Gordon Marshal 'Dictionary of Sociology' defines **age stratification** as system of inequalities linked to age. It refers to the social ranking of individuals at different stages in their lives. Age stratification separates people into three primary groups according to their age; the young, the old and the rest. There is unequal distribution of wealth, power and privileges among people at different stages in the life course. In Western societies, for example, both the old and the young are perceived and treated as relatively incompetent and excluded from much social life. Age stratification based on ascribed status leads to inequality. Our society places an enormous value on a person's perceived age, with major handicaps given to the very young and to the very old. The very young are either not physically or mentally capable of performing the required task, and the same is true for the elderly. Since society requires that people be able to perform some level of productive activity, those that cannot are viewed as a burden on the system.

#### **8.2.2 Functions of stratification:**

- a) Stratification constitutes a means of society's getting some of its essential jobs done by distributing different amounts of prestige and privilege to various strata.
- b) It regulates and controls human relationships in society. Prescribed roles and role expectation norms and standards of behaviour are involved in relationships with each stratum. Stratification regulates and controls individual and group relationships and participation. Inequality of opportunity or non availability of facilities gives advantages to those in higher strata and deprives those belonging to the lower strata thus regulating participation.
- c) Stratification in society has strong integrative functions, serving to coordinate and harmonise units within the social structure.
- d) Stratification of society categorizes people into different strata simplifying his relations with other people.

**Check your progress:**

- a) What is the meaning of social institution?
- b) Discuss the systems of stratification?
- c) Bring out the functionality of social stratification.

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**8.3 RELIGION**


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There is nothing in the world which has been the object of such deep reverence and the centre of such severe criticism as religion; it has been equated with salvation and characterized as the opiate of the people. The sociologist is concerned with the functions, social foundations and consequences of religion rather than the truth or falsity of any given religion. The sociologist studies the effect of religious beliefs and practices on the social and cultural systems, socialization process and personality development. They are concerned with the ways in which society and religion interact and the effect it has on the individual.

It is very difficult to arrive at a consensus of definition of religion. According to **Durkheim** religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, uniting into a single, moral community all those who adhere to those beliefs and practices. In sociological terms religion is a system of beliefs, practices, symbols and rituals that somehow relate to the community's orientation to the supernatural or the life beyond. Religion entails a form of worship, obedience to divine commandments and a concern with the transcendental realms that are beyond the rational and empirical.

**8.3.1 Elements of religion**

Members of a religion share a set of beliefs, system of philosophy, forms of rituals and some type of organization. Any proposition about an aspect of the universe that is accepted as true may be called **belief**. Religion is founded on many beliefs that are not universal. Based on belief of the members religion can be classified into monotheistic- belief in one god and polytheistic – belief in myriad forms of gods who preside over numerous forces of nature. The creation of the **sacred** is another important element of religion. Myths, legends, sacred texts, symbols such as trishul,



beads, fire, cross etc. provide the framework of knowledge within which the supernatural and the phenomenon outside the ordinary experience become meaningful to the believers. The practice of every religion involves a variety of **rituals**. Members of most religions have a sense of community in that their beliefs, rituals and practices unite them into a common fold. Religion consists of a social form with networks of institutional arrangements and status role (priests, temples, monks, churches, shrines, monasteries). Religion involves a system of ritual including festivals, ceremonies, prayers, sacrifices, fasts etc, congregation which includes meetings; satsangs etc. Religion also involves an expressive culture- particularly visual and performing arts - including singing, dancing, chanting, processions, trance etc.

### **8.3.2 Types of religious organization**

#### **8.3.2.1 Church**

Church is a type of religious organization that is well integrated into the larger society with well established rules and doctrines - a formal organization with a hierarchy of officials whose leaders are formally trained and ordained. Though it appoints people from all strata; in practice higher status groups are usually overrepresented. Church members conceive of god in highly intellectual terms and favour abstract moral standards over specific rules for day to day living. By teaching morality in abstract terms church leaders avoid controversy. A church may operate with or apart from the state. It identifies with the state and is integrated with the social, political and educational functions. A church generally accepts the norms and values of the society and frequently regards itself as the guardian of the established social order. A state church is formally allied with the state whereas a denomination is a church independent of the state and the one that recognizes religious pluralism.

#### **8.3.2.2 Sect**

A sect is an exclusive, highly cohesive group of believers who strictly adhere to a religious doctrine and reject many beliefs and practices of the general society and replace them with beliefs and practices which may appear strange to the non believer. As a result, sects are, in Peter Berger's words, 'in tension with the larger society and closed against it'. Sects are religious organizations that stand apart from the larger society. Membership into the sect is voluntary and is not universal in its appeal but is an exclusive group. A sect makes no effort to influence the religious life of those outside its fold. As a voluntary group, membership is restricted to those who are qualified to be its members. Members often join in through conversion and personal transformation. Sect members

have rigid religious convictions and unconventional beliefs and forms of worship and deny the belief of other. They usually stress equalitarian ideals among its members as new converts and old members are treated with equal respect. They also expect active participation, strict conformity and personal commitment on the part of their members. It is either indifferent or hostile to the state and the larger society and often upholds visions of an alternative society. They usually spring from the lower classes and disadvantaged people who feel oppressed by the state and society. In organizational terms they are less formal than churches, they are spontaneous and emotional in worship enjoying personal experience. In a sect, charisma is attached to the religious leader whereas in organized church it is attached to the office.

#### **8.3.2.3 Cult**

A cult is a religious organization often inspired by a charismatic leader and largely outside a society's cultural tradition. People voluntarily follow a leader who preaches new beliefs and practices. Since many cults hold unconventional doctrines that adhere to different lifestyles, they evoke negative sentiments in the popular mind. Cults are often at odds with the larger society and their unconventional beliefs often lead to the popular view of them being deviants and members dismissed as being crazy. However there is nothing intrinsically wrong with cults. In fact several of the organized religion began as cults. Cults often last only as long as their leader. There were several millenarian cults that appeared at the end of the twentieth century. These groups believed that the end of the world was near and prepared them to be saved by god as select group of faithful. The Moonies, People's Temple, Jesus People, Scientology, Rajneeshis and Ananda Margin are often called cults. Cults have often attracted controversies because of their alleged techniques of recruitment, lifestyles, and values which are perceived to run counter to those of the larger society. Many of the cults have been accused of kidnapping, brainwashing, using hypnosis and other mind controlling techniques and drugs. They have also been charged with manipulation of the young, immorality and exploitation. Sociologists of religion view cult formation as a response to utilitarian individualism and materialism of modern consumer culture which is characterized by impersonality and moral ambiguity. They think of it as a quest for new identity or conscious reformation.

#### **8.3.3 Functions of religion:**

Religion in terms of functional theory serves certain important functions. Durkheim pointed out three major functions of religion for the operation of the society. These are:

- a) Religion unites people through symbolism, values and norms. Religious thought and ritual establish rules of fair play, making social life orderly
- b) Every society uses religious ideas to promote conformity. It sanctifies norms and values of an established society, maintaining the dominance of group goals over individual wishes.
- c) Religious beliefs offer the comforting sense. Religion through its various ceremonies of worship provides emotional ground and identity amid uncertainties and impossibilities of human condition.

Religion though is highly personal affair it has a social aspect and social role. According to Arnold Green, religion helps in rationalizing individual suffering. Religion serves to soothe the emotions of humans in the face of disappointment and sufferings. Religion also plays a role in enhancing self importance and contributes to the integration of one's personality. Religion is also the source of social cohesion and social control as well. Religion is an integrating and unifying force in human society however it can also be dysfunctional that can keep humans in degrading subjection what Marx referred to as 'religion is the opiate of the masses'.

In spite of its various disservices the fact that religion has continued for centuries together is the proof of its value.

#### **Check your progress:**

- a) What are the different elements of religion?
- b) Discuss the types of religious organisation?
- c) What are the functions of religion?

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#### **8.4 SUMMARY**

Social institutions are the major spheres of social life or societal subsystems, organized to meet human needs. Social stratification is a system by which a society ranks categories of people in a hierarchy. The 3 commonly recognized systems of stratification are estate, caste and class. Stratification can be on the basis of wealth, power, status, education, ritualistic status, age and gender. It can serve functional purpose at the same time can be

highly dysfunctional and exploitative. Religion as a social institution plays an important role in the life of an individual. Sociologists study how religion is linked to other social patterns but make no claims about the truth of any religious belief. It serves integrative functions promoting social solidarity; however it can also make people over dependent and perpetuate inequalities in the society. Cults, sects and church are the different forms of religious organizations.

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#### **Questions:**

- Q1 What is social stratification? Bring out the functionality of stratification.
- Q2 Examine the significance of religion as a social institution.
- Q3 Examine the different types of state.
- Q4 What is sociology of religion? Explain the concept of church, sect and cult.
- Q5 Write short notes on:
- Caste and class
  - Elements of religion
  - Gender and age as forms of social stratification.



## POLITICAL INSTITUTION

### Unit structure:

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Political Institution
  - 9.1.1 State and government
  - 9.1.2 Functions of the state
  - 9.1.3 Types of state
- 9.2 Economic institutions
  - 9.2.1 Capitalism
  - 9.2.2 Socialism
  - 9.2.3 Informal economies
- 9.3 Summary

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### 9.0 OBJECTIVES:

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- To understand the political institution and types of state.
- To understand the economic institutions of capitalism, socialism and informal economy.

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### 9.1 POLITICAL INSTITUTION

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Every society has an order to which people adhere and this system ensures obedience or conformity to the social order. Political institution is the social institution that distributes power, sets a society's agenda and makes decisions. In traditional societies tribal chiefs, elders and shamans exercised control. In large and complex societies political authority has to be organized and structured. In today's world political and economic systems are intertwined. In both industrialized and developing societies, governments play a major role in shaping the economy.

#### 9.1.1 State and government

The **state** is a form of political entity by which a society is organized under an agency of government which claims legitimate

sovereignty over specified geographical area and has the monopoly of physical force. The features of state are:

- a) It is organized under a government that exercises authority over its subjects with the legitimate monopoly of physical force, to imprison and even executes members within its jurisdiction.
- b) The state exercises its political authority through governments at the national, state and local levels.

A **government** is an agency of the state, a complex legal system that has the power and authority to carry out the functions of the state. It is a formal organization that directs the political life of a society. In modern democracies, governments formed by political parties in power formulate policies, initiate laws, and launch programmes. The government consists of the legislature, executive and judiciary. The legislature is responsible for enacting laws that govern the behaviour of all individuals and institutions. The executive formulates policies and programmes and administers the country in accordance with the laws. The judiciary interprets the laws and safeguards the rights of all citizens.

### 9.1.2 Functions of the state

Modern nation states perform a wide variety of functions.

**Social control:** The state has the authority to enact and enforce laws. The state prescribes certain forms of behaviour and prohibits certain other behaviours that disrupt the social order; that are clearly specified. It is the responsibility of the state that along with making good laws it is also responsible for maintaining law and order, punishing criminals and protecting law abiding citizens. The police and courts are established to carry out the responsibility of maintaining law and order.

**Defence:** It is the prime responsibility of the state to protect its citizens against external aggression and threat. Modern nation states maintain standing armies and a large portion of national budget is utilized for defence purposes. The soldiers trained and equipped for defence is also employed for maintaining order in case of emergency domestic situations. However most democratic nations maintain a definite functional separation between social control and defence responsibilities of the state.

**Welfare:** The state initiates policies and programmes for the welfare of its citizens. Welfare measures would include health, education, employment, public services and retirement benefits. Equity, elimination of poverty, promotion of social justice, and cultural development are among the goals embraced by modern

nation states. Every state is expected to ensure economic stability and general social welfare.

### 9.1.3 Types of state

#### **Autocracy:**

Autocracy is defined in Modern Dictionary of Sociology as 'a form of government in which ultimate authority resides in one person who occupies the top position in a hierarchy of power and from whom authority descends to the bottom of the hierarchy'. It is a type of political system in which a single family rules from generation to generation. The autocrat may be a monarch who inherited the position or a dictator who captured power in coup d'état. The autocrat is not accountable for his actions to his subordinates or subjects. An autocracy is authoritarian but not totalitarian. In autocracy power and authority is vested in a single individual. Military dictatorships and absolute monarchies are examples of autocracies. With industrialization monarchy is gradually replaced by elected officials. All the European nations where monarchs remain are constitutional monarchies where monarchs are only symbolic heads of state with actual governing done by elected officials.

#### **Totalitarianism**

In Totalitarianism the state rather than the individual is supreme; the monopoly of power is vested in a party or a group of ruling elites. It is the most intensely controlled political form; a highly centralized political system that regulates people's life. The state controls and regulates all phases of life, perpetuates its power, and arbitrarily decides what is best for its citizens. The centralized system of authority discourages any form of real political participation. Although totalitarian governments claim to represent the will of the people most seek to bend people to the will of the government. Such governments have total concentration of power allowing no organized opposition. The population is denied the right to assemble for political purposes and also denied access to information. With the development of modern technologies and surveillance systems, totalitarian governments monitor every aspect of the citizens' life. Totalitarian states enforce strict conformity to state policies and political ideology. Examples of totalitarianism would be modern North Korea, Taliban.

#### **Democracy**

Democracy is a form of government in which power is exercised by the people as a whole. It is the government of the people, by the people and for the people. It gives power to the

people as a whole. A system of representative democracy puts authority in the hands of the elected leaders. All modern democracies are representative democracies in which people elect their representatives to form a government on their behalf. An ideal system of democracy is based on universal suffrage which allows all citizens of a certain age to exercise their right to vote. The effectiveness of the democracy depends on an enlightened electorate; people have to be politically conscious and active in the democratic process. Elected representatives formulate the budget, policies and programmes and carry out the programmes through a network of appointed officials. Modern nation states prefer democratic forms of government which recognize the sovereignty of the people.

**Check your progress:**

- 1) What is the difference between state and government?
- 2) Examine the various types of state.
- 3) Explain the functions of state.

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## **9.2 ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS:**

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The economy is the social institution that organizes a society's production, distribution and consumption of goods and services. Economic activity deals with goods and services needed for the satisfaction of human wants. It involves land, capital, labour and entrepreneurship.

The type of economy often depends upon the political form of government. How does the state control the flow of money, goods and services? What is the status of private property? What is the role of free market in the economic system? are the questions that illustrate the relationship between the state and economy. Two general economic models are capitalism and socialism.

### **9.2.1 Capitalism**

It is an economic system that is based on private ownership of the means of production and distribution in which individuals are free to accumulate and invest capital. The state only plays a minor



role in the marketplace, mainly controlling monopoly and exploitation. Features of capitalism are:

- a) Capitalist system operates on the basis of credit, free contract and free labour market.
- b) Private ownership of property is the essence of capitalism
- c) It involves freedom of choice, the right to own, rent, sell, trade, or give away the property.
- d) It encourages the accumulation of private property and considers the profit motive natural, simple a matter of doing business.
- e) It is based on unregulated competition which allows the market forces to determine what is produced, how much is produced and at what price.
- f) There is total freedom from government interference in business or commerce. A purely capitalist economy is a free market system with no government interference; called laissez- faire economy from the French words meaning to leave alone. Adam Smith, the Scott Philosopher stated that a freely competitive economy regulates itself by the invisible hand of the laws of supply and demand.

### 9.2.2 Socialism

It is an economic system in which the state has collective ownership of the means of production and distribution. In socialism the natural resources and the means of producing goods and services are collectively owned. The features of socialism are:

- a) It limits the rights to public property, especially property used to generate income. The state owns the land as well as other resources and operates businesses.
- b) Profit is no longer the ultimate goal of economic activity but public good is. Individuals are urged to work for the common good of all.
- c) There is a central planning agency that sets the goals and priorities. Production of goods as well as services and the entire market economy is oriented towards meeting the public needs rather than profit making.
- d) Socialism advocates overall welfare of the population through extensive public assistance programme.

### 9.2.3 Informal economies

These are economic activities involving income unreported to the government as required by law. Also known as underground

economy, black economy, informal sector includes self employed persons, vegetable vendors, rickshaw pullers, domestic servants etc. A large section of many economies constitutes of the informal sector. E.g. India- about 92% of the people is involved in informal sector contributing to the economy of the country. The informal sector is characterized by ease of entry, autonomy and flexibility, small scale of operation and family ownership of enterprise. The informal sector lacks government recognition and support. The organized capital market, bank finance, foreign technology, protection from competition etc is not available to informal sector enterprises. The informal economies function in the unprotected labour market. Workers in the informal sector can be classified into home based workers (rural artisans), self employed (street vendors, hawkers), piece rate workers and time wage workers (domestic servants, construction workers). Though unregulated and unprotected the informal sector today is a source of employment for a very large number of people contributing significantly to the total output of the economy.

**Check your progress:**

- 1) Explain the economic system of capitalism?
- 2) Examine the economic model of socialism.
- 3) Write a note on informal economy.

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## 9.4 SUMMARY

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Political institution is the major institution by which society distributes power and organizes decision making. Autocracy, totalitarianism and democracy are the main types of states. The type of economy often depends on the political form of government. Generally speaking economy may be classified into capitalism, socialism and informal economy.

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**Questions:**

- Q1 What is the difference between state and government? What are the different types of state?
- Q2 How is the economic and political institution interrelated? Examine economic institution of capitalism.
- Q3 What is the relationship between economic and political institution. Examine the economic institution of socialism.



## SOCIALIZATION

### Unit Structure

- 10.0 Objectives
- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 Definition and significance
- 10.3 Socialization as a process
- 10.4 Summary
- 10.5 Reference

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### 10.0 OBJECTIVES

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- To acquaint the students with the meaning and definition of Socialization
- To enable students to understand significance of socialization.
- To familiarize students the process of socialization.

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### 10.1 INTRODUCTION

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Human beings are social animals and they learn the cultural and behavioural patterns of the group they belong too. The Chinese and Japanese children learn to eat with chopsticks so skillfully that they can pick up not only rice but even single peanut. Children with some other part of the world use their hands or use a folk n knife to eat. How do we explain such variations? These phenomena can only be explained by socialization, the process by which individuals learn the culture of their society. Socialization is a life long process which enables the individual to learn the content of her/his culture and the many behavioural patterns of the group to which s/he belongs.

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### 10.2 DEFINITION AND SIGNIFICANCE

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#### Definition :

The new generation learns the basic essentials of culture and survives in the society. The process by which the new born child learns to satisfy its basic needs, prepares himself for different roles at any stage in society is called as socialization. The human

infant comes into the world a biological organism with animal needs. He/she is gradually moulded into a social being and learns social ways of acting and feeling. Without this process of moulding society cannot continue itself, nor could culture exist, and the individual cannot become a person. Socialization is the process by means of which the human infant learns to become a functioning and participating member of the society or group. It is a life long process which extends from cradle to grave. The social development is a gradual but continuous process which passes through different stages.

According to Anthony Giddens, "Socialization is process by which the helpless infant gradually becomes self aware, knowledgeable person, skilled in the ways of culture into which he or she is born." The process of socialization brings about a change in the individual personality as the new generation learns appropriate patterns of behaviour, develops ability to understand various social responsibilities and social obligations according to the expectations of society. Therefore the socialization is a process of training individual according to the norms of society. According to Anderson and Parker, "Socialization is a learning process of development of habits, attitudes and traits that differentiate individual from one another." According to Lundberg, "Socialization is a process of interaction where the individual learns habits, skills, beliefs and standard of judgments which are necessary for effective participation at social groups and communities."

Socialization provides children the experience of living and interacting with each other which helps the individual to grow as a human being or it would be difficult to differentiate them with animals. Children learn by imitating and observing, therefore socialization is concerned to be a two way process which involves observation and response. Every new born infant is considered to be a bundle of flesh that needs to be moulded in a specific way to be an accepted member. As the child grows, s/he becomes disciplined and matured. In this way socialization is a life long process.

#### **Significance :**

Socialization is significant to individuals and society in many ways. Firstly, it is through the process of Socialization, as Otite and Ogionwo (1979) have rightly argued, that human beings who are biological beings become socially human. Socialization ensures the continuity of society or its persistence over time due to inculcation into its members of the essential values and norms necessary for its survival and development. It is through Socialization that individuals and groups are assigned specific roles e.g., men and women in the society and they will continue to perform their various responsibilities or duties. It further serves to standardize the

acceptable patterns of behaviours in most societies and among the individuals and corporate groups in existence.

Socialization process also serves the function of providing the members of society with appropriate skills and knowledge for performing future roles e.g., training of people in formal institute such as schools, colleges, vocational institutions etc. it prepares the individual for the role s/he have to play in society and the status they occupy with proper belief, attitudes, norms, values, skills and knowledge. New members of the society are often socialized into accepting the moral code of society, the basis upon which the society survives; without moral regulation, most societies are likely to fall apart. Finally, it is through Socialization that every member of the society is provided with his or her personality. It should, however, be noted that consequences of the Socialization process may also prevail resulting in deviant behaviours, including criminality, among individuals and groups in society. Socialization transmits the heritage from generation to generations which ensures persistence and continuity.

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### 10.3 THE PROCESS OF SOCIALIZATION

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The social order is maintained largely by socialization. Unless the individuals behave in accordance with the norms of the group, it is going to disintegrate. It is said that the process of socialization begins long before a child is born. The parents' courtship, marital selection, customs concerning pregnancy and child birth and the whole system of cultural practices surrounding the family are important for the child's growth.

Direct socialization begins after birth. Reflexes are the automatic and rigid response of the organism to a given stimulus. They are unlearnt and are not modifiable. They set limits on what an organism can do. But they are the base on which the process of direct socialization begins.

Instincts are said to have some influence on human behaviour. For example, Freud is of the opinion that the sex instinct is the source of all human endeavours. The human infant at birth does not have complete instincts but only some elements of them, such as reflexes and urges. Urge provides a firm ground for explaining human behaviour. If human needs are not satisfied, it leads to tension until it encounters a stimulus capable of relieving the tension. The urge is thus a dynamic force behind behaviour, it provides a starting point for the process of socialization. The process of socialization involves different stages. They are the following-

**a) Imitation**

Imitation is copying by an individual of the actions of another. G.H Mead defines it as 'self-conscious assumption of another's acts or roles'. Thus when the child attempts to walk impressively like the father swinging a stick and wearing spectacles, he/she is imitating. Imitation can be conscious or unconscious. In imitation the person imitating performs exactly the same activity as the one who is imitated. It is the main factor in the process of socialization. Through it the child learns many social behavioural patterns. The child as compared to the adult possesses the greatest capacity for imitation. Language and pronunciation are acquired by the child only through imitation. It is because of the tendency to imitate that children are so attuned to the influence of their parents and friends whose behaviour they imitate.

**b) Suggestion**

Suggestion is the process of communicating information which has not logical or self-evident basis. It is devoid of rational persuasion. It may be conveyed through language, pictures or some similar medium. Suggestion influences not only behaviour with others but also one's own private and individual behaviour. In trade, industry, politics, education and every other field people make use of suggestion to have their ideas and notions accepted by other people and to make them behave accordingly. Advertising is based on the idea of suggestion. Children are more influenced by suggestion than adults.

**c) Identification**

In the early age, the child cannot make a difference between his/her own organism and the environment. Most of their actions are random. As they grow in age, they come to know of the nature of things which satisfy their needs. Such things become the objects of their identification. Thus the toys with which they play, the picture-book which they enjoy looking at, the mothers who feed them etc become objects of identification.

**d) Language**

It is the medium of social interaction. In the beginning the child does not know how to speak. At first the child utters some random syllables which have no meaning. Gradually the child learns by hearing the parents and all those with whom he is associated with. The mother tongue is learnt this moulds the personality of the individual from infancy.

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**10.4 SUMMARY**


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Socialization is a life long process which enables the child to learn the content of his culture and the many behavioural patterns of the group to which s/he belongs. The process and effects of

socialization are most pronounced in early childhood when the family consciously or unconsciously teaches the child certain types of behaviour as well as beliefs. Regardless of where we live, we are all products of socialization. Without this process of moulding society cannot continue itself, nor could culture exist, and the individual cannot become a person. Socialization is the process by means of which the human infant learns to become a functioning and participating member of the society or group.

**Check your Progress**

1. Define socialization
2. Discuss the process of socialization
3. Explain the meaning of socialization.

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**10.5 REFERENCES**

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# 11

## AGENCIES OF SOCIALIZATION

### Unit Structure

- 11.0 Objectives
- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 Agencies of socialization
- 11.3 Stages in socialization
- 11.4 Summary
- 11.5 Reference

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### 11.0 OBJECTIVES

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- To acquaint the students with the agents of Socialization
- To enable students to understand the stages in socialization.
- To familiarize students the process growth.

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### 11.1 INTRODUCTION

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Individuals acquire the culture of their society through participation in a variety of groups and institutions. From their family the child learns the first words of language, religion and several other roles. But the family cannot teach everything, at every stage of life we learn rules and behavioural patterns as we interact with others. The primary agents of socialization are the family, peer group, school and mass media.

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### 11.2 AGENCIES OF SOCIALIZATION

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#### Family :

The family is a permanent, the most complete and primary institution that looks after the needs of an individual. It is the family where the child comes in contact with human beings specially the mother and the child has physical and social contact. It is the group into which the child is born. Being the first group which has influence over the individual, the child learns his first lessons in socialization from the family. From his parents s/he learns her/his speech and language. S/He learns respect for persons in authority.

The child gets his first lessons in co-operation, tolerance, love and affection in the family. The family has tremendous influence on the character and morality of the person.

The self concept of an individual depends to a large extent on one's family. The child develops his sense of self through observing the reactions of his parents. He learns to define himself as his parents define him. The family acts as a mediator between the individual and the other agencies of socialization. Even though there are other agencies like school, work place, media etc; it is the family that determines how the individual comes to be influenced by these agencies. For e.g. which school the child goes to, which friends he has contacts with etc...

#### **Peer Groups :**

Peer group refers to people of almost the same who share similar interests. They also help in the development of personality. The first peer group is the neighbourhood play group; children who hang out together in the neighbourhood and play different games. They begin to spend more time together than in their own families. They play games like cricket together, or just hang out. Participation in such groups gives the child important social identity such as a team player, leader, or shy person etc. The first neighbourhood playgroups are breeding grounds for leaders. Children also learn the rules of the game here, their first exposure to rules of the society.

Later in life, peer groups become more influential in school and the workplace. Unlike the neighbourhood playgroups, in the school the child gets to choose his own friends. Friends may be chosen on the basis of physical attraction, common interests, or shared backgrounds. They share similar interests in sports, music, movies, fashion, and even ideologies. The first taste of alcohol or the first act of smoking may be peer-induced. Young adults who grow up in crime-ridden localities are drawn into deviant subcultures.

The influence of the peer group continues in the workplace. The office norm, or the unwritten rules of behaviour, is a product of peer socialization. For example, in an industry or in a government office, there is often this shared understanding that a honest day's work is not necessary, and the peers frown upon people who are eager to complete the task in a timely fashion. At the same time friends in the workplace can help individuals tide over many life crises such as domestic problems, divorce, accidents, and death.

#### **The School :**

The school is considered to be an important formal setting where the child spends many hours together with friends and

teachers. The school is the first formal agency which exposes the child to the rules of the larger society. Here the child learns to recognize and obey rules, practice skills, and relate to people in positions of authority. Children learn to behave in group settings, sit quietly and listen to teachers, participate in social events, and accept responsibilities. The school plays the most important role in the development of social and intellectual skills and the reception of society's cultural heritage. It is not only responsible for reading, writing, and arithmetic, but for the transmission of the accumulated social heritage of the community. Education refines social skills, and frequent interaction with peers and teachers helps in the formation of a healthy social identity. The school also teaches civic sense, patriotism, and pride in the nation's shared heritage. Above all, education is supposed to foster critical thinking so that individuals can think for themselves and become creative and productive members of the society.

**Mass Media :**

In the present-day society, mass media play a significant, although subtle role in the socialization process. Media imparts information through audio visual and print. Mass media refers to all instruments of communication such as television, radio, newspapers, magazines, movies, and records. Television has become by far the most influential medium in recent years. India has come a long way from the days of the government controlled single-channel television. With the growth of the cable industry and numerous private television channels, people have a choice. Not only is there a wide range of programmes available, but there is also an instant transmission of images, events, styles and fashions from around the world. Young people are now able to enjoy Western music, dance, fashion and fast food, and adopt types of behaviour patterns. There are also educational channels such as Discovery, National Geographic, and History, which inform, entertain and truly instruct. However, there is considerable controversy over what some people call 'cultural pollution', which is the result of the 'pernicious' influence of the West. Much of the controversy is the result of stereotypes and the comparison of our 'ideal' culture with West's 'real' culture.

It is possible that many people watch too much television and that they devote too little to reading. Once upon a time, good books were the only form of entertainment. Now we can watch television any time of the day or night. Studies in USA show that pre-schoolers and young children spend almost one-third of the day in front of the television. Studies have also shown that exposure to violence in the media can contribute to aggressive behaviour, insensitivity to violence. In India, parents are more likely to regulate children's viewing of television and violent movies. However, it will

be worthwhile to undertake some extensive research on the impact of certain television programmes on young children.

We also depend on other agents of mass media such as newspapers and journals to transmit enormous amounts of information. There are magazines that cater to every conceivable interest – women, young adults, fashion, film industry, sports, health and fitness, news stories, politics, occupations and professions, music and religion. Then there are, of course, the books – fiction, biographies, and social commentaries – which convey a host of ideas. In a sense, every book is a powerful instrument of socialization.

Once the individual completes his teenage, he enters the long phase of adulthood. The young adult is physically mature and socially responsible. His personality is integrated. He is independent and is able to make decisions for himself. He has the knowledge and skills necessary for social living and environmental mastery. Early adulthood is characterized by maximum physical and mental capacity. Speed of response and work capacity is at their best during this period. Training for a job usually occurs during this period. The young adult usually concentrates his attention on job success and advancement. There is a strong emphasis on work achievements in these years.

Old age, age of retirement, is accompanied by physical mental and social changes. There are important changes in the social roles of an individual. It is at this age period that we find signs of gradual withdrawal from active social involvements.

#### **Workplace :**

As the individual grows into an adult person, work becomes part of life. Occupation brings about reality in front of the person as the individual earns for survival to fulfill his ambition. Occupational socialization deals with the people as well as with the field. Personal goals and basic needs are fulfilled. The individual learns to cooperate, adjust with others at the work place. Discipline continues and if s/he violates the rules it may cost the loss of job.

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### **11.3 STAGES IN SOCIALIZATION**

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The Development of the Self continues throughout our lives which helps the individual to grow into an adult person and be an accepted member of the society. Values, norms, beliefs are taught to the individual so that the person follows the norms of the society.

An important aspect in the process of socialization is the development of the self. The development of the self concept takes place through the child's interaction with the social world and is the heart of socialization. The self is essentially an individual's awareness of his or her physical and social identity. The self may be divided into two – the physical or existential self and the social or categorical. The first stage in the development of the self concept is the development of the existential self. For the infant the first step in developing a self concept is to understand that he is separate and distinct entity. Once this process is over, the process of defining the social self begins, a process that continues over one's entire life span. This is sometimes referred to as categorical self because the definition takes form of placing one self in a wide range of categories.

Two theorists who have made considerable contribution to the understanding of self are C.H. Cooley and G.H. Mead.

#### **C.H Cooley- 'Looking Glass Self'**

C.H. Cooley stressed the role of primary groups and social interaction in the development of self. According to him the self develops within the context of social relationships "there is no sense of 'I'..... without its correlative sense of 'you', 'he' or 'they'..." according to Cooley one discovers oneself through reactions of others to him. The self concept is gained from the reactions of parents and later modified by the reactions of other individuals. Murphy explains self as any individual who is known to have his own identity and self image. The self of a person is what s/he consciously or unconsciously conceives her/himself to be. This concept of self is the combination of one's attitude and the feelings of others.

Cooley introduced the concept of 'Looking glass self'- there are three elements in the process of development of self:

- (i) The imagination of our appearance to another person
- (ii) The imagination of his/her judgment of that appearance
- (iii) Some sort of self feeling such as pride or shame.

Explaining these points we can understand that the way we look not only appeals to us but also provokes others to react. The reactions can have a positive or negative reaction on our behaviour. Therefore this theory 'Looking Glass Self' is considered to be important in the life of an individual.

#### **G.H. Mead- 'Development of Self'**

Development of Self according to G.H. Mead has described as the passing of the individual through distinct stages and the self emerges. He expressed the 'double centre of gravity' in his concept

of the self, which he divided into 'I' and 'Me'. 'I' is the creative, spontaneous, instinctive part of the self that has ideas and imagination, while 'Me' is the social self with its capacity to take the role of the other takes into account the reactions of others. Both 'I' and 'Me' pulls one to behave in a particular way. Consciousness is a form of a conversation between the 'I' and 'Me'.

According to Mead the development of self takes place in 3 stages:

- (i) The stage of developing self consciousness
- (ii) The play stage
- (iii) The game stage

In the first stage, the stage of developing self consciousness is apparent in most children at the early childhood. It is the product of language learning and the social interactions that necessarily accompany it. In this stage he begins to become conscious of him in the same way that others are conscious of him. He becomes self conscious through the use of language.

The play stage begins around the age of 3-5. During this stage the child's verbal ability increases and he or she engages in a great deal of role playing. Children from 5-8 years of age spend much of their free time in imagination role playing of one kind or another. Mother and father, teacher, soldier, policeman etc. are all common roles assumed by children in play. Children learn to do things from this kind of activity – they learn to play the adult roles around them and they learn who they are by being who they are not. Play is a significant preparation for the later life.

In the play stage the roles they play are free, independent of each other. In the next stage, game stage, the roles are related to each other by rules that define how they are to be played. In the most simple and universal of all games- hide and seek- there are only 2 related roles hider and seeker. There is no meaning in hiding if no one seeks or in seeking if no one hides. Thus in the games the meaning of one role lies solely in its relation to the other roles; it has no meaning outside that relation. Sociologically, therefore, play is characterised by role playing, while games are characterised by position enactment since the rules are the social norms of the game. In this stage, the player in order to do his part, must know all the roles of all other players and adjust his behaviour to the others.

Erving Goffman, a symbolic interactionist, argued that identities were the resources we 'pick up and put down' to negotiate everyday life. For Goffman, individuals are like actors playing the roles on stage, such as teacher, student, etc...and we self consciously monitor our performances. Goffman recognized that, like actors, people have time off stage, when they are less

obviously presenting an identity. So although they are performing some roles there, they are doing so less self consciously.

The chief architect of the dramaturgical analysis is Erving Goffman. The world is a theatre in which we are the actors. The theatre has a front region, where the performances are done and a back region, where rehearsals appear. At the back region, the behavior and actions are less deliberate and there is less presentation of self, an individual's effort to create specific impressions in the minds of others.

He adds that it is through the impression management technique that they present themselves on the stage. For eg: Waiters at expensive restaurants are acutely aware of being on stage and act in a dignified manner when they are at service. Once in the kitchen, however, they don't act in the same manner.

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## 11.4 SUMMARY

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The Development of the Self continues throughout our lives which helps the individual to grow into an adult person and be an accepted member of the society. Values, norms, beliefs are taught to the individual so that the person follows the norms of the society. Individuals acquire the culture of their society through participation in a variety of groups and institutions. From their family the child learns the first words of language, religion and several other roles. But the family cannot teach everything, at every stage of life we learn rules and behavioural patterns as we interact with others.

### Check your Progress

1. Define socialization and explain the agents of socialization.
2. Explain the development of Self according to Cooley
3. Explain the development of Self according to Mead

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## 11.5 REFERENCES

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# 12

## RESOCIALIZATION

### Unit Structure

- 12.0 Objectives
- 12.1 Introduction
- 12.2 Resocialization
- 12.3 Gender socialization
- 12.4 Political socialization
- 12.5 Summary
- 12.6 Reference

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### 12.0 OBJECTIVES

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- To acquaint the students with the concept of Resocialization
- To enable students to understand the concept of Gender socialization.
- To familiarize students with political socialization.

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### 12.1 INTRODUCTION

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Socialization is a process that continues throughout the life, right from the cradle to the grave. Although the family peer group, school and mass media are the most important agents of socialization, we continue to learn standards of behaviour and beliefs from a number of agencies.

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### 12.2 RESOCIALIZATION

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Resocialization is a sociological concept dealing with the process of mentally and emotionally "re-training" a person so that he or she can operate in an environment other than that which he or she is accustomed to.

Key examples include the process of resocializing new recruits into the military so that they can operate as soldiers (or, in other words, as members of a cohesive unit) and the reverse process, in



which those who have become accustomed to such roles return to society after military discharge.

The primary socialization received in childhood is just one part of the lifelong socialization process. Adults go through a process of resocialization, which is the learning of new norms and values that occurs when they join a new group or when life circumstances change dramatically. Learning new norms and values enables people to adapt, though newly learned things may contradict what was previously learned.

Though senility and certain diseases associated with old age can impair a person's ability to learn and adapt to new situations, many adults experience change throughout life. A new job, the loss of friends or a spouse, children leaving home, and retirement are all milestones that require resocialization.

Most instances of resocialization are mild modifications, such as adapting to a new work environment. Extreme forms of the process can include joining the military, going to prison, or otherwise separating from mainstream society.

The workplace is an agent of socialization—in this case, resocialization. A new job brings with it new norms and values, including the following:

1. What papers to fill out
2. What equipment to use
3. What tasks to complete and when to complete them
4. When to arrive at work
5. When to take a break
6. When to leave

The employing organization also has its own values. The socialization process involves learning how strictly the company enforces work-related norms, such as whether it's acceptable for people of different job levels to fraternize outside of working hours, or whether a very late arrival will incur some kind of punishment. During resocialization, people learn how to modify behavior to fit the new situation.

Most people are socialized to think for themselves and make their own decisions about daily tasks. That changes when they are resocialized by what sociologist Erving Goffman labelled a total institution. A total institution is an organization or setting that has the following characteristics:

1. Residents are not free to leave.
2. All actions are determined and monitored by authority figures.
3. Contact with outsiders is carefully controlled.

4. The environment is highly standardized.
5. Rules dictate when, where, and how members do things.
6. Individuality is discouraged.

Examples of total institutions include prisons, mental hospitals, and the military. In these total institutions, part of the resocialization process includes the loss of some decision-making freedom. The military decides what its soldiers wear, how they spend their time, and when and what they eat. To be promoted to a higher rank, they must demonstrate that they have been resocialized and have successfully adapted to the military's norms and values.

Sociologist Erving Goffman studied resocialization in mental institutions. He characterized the mental institution as a total institution—one in which virtually every aspect of the inmates' lives was controlled by the institution and calculated to serve the institution's goals. For example, the institution requires that patients comply with certain regulations, even when compliance is not necessarily in the best interest of the individual.

The goal of total institutions is resocialization which radically alters residents' personalities through deliberate manipulation of their environment. Resocialization is a two-part process. First, the staff of the institution tries to erode the residents' identities and independence.

Strategies to erode identities include forcing individuals to surrender all personal possessions, get uniform haircuts and wear standardized clothing. Independence is eroded by subjecting residents to humiliating and degrading procedures. Examples are strip searches, fingerprinting and assigning serial numbers or code names to replace the residents' given names.

The second part of resocialization process involves the systematic attempt to build a different personality or self. This is generally done through a system of rewards and punishments. The privilege of being allowed to read a book, watch television or make a phone call can be a powerful motivator for conformity. Conformity occurs when individuals change their behaviour to fit in with the expectations of an authority figure or the expectations of the larger group.

No two people respond to resocialization programs in the same manner. While some residents are found to be "rehabilitated", others might become bitter and hostile. As well, over a long period of time, a strictly controlled environment can destroy a person's ability to make decisions and live independently. This is known as institutionalization, this negative outcome of total institution

prevents an individual from ever functioning effectively in the outside world again.

Resocialization is also evident in individuals who have never been "socialized" in the first place, or who have not been required to behave socially for an extended period of time. Examples include feral children (never socialized) or inmates who have been in solitary confinement.

Socialization is a lifelong process. Adult socialization often includes learning new norms and values that are very different from those associated with the culture in which the person was raised. This process can be voluntary. Currently, joining the military qualifies as an example of voluntary resocialization. The norms and values associated with military life are different from those associated with civilian life.

Goffman also developed the concept of dramaturgy, the idea that life is like a never-ending play in which people are actors. Goffman believed that when we are born, we are thrust onto a stage called everyday life, and that our socialization consists of learning how to play our assigned roles from other people. We enact our roles in the company of others, who are in turn enacting their roles in interaction with us. He believed that whatever we do, we are playing out a role on the stage of life.

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### 12.3 GENDER SOCIALIZATION

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A baby is born and the doctor looks at the proud parents or parent and says three simple words: "It's a boy," or "It's a girl!" Before a newborn child even takes his or her first breath of life outside the mother's womb, he or she is distinguishable and characterized by gender. The baby is brought home and dressed in clothes that help friends, family and even strangers identify the sex of the child.

Baby boys are dressed in blue and baby girls are dressed in pink. The baby boy may be dressed in a blue jumpsuit with a football or a baseball glove on it. The baby girl may wear a bow in their hair and flowered pajamas. As the boy begins to grow, he is given a miniature basketball and a hoop to play with. The girl is given dolls and doll clothes to dress them up in. Even going further, eventually the boy may play with Legos and Lincoln Logs and the girl gets a Play School oven and a plastic tea set with which to play house.

As illustrated in the not-so-fictional scenario above, gender socialization begins very early in life. Society has accepted such

stereotypical things as baby boy blue and baby girl pink to help identify the sex of a child. Heaven forbid the little Joey looks like a girl or baby Michelle is mistaken for a boy. Mothers and fathers make it easy for everyone to distinguish their bundle of joy by utilizing the socially established gender stereotypes.

But where and how did these stereotypes come from? Unfortunately, there isn't a definite answer to that question. We seem to accept that blue is for boys and pink is for girls. Boys generally play with balls, toy trucks and building blocks whereas girls spend their time with dolls, tea sets and stuffed animals. But these are the stereotypes that are influenced by the parents. A baby child isn't concerned with his or her gender identity. As the child gets older though, he or she will begin to develop an identity for his or herself and establish a personality that reflects their masculinity or femininity.

Another aspect of everyday life that is highly influential in gender socialization is the media. What we see on television or at the movies, what we read in the newspaper or in magazines, what we see on billboards or hear on the radio are all very significant on how we form an opinion on gender identity. Media publishers have very successfully learned to "play" to an audience and are extremely successful in communicating with the audience they wish to reach. Advertisers are the biggest example of this concept. Society is very apt in recognizing images seen in commercials and printed ads and viewing them as socially acceptable behaviour.

For example, beer companies will target the twenty to thirty year old male audience and include scantily clad women enjoying their favourite beers. Ironically, popular women's magazines also use beautiful women to promote cosmetics and beauty products. How often do you think people question the activities they see portrayed in advertising and question them as to their validity? Probably not very often. It is much easier for society to just accept the images and not bother to take the time to analyze their bias and untrue nature. It is this societal indifference that clouds the mind and allows the images to continue to influence what we believe to be socially acceptable. And when society is presented with something or someone out of the ordinary which doesn't follow what we deem to be correct, we rebel and try to modify it to our socially acceptable standards.

Advertisers utilize female images to sell products. Society associates beauty with the female and we are more inclined to pay attention to a beautiful woman presented to us on a screen or a page in a magazine. In a perfect world, there would be no gender differentiation, no racial tension and no "political incorrectness ". But we live in an imperfect world that is currently making a turn

towards becoming more "PC" (politically correct). Fading away are such terms as fireman, stewardess, boyfriend and girlfriend, policeman and secretary. Now we are starting to use a more socially acceptable language and replacing such terms with fire fighter, flight attendant, domestic partner or significant other, police officer and administrative assistant. We are slowly, and do mean slowly, moving towards a non gender separated society. Eventually we may be able to control what we see and how we see it, but until then we must rely on ourselves to determine what is reality and what is part of a Dream World.

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## 12.4 POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

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The development of political socialization is the process by which people come to acquire political attitudes and values. Socialization in childhood has been extensively studied. Children acquire warm feelings towards authority figures that might appear in fairy stories such as that of queens and kings.

It is claimed that political socialization as a concept is somewhat new. Almond and Verba who studied the problems and effects of political socialization on political activities gave serious thinking to this concept. Followings are three main stages of political socialization.

The first stage is when a child begins to realize that there is a world around him. Then, he realizes that outside the family there are more powers. He/she starts living and learning outside family. They put certain demands on the society and recognize authorities, which operate in the society. Second stage is when one reaches adolescence stage and becomes mature enough to participate in political activities. Third stage is when either he/she begins to love or hate surrounding political institutions and systems. At this stage, values and attitudes become clear.

It should be noted that sociologists have been more interested in how people related to groups and society, social psychologists have been interested in how individuals learn about and adjust to the demands of groups and society, and anthropologists have been interested in how people learn about their culture.

Political socialization is a process that takes place in every society. This process begins very early in life and is a continuous process. Generally, the main aim of political socialization is to create good citizens. Political socialization is the process by which individuals learn about politics and that factor can shape political culture. Political socialization is an attempt to train people to do

what the system requires in values, norms, information and skills that are considered desirable and useful in the society.

Following are some of the important types of political socialization.

- **Manifest socialization:** Certain values and feelings towards a political system are directly expressed. There is an explicit communication of information to other parties e.g. formal education given in educational institutions, talk on electronic and mass media about political problems, and use of platform for audience. Such a manifestation can be both voluntary and involuntary. It includes all types of propaganda. It is not necessary that such a manifestation will be for the maintenance or stability of political system, rather it can be for instability, change and even revolution.
- **Latent manifestation:** There is no direct approach to the problems, and that ideas are transmitted indirectly.
- **Particularistic socialization:** Political ideas of individuals are directed towards a particular value, which they are required to adhere and appreciate. Thus, all political energies are directed in that direction alone.
- **Universalistic socialization:** Here, political energies are not directed in one direction, but a liberal outlook is developed. One then can learn and perform several roles. Such roles can be in any walk of life.

The process of political socialization is to create a nominal interest among the people, to inculcate value, discipline, and teaches people to become obedient, and to inculcate some lofty values.

What is the importance of political socialization for the political system?

David Easton says that political socialization creates a reservoir of support for political system. He further adds that political system is a set of human interactions in which authoritative allocation of values take place. In political system we have input, output, adaptation, and maintenance. Political socialization is the adaptation and maintenance function of political system. Political socialization is interested in maintaining the status quo. The whole exercise of political socialization is to exercise order and stability, and normally political socialization is a pro-stable process.

Citizens are trained to believe that political system is good and responsive. Reservoir of support ensures non-active and supportive citizens. Political socialization brings changes in public

opinion. It helps in the creation of political culture and modifies that to the changing needs.

There is close relationship between political culture & political socialization. Both are closely linked and connected with each other. Political socialization maintains and transforms political culture of a group. It maintains political culture by successfully transmitting it from an old generation to a new one. The process of political socialization in every society involves a combination of three tasks of maintaining, transforming, and creating a new political culture. How we develop political culture in fact is a process called political socialization. In brief, it is difficult to separate political socialization from political culture.

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## 12. 5 SUMMARY

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Socialization is a life long process which enables the child to learn the content of his culture and the many behavioural patterns of the group to which s/he belongs. The process and effects of socialization are most pronounced in early childhood when the family consciously or unconsciously teaches the child certain types of behaviour as well as beliefs. Regardless of where we live, we are all products of socialization. Human beings are social animals, and we need to learn the cultural and behavioural patterns of the group to which we belong. Socialization is the only way an individual can become a full member of society. It is the only way we can transmit our social heritage from one generation to the next.

### Check your Progress

1. What is resocialization? Explain the concept with examples.
2. Write an essay on Resocialization
3. Explain the concept of Gender socialization
4. Explain the concept of Political socialization

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**12. 6 SUGGESTED READINGS**

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# 13

## SOCIAL CHANGE

### Unit Structure

- 13.0 Objectives.
- 13.1 Introduction.
- 13.2 Meaning and Definition.
- 13.3 Theories of Change.
  - 13.3.1 Evolutionary Theory.
  - 13.3.2 Functionalist Theory.
  - 13.3.3 Conflict Theory.
- 13.4 Factors of Social Change.
- 13.5 Resistance to Change.
- 13.6 Conclusion.
- 13.7 Questions.
- 13.8 References.

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### 13.0 OBJECTIVES

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- To understand the meaning of social change.
- To make the students know the various theories of social change.
- To identify the factors responsible for social change.
- To understand the various theories related to change.

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### 13.1 INTRODUCTION

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People long for stability, security through continuity. However, no society remains static or stable. Society is constantly changing in its structure & function. This change in the society is inevitable. It's a continuous process. Some changes are willingly accepted by the society, some are not. Speed of change also varies from society to society. Some societies experience speedy change, some take long period.

Social scientists are trying to understand the process of social change, the direction of social change & various factors that bring this social change. The word change refers to anything that is done differently. It does not necessarily mean the social change, because all the changes cannot be regarded as social changes.

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### 13.2 MEANING & DEFINITION

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If we say that, society is a complex network of relationship then social change would mean change in social relationship. Different sociologists have tried to explain social change by defining it in different ways.

According to T. B. Bottmore “social change refers to change occurring in social structure or in institution or in the relationship between the institutions.”

According to Kinsley Davis “social change is change which occurs in the social organization i.e. its structure & function.”

Social change may be defined as the process in which is discernible significant alteration in the structure & functioning of a particular social system.

Thus, social change is an universal phenomenon. It is a process that also implies continuity. Social change is thus inevitable & a demand of time.

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### 13.3 THEORIES OF CHANGE

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The theories of social change are of four types. Some show the existence of more or less general & irreversible trends. Second type takes the form of conditional & structural laws. The third type deals with the forms of change & the fourth type deals with causes or factors of change. The details are discussed in the following table :-

Table : 1 : TYPES OF THEORIES FO CHANGE

TYPE	DEFINITION	EXAMPELS
1	Search for trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parsons : trend towards Universalism</li> <li>• Comte : the three stages</li> <li>• Rostow : the stages of growth</li> </ul>
2	a. Conditional Laws	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parson : Industrialization → Nuclear family</li> <li>• Dahrendorf : Industrialization → Disappearance of class conflicts</li> </ul>
	b. Structural Laws	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nurkse : Vicious circle of poverty</li> <li>• Bhaduri : Reproductive nature of semi-feudal relations of production.</li> </ul>
3	Forms of change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hegelian triad</li> <li>• Kuhn : scientific revolutions</li> </ul>
4	Causes of change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weber : the rotestant ethic</li> <li>• McClelland : the achieving society</li> </ul>

We will discuss the following three types of theories in detail

- I Evolutionary
- II Functionalist
- III Conflict

### 13.3.1 Evolutionary theory of change

The concept of evolution implies order, change & composition of given populations by such processes as mutation & natural selection. Often the analogy between the development of an organism & the development of human society is made or implied, hence the concept of social evolution has been used to refer to certain definite stages through which all societies were belived to pass, in the passage from a simple to a more complex form.

Classical evolutionary theory, was based on the assumptions that the history of human societies represented the history of their development from a simple, hardly differentiated, i.e. 'backward' state to more complex i.e.- 'advanced' state. In the 19<sup>th</sup> & early 20<sup>th</sup> c conjectures about unilineal societal development characterized the study of social evolution.

Theorists taking the evolutionary approach differed in many particulars. August Comte [1798-1857] viewed society as passing through three main epoch :-

1. The theological & military epoch in which supernatural preoccupations dominate the culture & military conquest salvery are the major social goals.
2. The metaphysical & juridical epoch which is a transitional epoch between the first & the third &
3. The scientific & industrial epoch in which positivism displaces religious speculation & peaceful economic production displaces war making as the dominant aim of social organization.

Sir Henry Maine [1822-1888] viewed the progress of civilization as a series of stages between early forms of social order based on patriarchy & status & later forms based on freedom & contract.

Herbert Spencer, in his principles of sociology, felt that in social life there was a change from simple to complex forms from the homogenous to the heterogeneous & that there was with society integration of the 'whole' & a differentiation of the parts.

E. B. Taylor, in his great work, primitive culture, 1871, linked his observations covering a wide range of different societies to the evolutionary framework. In particular, he sought to establish a sequential development of religious forms: a concern which also motivated Sir James Frazer in the Golden Bough : A study in Comparative Religion & Emile Durkheim in his, les elementariness de la vie religious, 1912, Karl Marx & F. Engels in Das 1848, put forward a materialist variant of evolutionary theory when they would be transition from capitalist control to rule by the proletariat similar to the earlier development whereby capitalism itself replaced feudalism.

The evolutionary doctrine provided a broad general framework through which the whole progress of human society could be conceptualized. The neo-evolutionary theory of society focused more on the apparent variation of change patterns with respect to certain social groups, regions of organization as their major focus of analysis while the classical evolutionary theory dealt with the mankind, civilization or some institutional ideal type of society.

### 13.3.2 The Functionalist Theory of Change

The functionalists presented the best known theoretical approach that views exogenous forces as the source of major changes in society. The early functionalists were involved in by the variety of socio-cultural phenomena & by the uniformity of certain characteristics of the various societies. This led them to the idea that cultural manifestations & social institution were closely related to the satisfaction of basic human needs. Eg :- Theories of Radcliffe Brown & Malinowski, Needs were largely considered to be constant only the societal organization to meet the needs are variable. Social change hence, can be understood as change of the institutional arrangements available to take care of those needs or as change of the manifest & latent functions of these institutions. Equilibrium was considered as the most important assumption with which the functionalists view society. Eg :- Kingsley Davis, Talcott Parsons etc. In most general terms, a system is said to be in equilibrium when its component parts are so compatible with each other, barring an outside disturbance, none of them will change its position or relation to the others in any significant way. A theory of social equilibrium is a theory that seeks to uncover the general condition for the maintenance of a society in stable equilibrium & to specify the mechanism by which that stability is preserved or established after the occurrence of outside disturbances.

### 13.3.3 The Conflict Theory of Change

Common to all conflict theoretical approaches is that they explain change in terms of antagonism or tension producing elements that are present in the social system. The causes of such conflicts leading to societal changes are especially sought in those elements of the social structure which on the other hand are related to the establishment & sanctioning of social norms & on the other hand to the control & allocation of scarce resources such as income, property, prestige, influence & authority. These theories focus on processes of social life that tend to ward instability in & conflict between parts of society or simply the actors concerned. Change is seen as a dialectical relationship between dominant elements of society (central values, ideologies, power relations, distribution of resources etc.) & those arrangements that compete with or oppose the former. Karl Marx was one of the earliest exponents of conflict theory.

In Marxism, the basis of conflict is to be found in the social relations of production. Thus all supporting social institutions support the different 'sides'. In this conflict & the unitary concept of a cultural & social system tend to disappear. The political & economic institutions of capitalist society are seen as representing 'the political & economic way of bourgeoisie' & as against this there

is reference of the 'political economy of the working class'. So conflict between classes in the social relations of production spills over to become a conflict in all spheres & the social system becomes one of two conflicting classes.

Ralf Dahrendorf, on the other hand has suggested that intra-institutional conflicts occur about authority in all institutions & that there need not necessarily be any overlapping. In particular he argues that industrial conflict has become institutionalized i.e.- confined within a particular institutional context. Lockwood, has drawn attention to the importance of conflict between institutional sub systems Eg :- there is no necessary harmony between industrial & educational institutions.

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### 13.4 FACTORS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

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For social change, not one cause may be effective. There may be many factors which set the process in motion. Although social causation is always a multiple causation, some sociologists have emphasized on factor over another, we would take into account all the factors, though some consider social & cultural factors to be most predominant.

**1. Physical Factors** – Changes in the physical environment are not rapid, but the occasional changes in the environment bring total changes in human social lives. Eg :- Earthquake, storms, heavy rainfall. These changes force people to migrate to new areas hence people have to change themselves according to that society. This brings out change I culture, way of clothing, manners etc.

**2. Biological Factors** - Biological factors too have some indirect influence upon social change. Among the biological factors is the qualitative aspect of the population related to heredity. The qualitative aspect of population is based upon powerful & great men & their birth is dependent to a large extent upon heredity & mutation. Hence, biological factors play a part in social change to that extent. In addition to this the biological principals of natural selection & struggle for survival are constantly producing alterations in society.

**3. Technological Factors** – Human beings are never satisfied. In the process of satisfying his wants man devised new means & created new needs. To satisfy his new needs man invented new techniques to use natural resources. This technological factor brought out severe changes in the society.

Technological factors has immense influence in social change. Technology changes society by changing our

environments to which we in turn adopt. This change is usually in the material environment & the adjustment we make to the changes often modifies customs & social institutions. In this way, the increase in new machines & methods due to new discoveries has had a very great influence upon social institutions. In the modern age, technological factors are among the predominant causes of social change.

**4. Economic Factors** – Karl Marx has given economic interpretation of social changes. With the changes in the economic system, the entire society changes in its structure & functioning. Economic conditions in countries do affect the health, mortality, marriages, divorce rate, suicide, crime & emigration etc. It can also bring social unrest & revolution & war. Of course not all the social changes are necessarily caused by economic conditions. Changes have also occurred due to educational moulding in peoples attitudes etc.

**5. Cultural Factors** – The main cause of social change is the cultural factors. Changes in the culture are accompanied by social change. Changes & variations in culture inevitably influence social relationships. Culture gives speed & direction to social change & determines the limits beyond which social changes cannot occur. Max Weber, has proved this hypothesis by a comparative study of religious & economic institution.

**6. Environmental Factors** – The geographers have emphasized the impact of geographical environment upon human society Huntington has gone so far as to assert that an alteration in the climate is the sole cause of the evolution & devolution of civilizations & cultures Even if these claims of the geographers are to be discarded, it can not be denied that floods, earthquakes, excessive rain, drought, change of season etc. have significant effect upon social relationships & these are modified by such natural occurrences.

**7. Psychological Factors** – Most sociologists regard psychological factors as important elements in social change. The cause of social change is the psychology of man himself. Man is by nature a lover of change. He is always trying to discover new things in every sphere in life & is always anxious for novel experience. As a result of this tendency, the mores, traditions, customs etc. of every human society are perpetually undergoing change. The form of social relationships is constantly changing in the process of interactions between the tendencies of moving towards the new while preserving the old. New customs & methods replace the old traditional customs while old traditions that demand change with time adapts to changing traditions.

**8. Other Factors** – In addition to the above mentioned factors, another factor of social change is the appearance of new opinions & thoughts. Eg :- Changes in the attitudes towards dowry, caste system, female education etc. have resulted in widespread social variations & modifications. In fact a majority of the social revolutions take place as a result of the evolution of new ways of thinking. War, thoughts of great thinkers i.e.- Mahatma Gandhi, Karl Marx etc. influence the population & has socio-economic impact causing social change.

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### 13.5 RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

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Any change is not accepted easily. As we have seen unless there is mental preparation, no change is accepted by the society. Thus there are various factors which hinder the social change.

- 1. Inertia** – People should feel the dissatisfaction with existing situation, then only social change can take place. But many times people are so much used to that lethargic situation that they do not wish to change the situation. They have no mental capacity to fight against the situation & to change it. Such attitude is one of the obstacles in social change.
- 2. Habit** – Habit is developed through repeated actions for a long period of effect to break that habit is always resisted.
- 3. Custom & Tradition** – People have inculcated the tradition & custom through fore father so much that any revolutionary idea to change the custom is always criticized.
- 4. Vested Interest** – Resistance to the change comes from such group of people who would be threatened by that change. Any suggested change is likely to have resistance when it's not beneficial to the personal ambitions.
- 5. Lack of Proper Knowledge** – Social change is resisted by those who lack the knowledge of a new discovery. For want of facts, misconception & misunderstandings influence attitudes of people against any change. Illiteracy & ignorance make understanding of any technological innovation difficult. It took generations for the Baigas of Central India to accept iron plough for they were not prepared to hurt their mother earth with a knife. It is necessary, therefore to educate the people before introducing any change in their native, traditional setting. Knowledge can clear misconceptions & make people accept change readily.
- 6. Desire For Stability** – Any change disrupts normal routine life in which people find stability. They are not sure that the change is going to be beneficial or harmful. They tend to be apprehensive



about it. It is the desire for stability that makes people resist change.

**7. Suspicion** – When people suspect that a given change is harmful, anti-social or irreligious, they resist it. Those who believe that taking vaccine against smallpox is to arouse the wrath of goddess 'Mata' refuse to take inoculation. Superstitions, religious beliefs & prejudices often contribute to the suspicion that illiterate, ignorant, tradition bound people entertain against any innovation.

These are some of the stumbling blocks in the process of acceptance of social change. However, with education, persuasion, deliberation it is possible to prepare the people mentally to accept the change, if it is meant for their well-being & welfare of the society at large. Attitudes of the people can not be changed with the stroke of a pen, by passing laws or by any other forcible, drastic measures. When attitudes change favorably, the speed of social change is accelerated.

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### 13.6 CONCLUSION

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All societies change continuously. The world in which we live the physical environment, people and culture undergo changes. Society is not static. It is dynamic in the sense that alterations of various forms & dimensions are continuously taking place in it. Every moment of our life, we encounter some change or the other. There are changes of style & fashion, of technology, of market conditions, of systems, of education, of forms of government, of likes and dislikes and of individual and group preferences & so on.

Thus social change is change in the social relationship. This implies that it refers to changes in the social structure and social relationships of the society.

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### 13.7 QUESTIONS

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1. What do you understand by social change?
2. Discuss any one theory of social change in detail?
3. Explain the factors responsible for accelerating the process of change?
4. Discuss the impact of social change on our environment?
5. Which are the factors that hinder social change?

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# 14

## ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL CHANGE

### Unit Structure :

- 14.0 Objectives
- 14.1 Introduction
- 14.2 What is environment?
- 14.3 Sustainable Development
- 14.4 Impact of social change on environment
- 14.5 Conclusion
- 14.6 Questions
- 14.7 References

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### 14.0 OBJECTIVES

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- To understand the meaning of environment.
- To understand what is sustainable development.
- To make the students know the impact of social change on environment.

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### 14.1 INTRODUCTION

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People are dependent on the natural environment for meeting all their needs & therefore the inter actions between people & environment can not be separated. What is important, is to study the impacts of using resources & how best to manage these, so that human & environmental needs can be met now in the future.

People have inhabited India for ages & ages & have used the natural resources for food, shelter, energy & other needs. The ways humans have used & managed the environment have changed over the years, but in the last century the population has grown exponentially. Exponential population growth is not unique to India, however, in the light of this, there has been greater attention both nationally & internationally on 'sustainable development '. This

means meeting social needs for present & future generations by sustainable development.

**What Is Causing Social Change?** – The focus in India at present is on meeting basic needs i.e. ensuring that all citizens have proper housing, water supply & sanitation, electricity, health care & other services. There has also been radical changes to the constitution so that it now reflects the interest of all sectors of population, creates empowerment of individuals & communities & upholds the rights of humans & the environment.

**What Pressure Is Social Change Putting On The Environment?**

– The Indian population is growing & more people means greater demands on the natural resources & environmental services as well as increasing the amount of waste & pollution that is generated. There has also been an enormous movement of people to urban areas both from rural areas & from other countries. This concentrates the pressures on the environment & can lead to problems of sanitation, pollution & crime directly affecting human health & quality of life.

Differences in wealth among the people of India have also pressurized natural resources. The more affluent people tend to consume more resources & generate more waste on a commercial & domestic level. Eg. Wealthier people, tend to use more resources such as energy & water & commercial agricultural & industrial development transforms natural habitats & generates wastes & pollution. Poor people exert different environmental pressures, cultivating unsuitable areas of land, overgrazing the veld & removing large quantities of wood for fuel.

Changes in values and beliefs have also contributed to environmental change in India. As people move away from rural areas into an urban, often consumerist setting, they lose the connection with nature & forget the importance of maintaining environmental services such as water resources.

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## 14.2 WHAT IS ENVIRONMENT ?

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The interaction between environment and society is an area of major concern to modern sociology. The quality of our social life depends on the quality of the natural environment, and human actions have a direct impact on the ecosystem. According to Milbrath (1989 : 607), human actions have brought about more changes to the planet during the last two centuries than changes to our planet from all causes over the course of the last billion years. It

is estimated that the global economy has expanded more in the last seven years than in the 10,000 years since agriculture began.

The technology that enabled the unprecedented economic growth of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has had a dramatic effect on our natural resources. Global consumption of wood has doubled, paper use has increased six times, and the use of fossil fuels is up nearly five-fold. Grain consumption has tripled, and fish consumption has increased five-fold. The resulting environmental stress includes shrinking forests, and wetlands, eroding soil and coral reefs, pollution of international waters, collapsing fisheries, vanishing plant and animal species and temperatures. Half the world's population lives on coastlines, rivers and estuaries, including, rural people who rely on waterways for their livelihoods- fishing, transportation, communication, and irrigation for farmlands. Based on U. N. population prediction, by 2050 one in five people is likely to live in a country with severe shortages of fresh water serious enough to threaten health and economic well-being.

Unlike other creatures, humans make deliberate choices that alter the face of the planet, therefore they have the primary responsibility for maintaining a healthy and diverse ecosystem. More than at any other time in history, people now realize that the civilization they have built may not survive. The limits of Growth perspective which emerged in the 1970s points out that unlimited growth is neither desirable nor sustainable. Petroleum, natural gas, Clean air, Fresh water, and the earth's top soil are all finite resources that will exhaust if we continue to pursue growth at any cost. The limits to growth perspective argues that humanity must implement effective policies to control the growth of population, material production and the use of resources in order to avoid environmental degradation.

Today there is a general consensus that the world cannot be at peace unless all living things truly experience the ecosystem in equilibrium. As crucial relationships between world's species and their environment are altered and even destroyed, the integrity of the planet's life-support system is threatened. An area nearly the size of western Europe has lost most of its productivity from man's abusive use. Another 2.25 billion acres, an area larger than Australia, has degraded, requiring care and restoration. Worldwatch Institute calculates that top soil loss means an annual decrease in grain production of a million ?????. as we deplete precious natural resource and degrade the environment we also destroy its ability to rejuvenate itself. For example, scientists predict that the North Sea will be dead within the next few years. For thousands of years, it was able to absorb the fifth of Europe's cities but it also had the capacity to cleanse itself. Now the assault has become overpowering as European nations dump around 700,000 tonnes of

merary, nitrogen phosphorus, cadmium, lead and zinc into this sea every year, Today we share this planet with numerous instruments of total destruction; over 30,000 nuclear weapons and untold quantities of deadly biological and chemical material. Heavy use of fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides contaminates rivers and ground water. Ozone depletion destruction of rain forests, and pollution of water ways have disastrous transnational consequences.

There is also injustice in the way the industrialized world progress has been paid by developing countries. Every year the industrialized west produces millions of tones of industrial and toxic waste and often uses the Third World as a convenient dumping ground. The United States alone produces about 160 million tones of solid waste per year. Poor countries such as Haiti, Cameroon, and many others have been 'persuaded' to accept, for a fee, toxic garbage from rich industrialized countries. As much as to per cent carbon dioxide emission, which cause global warming, it from Europe and America. The sea level rise due to global warming could destroy countries like Bangladesh, Thailand, and even Egypt. Abdul Gayoom of the Maldives said in the United Nations: Global warming means the death of our country of 1,190 small islands, we did not contribute to this impending catastrophe to our nation and alone we cannot save ourselves. Japan is the largest importer of timber in the world primarily for paper production and disposable chopsticks. The forests of the Philippines, Thailand, Canada, and Malaysia are being destroyed to fulfill Japan's needs. Almost one billion trees are cut down every year to provide disposable diapers to babies. Although they cover only about 7 percent of the earth's surface, tropical rain forests are home to almost 70 percent of all plant and animal species most of which have not yet been identified. The global ecological crisis is leading scientists to a new understanding of the relationship of man with nature, and the need to take a holistic approach to problems.

Let us now look at some of the major environmental issues.

Global warming or the greenhouse effect is one of the major concerns of the world today. It has been well documented that chlorofluorocarbons or CFCs which are found in so many household products, when released into the air, accumulate in the upper atmosphere, and reacting with sunlight they form chlorine atoms - these atoms destroy the ozone layer which serves to limit the amount of harmful ultraviolet radiation from the sun reaching the earth. The depletion of the ozone layer is linked to global warming, increase in human skin cancers, disastrous effect on plants and animals, and the re-emergence of disease such as cholera and viral fevers. Although there is some skepticism about the impact of global warming, there is mounting evidence that it is the planet's biggest environmental problem. There is also no doubt that the

advanced industrialized nations are the biggest consumer of energy. Industrialized countries represent roughly 20 percent of the humanity but utilize over 80 percent of the world's energy. The poorest 20 percent in the world consume 1.3 percent of the world's goods and services and account for about 8 percent of carbon dioxide emissions. A typical American adult consumes one hundred times more energy every year than the average member of the world's poorest societies. Yet, the United States has failed to ratify the 1997 Kyoto Protocol signed by 160 nations which identified ways industrialized and developing countries can reduce emission of gases responsible for the greenhouse effect. And the latest reports by experts warn that by 2010 aviation emissions alone will wipe out any progress made on emission-reduction through the Kyoto-Protocol.

Water conservation is another major environmental issue. The simple truth is that without water life and growth ceases. It is estimated that 1,000 tonnes of water are needed to produce a single tonne of harvested grain. Worldwide, agriculture uses about 65 percent of all water removed from rivers, lakes and aquifers for human activities, compared with 25 percent of industries. According to current predictions, within the next thirty years, more than a billion people in North Africa and the Middle East will lack necessary water. The global consumption of water, estimated at about 5 billion cubic feet per year, has doubled since 1950 and is expanding faster than the world's population. Given the population growth, nearly three billion people or 40 percent the projected world population will live in water stress countries by 2015. Groundwater mining can lead to a variety of irreversible effects. In coastal areas, over pumping can cause saltwater to invade freshwater aquifers, contaminating supplies. This has occurred in Gujarat where irrigators have heavily over pumped local aquifers. Groundwater depletion can also reduce the earth's natural capacity to store water. Another problem is that many of the major rivers of the world are completely tapped out during the drier part of the year that very little water is lost to the sea during the dry season. This is true of most rivers in India including the Ganga. Some cities dump untreated sewage and partially cremated bodies in the Ganga. Industrial waste, pesticides, and herbicides enter the waterways through dumping as well as run off from farms and homes. Such pollution sometimes causes massive fish kills and many chemicals become more concentrated as they pass up through the food chain, with the humans receiving the highest doses. In short, there are two issues relative to water. The first is, of course, conservation. Rainwater harvesting and small check dams are significant measures to conserve water. The second issue relates to cleaning up of the waterway and measures needed to prevent future pollution of the sources of water. Current pollution results not only from international dumping but also from the runoff of agricultural fertilizers,

chemical and wastes. Ganga Action Plan, launched in 1985, to clean up the river and restore water quality is an example of a belated initiative on the part of the government.

Deterioration of air quality is another environmental problem. The thick, black smoke belched from factory smokestacks and emissions from motor vehicles constitute the major source of air pollution. The rich countries have taken a number of steps to reduce air pollution. Scientists have devised new technological ways to reduce noxious exhaust from factories and automobiles. The coal fires that choked London a half-century ago are now forbidden. However, in many less developed countries people still rely on wood, coal, peat, and other fuels for cooking and heating. In India it took a ruling from the apex court to force automobiles to reduce emissions in the wake of continuous deterioration of air quality in the nation's capital.

Preserving the rain forests is yet another environmental issue. South America, especially Brazil, West-Central Africa and South-East Asia are home to regions of dense forestation. The world's rain forests cover an area of some 2 billion acres, roughly 7 percent of the earth's total land surface. At the current rate of destruction the rain forests will disappear by the end of the next century. India has only 2 percent of forest and the continuous loss of tree cover and top soil has led to droughts and floods. Deforestation also impacts on biological diversity because of the shrinking habitat available to faunal and floral species. Logging, mining, grazing, agriculture, industrialization, and urbanization alter terrestrial and aquatic habitats in ways that make them less able to support life or valuable ecosystem services. Consider the case of large dams. There are nearly 40,000 large dams and countless smaller dams around the world. Needless to say, dams, and reservoirs are not an unmitigated evil. They increase crop production by providing additional irrigation, check floods, and create opportunities for developing inland pisciculture. But they also mean huge displacement and submergence of vast tracts of land, often previous forest land. There has been no public debate in Laos of the government decision to feed Thailand's energy appetite by building more than twenty-three dams by the year 2010. In India the Chipko movement raised the level of public consciousness about the dangers to which all forms of life are exposed. And the demands made by the Narmada Bachao Andolan spotlight the development vs. environment debate.

Finally, the loss of biodiversity is a significant environmental problem which requires immediate attention. In the hunt for new articles of fancy, man began to kill bird and beast, not to improve the living standards but to satisfy his ego and fancy. Some bird species became almost extinct because they had beautiful



plumages with which wealthy women worked to adorn their hats. The chino and tiger population suffered because some people believed that they both had aphrodisiac properties. Also, thousands of species of plants and animals are being lost each year to wars, pests, disease, climate change, urbanization, the global marketing of exotic breeding material and large state industrial agriculture. Our planet's biodiversity provides vast and varied sources of food. Just think of the world without the Bengal Tiger, Chinese panda, Australian Kangaroo, the African giraffe, or the magnificent elephants. About 12 percent of animal species including 41 percent of all recognized fish species live in the 1 percent of the earth's surface that is fresh water. According to experts, at least one-fifth of all fresh water fish species have become extinct, threatened, or endangered in recent years and entire fresh water faunas have disappeared. The experience of Asia chicken farmers who were forced to cull or incinerate millions of chickens because of the avian flu may foreshadow a larger epidemic on the horizon. Over ten thousand varieties of wheat used to be cultivated in China and the Philippines had thousands of varieties of rice. Now there are only a few varieties left in India, the Navdanya movement is responding to the loss of biodiversity by protecting local varieties of wheat, rice, and other crops by cataloging them and declaring them common property. Navdanya has also set up locally owned seed banks, farm supply stores and storage facilities, and has helped establish 'Zones of freedom' – villages that pledge to reject chemical fertilizers and pesticides, generally engineered seeds and patents on life.

In the words of Abramovitch (Brawn 1996-77).

We need to see the ecosystem in its entirety: rivers and lakes, along with their entire watersheds and all the physical, chemical and biological elements, all parts of complex integrated systems. Human inhabitants are also part of those systems and we need to learn to manage such systems in ways that maintain their integrity. In such a flexible ecosystem-based approach, resources would be managed over large enough areas to allow their species and ecological processes to remain intact while allowing human activity. On a social level, all stakeholders would be involved in defining issues, setting priorities, and implementing solutions.

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### 14.3 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Sustainable development (SD) is the process which effectively balances the needs of development which concerns not the health of the environment. It is characterized by economic and social growth that does not exhaust the resources of a host country, that respects and safeguards the economic, cultural and natural environment; that involves grass roots participation and builds indigenous institutions, and that is nurtured by eco-friendly policies.

and programmes. Development is sustainable only when it permanently requires investment in human capital—in education, health, food security, and the total well-being of the population. The United Nations sponsored two worldwide summits: the Rio conference on environment and development in 1992 and the Johannesburg World Summit on SD in 2002, which encouraged government to partner with NGOs and private industry to make a bold commitment to applying SD principles in every area where humans impact on the environment.

**As the time (August 2002 : A 8) special on Green century put it**

With 6.1 billion people relying on the resources of the same small planet, we are coming to realize that we are drawing from a finite account. The amount of crops, animal and other biomaterial we extract from the earth each year exceeds what the planet can replace by an estimated 20 percent, meaning it takes 14.4 months to replenish what we use in 12 deficit spending of the worst kind. Sustainable development works to reverse that, to expand the resource base and adjust how we use it so we are living of biological interest without ever touching principal.

Two billion people lack reliable access to safe, nutritious foods, and 800 millions of them including 800 million children are chronically malnourished. Yet, most of the agricultural practices are based on unsustainable development. We resort to improved varieties which require enormous amounts of water and chemical fertilizers. Better crop rotation and irrigation can help but what is even more important is development of indigenous crops and the use of organic natural nourishment. One case in point is the probiotic fertilizers made of composts of agricultural waste and animal manure developed by the Ahmedabad – based Institute of Studies and Transformation. Studies have shown that probiotic fertilizers make soils and plants healthier, capable of withstanding pests and droughts.

Although the world has 70 percent water, only 2-5 percent of it is fresh and only a fraction of that is accessible. With increasing population growth and urbanization, by 2025 nearly two-thirds of the world's population will be facing serious water shortages. Since agriculture accounts for almost two-thirds of the fresh water consumed, the UN calls for a 'more crop per drop' approach based on efficient irrigation techniques. Rain water conservation and watershed management and more prudent use of water are important SD principles.

The world's appetite for energy is growing and the demands are met by burning fossil fuels such as oil, coal, and gas which release more carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. SD

principles require the development and use of cheaper, cleaner and renewable sources. Wind and solar power can be harnessed every efficiently small communities may be encouraged to setup micro-hydroelectric plants from streams and rivers.

It is estimated that 36 million acres of forest are lost annually and more than 11,000 species of plants and animals are threatened with extinction. Only now we have come to realize the peril inherent in the prevailing models of development : the atmosphere filled with toxins, oceans polluted and threatened to exhaustion, rain forests chopped down water contaminated and wasted, soil eroded and turned barren, and essential flora and fauna lost forever. So there is a new urgency to follow the fundamental principle of SD : balancing economic growth with environmental protection. The programme of sustainable development includes the following : use of indigenous technology, grass roots participation in development, eco friendly agriculture with organic manual and crop diversity, rain water conservation, recycling waste material, use of renewable source of energy such as solar and wind power, saving forests, minimizing all types of pollution and preservation of biodiversity. Time (August 2002 : 19) observes :

Those who profess to care about the environment and yet soon the goal of development only undermine both causes for the poorest members of the human family in particular, development means the chance to feed, school and care for themselves and their children. But development that takes little account of sustainability is ultimate self – defeating. Prosperity built on the despoliation of the natural environment is no prosperity at all, only a temporary reprieve from future disaster. The issue is not environment vs. development or ecology vs. economy; the two can be integrated. Nor is this a question of rich vs. poor; both have an interest in sustainable development.

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#### **14.4 WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS OF SOCIAL CHANGE ON THE ENVIRONMENT?**

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More people means more demand for resources. In 1996 domestic demand for water was 11% of the total. By 2030 it is predicted that this demand will increase to 23% of the total. Already alternative sources of fresh water such as desalination of sea water & importing water from other countries are being investigated to meet this demand, although these are currently prohibitively expensive & may not be environmentally sustainable.

Uncontrolled settlement development can also result in problems of pollution, health hazards & inadequate housing & services provision contributing to informal sector activities & crime. Natural resources in areas surrounding settlements are generally under greater pressures than those in areas of less dense human habitation.

The impact of poverty on the environment include deforestation from excessive collection of wood for fuel, soil degradation through cultivation of unsuitable soils & exploitation of rare & endangered species to supplement incomes. An inability to adequately provide for the basic needs of the population will lead to collapse of the natural ecosystem services & deterioration in quality of life.

The government has developed a number of policies & passed a number of laws which aim to alleviate the pressures of social imbalances on natural resources & to promote sustainable development. These include the reconstruction & development programme, a white paper on population policy & the national crime prevention strategy.

The government has also initiated several housing development schemes, electrification & water services schemes, as well as identifying local areas for economic development & job creation. The largest proportion of the national budget is directed towards education, reflecting the governments policy priority concern of nation building and empowerment of it's people.

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## **14.5 CONCLUSION**

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Over the millennia, changes in the natural environment have impacted on the social life of human beings. Loss of forest, desertification, soil erosion, environmental degradation of climatic changes have significantly influenced the way human beings live in groups. Many of these changes have been gradual & slow. Today air & water pollution, acid rain, the greenhouse effect & dumping of chemical wastes have led to a worldwide environmental movement. Public awareness has forced national governments & international organizations to act in defense of our planet. In many ways it has changed both the individual of the social way of life.

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## **14.6 QUESTIONS**

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- Q.1 Discuss some of the major environmental issues in detail.
- Q.2 "It is very essential to preserve the rain forest" – comment.
- Q.3 What do you mean by sustainable development?
- Q.4 What will be the impact of social change on environment?

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## 14.7 REFERENCES

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1. Abraham Francis M, Perspectives on Modernization : Towards a General Theory of Third World Development, Washington DC : University Press of America, 1980.
2. Abraham Francis M, An Introduction to Concepts & Theories, Oxford Univ. Press, New Delhi, 2006.
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**SYLLABUS****FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIOLOGY****F.Y.B.A PAPER - I****OBJECTIVES :**

1. To introduce students to the basic concepts in sociology.
2. to familiarize students with the theoretical aspects of different concepts.

**1. Sociology as a discipline (15 lectures)**

- perspectives in Sociology : Functionalist, Conflict, Interpretive, Critical
- Sociological Imagination-Developing a sociological outlook.
- Significance of sociology

**2. Culture (15 lectures)**

- Understanding culture
- Characteristics of culture
- Types of culture-Subculture, counterculture
- Ethnocentrism, Xenocentrism, Cultural relativism
- Components of culture
- Towards a global culture

**3. Society and Groups (15 lectures)**

- Evolution of society: Hunting, Food gathering, Feudal, Industrial, Post-Industrial
- Types of social groups
- In group, Out group
- Primary group, Secondary group
- Electronic community (networking)

**4. Social institutions: Concept and Significance (15 lectures)**

- Social Stratification
- Bases of Stratification: Caste, Class, Gender, Age
- Religion : Church, Sect, Cult
- Political Institution: State and Government, Types of States
- Economic Institutions: Capitalism, Socialism, Informal Economics.

## 5. Socialization (15 lectures)

- Socialization as a process
- Agencies of socialization
- Development of self : C H Cooley, G H Mead
- Gender socialization
- Political socialization
- Resocialization

## 6. Social Change (15 lectures)

- Theories of Change : Evolutionary, Functionalist, Conflict
- Factors of Social change
- Resistance of change
- Environment, Sustainable development and social change

**Note: Topics I to III will be done in the first term and topics IV to VI in the second term.**

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