

# SOCIOLOGY

(For Class X1)



Punjab School Education Board

Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar

Punjab Government

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## Foreword

Punjab School Education Board, since its inception has always been engaged in an endeavour to prepare Textbooks for all classes at school level. The book in hand is one in the series and has been prepared for Sociology class XI students. Punjab Curriculum Framework (PCF) 2013, based on National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 recommends that the child's life at school must be linked to their life outside the school. The syllabi and textbook in hand is developed on the basis of the principle which makes a departure from the legacy of bookish learning to activity based learning in the direction of child-centred system.

Sociology has been implemented as an elective subject under the Humanities stream for Senior Secondary classes. The subject revolves around society, culture, social groups, community, family, marriage, kinship, polity, religion, economy and education so that students are able to comprehend their social reality and contribute to the social and economic development. To make the content more relevant and interesting, pictures and the exercises have been developed according to the mental level of the students. Activities requiring hands on experience and box items have been added to encourage children to reflect on their own learning. This book is an attempt to restructure and reorient knowledge with great consideration for child psychology based on suggestions from NCERT, SCERT, College and University experts.

Punjab School Education Board appreciates the conscientious effort done by the Textbook development committee for its contribution towards the preparation of the book. We welcome comments and suggestions for further improvement of the textbook.

**Chairperson**

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## Preface

Sociology is being offered as an optional subject at the Higher Secondary level. The main idea is to provide an understanding of the fundamentals, basic concepts and nature of Sociology to the learners. It is our belief that studying Sociology will help the learners understand society, and the course of everyday life better. The present syllabus aims at enabling the students to understand the dynamics of human behaviour in all its complexities and also provide answers for the questions that arise in their minds while trying to understand social life.

### Objectives

- To introduce the basic concepts of Sociology that would help students observe and interpret social life.
- To relate class room teaching with the society.
- To create awareness regarding social structure and complexities of social processes.
- To build the capacity of students to understand and analyse the changes in contemporary Indian society.
- To understand the diversity in Indian society and the impact of world level changes on it.
- To understand the problems of underprivileged sections of the society.

There is additionally, the need to develop an analytical approach to the social structure that will facilitate meaningful participation in the process of social change. The chapters are framed keeping a learner-centric approach that makes the learner connect her/his lived reality with the conceptual aspects of social structure and social processes. Efforts have been made to maintain the sensitivities towards gender, environment and social problems.

**Seema Chawla, Subject Expert**

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We sincerely acknowledge the contribution of the committee members Dr. Manju Bhatt, Professor of Sociology, DESS, NCERT, Sri Aurubindo Marg, New Delhi, Ms. Seema Banerjee PGT, Luxman Public School, New Delhi, Dr. Madurima Verma, Professor and Head, Sociology, Correspondence Department, Punjab University, Chandigarh, Dr. Sangeeta Sharma, Assistant Professor (Sociology), Desh Bhagat University, Gobindgarh, Dr. Suneet Kaur, Professor, Government College, Mohali, Dr. Ramandeep Kaur, Assistant Professor (Sociology), MCM DAV College, Chandigarh, Ms Jyoti Rani, Lecturer, Post Graduate Government College for Girls, Sector 42, Chandigarh, Ms. Manipal Kaur, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Sociology, SGGS College, Sector 26, Chandigarh and Shri Mohan Lal, Ex-Principal, Government School, UT, Chandigarh, Mrs. Baljit Kaur, Subject Expert, SCERT & Mrs. Manjeet Kaur Subject Expert SCERT who have participated in the review of the manuscript.

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## **SYLLABUS**

### **Unit I- Origin and Development of Sociology**

1. Emergence of Sociology: Historical background, Meaning, Nature and Scope of Sociology.
2. Relationship of Sociology with other Social Sciences: Political Science, History, Economics, Psychology and Anthropology.

### **Unit II- Basic Concepts in Sociology**

3. Society, Community and Association: Society – Meaning and Features, Relationship between individual and society; Community – Meaning and features; Association – Meaning and Features, Difference between Society, Community and Association.
4. Social Groups: Meaning and Features, Types – Primary and Secondary group, In-group and Out-group.

### **Unit III- Culture and Socialisation**

5. Culture: Meaning and features, Material and Non-Material culture.
6. Socialisation: Meaning, Socialisation as a process of learning, Agencies of Socialisation: Formal and Informal Agencies.

### **Unit IV- Social Institutions**

7. Marriage, Family and Kinship.
8. Polity, Religion, Economy and Education.

### **Unit V- Social Structure, Social Stratification and Social Change**

9. Social Structure: Meaning, features and Elements – Status and Role.
10. Social Stratification: Concept, Forms, Caste and Class, Features and Differences.
11. Social Change: Meaning, Features and Factors – Demographic, Educational and Technological.

### **Unit VI- Founding Fathers of Sociology**

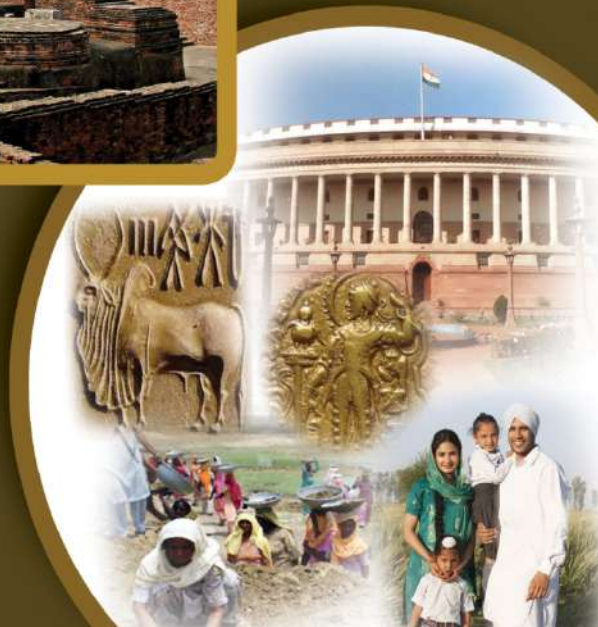
12. Western Sociological Thinkers: Auguste Comte – Positivism, Law of Three Stages, Karl Marx – Class and Class conflict, Emile Durkheim – Social Facts, Division of Labour, Max Weber – Social Action, Types of Authority, Sociology of Religion.

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## Chapter -1

### Emergence of Sociology





## Chapter

# 1

## Emergence of Sociology

### Highlight :

- 1.1 Historical Background
  - 1.1.1 French Revolution and Enlightenment
  - 1.1.2 Growth of natural sciences
  - 1.1.3 Industrial Revolution and Urbanisation
- 1.2 Understanding Sociology
- 1.3 Nature of Sociology
- 1.4 Scope of Sociology
  - 1.4.1 Formalistic School
  - 1.4.2 Synthetic School

### Introduction

The development of Sociology as a discipline is a recent phenomenon in the history of social sciences although one cannot establish the precise point in time when Sociology originated. The study of society can be traced back to the contributions of the Great Philosophers such as Herodotus, also known as Father of History, Plato and Aristotle, known as the founding Fathers of Political Science, and Abdel Rahman Ibn-Khaldun in North Africa who produced a body of work that had many ideas in common with contemporary Sociology. In the Indian context, more than 2000 years ago the Great Law Giver, Manu, as well as, Kautilya and many other scholars had written about different aspects of social life. The rise of intellectual movements in Europe such as, the Renaissance and the Enlightenment during 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries had a huge impact on the emergence of the scientific study of social phenomena.

Sociology had a late origin and its emergence as a discipline can be attributed to the vast changes that took place in the middle of nineteenth century. As a result of the French Revolution, as well as, the Industrial Revolution, large number of people left their homes and migrated to the industrial locations in the urban settings. These and other developments facilitated the emergence and growth of Sociology as a discipline

that engaged in the sociological study of society. Additionally, the intellectual crisis of the 18th and 19th century contributed to the emergence of Sociology as a new branch of learning. Scholars such as August Comte, Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber were the first to focus on the issues of social order, conflict, stability and change, and as a result, the discipline of Sociology emerged.

During this time, there were numerous factors which contributed to the entire transformation of the society. Given below are the three major processes that speeded up the establishment of Sociology as a separate social science.

- French Revolution and Enlightenment Movement
- The Growth of Natural Sciences
- Industrial Revolution and Urbanisation

## **French Revolution and the Enlightenment Movement**



French Revolution



Age of Enlightenment

The French Revolution took place in 1789. It was the first uprising of its kind. It had a great impact on society since it changed the structure of society from traditional to modern, as well as, from feudal to capitalist. It was accompanied by Enlightenment, which was an intellectual movement to which many philosophers contributed. The thinkers of Enlightenment aimed to challenge the dominance of the Church, i.e., religious institutions. They urged people to stop following the Church's teachings and decisions blindly, and start thinking on their own. People were now encouraged to solve their problems on their own in a logical manner.

Thus, the Enlightenment Age thinking went on to become a significant contributing factor in the emergence of Sociology. It is considered to be the source of critical ideas



and highlighted the certainty of freedom and democracy as the primary values of society. It managed to steadily weaken the social distinctions in the feudal society and shift the power away from the Church.

In a nutshell, the Industrial Revolution of England and the democratic revolutions of United States of America and France gave a blow to the existing organisational structure of the society in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **The Growth of Natural Sciences**

Nineteenth century was also the period in which natural sciences made much progress. The success attained by those working in the field of natural sciences inspired a good number of social thinkers to follow them. The belief was that if the methods of natural sciences could be successful in the physical world to understand the physical or natural phenomena, the same methods could be applied successfully to the social world to understand the social phenomena. Scholars like Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber and other sociologists advocated the methods of science to study society as they were inspired by the discoveries by natural scientists and wanted to study society in a similar way.

### **Industrial Revolution and Urbanisation**

The emergence of Sociology was also influenced by the Industrial Revolution that took place in Europe during the 18th century which brought about sweeping changes throughout Europe. The advent of factory system with large scale production changed the traditional set-up of society as a whole. Simple rural life and cottage industries were replaced by mass production of goods in the factories. It radically altered the medieval customs, beliefs and ideals and changed the society from traditional to modern.



Industrialisation



Urbanisation

Further, industrialisation led to urbanisation. The expansion of cities produced an endless list of urban problems – over-crowding, various types of pollution like noise, traffic and so on. Due to urbanisation, mass migration took place towards these centres. Consequently, people got alienated from their traditional rural environment, and there was mushrooming of slums in and near urban areas. New classes were emerging in the urban areas, as well as, in the industrial society; the rich were becoming richer while the poor were becoming poorer. There was a sudden rise in crimes due to the huge social, economic, political and ideological turmoil.

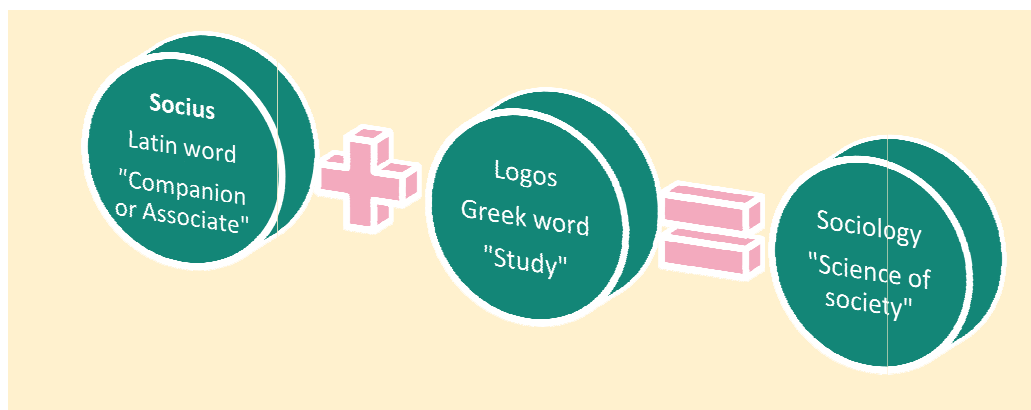
Scholars like Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Max Weber and Georg Simmel felt that in order to solve the new emerging social problems resulting from the transformation in society, a scientific study of society was required which led to the emergence of Sociology.

### Activity 1

Make a chart on the contribution of classical thinkers for the development of Sociology as an independent science.

### Understanding Sociology

The term Sociology is derived from Latin word ‘Socius’, which means society and the Greek word ‘Logos’, meaning study. Thus, the meaning of Sociology is the study of society.



Sociology is a modern social science. The study of society in a scientific way started only after 1839 when Auguste Comte coined the term Sociology, calling it the systematic study of human society and social behaviour. The subject matter of Sociology is very vast but it mainly studies human behaviour shaped by the group to which an individual belongs and the social interaction that takes place within these groups. The main focus of Sociology is group rather than an individual. The sociologist is primarily interested in the interaction pattern of the people, i.e., the ways in which people act towards each other, respond to each other, and influence each other. Other sciences study humans as individuals or as collections of individuals but Sociology studies their interdependence and their meaningful interactions.

**Box 1**  
**Definitions of Sociology**

“Sociology is the study of relationships between man and his human environment”.  
- **Henry Fairchild**

“Sociology is the scientific study of social life”.  
- **William F. Ogburn and Meyer F. Nimkoff**

“Sociology is a science of collective behaviour”.  
- **Robert E. Park and Earnest W. Burgess**

“Sociology is the science of society or social phenomena”.  
- **L. F. Ward**

Thus, Sociology can be termed as given below:

1. Sociology is a science of society as a whole.
2. Sociology is an independent science like other social sciences.
3. Sociology is the study of groups and the social system.
4. Sociology is the study of social relationships.
5. Sociology is the study of human interactions, interrelations and interdependence.

## Sociology as a Discipline

Sociology as compared to the other social sciences is a young discipline. It emerged as a consequence of the changes that occurred during 18th and 19th century in Europe. In fact, Sociology emerged as a distinct discipline because of the crisis caused by drastic changes due to the French and Industrial revolutions. With the development of Sociology as a branch of knowledge, the subject of Sociology also found a place in the syllabus of higher learning. It was given a place in the curriculum of Yale University of America in the year 1876 followed by other universities in various countries like France, Poland, Egypt, Sweden etc.

## Development of Sociology in India

In Europe and America, Sociology developed as a subject after the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, in India, it not only emerged a little late but was also given secondary importance as a subject of study. Nevertheless, after India attained independence, Sociology has risen in stature and has found a place as an independent subject in the curriculum of almost all the universities of the country. In addition, it has also been recognised as a subject for different competitive examinations. Radha Kamal Mukherji, G. S. Ghurye, D. P. Mukherji, D. N. Majumdar, K. M. Kapadia, M. N. Srinivas, P. N. Prabhu, A. R. Desai etc. are some important scholars who have contributed to the development of Indian Sociology.

Thus, Sociology is a growing social science in India and it is marching ahead day by day as an independent branch of knowledge.

### Box 2

**Auguste Comte**, a French Philosopher, is traditionally known as the 'Father of Sociology'. Comte, who coined the term '*Sociology*', distinguished the subject-matter of Sociology from all other social sciences. He introduced the word 'Sociology' for the first time in his famous work '*Positive Philosophy*' in 1839.



## **The Nature of Sociology**

There has been a great deal of controversy about the nature of Sociology. A question is often raised regarding whether or not Sociology is a science. Some sociologists deny Sociology the right to be regarded as a science, while there are others who assert that Sociology is a science.

## **Arguments in Favour of Considering Sociology as a Science**

There are those who believe that Sociology makes use of scientific methods in the study of its subject matter and is, therefore entitled to be called a science. The main arguments in this regard are as follows:

**1. Sociology employs scientific methods:** Sociology employs scientific methods like sociometry, interview schedule and questionnaire, which involve quantitative measurements of social phenomena. In addition, sociological studies follow the same steps in scientific investigation as natural sciences, namely, formulation of problem of study, collection of data, classification and tabulation of data, testing of hypothesis and generalisation.

**2. Sociology uses the methods of observation and comparison:** The two basic methods used in Sociology at all times are observation and comparison. Sociology deals with social groups, classifying them and analysing the nature of social structure. It deals with peculiar features that are common to all groups and all societies. For the purpose of finding answers to various questions the sociologists adopt observational and comparative approaches.

**3. Sociology is factual:** Sociologists try to create knowledge that is factual, rather than based on opinion. In fact, for the famous French sociologist Emile Durkheim, Sociology is the study of social facts.

**4. Several physical sciences are also not capable of experimentation:** A subject can be scientific even if it does not make use of the method of laboratory experiments. There are various physical sciences which do not employ laboratory experimentation. For instance, Astronomy cannot experiment with its subject matter, namely, the heavenly bodies which cannot be induced to put in an appearance in the laboratory. Yet no one can dispute its status as a science. A similar argument can be used in favour of the subject matter of Sociology as well, namely, human beings. The

point being made is that experimentation need not be a primary component of a scientific subject.

**5. Sociology is capable of framing universal laws:** Even though the findings of Sociology are often limited in time and space because cultural factors vary from place to place, but like physical sciences, Sociology endeavours to discover general laws that are applicable everywhere and at all times regardless of the variations of culture and time period.



**6. Sociology has predictive capability:** Sociology attempts to predict by framing laws, although its predictions may not always be accurate. The fact is that no science can claim to make precise predictions, since many of the theories established by the other sciences also had to be modified with the passage of time. Even in Physical

Sciences many a times predictions do not come true. For example, forecasts about weather do not always happen to be true. And yet weather forecasting is considered a science.

From the above points, we can see that Sociology traces cause-effect relationships in social organisation. It tries to find answers to the 'how', as well as, the 'why' of social processes and relationships. Sociology also gives generalisations about the social behaviour of human beings. Thus, Sociology should be acknowledged as a science.

### **Arguments against considering Sociology as a Science**

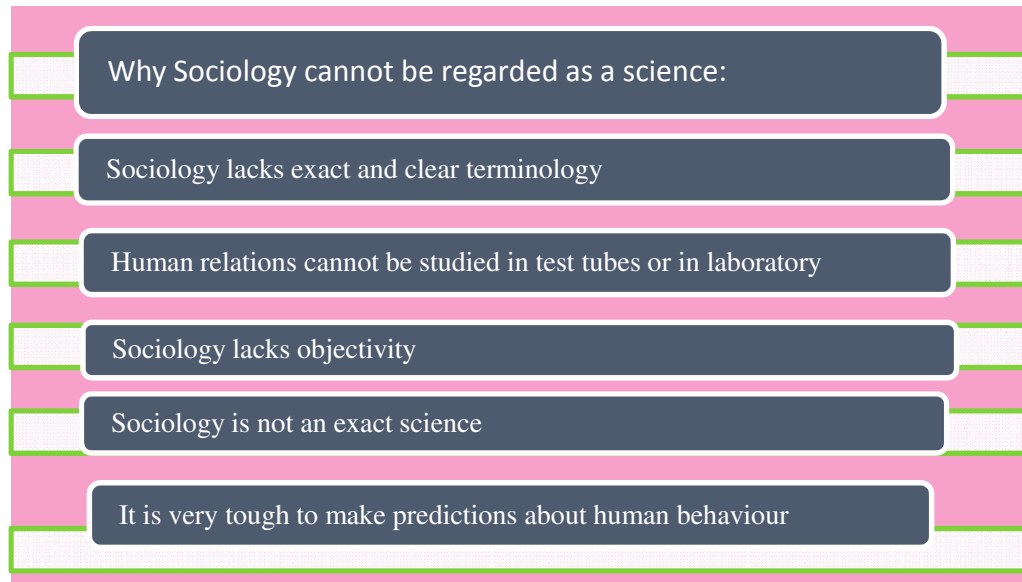
Many scholars are not ready to admit that Sociology is a science. They offer various arguments in support of their view point.

**1. Sociology lacks the scientific methods of experimentation and predictions:** The subject matter of Sociology is human relationships in groups which cannot be studied in a laboratory. In the case of physical sciences one can experiment on the subject matter in a laboratory. But in Sociology we do not use any laboratory for experiments. Similarly, scientists regularly use prediction as an essential element of the scientific method, when they generate a hypothesis and predict what will happen. However, no accurate prediction is possible in the human relationships in society.

**2. Lack of objectivity:** Humans have their own prejudices and biases so their behaviour is dynamic and a person cannot maintain complete objectivity. In other words, social relations cannot be studied completely without bias. Hence, Sociology as a subject lacks the quality of objectivity.

**3. Lack of exactivity:** Sociology cannot be considered as a science because it lacks certainty, since its laws and results cannot be expressed in precise terms. The exactness of science depends on its subject matter and the subject matter of Sociology, namely, human relationships make it difficult for Sociology to become an exact science.

**4. Lack of precise and clear terminology:** Since Sociology is a young social science, an adequate set of scientific expressions has not been developed yet. In other words, it lacks clearly defined technical terms.



**5. Complexity of social relationships hinders generalisation:** Sociology cannot make generalisations like natural sciences which are universally applicable. Supporters of this view are of the opinion that social relationships cannot be studied in the physical sense. What we see in social relationships is only as outward expression of our inner life. But a physical scientist is not faced with such complex phenomena. Sociologists have to work on the inner mind of their subjects in order to understand the external actions properly. Therefore, Sociology is not capable of providing generalised results, laws and principles.

**6. Difficulty in obtaining correct data:** In physical sciences there are certain theories based on facts. The data of physical sciences are relatively simple and can be explored and processed in a laboratory. But in Sociology the data are usually acquired through field work, collection of documents or statistics and so on. Sociology may lack accurate data to explain various complex issues such as sex, family, crime and poverty etc. Hence, if we do not have proper data on these subjects, we are likely to draw the wrong conclusions.

## Scope of Sociology

Scope means the subject matter or the areas of study. Every science has its own field of inquiry. It becomes difficult to study a science systematically unless its boundary or scope is determined precisely. Sociology as a social science has its own scope or

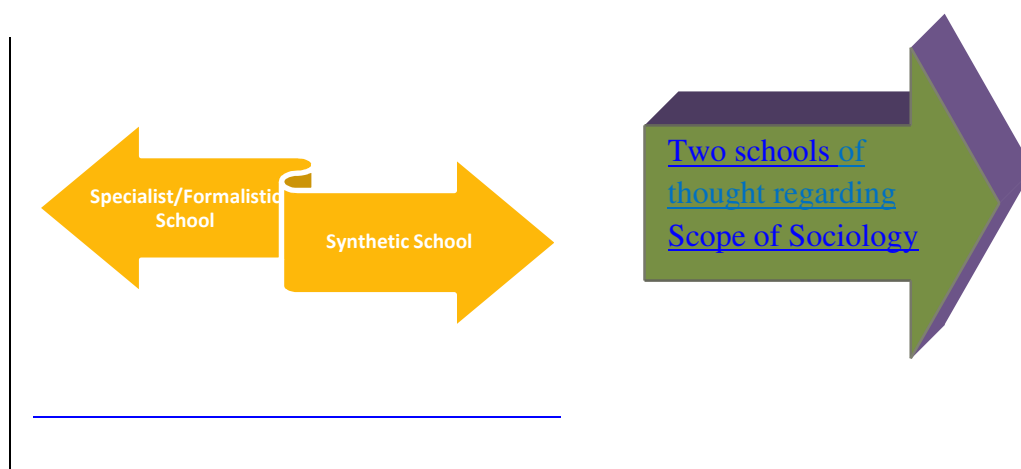


boundaries. It provides tools for understanding how our society functions, impact of social institutions on individual lives and the challenges of social interaction between individuals and society. Subject matter of Sociology emerges from the interactions between individuals such as that of a shopkeeper with a customer, between teachers and students, between two friends or family members etc. But it can be seen that there is no consensus among sociologists about the scope of Sociology. Since the days of the forefathers of Sociology like Comte, Spencer, Durkheim and Giddings, sociologists have attempted to define the limit and the field of sociological investigation.

There are two schools of thought with different viewpoints regarding the scope and subject matter of Sociology, namely, the Formalistic and the Synthetic schools.

### **The Formalistic School and the Synthetic School**

The first school believes that Sociology was conceived to be a social science with a specifically defined field. It includes the views of Georg Simmel, Ferdinand Tonnies, Alfred Vierkandt and Leopold von Wiese. On the other hand, the Synthetic school includes the views of Emile Durkheim, L. T. Hobhouse and Pitirim Sorokin who believe that Sociology is a fusion of all social sciences and it embraces all social sciences within its scope and synthesizes them.



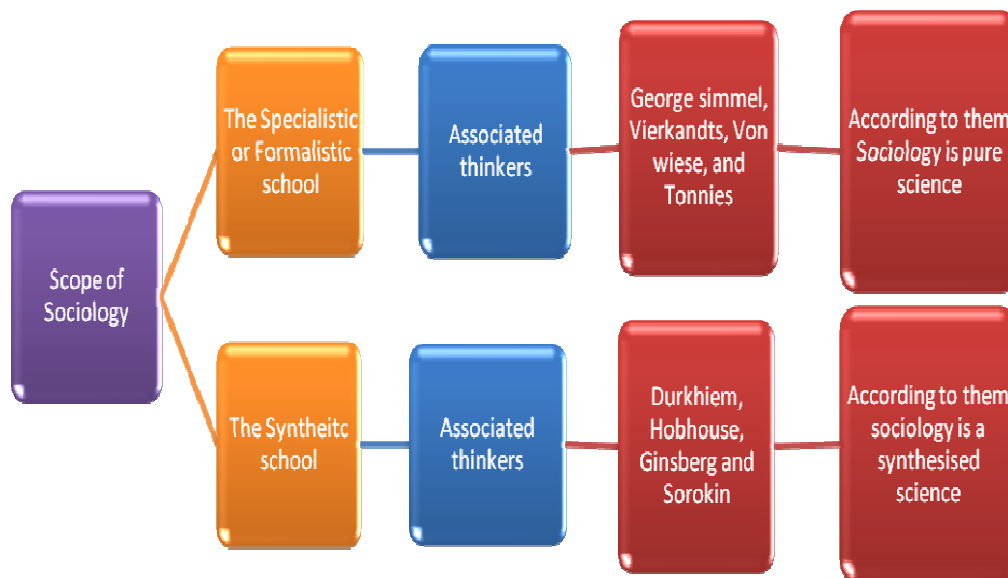
### **The Formalistic School**

The formalistic school aims at giving Sociology a definite subject matter to make it a distinctive discipline. According to the proponents of this school of thought, Sociology cannot study social life as a whole as its scope is limited. Sociologists from this

intellectual tradition wanted to keep the scope of Sociology distinct from other social sciences. They consider Sociology as a pure and independent science.

The Formalistic school of Sociology deals with 'forms of social relationships'. The relation of Sociology with other sciences is seen to be similar to the relation between Geometry and physical sciences. For instance, Geometry studies the special forms and relations of objects, not their content. In the same way Sociology does not study all the activities of society. Therefore, the scope of Sociology is the study of the specific forms of social relationships, behaviours and activities

- According to **Georg Simmel** Sociology is a specific social science which describes, classifies, and analyses the forms of social relationships.
- **Ferdinand Tonnies** divided societies into two categories, namely, *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (association) based on the degree of intimacy among the members of the society. He believes that the aim of Sociology is to study social relationships falling in these two categories.
- **Max Weber** also specifies the particular range of phenomena with which Sociology should deal. In his view, Sociology is a science which attempts to interpret or understand social action. Social action does not cover the whole field of human relations. Indeed, not all human interactions are social.





Find out thinkers like George Simmel, Max Weber, Sorokin, Emile Durkheim belong to which school of thought and what were their contributions.

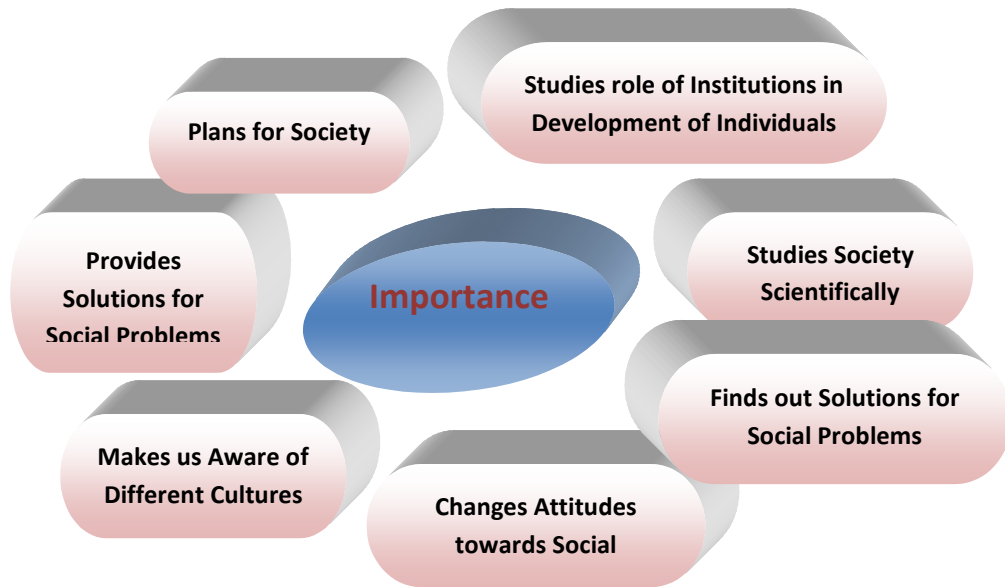
## The Synthetic School

In Synthetic School, Sociology is viewed as a synthesis of social sciences or as a general science. Sociology is seen as a science of sciences and all the other social sciences are included in its scope. The contention of this school is that all aspects of social life are interrelated. Hence, the study of one aspect of social life is not sufficient to understand the entire totality. For this purpose Sociology studies social life as a whole systematically. The subject matter of all social sciences is the same but there is difference in their viewpoint. Society is the subject matter of all social sciences but they study it from their own perspectives. However, Sociology studies social life as a whole, encompassing all the facets of social life.

L. T. Hobhouse perceived Sociology as a science which has the whole social life of man as its sphere of study. Its relations with the other social sciences are considered to be one of mutual exchange and mutual stimulation. If, for instance, we want to analyse and study the causes of family disorganisation, then we will have to seek the help of Economics, Psychology and other social sciences. In this way the scope of Sociology includes the subject matter of all other social sciences. Hence, while one school of thought (Formalistic) considers Sociology as being distinct from the other social sciences, the other (Synthetic) believes that it synthesises them.

## Importance of Sociology

The study of Sociology has great value. Some of its uses are:



- The study of Sociology makes it possible to do a scientific study of society.
- Sociology studies the role of institutions in society, e.g., family, school and education, the church and religion, the state and government, industry and work, the community and association. It studies the role of institutions for the development of an individual.
- The study of Sociology is useful for the planning of society because it is possible to improve the society through adequate and proper knowledge of its structure.
- Sociology provides solutions for social problems as it studies the causes of social evils.
- Sociology has been instrumental in changing our attitude. For instance, Sociology has changed our outlook on aspects like crime and criminals.
- Sociology helps individuals understand different cultures.
- It guides people in planning welfare programmes.

## Conclusion

Thus, Sociology is a social science that studies human societies, their interactions, and the processes that sustain and transform them. It emerged with the rise of the 18th and 19th-century philosophy of Enlightenment and factors like French Revolution, the growth of natural sciences, Industrial Revolution and urbanisation contributed to its development. Today this youngest science has grown to become not only a systematic and scientific attempt to study human society with all its complexities, but also a source of social planning, reconstruction and reform.

### Box 3 Sociology as a Career

- High prospects of career-opportunities in NGOs, INGOs and in various programmes/departments of United Nations (UN)
- Jobs in Teaching at intermediate, Graduate and Post-Graduate levels
- With the growing culture of NGOs in Punjab, there are emerging ample opportunities in research activities through these organisations
- Jobs at Social Welfare and Child Welfare Offices with Punjab Government
- Jobs of Counsellors in Government and Private Hospitals to provide socio-psychological counselling to the patients
- Best path for becoming Entrepreneurs
- Job avenues in various Government Departments

## Glossary

- **Capitalism:** A system of economic enterprise based on market exchange. “Capital” refers to any asset, including money, property and machines, which can be used to produce commodities for sale or invested in a market with the hope of achieving a profit. This system rests on the private ownership of assets and the means of production.
- **Enlightenment:** The age of Enlightenment was a cultural movement of intellectuals beginning in late 17th-century Europe emphasising reason and individualism rather than tradition. Its purpose was to reform society using reason, to challenge ideas grounded in tradition and faith, and to advance

knowledge through the scientific method. It promoted scientific thought and intellectual interchange.

- **Individualism:** The moral stance, political philosophy, ideology, or social outlook that emphasises the moral worth of the individual. Individualists promote the exercise of one's goals, desires and value independence and self-reliance.
- **Industrialisation:** The period of social and economic change that transforms a human group from an agrarian society into an industrial one.
- **Urbanisation:** Implies the increasing number of people that live in urban areas. It predominantly results in the physical growth of urban areas.
- **Values:** Ideas held by human individuals or groups about what is desirable, proper, good or bad.

## Exercises

**Answer the following very short answer questions in 1-15 words each:**

1. Who is regarded as the 'Father of Sociology'?
2. Name the two vital factors for the establishment of Sociology as a separate social science.
3. From which two words the word 'Sociology' came and in which year the subject Sociology emerged?
4. Name the two schools regarding the scope of Sociology.
5. What is industrialisation?
6. Name two scholars who contributed in the development of Sociology in India.

**Answer the following short answer questions in 30-35 words each:**

1. What is the meaning of Sociology?
2. State two important changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution.
3. What is positivism?
4. What is scientific method?
5. Define objectivity.
6. Discuss the issue of the scope and subject matter of Sociology.
7. What are the scientific methods employed by sociologists to study its subject matter?

**Answer the following long answer questions in 75-85 words each:**

1. In what way is the Formalistic School of thought different from Synthetic School?
2. Discuss briefly the importance of Sociology?
3. In what way did the French Revolution have a great impact on society?
4. In what way did the Industrial Revolution have a great impact on society?
5. Sociology makes use of scientific methods in its subject matter. Explain.

**Answer the following long answer questions in 250-300 words each:**

1. What do you mean by Sociology? Highlight the scope of Sociology.
2. What do you understand by Sociology? Discuss the nature of Sociology.
3. What were the factors responsible for the emergence of Sociology?
4. Why are the study of the origin and the growth of Sociology important?
5. Write a note on the Enlightenment period of Sociology.

## Chapter 2

# Relationship of Sociology with other Social Sciences

### Highlight :

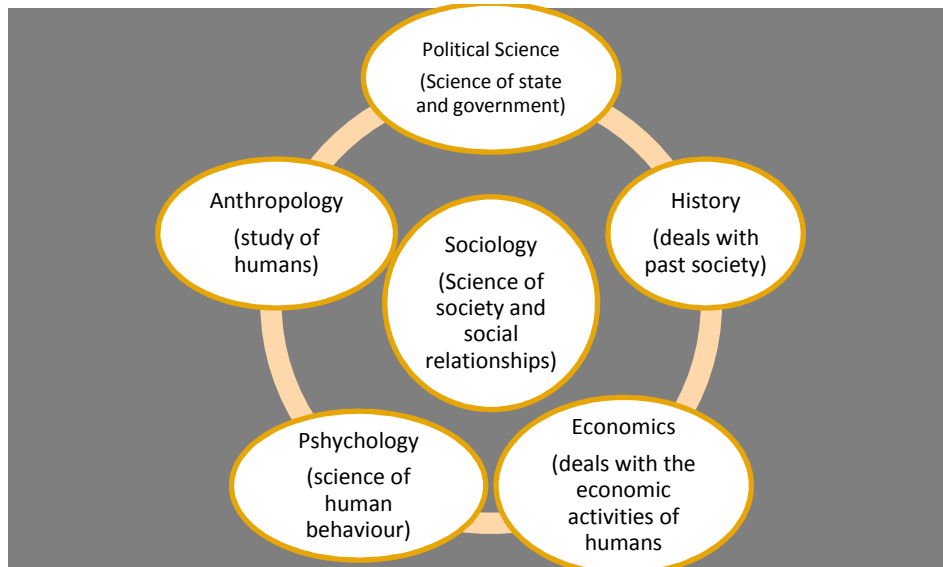
- 2.1 Political Science
- 2.2 History
- 2.3 Economics
- 2.4 Psychology
- 2.5 Anthropology

## Introduction

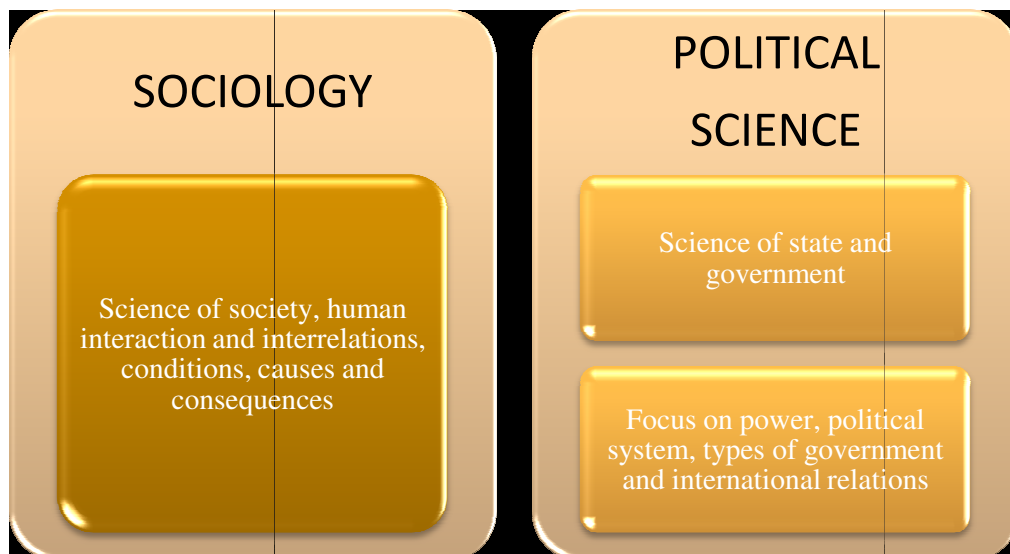
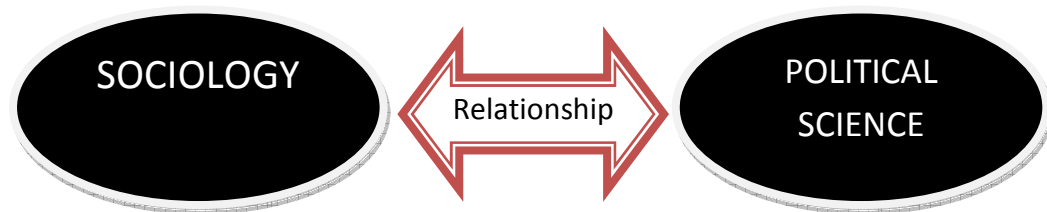
The life of an individual is many sided. It has an economic aspect, a legal aspect, a religious aspect, a political aspect and so on. Consequently, in order to comprehend social life as a whole, Sociology needs the help of other social sciences, which are all attempting to focus upon particular aspects of society. Sociology can understand social life better by taking help from other social sciences which focus on specific dimensions of human society. Hence, Sociology not only borrows from other social sciences but other social sciences are also dependent on Sociology.

Sociology and many social sciences have a lot in common and there has been talk of adopting an interdisciplinary approach in order to understand society, which would benefit every social science. Given below are the attempts to explain the interdependence and distinction between Sociology and some social sciences.





## Sociology and Political Science



Sociology is closely related to Political Science. Sociology is a science of society. It studies human interaction and interrelations, their conditions, causes and consequences. Political Science, on the other hand, is a science of state and government. It deals with social groups organised under the sovereign power of the state. Specifically, it focuses on the issues of power, political processes, political systems, types of government and international relations.

According to Morris Ginsberg, historically Sociology has its roots in politics and philosophy of history. For that reason Sociology depends on Political Science. Each and every social problem has a political cause. Any change in the political system or nature of power structure brings changes in society. To understand different political events Sociology takes help from Political Science. Similarly, Political Science also depends on Sociology. The State frames its rules, regulations and laws on the basis of social customs, tradition and values. Thus, without sociological background the study of Political Science will be incomplete. Almost all political problems have a social origin and for the solution of these political problems Political Science takes the help of Sociology.

Besides, there are some common topics which are studied by both the subjects, such as, war, propaganda, authority, communal riots, law etc. Together both subjects have given rise to a new field of study called Political Sociology. Thus, both Political Science and Sociology contribute to each other.

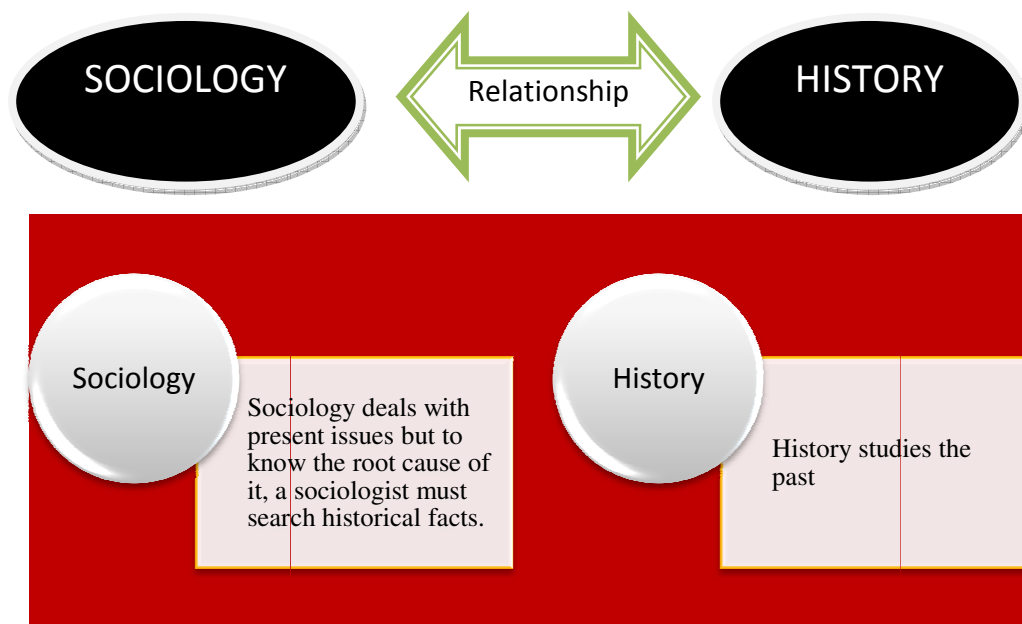
However, in spite of their interrelationship and interdependence, both the sciences differ from each other in the following ways:

### **Differences**

<b>Sociology</b>	<b>Political Science</b>
Sociology is a science of society and social relationships	Political science is a science of state and government.
The scope of Sociology is very wide	The scope of Political Science is limited.
Sociology is a general science	Political Science is a specialistic science.
Sociology studies organised, unorganised	Political Science studies only politically

and disorganised society	organised society.
Sociology studies the social activities of human beings	Political Science studies political activities of humans.
Sociology is a new/young science	Political Science is an older science.
Sociology studies human beings as social animals	Political Science studies humans as political animals.
Sociology studies both formal and informal relations	Political Science studies only formal relations.
Sociology analyses both conscious and unconscious activities of individuals	Political Science analyses only conscious activities of individuals.
Sociology deals with all forms of association	Political Science deals with only one form of association, namely, the state.

## Sociology and History



History is the branch of knowledge dealing with past events. It is the study of dates, places, events and struggles. It primarily deals with the past events and how they affected society as a whole. For instance, during the Partition of India in 1947, how people interacted, how culture was affected and so on. That is why it is said that

History is the microscope of the past, the horoscope of the present and telescope of the future.

On the other hand, Sociology is a study of systems of social action and their interrelations. It is a science of social groups and social institutions. It not only studies the past but also the relationships relating to the present and the future.

Both the subjects are closely interrelated and dependent on each other. Both study the same human society. History helps and enriches Sociology. History is the storehouse of knowledge from which Sociology has gained a lot. It provides materials that sociologists use. History is a record of past social matters, social customs and information about different stages of life. Sociology uses this information. Similarly, Sociology also provides help to History and enriches it. Historians have greatly benefited from the research conducted by sociologists. Sociology provides the background for the study of history. For example, historians now study caste, class and family using sociological data.

Hence, History is now being studied from a sociological angle. Every historical event has a social cause or social background. To understand any historical event History needs help from Sociology. Sociology provides facts on which historians rely. Thus, History and Sociology are mutually dependent. Given below are some points depicting the relationship of Sociology with History.

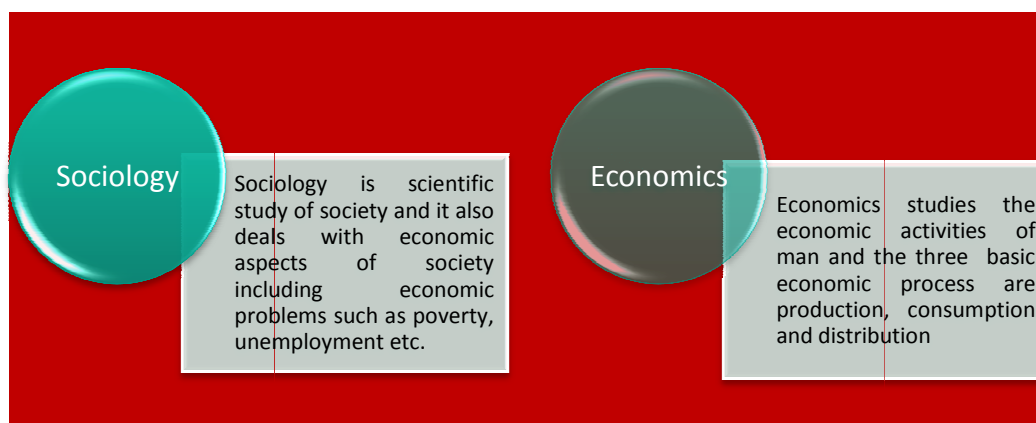
- Sociology takes help from History in order to conduct present day studies.
- Study of the past existence of culture, tradition, social movements, social change and social institutions like family, marriage, religion etc, helps us understand their present condition.
- In sociological research, historical method is quite relevant and vital.
- History is not only concerned with historical events but also tries to take up present events too. Similarly, Sociology studies historical events.

Despite the close relationship between Sociology and History, both social sciences have some differences too.

## Differences

Sociology	History
Sociology is a science of society and is concerned with the present society.	History deals with the past events and studies the past society.
Sociology is a modern or new subject.	History is an older social science.
Sociology is abstract.	History is concrete in nature.
The scope of Sociology is very wide.	The scope of History is limited.
Sociology is an analytical science.	History is a descriptive science.
Sociology studies a particular event as a social phenomenon.	History studies a particular event in its entirety.
Sociology is a general science.	History is a specialistic science.

## Sociology and Economics



Sociology has a close relationship with Economics, too, because economic relationships include social activities and relationships and thus, economic activities are, to a great extent, social activities. Likewise, social relationships are also affected by economic relationships. Hence both are mutually related.

Sociology is a science of society focusing on the association of human beings. Economics deals with the economic activities of humans. It is a science of wealth and rational choice concerning itself with the allocation and management of scarce resources. According to Lionel Robbins, Economics is a social science which studies human behaviour as a relationship between ends and scarce means. It is concerned with activities such as production, consumption, distribution and exchange. It also studies the structure and functions of different economic organisations like banks, markets etc. It is concerned with the material needs of humans, as well as, their material welfare.

Despite their different areas of concern, there exists a great deal of interrelationship between these two disciplines. Both are interdependent and interrelated. Actually, for some Economics is in fact, but one branch of Sociology. Their interrelationships can be described as follows:

- For its own comprehension, Economics takes the help of Sociology and depends on it.
- Economics is a part of Sociology and without the help from Sociology it cannot understand itself completely.
- Economics is concerned with material welfare of human beings, which is one part of social welfare.
- For the solution of different economic problems such as inflation, poverty, unemployment etc. economists take the help of Sociology by taking into account the social events of that particular time. At the same time society controls the economic activities of individuals.

Similarly Sociology also takes the help from Economics.

- Economics enriches sociological knowledge. Economic factors greatly influence each and every aspect of social life.
- Economics is a part of Sociology and without the help of Economics we may not understand our society properly.

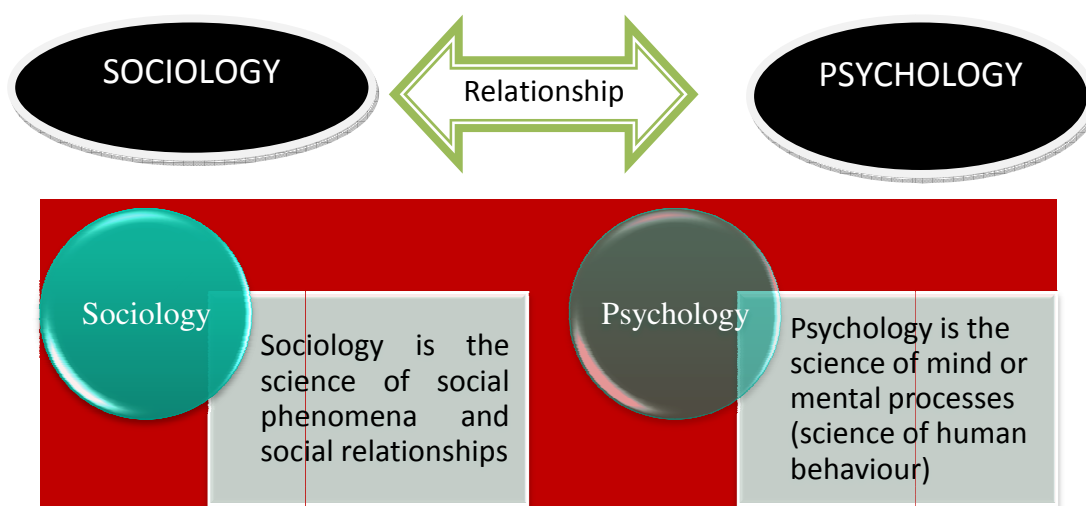
Thus, both Sociology and Economics are closely related. Economic changes result in social changes and vice versa. There are many issues which are studied by both

sociologists and economists, such as capitalism, industrialisation, labour relations, globalisation etc. However, in spite of the mutual dependence, both the social sciences have certain differences which are described below:

## Differences

Sociology	Economics
Sociology is a science of society and social relationships	Economics is a science of wealth and rational choice.
Sociology is a much younger science which has very recent origins.	Economics is comparatively an older science.
Sociology is an abstract science.	Economics is concrete in nature.
Sociology is a general social science.	Economics is a specialistic social science.
The scope of Sociology is very wide.	The scope of Economics is very limited.
Sociology is concerned with the social activities of human beings.	Economics focuses on the economic activities of humans.
Society/group is taken as a unit of study in Sociology.	Individual is taken as a unit of study in Economics.

## Sociology and Psychology



Psychology is another subject with which Sociology has a close relationship. Both depend on each other for a better comprehension of their own subject matter. Relationship between the two is so close and intimate that psychologists like Karl Pearson refuse to accept both as separate sciences. Their relationship will be clear if we analyse their inter-relationship and mutual dependency.

Sociology is a science of social phenomena and social relationships. It involves the study of social groups and social institutions. It is a science of collective behaviour, i.e., it studies human behaviour in groups. Psychology, on the other hand, is a science of the mind or mental processes. It is a science of human behaviour. It analyses attitudes, emotions, perception, process of learning and values of individuals and process of personality formation in society. For better understanding of many aspects of society, Sociology takes help from Psychology. Psychologists like Sigmund Freud, William MacDougall and others have enriched Sociology in many respects. They opined that the whole social life could be reduced ultimately to psychological forces. Each and every social problems and social phenomenon must have a psychological basis for the solution for which Sociology requires the help from Psychology.

Similarly, Psychology depends on Sociology to comprehend various phenomena. It requires help from Sociology in many cases by borrowing its understanding of social relationships, behaviour and activities. As human mind and personality are influenced by social environment, culture, customs and traditions, hence psychological study remains incomplete without taking the help from Sociology to understand these subjects. A new branch of knowledge that has developed with the combination of Sociology and Psychology is known as Social Psychology.

Their mutual dependence is clear from the following points:

- To understand human nature and behaviour properly Sociology depends on Psychology.
- Similarly, there may be many psychological problems which have social causes. Psychology requires the help from Sociology to understand these social problems.
- Contributions and theories of many sociologists are of great help to psychologists and the same holds true the other way round.
- Research in Sociology richly contributes to Psychology and vice versa.



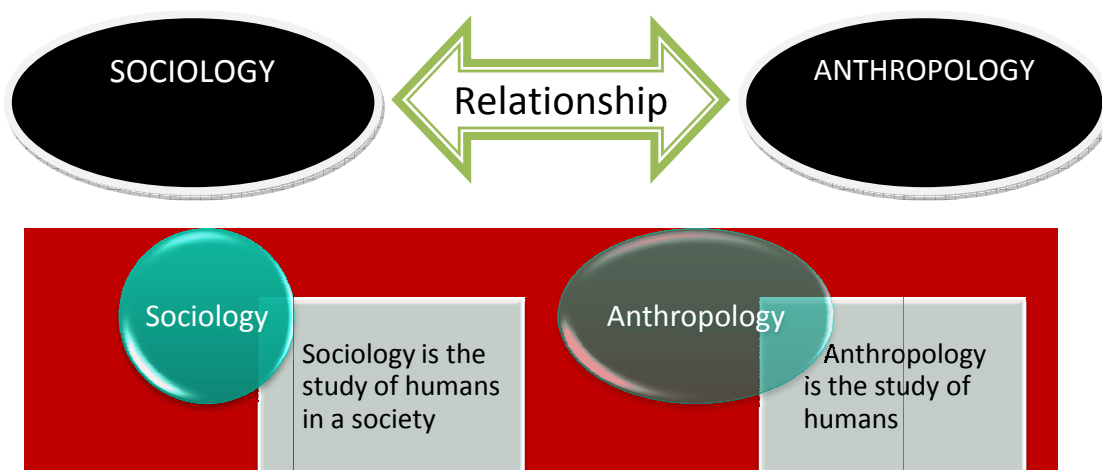
Thus, Sociology and Psychology are mutually dependent. Besides, there are some common areas of study for both such as social disorganisation, public opinion etc. which are being studied by both sociologists and psychologists.

Nevertheless, like in the case of other social sciences, there are some differences between Sociology and Psychology, as well.

## Differences

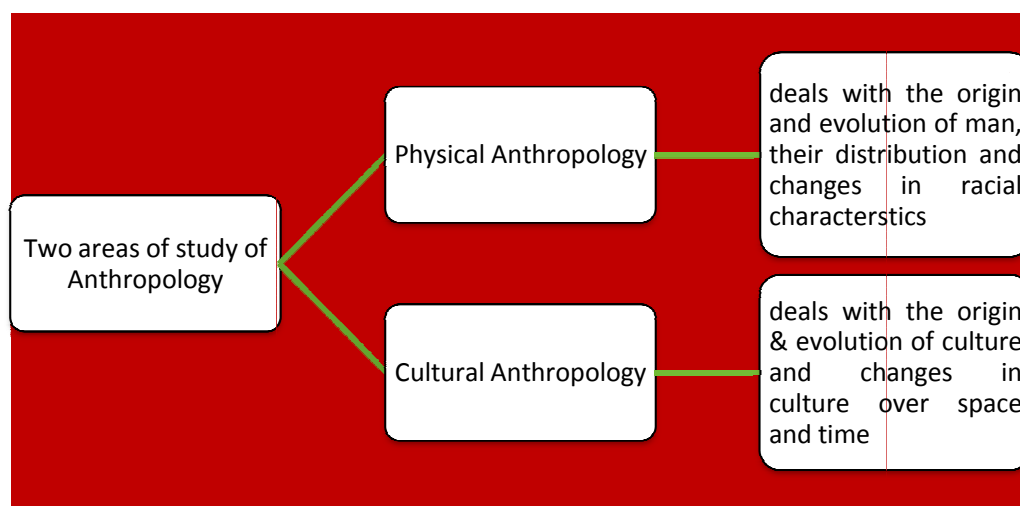
Sociology	Psychology
Sociology is a science of society.	Psychology is a science of the mind.
Scope of Sociology is wide.	Scope of Psychology is limited.
Society is the unit of study in Sociology.	Individual is the unit of study in case of Psychology.
Sociology studies social processes.	Psychology studies mental processes.
Sociology studies and analyses human behaviour from a sociological angle	Psychology studies and analyses human behaviour from a psychological angle.

## Sociology and Anthropology



So close is the relationship between Sociology and Anthropology that anthropologist A. L. Kroeber considers Sociology and Anthropology as twin sisters. They often appear as two names for the same subject. Scholars like Robert Redfield recognised the closeness between these two social sciences and worked in both fields.

As a science of society Sociology studies human behaviour in groups. It is concerned with the association of human beings. The term Anthropology is derived from two Greek words 'anthropos' meaning man and 'logos' meaning study or science. Accordingly, Anthropology means study of man.



As a science of man it deals with human beings, their works and behaviour. Anthropology studies the biological and cultural development of humans. It has a wide field of study which can be broadly divided into three main divisions such as Physical Anthropology, Archaeology (Cultural Anthropology) and Social Anthropology. Physical Anthropology studies bodily characteristics of early man and thereby tries to understand both primitive and modern cultures. Archaeology studies cultures of pre-historic period. This study facilitates sociologists to make a comparative study of present social structure. It is concerned with the early periods of human existence. It reconstructs the origin, spread and evolution of culture by examining the remains of the past societies. Social Anthropology deals with the behaviour of individuals in social institutions. Social Anthropology is the branch of Anthropology which is closest to Sociology. In fact, E. E. Evans-Pritchard considers Social Anthropology as a branch of Sociology.

Thus, there exists a very close and intimate relationship between Sociology and Anthropology.

- Sociology studies society whereas Anthropology studies man. But since man and society are mutually interrelated, it is very difficult to distinguish the two.
- Anthropology contributes to the growth of Sociology. Without the help of Anthropology, the study of Sociology cannot be complete. It is a part of Sociology.
- Anthropology provides knowledge about ancient societies. To have a comprehensive understanding of present society, Sociology takes the help of Anthropology.
- The origin of social institutions like family, marriage, religion etc. can be better understood through anthropological knowledge.
- Concepts like culture, cultural traits and cultural lag have been taken by Sociology from Anthropology.
- Anthropology accepts many concepts of Sociology. Contributions of many Sociologists like Emile Durkheim and Herbert Spencer are of great help to Anthropology.
- Anthropologists have greatly benefited by the Sociological research. Ideas and conclusions of sociological investigations contribute to the research in Anthropology.

Thus, there exists a great deal of affinity between Sociology and Anthropology. Sociology is greatly benefited by anthropological studies while Anthropology profits a lot from sociological contribution. Both study human society and both are concerned with all kinds of social groups like families, friends, tribes etc. Many common ideas and concepts are used in both the disciplines. Hence, both are interrelated and interdependent. However, there are some differences between the two social sciences, as well.

## Differences

Sociology	Anthropology
Sociology is a science of society.	Anthropology is a science of man.
The scope of Sociology is very wide.	The scope of Anthropology is very limited because it is a part of Sociology.
Sociology studies society as a whole.	Anthropology studies man as a part of society.
Sociology studies civilisations which are vast and dynamic.	Anthropology studies cultures which are small and static.
Sociology studies modern, civilised and complex societies.	Anthropology studies ancient and non-literate societies.
Sociology is concerned with social planning.	Anthropology has no concern with social planning.

## Conclusion

The above discussion makes it evident that the various social science are interrelated and despite their differences, there exists a very close and intimate relationship between Sociology and other social sciences.

## Glossary

- **Archaeology:** is the study of human activity in the past, primarily through the recovery and analysis of the material culture and environmental data that they have left behind, which includes artefacts, architecture, biofacts (or eco-facts) and cultural landscapes (or archaeological record).
- **Cultural Anthropology:** it is a branch of Anthropology focused on the study of cultural variation among humans and in contrast to Social Anthropology, perceives the cultural variation more as an independent (explanatory) "variable" than the dependent one.
- **Physical Anthropology:** Also known as Biological Anthropology it deals with the evolution of humans, their variability, and adaptations to environmental stresses.

- **Political Sociology:** a subject that is concerned with how social trends, dynamics, and structures of domination affect formal political processes, as well as exploring how various social forces work together to change political policies.
- **Social Psychology:** The scientific study of how people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviours are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others.

## Exercises

**Answer the following very short answer questions in 1-15 words each:**

1. Who considers Sociology and Anthropology as twin sisters?
2. Name few issues that are studied both by sociologists and economists.
3. What are the two areas of the study of Anthropology?

**Answer the following short answer questions in 30-35 words each:**

1. What is Sociology?
2. What do you mean by Political Science?
3. What do you mean by Physical Anthropology?
4. What is Cultural Anthropology?
5. What is Economics?
6. What is History?

**Answer the following long answer questions in 75-85 words each:**

1. Bring out two differences between Sociology and Political Science.
2. What is the relationship between Sociology and History? Mention two points.
3. Discuss in brief the relationship between Sociology and Anthropology.
4. How is Sociology associated with Economics? Discuss in brief.
5. Discuss the relationship between Sociology and Psychology.
6. How Sociology and Political Science are interrelated? Explain in brief.
7. Discuss in brief the differences between Sociology and Anthropology.

8. Discuss in brief the differences between Sociology and Economics.
9. Differentiate between Sociology and Psychology.
10. Distinguish between Sociology and History in brief.

**Answer the following long answer questions in 250-300 words each:**

1. How is Sociology different from other social sciences? Discuss any two in detail.
2. Write a detailed note on the relationship between Sociology and History.
3. Why is sociological understanding necessary for political scientists?
4. How does Psychology influence Sociology?

## Unit-2

## Basic Concepts in Sociology





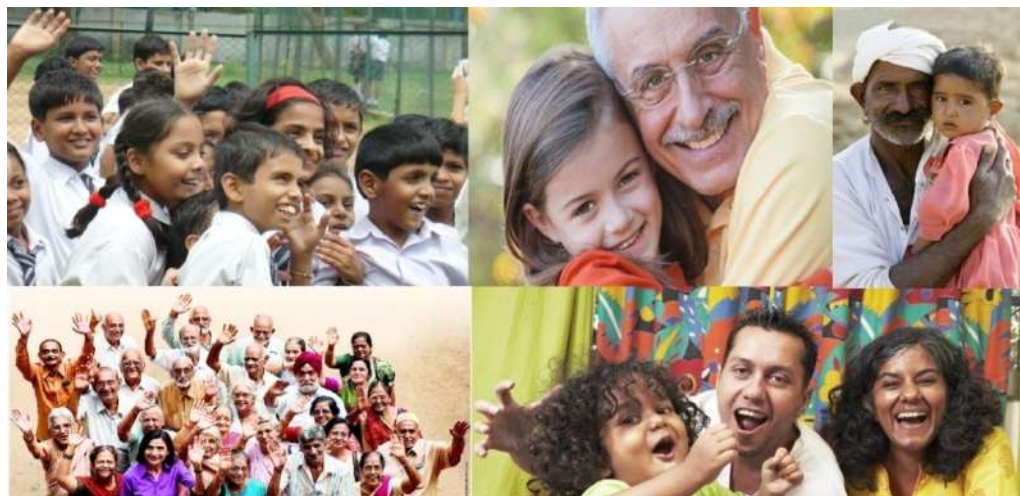


## Chapter 3

# Society, Community and Association

### Highlight :

- 3.1 Meaning
- 3.2 Features
- 3.3 Individual and Society
- 3.4 Difference between Society, Community and Association



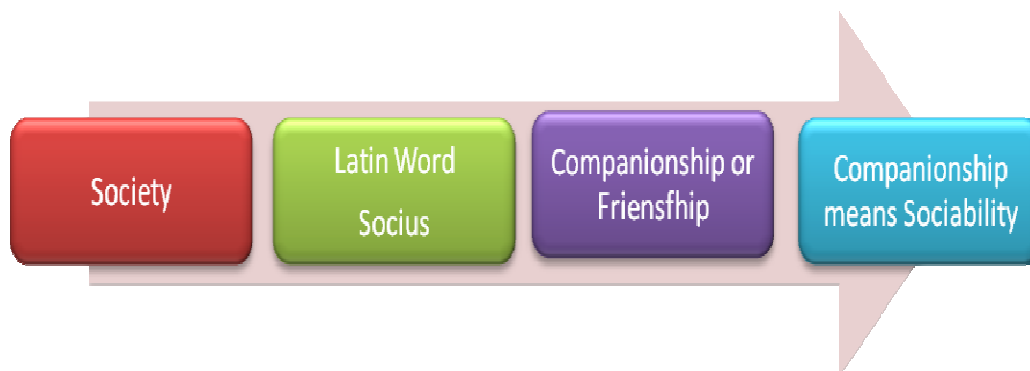
### Introduction

Sociology is the study of social relationships and interactions. However, relationships and interaction do not exist in a vacuum but in certain units of a society. In this chapter we will focus on three such units, namely, society, community and association.

### Society

In the words of the Greek philosopher Aristotle, man is a social animal. An individual cannot imagine life without society as we are born in a society, spend our life in society and die in the society. The term society is derived from the Latin word 'socius' which

means companionship or friendship. Companionship means sociability, which indicates that humans always need to live in the company of other people.



The simplest way of defining society is to describe it as a group of people with a common defined territory, a social structure, interactions and culture. As is clear from the above definition, society is a very broad term. It consists of the mutual interactions and interrelations of individuals and groups. It implies an organised system constituted of a number of institutions, which have to work in coordination with each other. When viewed as an organisation, society has a shared set of goals and definite objectives. For its proper functioning, society must also have certain defined rules, standards, norms and values that are useful in moulding the individual member's behaviour patterns. Thus, for some, society is a collection of individuals while others define it as a web of social relationships that exist among the people or groups or aggregates. In other words, a society is not only a group of people and their culture, but the relationships between the people and the institutions within that group.

Society has different meanings in different social sciences, but in Sociology it is used to refer to various kinds of social units. The main focus of Sociology is on human society and the network of relationships in it. In a society, sociologists study the interpersonal relationships of social beings and discover how a person behaves in a particular situation, what should be expected of others and what do others expect of her/him.



Following are some of the important conceptions of society:

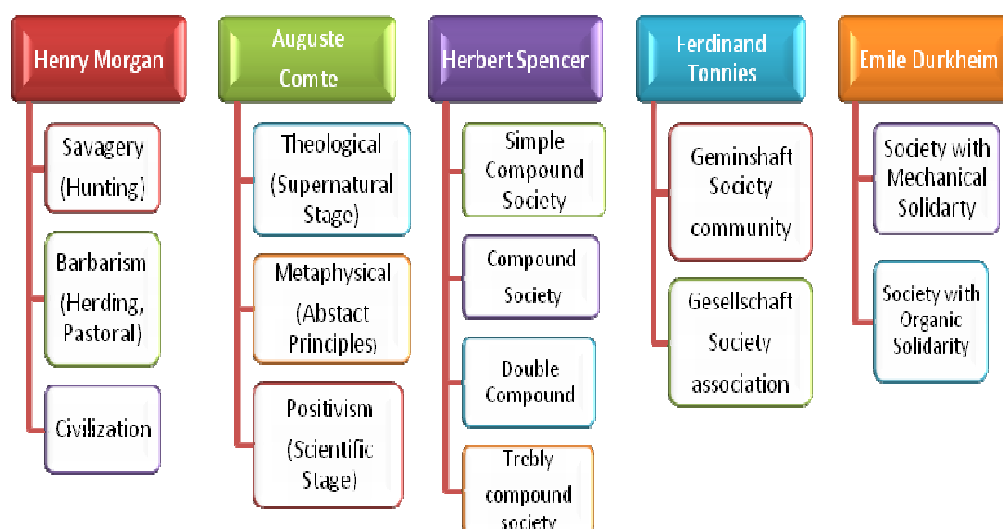
- **August Comte:** Society is a social organism possessing a harmony of structure and function.
- **R. M. MacIver and Charles Page:** Society is a web of social relationships.
- **F. H. Giddings:** Society is the union itself, the organisation, the sum of formal relations in which associating individuals are bound together.
- **Morris Ginsberg:** Society is a collection of individuals united by certain relations or mode of behaviour which mark them off from others who do not enter into these relations or who differ from them in behaviour.
- **G. H. Mead:** Society is not a collection of pre-existing atomic individuals but rather a processual whole within which individuals define themselves through participation in social acts.

Thus, overall it appears that society includes all relations, institutions and organisations, which give rise to a 'we feeling' among people and individuals become interdependent on each other.

## Types of Society

Different writers have classified societies into various categories. All these thinkers have broadly divided society into pre-industrial and post-industrial societies. Sociologists like Comte based their classification of societies on intellectual

development. Following this classification, sociologists often refer to societies as primitive or modern and non-literate or literate. A more recent kind of classification which is also used while distinguishing societies into types is the one that divides them into open and closed societies. A closed society is one which is traditional, simple and totalitarian and tends to resist change, while an open society admits change.



From the above image one can see that classification of societies can be based on the level of social development (Morgan), intellectual development (Comte), the degree of structural complexity (Spencer), types of social ties (Tönnies) and types of solidarity (Durkheim).

## Characteristics of Society

### 1. Society is Abstract

All of us are aware that society is external to us and has an impact on our behaviour, thinking and acting. But have you ever seen society? The answer is most probably 'no'. As explained earlier, society is a web of relationships. The social relationships are invisible and all of us are bound within the network of social relationships in one way or the other. We cannot see or touch these relationships but we can feel their existence. Moreover, society consists of customs, traditions, folkways, mores and culture which are also abstract. Hence, society is an abstract phenomenon.

## **2. Society exhibits Likeness**

Society consists of members who have some degree of likeness in mind despite differences at other levels. They feel alike, act alike, and think alike to a great extent. Without a sense of likeness, there could be no mutual recognition of 'belonging together' and therefore, no society. For instance, we all share similar feeling towards India and on its Independence Day, despite cultural and religious differences, act in a similar fashion by hoisting and saluting our National flag. 'We', 'us' and 'our' are concepts that explain similarity of thought. In a society, similarity or likeness prevails over the difference though both are integral parts of society.

## **3. Society exhibits Difference**

Do you have similar preference as your parents or siblings? Does there exist a similarity of interest and choices among all members of a society? Obviously it is not so. The members of society vary with regard to their likes, interests, feelings, culture and so many other things. This means society exhibits differences that are intrinsic to the members of society and persist generation after generation. Even twins show natural differences of aptitude, interest and capacity to do things. Society as web of social relationships inculcates the differences that exist among the interacting members of society. However, although differences are necessary for society but differences by themselves do not create society. Hence, difference is sub-ordinate to likeness.

## **4. Cooperation and Conflict are Integral parts of Society**

Cooperation and conflict are universal elements of human society. Irrespective of differences among members of society, they cooperate to run the institutions of society. An individual cannot fulfil one's needs alone. One has to cooperate with others to have a comfortable and peaceful life. For instance, the agricultural production process in a society makes people interact among themselves and leads to a structure of social relationships. Cooperation among farmers, farm labour, and credit and market institutions is must for the production of grains. Similarly, families living in a village support each other and work together to resolve their issues. At the same time, conflict among members of a society cannot be underestimated. Conflict is a process that implies disagreement and exists in all societies. Its relation with cooperation is inherent as it is the realization of conflict which makes the members opt for greater cooperation so as to ensure the growth and stability of the society. Conflict initiates the process of finding alternatives for the smooth and

harmonious functioning of society. Otherwise, the society may stagnate. So, cooperation and conflict co-exist and are the essential characteristics of society.

### **5. Society includes a system of Stratification**

Each society has a system by which it ranks categories of people in a hierarchy. All societies consist of various strata which are ranked unequally in terms of wealth, status and power. Social stratification refers to the existence of structured disparities between groups in society in terms of their access to material and symbolic rewards and power.

### **6. Society is Dynamic**

The nature of society is dynamic and changeable. Society is not static, it is dynamic. Change is ever present in society. No society can ever remain constant for any length of time. Old customs, traditions, folkways, mores, values and institutions change and new customs and values replace them. Society changes from traditional to modern form. Change may take place slowly and gradually or suddenly. It may take the form of partial or a complete transformation. Great or insignificant in dimensions, changeability is an inherent quality of human society.

### **7. Society is Organised**

Society is an organised system. It has certain sets of rules and behaviour to which every individual has to conform. The rules and set patterns help in proper functioning of the various parts of society. This co-operation and organised functioning is essential so that work is not stopped at any level.

#### **Activity-3.1**

- Give instance of cooperation that you observe in your own family set-up.
- Do you think generation gap leads to conflict?

#### **Activity-3.2**

- Find out from your grandparents/elders regarding the changes that have taken place in our society over the years.
- Discuss the similarities and differences found within societies with the teacher in the class. Find out the causes for the same and list them out.

### **Activity-3.3**

- Make a list of some threats to Punjabi society.

## **Individual and Society**

An individual is not merely a biological being but a social being too. As individuals, we are members of groups all the time because no one can live in isolation. One cannot live by oneself in seclusion for long and needs others, not only to fulfil the basic requirements of life, but also because one is a social animal, and is gregarious by nature. Each individual has an urge to live in a life interacting with others. One needs society and association with others for one's existence and survival.

Society provides favourable ground for the development of self as a product of society. A rich and varied social life provides one opportunities not only to develop one's personality but to integrate with the society. As an inseparable part of society, one's beliefs, attitudes and ideas relate one with the society and other members of society. Peter Berger states that society not only controls individual's movements but also shapes the identity, thoughts and emotions of a person. The language we use, the clothes we wear, the food we eat and the recreation activities we enjoy, all are derived from society only. Hence, emotional development, intellectual maturity and self-perfection are possible only in society.

There are number of opinions regarding the relationship between individuals and society. Emile Durkheim holds that society is external to us; it is part of our entire life. Institutions of society mould our actions and even shape our expectations. The structure of society becomes the structure of our consciousness.

## **Importance of Individual for Society**

One of the basic requirements for the formation of the society is the existence of members. Without members, there can be no society. Because of this condition, individuals are given primary importance in the formation and existence of a society.

## **Importance of Society for the Individual**

Just as the individual holds great importance for the society, the society too has immense relevance for the individual.



**Survival:** Every individual needs society for one's survival and satisfaction of one's needs.

**Learning:** Every member learns norms, values and ways of behaviour by living in society. This learning process begins right from birth and continues at different stages of life.

**Social Product:** Humans are biological beings when they are born but by becoming part of society they became social and the society plays an important role in the individual's life in teaching all the traditions and customs of the society.

**Development of Self:** While living in society the self emerges, as one becomes aware of one's own statuses and roles as also that of others. No individual can develop a personality and self by living alone. Society is that system which helps in fostering the personal growth and development of its individual citizens. The examples of Kasper Hauser and Anna who remained away from human society amply support the view that without society, development of mind and self is unthinkable. Individual is a part of the larger society and is inseparable from it. One's individuality and sociability develop together by being a part of the society.

### **Box 1**

#### **Examples depicting the importance of society for development of an individual**

- Kasper Hauser was a German youth who grew up in total isolation of a dark cell and was found roaming in the streets of Nuremberg in 1828. His estimate age was 18 years. He could hardly walk or talk, and had an inadequately developed mental faculty. The reason was that he was not part of human society and that is why he did not develop like any ordinary individual.
- Another example is the case of Anna, an illegitimate child who was confined to a small, dark room and fed only milk for the first 5 years of her life and kept totally isolated from all human contact. When she was rescued at the age of 5, she had few attributes of a normal 5-year-old. She could neither walk nor talk and was indifferent and apathetic towards people around her.



The above examples highlight the importance of society. It is within a society that an individual develops one's self and personality. Society gives an individual his/her social heredity, which determines and moulds one's personality.

Thus, every individual is unique. Individuality is bequeathed by nature. However, sociability is gift of society. The relation between individual and society is not merely a physical unity, or functional unity but it is in totality. No individual can survive without society and neither can the individual develop one's personality. Society gives us choices and chances, as well as, the scope for learning which helps us emerge as developed social beings.

## Community

The word community is derived from the Latin word 'communitas', a broad term for companionship or organised society which is based on the concept 'communis' meaning things held in common or shared.



Community is a social group of any size whose members inhabit a particular geographical area, share a government, and frequently share a cultural and historical legacy. It may also refer to a collection of people who perform or engage in similar kind of work or activities such as racial community, religious community, a national community, a caste community, or a linguistic community etc. In this sense it indicates a social, religious or occupational group having common features or concerns and perceived as or perceiving itself as different in some way from the larger society within which it exists. Community can thus, refer to people spread over a vast area but sharing similarity in one or the other way. For instance, the terms 'international community' or 'NRI community' are used in literature referring to some coherent group based on supposedly some characteristics.

In sociological literature, community refers to population settlements like rural community or urban community. The population living in such settlements has a network of social relationships which is distinct, determining their typical way of life in

a specific geographical area or location. The concept of community, therefore, refers to a group of people living in a definite geographical area and sharing similarity in ways of life. However, since the arrival of the Internet age, the concept of community has less of geographical implication, as people can now form virtual communities that meet online and share common interests regardless of physical location. In any case, in the modern world, geographical isolation is of little importance except in the case of tribes which have been kept apart to preserve their distinct culture and identity like that of Andaman & Nicobar.

The concept of community is many a time called as ecological or organic one. This is largely due to their proximity of living, close personal contacts and similarity of interests, traditions and customs which become the basis of belongingness. For this reason, community is sociologically identified with 'we/our' not 'I/mine'. For instance, we normally say 'our' village, 'our' religion, 'our' country and not 'my' village, religion or country. In this sense, community is not a mere geographical idea; it expresses the relations among the people residing within an area, having some degree of mutuality, organisation and consensus arising out of their close interaction and communication. As a result, the members of a community have a degree of common consciousness and identity. MacIver defines community as any area of common life, which can be a village or town or country or an even wider area. It is a self-contained group in which people share, not this or that particular interest but the basic conditions of life. Therefore, a community is a group of people occupying a single geographical area and living a common life.

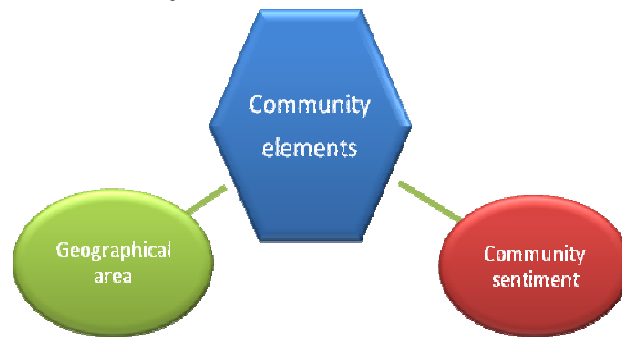
Based on the above discussion, community can be understood in many ways:

- People living in a definite geographical area which implies commonality of purpose, and a distinct nature of social relationships and a way of life. Village and tribal community are examples of this. Here the emphasis is on the ecological or locality character of the community.
- People having some degree of mutuality, organisation, and consensus arising out of close interaction and communication. This implies common consciousness and identity. Jain community, Sikh community etc. are the examples of such communities. This way of understanding community lays emphasis on relationship.
- As geographical isolation is of little importance in the modern world, community has to be understood as a 'social system' which is not a self-contained group of individuals having similarity of interest but in which diversity, self interest and change exist. People exhibit solidarity and

conformity to meet ends as a part of a larger society. Ends and means vary but are attainable with the active support of others who may have interest different from that of the individual. This is observed in business community, medical community and the like.

Thus, definition of community as a network of social relationships determining basic conditions of life, leading to emergence of common consciousness and shared identity with all its diversity is gaining ground rather than restricting the definition to its territorial character and we feeling.

### Elements of Community



- a) Communities may be thought of as collections of people with a particular social structure having a sense of belonging or community spirit.
- b) All the daily activities of a community, work and non-work, take place within the geographical area, which is self-contained.

### Features of Community

Although MacIver and Page (1949) have listed two important bases of community, namely, locality (geographical area) and community sentiments, its features can be elaborated as follows:

- 1. Collection of People:** Community is a collection of individuals who engage themselves in a particular work or perform similar kind of work leading to sharing of common interests to meet their ends.
- 2. A Geographical Area or Locality:** The bonds of social solidarity that exist among the members of the community are derived from their condition of locality or

geographical area. Members of a community share physical space, so that residents come into contact with each other due to proximity, rather than common interests. However, to be a “real” community, residents must feel a sense of belonging and hold at least some values and symbols in common. For example, families living in a small village are bound together in a slow moving way of life. They share stories, jokes, sorrows, folklores, and experiences. They move together in groups of their own and organise activities based on their locality.

**3. Community Consciousness:** Without community sentiment a community cannot be formed. Community sentiment refers to a strong sense of ‘we feeling’ or a feeling of belonging together, among the members. It refers to a feeling of common living that exists among the members of a locality. Because of common living within an area for a long time, a sentiment of common living is created among the members of that area, with which the members emotionally identify themselves. This emotional identification of the members distinguishes them from the members of other community. Each community thus, shares a common way of life. They share common identity, have a degree of mutuality, consciousness and organisation to a large extent. So, this likeness, which is the base of collective consciousness, is largely due to their close interaction and contacts within a locality or geographical area.

**4. A Common Culture:** The essence of a community is a sense of belongingness, common interests, shared moral values and sentiments. The members of a community share similar traditions, customs, values and norms and above all, a way of life. They share common experiences that shape the way they understand the world. As the community grows in size, the area of social network or relationships expands and so do the traditions, customs and the like.

**5. Naturalness:** Communities are naturally organised. They are neither a product of human will nor created by an act of government. They grow spontaneously. A community establishes itself in a natural way and not in a planned manner or through any act. It is natural in its origin, encompassing the complete life of its members. It is relatively stable and permanent. The rules that govern life, too, get established over a period through the process of usages, folkways, norms, customs, and so on.

### Activity-3.4

- Discuss the significance of ‘Baisakhi’ and ‘Lohri’ celebrations for the community.
- There is a close connection between agriculture and culture. Explain with suitable examples.

<b>Society</b>	<b>Community</b>
Society is a web of social relationship.	Community consists of a group of peoples living in a particular geographical area with degree of 'we sentiment'.
Society is abstract.	Community is concrete.
A definite geographical area is not necessary for society.	Community is a territorial unit.
Society may or may not have community sentiments.	There can be no community without community sentiment.
Society is an all encompassing entity. There can be more than one community in a society.	Community is smaller than society. It is a part of society.
Society involves both likeness and differences.	Likeness is more important than difference in community.

## **Association**

When two or more people cooperate with each other or fulfil a specific goal or goals, the group is called an association. It is a sort of cooperative unit having its own organisation and rules and regulations. People have diverse needs, desires and interests, which demand satisfaction. There are three ways of fulfilling these needs. Firstly, individuals may act independently, each in one's own way without caring for others. This is an unsocial method and has many limitations. Secondly, people may seek their ends through conflicts with one another. This too is not a constructive approach. Finally, people may try to achieve their ends through cooperation and mutual assistance. This cooperation has a reference to association. Political associations, religious associations, student associations, labour associations, economic associations, and international associations are some examples of association.

Thus, an association is a group of people organized for a specific objective or a number of objectives. For an association to be created, a) there must be a group of people, b) these people must be organised, i.e., there must be certain rules for their conduct in the groups, and c) they must have a common and a specific purpose to pursue. Family, church, trade union, music club all are the instances of association.

One person can be a member of a cricket association, another is a member of women's association and a third can be a member of Facebook users' association. Why the word 'association' is being used in all above references? Such words often find a mention

whenever one tries to know about the person and his/her activities. In the modern complex societies, association is in use more than the word community. Why is it so? Is it that society is unable to meet the needs of the individuals or is it something else? One becomes member of a group because of its certain attributes or one's own interest. For instance, if a person has interest in cricket, or in women's causes, they join the cricket and women's associations, respectively. Or one may join the Facebook to gather important information or reconnect with old friends. So, associations tend to promote one's specific interests.



Political Parties as Associations



Labour Union as an Association

All associations come into existence to meet specific interests of the members of a society. In the present modern world, interests cannot be pursued independently and one has to seek the cooperation of others to achieve one's ends. In the process of doing this, sometimes conflict with others may help to attain the desired end but such a method questions the very existence of an orderly society. So, when individuals come together to fulfil their specific interests or attain their desired ends, they are said to have organised into a group called association. Hence, association is group of people united for a specific purpose or a limited numbers of purposes. The ends or objectives of the association may be complex like that of a trade union which not only further the interest of the workers but also provide security, vocational training etc.

## Features of Association

Each association attempts to fulfil the interests of its members which one cannot achieve as an individual. The characteristics of the association can be summarized as follows:

**1. Collection of Individuals:** An association is a collection of people. Without people there can be no association. However, all groups are not associations, because an association is basically an organised group.

**2. Voluntary Membership:** Associations are often voluntary as the membership depends upon one's interest or the purpose for which one becomes the member of an association. A person becomes a member because s/he wants it and only because s/he likes it and if one develops a feeling of dislike for the association, s/he is absolutely free to disown or leave any such association.

**3. Common Interest or Interests:** Associations come into existence as conscious and deliberate efforts of the members with certain aims or purposes. Accordingly, those who have political interests may join a political association, and those who have religious interest may join religious associations, and so on. Usually with the attainment of the purpose of the association, it may cease to exist.

**4. Rules and regulations:** Association has a constitution that elaborates the set of procedure, rules and regulations for its functioning. The members adhere to these set of procedures for the attainment of goals or interests. Associations may be closely or loosely structured. Formal rules define the functioning of the association. It has formal rules, office, procedures to follow and goals to be achieved. The religious associations are loosely structured whereas the business ones have more rigid structures, because religious associations are bound by traditions and customs and the business associations by formal rules to large extent.

### Activity -3.5

- Find out about the different associations that exists in your neighbourhood, like residential welfare associations, youth clubs, senior citizen organisations etc.
- Collect the names of similar type of association that exists in your city/town/village.
- Find out the activities that are carried out by these associations.

<b>Community</b>	<b>Association</b>
Individual becomes a member of a community by birth.	Membership of an association is voluntary.
A community has some general interests.	An association has some specific interest or interests.
A community is stable and permanent.	An association may or may not be stable or long lasting
A community has no legal status.	An association may have a legal status.
Community may consist of many associations.	An association is an organisation within community.

### **Difference between Society and Association**

<b>Society</b>	<b>Association</b>
Society is the result of natural evolution.	Association is deliberately created or is artificial.
The membership of society is compulsory.	The membership of association is voluntary.
The aim of society is the general well being of its members.	Association is formed for the pursuit of some particular interest or interests.
Society is marked by both co-operation and conflict.	Association is based on co-operation.
Society may be organised or unorganised.	Association must be organised.
Society is older than association, existing ever since the origin of humans.	Associations are more recent as they arose when humans learnt to organise themselves for the pursuit of some particular purpose.

### **Conclusion**

Thus, society, community and associations are the basic units which provide us with the basis for grasping the relationship between the individual and social processes. Each unit is linked with the other, yet they differ in many ways as well. Any understanding of the subject of Sociology must include the study of these concepts.



## Glossary

- **Aggregate:** A collection of people who happen to be at that same place at the same time but have no other connection to one another.
- **Association:** An organised body of people who have an interest, activity, or purpose in common
- **Community:** It is a set of interactions, human behaviours that have meaning and expectations for its members. It includes not just action, but actions based on shared expectations, values, beliefs and meanings between individuals.
- **Co-operation:** The process of working or acting together for common or mutual benefits.
- **Dynamics:** A process or system characterised by constant change, activity, or progress.
- **Institution:** Any enduring structure or mechanism of social order regulating the behaviour of a set of individuals within a given community.
- **Law:** A norm that is written down and enforced by an official agency.
- **Social Relationship:** Relation between two or more individuals in society.
- **Society:** A group of people who share a particular territory, culture and social relations.
- **We-feeling:** A strong sense of feeling by which members of a group identify themselves and distinguish themselves from others. This shows a strong sense of unity among them.

## Exercises

**Answer the following very short answer questions in 1-15 words each:**

1. State the meaning of society.
2. Society and community are derived from which words?
3. Who said, "Man is a social animal"?

4. Who gave the simple compound society, compound society, double compound society and trebly compound society classification?
5. What is association?
6. What is an open society?

**Answer the following short answer questions in 30-35 words each:**

1. Discuss the three characteristics of society.
2. Describe the types of society.
3. What is community?
4. How is society different from community? Mention two points.
5. Define association and discuss its characteristics.
6. State two differences between community and association.

**Answer the following long answer questions in 75-85 words each:**

1. Write a short note on human society.
2. Name the three stages of human society as identified by August Comte.
3. Which are the main bases of community?
4. Give three the examples of association.
5. What are the types of society discussed by Tonnies?

**Answer the following long answer questions in 250-300 words each:**

1. What do you understand by the term society? Write a detailed note.
2. Individual and society are interrelated. Comment.
3. What do you mean by community? Discuss the characteristics of community in detail.
4. Define community. Discuss in which respect community differs from society.
5. Draw a comparison between community and association.
6. Discuss the difference between society and association.

## Chapter

# 4

## Social Groups

### Highlight :

- 4.1 Meaning and Feature
- 4.2 Types : Primary and Secondary Group
- 4.3 In-group and Out-group

### Introduction

In the whole world one cannot find a person who is not a member of any group. In fact, all human beings live in groups. In the discipline of Sociology group occupies a central place. Many sociologists maintain that Sociology is the science that deals with social groups. In every society whether primitive, ancient, feudal or modern, Asian, European or African, human groups and collectivities exist. But it is true that the types of group and collectivities are different and vary in accordance to their culture.

### Concept of Social Group

An individual cannot live in isolation since everyone is a social being. Most of the individual's social actions are conducted in the capacity of a participating member of a group, for instance, family. When a person goes out, one tends to interact with a number of individuals and share common ideas and feelings. In other words, all men and women have the tendency to live as social members connecting with each other through the interaction process.



A social group is a collection of individuals, made up of two or more persons having interaction among them. It consists of people who interact with one another and recognise themselves as a distinct social unit. The number of members in a group can range from two to hundreds of individuals. In addition, the social group is dynamic in nature as it expands its activities from time to time. The interaction within social group motivates them to identify with one another. Groups are mostly stable and enduring social units, for example family, community, village etc. Groups carry out many organised activities which are necessary in a society.

## Aggregate, Category and Group

We need to differentiate social group from an aggregate and a social category. Any gathering of people does not necessarily constitute a social group. It is merely an aggregate. Aggregates are simply collections of people who are in the same place at the same time, but share no definite connection with one another. For example, aggregation of people includes those waiting for a bus at the bus stand, where people are gathered but they are neither having any specific aim nor any interaction with each other. It implies that certain conditions are necessary to form a social group. Therefore, we can say that a specific purpose and interactions are the necessary elements of a social group.



Similarly, a social category is constituted by a number of people who have common characteristics. For instance, people who share the same age group, caste, sex and occupation etc. are members of the same category. The people in the same category do not necessarily interact with each other nor do they gather in one place. In fact, they do not attach any importance to the common characteristics they share. It is only when a number of people share some organised pattern of recurrent interaction that they can be said to form a social group. Family, village, school, college and club are the examples of social groups. And, of course, society is a largest social group.

### Activity- 4.1

Make a project depicting aggregate, category and social class.

## Characteristics of a Social Group

A social group has many features, which are as follows:

**1. Collection of individuals** – A group consists of people whose number may vary. At least two individuals are necessary to form a group. Without individuals there can be no group. Just as there cannot be a school without students and teachers, in the

similar manner there cannot be a group in the absence of people. These people belong to the group in their capacity as members.

**2. Interaction** – The essence of a group is that its members interact with each other. A social group is, in fact, a system of interaction. Interaction is not necessarily either regular or frequent but must occur over a period of time. For example, large families with members living at separate places may rarely meet, but there is a communication among them. The members share a sense of belongingness with the other members of the family. Moreover, the interaction in the group may be physical or symbolic. Symbolic interaction does not involve face to face physical contact but symbolic communication since family members now days are linked with each other through mobile phones, Internet and other modern means of communication.



**3. Awareness of Membership** – Awareness of membership by those within the group is also an important feature of a group. Members of a group are aware that there is a certain line that separates them from non-members. This line cannot be crossed by the outsiders. A feeling of exclusiveness is thus, a part of group life. All individuals in a group are aware of the differences among members and non-members. This may be due to “the consciousness of kind” as defined by F. H. Giddings.

**4. Group Interests** – A member of a group feels that s/he is a part of something bigger than herself/himself. Sometimes the group acts independently without caring for the individual interest of a member. In other words, group interests are always and necessarily more important than the interest of any individual. As the famous sociologist Emile Durkheim says society is always much more important than an individual.

**5. ‘We feeling’** – ‘We feeling’ means a tendency on the part of the members to identify themselves with the group as a whole. It represents group spirit. People may see and talk to each other regularly, but unless there is common identity among them, a group does not exist. For example, customers and salesperson in a store may see and talk to each other often, but they do not form a group as they are not aware of their common identity. On the other hand, the members of a particular caste are well aware of their group identity and have a feeling of belongingness which creates ‘we feeling’

among them. Therefore, it can be said that we-feeling is also an important feature of social group.

**6. Reciprocity** – In the group, there exists reciprocity (relationship of give and take) among its members. Take the example of a family. In it the members interact with each other. The father provides sustenance and protection for children, who reciprocate with obedience and respect. Similarly, in a school the teacher makes the students learn the rules and regulations of schools through the process of rewards and punishment.

**7. Definite Roles of Members** – In every group, the members of that group have definite roles to play. Each member is given a status in the group. Status means the position in relation to the other. Status is always related to its role. Status never works without action and that action is known as role. Hence, every member of the group works according to her/his status and role.

**8. Group Norms** – There is a body of rules and regulations which the members of a group are supposed to follow. These rules are known as norms. These norms may be in the form of folkways, traditions, mores, customs and laws. These norms may be written or unwritten. If any member of the group violates them, s/he is liable to be punished and the punishment is also decided by the norms.

**9. Group Control** – Group always exerts pressure on the activities of the members. Such pressure may be direct or indirect, but it is always present. Usually, individuals submit to it and sacrifice their self interest for the group-interest. However, the individual may conform to the pressure or rebel against it to escape the group pressure. Rebellion may take two forms. The rebellious individual may remove oneself from the group by becoming a hermit or one can start acting on one's own. If one chooses the second line, s/he is branded as a criminal or insane.

**10. Unity and Solidarity** – There is a sense of unity and bond of solidarity among the members forming a group. The group solidarity depends on the frequency, variety and emotional quality of the interaction of its members. A family, a peer group, a neighbourhood and a caste group are some of the examples of highly united and integrated groups.

**11. Dynamism** – A social group is dynamic. The forms and activities of social groups may undergo change. They may change due to either internal pressure or external

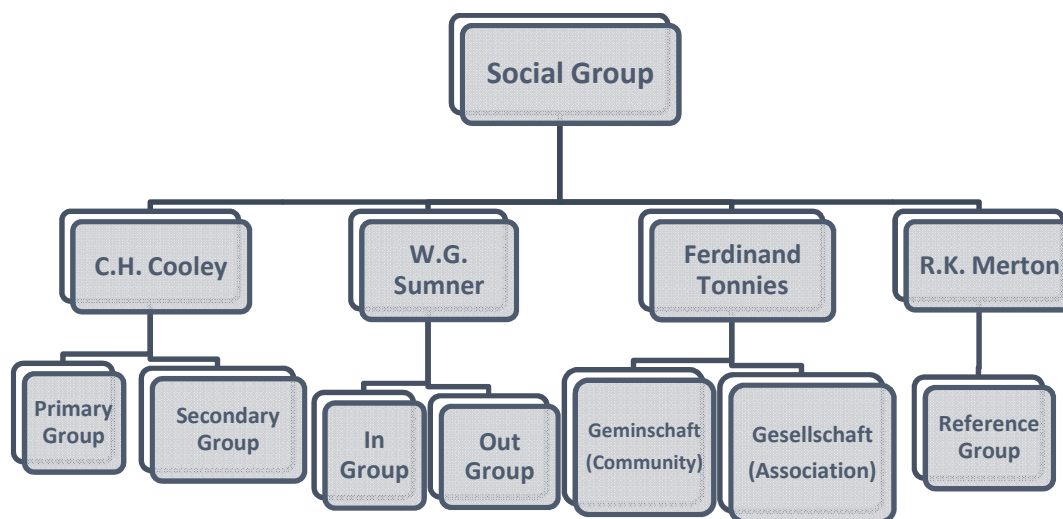
pressure. Sometimes, the changes take place slowly while at other times there may be very rapid changes.

### Activity-4.2

Identify other species who live in groups like the human beings.

### Types of Groups

Different sociologists have classified social groups into different categories. C. H. Cooley has divided them into Primary and Secondary groups, W. G. Sumner categorises them into In-group and Out-group and Robert K. Merton describes Reference groups.



### C. H. Cooley: Primary and Secondary Groups

#### Primary Group

The concept of Primary Group has been introduced by C. H. Cooley. A social group is primary in several senses, but mainly because it is fundamental in forming the social nature and ideals of the individual. Perhaps the simplest way of describing its wholeness is by saying that it is a “we group” having a “we feeling”. Primary groups are small in size and are characterized by face to face relationships, intimate association

and cooperation. They are the basis of what is universal in human nature and human ideals. They are the nursery of human virtues like love, cooperation, sympathy, justice and fair play. For R. M. MacIver they are the breeding ground of our mores and nursery of our loyalties. Examples of primary groups are family, neighbourhood, play group etc.



Family



Peer Group

## Characteristics of Primary Groups

There are two types of characteristics of primary groups. According to Kingsley Davis, these are internal and external. Following are the external characteristics or features of the primary group:

### External Characteristics

1. **Small Size** – The size of primary groups is very small because in a large group it is not possible to relate to one another directly and personally. Intimacy decreases when the number of people increases in the group. On the other hand, the smaller the size of a group the greater is the intimacy. If the audience is large, everyone cannot see the speaker or listen clearly. One must remember that while all primary groups are small, but all small groups are not primary. For instance, the relation between the doctor and the patient cannot be an example of a primary group.

2. **Physical Proximity** – Physical proximity means the members of the primary groups must live in the same place at the same time. It will be difficult to exchange thoughts or to help one another if the members are not physically close. Close contact provides better scope for direct interaction. Seeing and talking with each other facilitates the exchange of ideas, opinions and sentiments. Embracing, caressing, eating and living together, playing, travelling, and studying together are regarded as the external sign of closeness. However, Kingsley Davis points out that the primary group cannot be limited to direct contact. There are relations which are intimate and friendly,



but which do not involve direct contact. Pen-friends or Facebook friends belong to this category.

3. **Durability** – Primary groups are durable and develop among those who interact frequently over a long period of time. The longer its members interact, the more intimately they are related to one another. The better they know each other, the more intimate they become. For example, parents and children may have differences of opinion but the very fact that they are living together for a long period of time thus, makes it difficult for them to live without each other.

### **Internal Characteristics**

These characteristics are those which relate to the inner part of primary relationship. These are as follows:

1. **Identity of ends** – In a primary relationship, desires, attitudes or objectives of all the group members are alike. They view the world in the same manner. For instance, the groups of players competing in a game have a single end or objective.

2. **Relation is an End in Itself** –A primary relationship is not simply a means to an end but an end in itself. It is valued for its own sake. It is the relationship of love and affection. It can be seen in the relationship between the mother and the child, between lovers and between closest friends.

3. **Relationship is Personal** – The members of the primary group maintain personal relations. It is the relation between two particular persons. Hence, relationship is not transferable and that is why the void due to a member's absence cannot be completely filled by anyone else. For example, after the death of the spouse the surviving partner may marry again but the memory of the first partner does not disappear. No other person can take the place of a particular friend or a family member.

4. **Relationship is Inclusive** – The relationship in a primary group is inclusive in the sense that it covers all aspects of the personality of the members concerned. The members know each other to the core. Nothing is secret among them. Hence, they are open to each other. For example, good friends tend to share everything with each other.

**5. Relationship is Spontaneous** – In a primary group the relation with another member is voluntary. There is nothing like compulsion or pressure among the members. For example, friends get together because they want to talk to each other or they want to play football or cards together. In short, they want to be in each other's company everywhere.

**6. Similar background** – Having a similar background, the members of a primary group tend to have similar experiences and are almost similar in terms of mental level.

**7. Co-operation** – All members of primary group are expected to work together with each other in a spirit to participate co-operatively in each task.

## **Importance of Primary Group**

### **Importance for Individuals**

- An individual learns about her/his culture in a primary group
- The primary group shapes the personality of the individual
- It connects the individuals together
- It lets the members express their aspiration and resentment
- It provides stimulus to each of its member in the pursuit of their interests
- It encourages its members towards the achievements of their goals
- It boosts the morale of its members
- It creates “we feeling” and promotes co-operation and unity among members

### **Importance for Society**

- A primary group maintains social control over its members
- It helps in the process of socialisation
- It guides its members to work according to the norms of the society
- It develops a positive attitude towards social institutions
- It provide a welding force to social structure and prevents disorganisation

Thus, within primary groups, consensus is achieved based on authority, compromise and integration. Primary groups are primary in time and in importance. These groups are considered primary in time because they are the first group a child encounters at the prime stage of her/his life. They are primary in importance in the sense that they are vital to the socialisation process. They give the child her/his first experience in the

process of give and take through social interaction and teach her/him co-operation to achieve common goals. Primary groups are important for the individual and for the society. They prepare the individual to lead a successful social life. They socialise individuals and give proper shape to their personality. Scholars argue that the strength or vitality of primary groups is the basis of the health of society. In an increasingly impersonal world they are the source of openness, trust and intimacy. People who are not accepted as member of any primary groups like marriage, friendship or work relationship – may have to face difficulty to cope with life.

## Secondary Group

Secondary groups are opposite to the primary groups. Although Cooley has not mentioned the secondary group while explaining the primary group, later scholars assumed the idea of the secondary group from the primary group. Secondary groups are the groups which are large in size and are of relatively short duration. The interaction among the members is formal, utility oriented, specialised and temporary because the members are interested in one another mainly in terms of the roles and the function they perform. The classic examples of secondary groups are the buyers and sellers in a shop, the people at a cricket match and the people belonging to a trade union. A corporation, a factory, an army, a students' union, a university, a political party and so on can be cited as some of the examples of secondary groups.

In a nutshell, secondary groups are created for specific purposes and secondary group members try their level best to achieve those purposes. The members of secondary groups do not meet regularly. They have impersonal relationships and they don't have intimate ties with each others.



Political Parties



Labour Organisation

## **Characteristics of Secondary Groups**

Secondary groups are large in size. The members of secondary groups may be scattered over a large area or even the world over. They have the following characteristics:

**1. No physical proximity** – The members in a secondary group do not live in the same place at the same time. Mostly secondary groups are not limited to any definite area. There are some secondary groups like the Red Cross Society and the Rotary Club which are international in character whose members are scattered over a vast area and often they are not even known to each other.

**2. Non-permanence** - Members join the secondary group to attain specific purpose and leave it as soon as their purpose is achieved. For example, a school student leaves her/his school as soon as s/he passes the school examination. In most cases the relationship between the teacher and the student disappears as soon as the student quits the institution. This shows that secondary groups are not permanent, they do not last long.

**3. Relationships are means to an end** – In a secondary group, relations are always goal oriented. They are considered not an end in themselves but a means to an end. The members in the secondary group do not share common ends. They form relations for specific purpose or purposes. The relations are valued only in so far as they serve a purpose and hence are calculative in nature.

**4. Relations are formal** – The relationships in a secondary group are formed on formal basis. The individuals meet each other in a formal manner for the work and secondary group is regulated by formal rules. There is no warmth in relations. Instead there exists a lack of intimacy and the relations among its members are impersonal.

**5. Voluntary membership** – It is not compulsory for individuals to be a member of a secondary group. The status of its members is achieved and depends upon the role or functions performed, not on personal quality.

## **Importance of Secondary Group**

Unlike primary groups, secondary groups are secondary in nature, because they pre-suppose that individuals come in contact with them later in life. These groups are

important for society, as well as, for the individual because they tend to help the members in meeting some specific goals. Increasing industrialisation, urbanisation, globalisation and wider communication have made the secondary group salient. Due to complexities of social life, primary groups fail to serve the basic needs of people. Consequently, they look towards the secondary groups to fulfil their needs. For example, earlier the families used to take the care of their children and parents in old age but today we see that working mothers leaving the children in the crèche and old parents are sent to old age homes. Thus, humans now depend for their needs more on secondary groups because of the changing trends of modern society, which are changing from small communities to larger communities.

### **Differences between Primary and Secondary Groups**

<b>Primary Group</b>	<b>Secondary Group</b>
Face to face relationships	Distant relationships
Limited members/small in size	Large membership/large in size
Personal and intimate relationships	Impersonal and detached relationships
Feeling of love, friendship and sympathy etc.	Behaviour as per the accepted norms of the organisation
Informal means of social control	Formal means of social control
A person is bound with stable relationships	Temporary relationship/one can quit the group at any time
Involuntary membership	Voluntary membership
Cooperation is direct	Cooperation is generally indirect
We feeling	They feeling
Informal relations	Formal relations

### **W. G. Sumner: In-group and Out-group**

The concept of 'In-Group' and 'Out-Group' has been given by William Graham Sumner, an American sociologist. He has divided groups into two categories – In-Groups and Out-Groups. An In-group is often called 'we group' and the out-group is the 'they group'.

## **In-group**

An in-group is a social group in which the members have a consciousness or awareness of the kind. They feel that they belong to it, share a common fate and follow a common ideology. In-groups may be primary groups. The student of your school may experience a feeling of friendship or a sense of togetherness. Similarly, children belonging to another school may be an 'in-group' for themselves, but it is an out-group for you. The members of the other groups are 'they' for you and similarly you are 'they' for them.



## **Out-group**



An out-group is defined as the group to which an individual does not belong and includes the group relations outside the boundaries of one's own group. It consists of persons towards whom the individuals may feel a sense of disgust or indifference. The members of an in-group use the term 'they' for the out-group. The attitude of individuals towards out-group members ranges from indifference to negative attitude to a feeling of hatred. For example, during school matches one cheers one's own school team and jeers the opposite team which is considered as the out-group.

### Activity-4.3

1. Find out the experience of people coming from other regions of India, who have come to Punjab for education, work or any other reason.

- Do you think they are treated as outsiders?
- State reasons for your answer.

### Robert K. Merton: Reference Group

The concept of reference group was given by American sociologist Robert K. Merton. As we are aware, every person is a member of one or another group. For any group of people there are always other groups whom they compare themselves with. Sometimes the members of a group look up to and aspire to be like another group. The groups whose life styles are imitated are known as reference groups. One may even start identifying oneself with that group. Reference groups are important sources of information about culture, lifestyles, aspirations and goal attainment. For examples, the reference group for Punjabis can be the Punjabi NRIs living in other countries like US, Canada and Australia, as the status of NRI attracts them, and they always aspire to go abroad and settle there.

### Activity 4.4

- Are you impressed by some specific person in your family or area?
- Which of her/his qualities impress you the most?
- Do you ever try to behave like that person?

### Conclusion

The study of social groups is the central focus of sociologists. A social group is more than an aggregate of humans. It involves two or more persons having similar characteristics and who interact with each other and feel a sense of unity and belongingness. We can distinguish between various types of groups, each having its own purpose, culture, norms, etc., the most prominent being primary/secondary groups, ingroups/outgroups and reference groups.

## Glossary

- **In-group:** A group towards which one has a feeling of belonging
- **Out-group:** A group towards which one has no feeling of belonging
- **Primary Group:** A small groups in which individuals come to know one another and have close, intimate, we-feeling
- **Reference Group:** Any group accepted as model or guide for our judgments and actions
- **Secondary Group:** A group in which contacts are impersonal, formal, segmental and utilitarian
- **We-feeling:** The tendency on the part of the members to identify themselves with the groups. It represents group unity.

## Exercises

**Answer the following very short answer questions in 1-15 words each:**

1. Who discussed the two types of groups, Ingroup and Outgroup?
2. Mention two examples of Ingroups.
3. Give two examples of Outgroups.
4. Who coined the term Reference group?
5. What is we-feeling?
6. Name the examples of primary groups given by C. H. Cooley.

**Answer the following short answer questions in 30-35 words each:**

1. Define social group.
2. What do you mean by primary group? Give its example.
3. What do you mean by secondary group? Give its example.
4. State two differences between 'ingroups' and 'outgroups'.
5. Explain the features (characteristics) of secondary group.
6. Explain the features (characteristics) of primary groups.



**Answer the following long answer questions in 75-85 words each:**

1. Discuss the features of a social group.
2. Write down the importance of primary groups.
3. What are the differences between primary and secondary groups?
4. Discuss the features of ingroup.

**Answer the following long answer questions in 250-300 words each:**

1. What do you understand by a social group? Write a detailed note.
2. How will you describe Primary and Secondary groups?
3. As a member of society you must be interacting with and in different groups. How do you see these from a sociological perspective?
4. Man's life is group life. Discuss with examples.



### Unit-3

## Culture and Socialization





## Chapter 5

# Culture

### Highlight :

- 5.1 Meaning and Features
- 5.2 Material Culture
- 5.3 Non-Material Culture

### Introduction

Culture is what distinguishes human beings from other animals. Culture and society are closely related to each other. Culture is learned behaviour shared and transmitted among the members of the group. It can be acquired only when an individual is a member of a society. Hence, there can be no culture without society and vice versa. Culture is developed through social interaction with other members in society. Learning the appropriate rules and patterns of behaviour in a society is an integral part of culture. For example, we greet diverse types of persons differently such as friends, older relatives, people from other groups etc. This is taught to us by our culture.

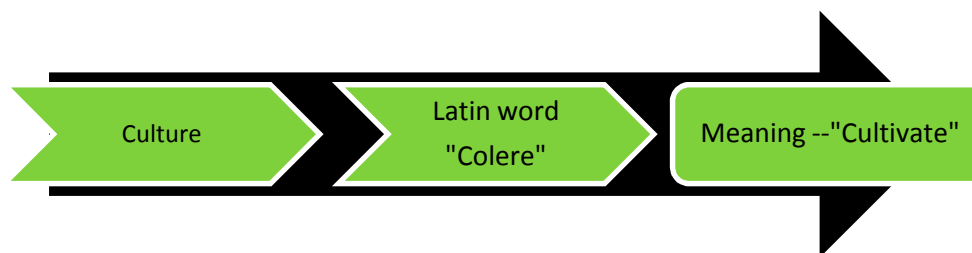


Seasonal Festivals in India – Baisakhi in Punjab and Durga Puja in Bengal

As we look around, we will find that much of our life as human beings in our day-to-day interaction is influenced by various cultural products such as tools, toys, household items, clothes, food, books as well as electronic items like T.V., mobile phones,

computers etc. Culture, thus, is an integral part of our life. It shapes our behaviour just as we also shape our culture. However, it is important to remember that cultures are never finished products. They keep changing and evolving as new elements are constantly being added, deleted, expanded and rearranged in them, which makes cultures dynamic functioning units. In other words, culture is a never ending process with constant change.

## Meaning of Culture



Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Anthropologists first developed the concept of “culture”. The word “culture” has been derived from the Latin word *colere*, which means “to cultivate” or ‘till the soil’. In medieval Europe it was associated with agriculture. In Social Anthropology, the word “culture” means “knowledge”; knowledge about those aspects of humanity, which are not natural, but acquired.

### Definitions of Culture

According to **Edward B. Tylor**, “culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, art, moral, beliefs, laws, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of a society”.

Similarly, **Clyde Kluckhohn** defined culture as:

1. ‘The total way of life of the people’;
2. ‘The social legacy that an individual acquires from his group’
3. ‘A way of thinking, feeling and believing’
4. ‘An abstraction from behaviour’
5. ‘A storehouse of pooled learning’
6. ‘A set of standardized orientations to recurrent problems’
7. ‘Learned behaviour’
8. ‘A mechanism for the normative regulation of behaviour’
9. ‘A set of techniques for adjusting both to the external environment and to other men.’

Cultures vary from society to society and each culture has its own specific values and norms. Social norms are the rules of behaviour approved by society while values refers to general standards of what is right and desired behaviour and what ought not to be done. For example, in one culture hospitality has a high social value whereas in some others it may not be so. Similarly, in some societies polygamy is a customary form of marriage whereas, in many other societies, it is not accepted as an appropriate practice.

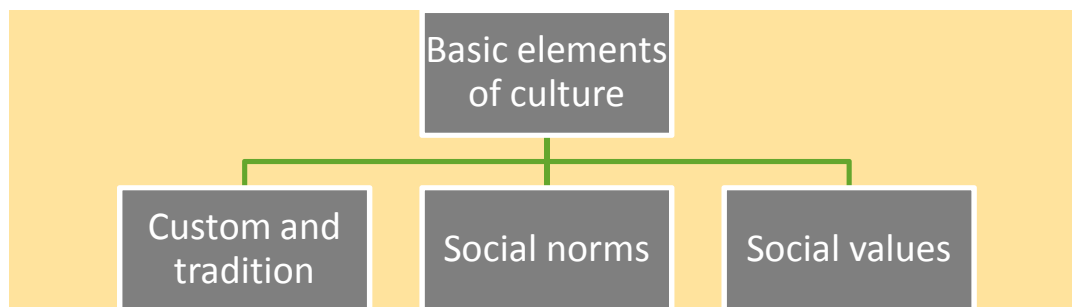
Culture has certain elements through which a concrete form of culture emerges. These elements shape the identity of culture. We can divide them into two parts – Material and Non-Material.

The first consists of cultural objects and material objects, while the second consists the knowledge and beliefs that human beings inherit from the previous generation and which influence social behaviour (of an individual). In addition, customs, traditions, norms and values play an important role in influencing social conduct of individuals. The material elements may include tangible cultural products.

### Activity 5.1

Find out more about your culture, specifically the food habits, clothing, , folkways, etc. That influence your day to day life.

Make a list of important cultural practices and discuss it in your class.



### Customs and Traditions

Customs are the types of social behaviour which are organised and repeated. They are regular, patterned ways of appearing or behaving. Customs differ from society to

society, from one culture to another culture and one situation to another situation in the same place. People behave according to these customs under the pressure of the groups and society. For example, in order to express respect for someone people bow with folded hands in India. In the western society people get up from the chair to shake hands. Both of these actions are related to the practice of expressing respect differently in different cultures.

A tradition is a belief or behaviour passed down within a group or society having special significance, with origins in the past. Every society develops a system of behaviour in certain circumstances. For example, Hindus light lamps and prepare sweets on the occasion of *Deepawali*, Sikhs do it at the time of *Gurupurbe*. Muslims offer *namaz* in mosques and celebrate Eid. Christians visit one another's places and exchange gifts on Christmas day. Celebrations and gaiety mark each of these occasions. All these are termed as traditions. Traditions are very old customs that have existed in society since long. Customs are concerned with individual's daily behaviour while traditions are related to special occasions. When a Head of State officially visits another country, it is a tradition for the dignitary to pay homage to the heroes and martyrs of the host country. For example, whenever some Head of State visits India, s/he has to visit Rajghat to pay homage to Mahatma Gandhi. Hence, traditions must be observed by society. Individuals who ignore traditions may face criticism in the society.

## **Social Norms**

Norms are another important element of culture. Every society has expectations about how its members should and should not behave. A norm is a guideline or an expectation for behaviour. Social norms are those that regulate the behaviour of the member of the group in the society. They are the rules that a group uses to define appropriate and inappropriate values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. Every activity related to an individual, namely, her/his manners of sitting, standing and walking about, talking, eating, dressing, is determined by norms. Norms are changing constantly and vary from society to society according to the culture. To what extent certain behaviour is excusable is determined by the amount of social pressure applied in supporting the behaviour. Societies devise various methods to encourage people to observe norms, the most common being the use of sanctions, which express approval or disapproval. Sanctions may be positive or negative. By positive consent the individual's behaviour is sanctioned, praised or honoured. A positive sanction rewards someone for following a norm and in doing so encourages a certain type of behaviour. On the other hand, individual's behaviour is controlled by negative consent as society may punish one if



s/he tries to break the norms. A negative sanction is a way of communicating that society does not approve of a particular behaviour.

## **Social Values**

Social values are the desirable form of behaviour. Every culture has certain key values, which are the central and lasting beliefs or ideals shared by its members about what is good or bad and desirable or undesirable. For instance, the central values of the traditional Indian society are detachment, other worldliness and the achievement of *artha*, *dharma*, *kama* and *moksha* as the four *purusharthas*. The central values of the modern India are the democratic system, justice, equality and secularism. Different societies may have different core values. Small communities may emphasise particular values while big societies emphasise universal values.

## **Characteristics of Culture**

Sociologists and social anthropologists have given various explanations of culture, but the following characteristics are enough to understand culture:

**1. Culture is Learned Behaviour** – Culture is learned behaviour. It is acquired by human beings from the society in which they are brought up. Wisdom of one generation is passed down to the succeeding generation through a process called socialisation. It involves learning about one's own culture in order to become a member of one's society. It is not limited to physical activities such as the food we eat or the dress we wear. Nor is it limited to the language we speak. It includes values, norms, attitudes, morality and many other things, both mental and physical. Culture is not possessed by a single person. It is an acquired quality or learned way of behaviour. It is learnt through experience, imitation, communication and socialisation process.

**2. Culture is a Pattern of Life** – Culture establishes a pattern of life without which it is difficult to live, e.g., we often feel uncomfortable when we travel to another country and take to another way of life. Coming from different cultural background or adapting to a new cultural set up seems to be very difficult. This happens because all cultures are not the same. Every society has a different culture or one can say culture differs from society to society.

**3. Culture has a Cognitive Component** – Every culture is having more or less cognitive component in it. Cognition is the mental process of knowing and includes aspects such as awareness, intuition, perception, reasoning, and judgment. This cognitive or knowledge component is represented in myths, literature, arts, religion and scientific theories. Ideas are expressed in literature and in this manner the intellectual heritage of a culture is recorded and preserved in books for future generations. Such ideas and lore (education, skill etc.) frame the worldview of the people of a culture. In literate societies, ideas are transcribed (written) in books and documents and preserved in libraries or archives. In non-literate societies legend or lore is committed to memory and transmitted orally, for instance the *Smriti* and *Shruti* traditions in India are based on oral transmission.

**4. Culture is Shared** – Components of culture are normally shared; we share it with the other members of the group. It is because we share culture with other members of our group that we are able to act in appropriate ways and also predict how others will act. However, although we share culture, it is not homogeneous or the same everywhere. There are societies having mixed culture, because various cultures co-exist in them. For example America has a multicultural scenario where European, Asian, African and Indigenous culture come together to create a mosaic of culture.

**5. Culture is Based on Symbols** – A symbol is something that stands for something else. Every culture has its own set of symbols associated with different experiences and perceptions. Symbols vary across cultures and as such are meaningful only when people in a group or culture agree on their use. As and when we see a symbol, specific things come to our minds. For example, when we see *trishul* or *kirpan* we think of Hindu and Sikh faiths, respectively.

**6. Culture is Integrated** – The various component of culture are interconnected and thus make it whole and meaningful. All aspects of a culture are related to one another. Thus, to comprehend a culture, one must learn about all its parts, not only a few.

**7. Culture is Dynamic** – This means that different cultures interact and subsequently change. We all know that most cultures are in contact with other cultures due to which they exchange ideas and symbols. If a culture does not change then it is difficult for it to adapt to changing environments. Also, since all components of culture are

interrelated, if there is change in one component, it is likely that the entire system must change accordingly.

**8. Culture Fulfils Human Needs** – Culture fulfils an individual's biological and social needs. In fact, the continuity of culture depends on its capacity to fulfil human needs. That is the reason why many parts of culture which are not able to fulfil the changing needs become obsolete. The bullock-cart, for instance, has been replaced by much faster means of transport. Similarly, custom and conventions change in accordance to the changing values.

**9. Culture is a Total Way of Life** – Culture is total expression of the way people lead their life. The spoken language, the customs that are followed, the Gods one believes in, values and norms, the style of dressing, art and literature etc., are all common to people who are members of the same cultural group. Individuals growing up in a culture learn about the economic activities, the religious ceremonies, traditions, beliefs, social roles as well as the skills, techniques and the knowledge of their natural and social world. Thus, culture includes every aspect of a person's life.

## **Classification of Culture**

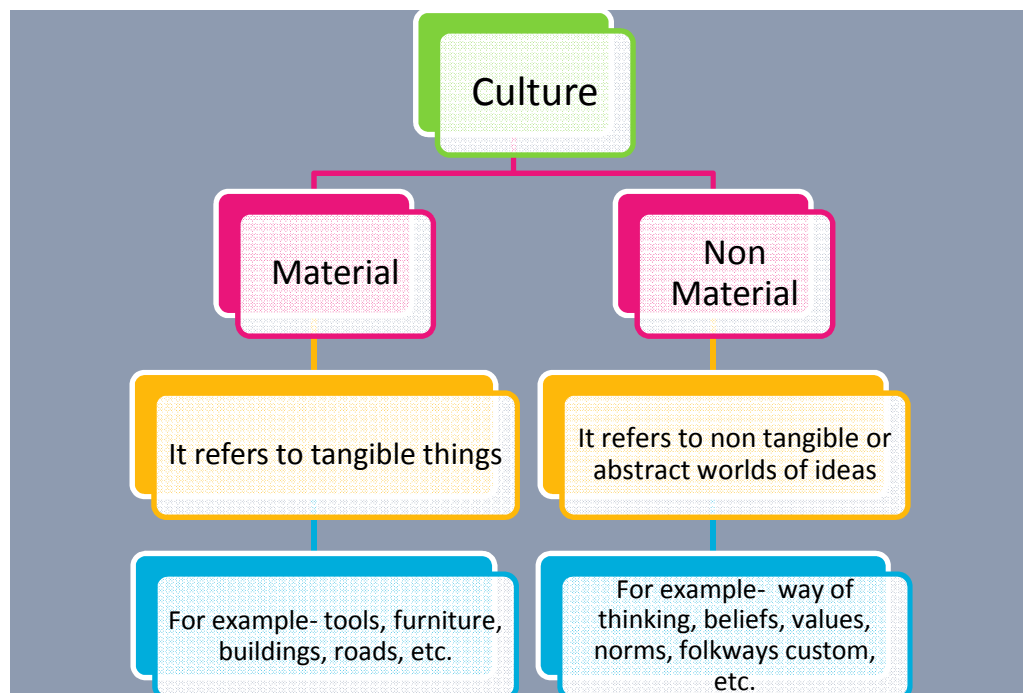
Culture is classified into two types – Material and Non-material.

### **Material and Non Material Culture**

These are the two interrelated aspects of human culture including the physical objects of the culture and the ideas associated with these objects.

**Material Culture** – This category of culture consists of concrete, physical and material dimension of culture. This aspect of culture includes manmade objects and material goods. The material culture refers to tools, technologies, machines, instruments of production and communication, building and modes of transportation, for example, cars, buses, trains, airplanes. These tools and instruments are used in everyday life to produce other items of consumption for the market. Material culture represents the development of scientific knowledge and production technology in a society.

Material culture embodies the advancement of technical knowledge in a culture. The material part includes everything that is made, fashioned or transferred by human beings in society, i.e., tangible things like buildings, tools, implements, technology, musical instruments etc. These physical aspects of a culture help to define its members' behaviours. For instance, even people who have agriculture as their main occupation do not use similar agricultural implements in different areas. In hilly regions hoes are used instead of ploughs. Similarly, due to difference in technology, the youth in a developed society need to know about computers while those in a tribal community must learn the use of hunting weapons.



**Non-material Culture** – This aspect of culture is abstract, non-physical and non-material. This is also known as cognitive and normative aspect of culture. The example of this type of culture is ideas, knowledge, traditions, belief, art etc. This type of culture is associated with rule making and standardisation of behaviour in



a culture. Social roles, rules, ethics, and beliefs are just some examples. These aspects of culture ensure continuity and predictability in society and are manifested in folkways, mores, customs and laws. They act as guides for members of a culture to know how to behave in their society. Thus, the pattern of behaviour acceptable among one's friends and peer-group may become unacceptable with one's parents. The value frames vary in different context, bringing about a variation in conduct and role performance. Norms and values set standards of behaviour and help maintain order in the society.

The non-material aspects of culture include symbols and ideas that shape the lives of human beings in relation to one another. The most important of these are attitudes, beliefs, values and norms. For example, beliefs affect the rituals in every culture – Muslims observe fasting for one month known as the '*ramzan*' month. Similarly, Hindus observe certain restriction on food during *navratri* period. Both the observance of *roza* during the *ramzan* month and the fasting during *navratri* period are examples of non-material culture.

## Cultural Lag

Cultural lag is a term used to describe the situation in which technological advancements or changes in society occur faster than the changes in the rules and norms of the culture. When the size of the society is small and the rate of change is slow there is considerable amount of unity found in it. But when the change is rapid, a condition of 'culture lag' is created. William F. Ogburn propounded the idea of cultural lag stating that culture always keeps changing in terms of time. The material aspects of culture changes more easily and quickly as compared to the non material culture.



Monk using mobile phone



Traditional farmer using computer

The change occurring in one aspect of culture may create stresses and pressure in the other aspects of culture which is relatively slow to change. So, the material and non-material aspects of a culture must work together for the overall development of a specific society. If

the non-material aspects are unable to keep pace with the material, a culture lag occurs. For example, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century many Indians adopted English education, dressing styles and the modern techniques of house building but most of them stuck to the old custom of untouchability and differentiation, which resulted in moral and ethical dilemmas for individuals.

### **Activity-5.2**

Are you aware of any sub-culture group in your locality? How do you identify them?

### **Cultural Change**

Cultural change is the way in which societies change their patterns of culture. The impetus for change can be internal or external. In regard to internal causes, for instance, new methods of farming or agriculture can boost agricultural production which can transform the nature of food consumption and quality of life of an agrarian community. On the other hand, external intervention in the form of conquest or colonisation can also cause deep seated changes in cultural practices and behaviour of a society.

Cultural change can occur through changes in the natural environment, contact with other cultures or processes of adaptation. Changes in the natural environment or ecology can drastically alter the way of life of a people. For example, the culture of tribal communities in North East India, as well as, middle India has been the worst affected by the loss of forest resources. Contact between cultures can also bring about cultural change. Sustained interaction between cultures can lead to acculturation or the imbibing of the cultural traits and patterns of behaviour of the dominant culture by the subordinate one.

### **Conclusion**

- Culture refers to a way of life shared by the members of a society, i.e., the values, beliefs, behaviour and material objects that constitute people's way of life.
- It includes human habits, capabilities, language, instruments, knowledge, ideas, art, morality and law.
- The biological, social traits and ecology of an individual contribute to the development of human culture.
- Material and non material are two types of culture.

- When there is a rapid social change the material culture changes rapidly and the non material culture is left behind leading to a situation called 'cultural lag'.
- Every culture has sub-cultures.
- Customs are the organized forms of social behaviour and their repetition.
- Customs is concerned with the daily behaviour and of an individual while tradition is related to special occasions.
- Social norms are those accepted criteria developed by society which regulate the behaviour of the group's members.
- Social values emphasise the priority and desirability of goals of a society.

## Glossary

- **Cultural change:** it is the way in which societies change their patterns of culture.
- **Cultural lag:** The time gap that occurs, when changes in material culture come more rapidly than changes in the non-material culture
- **Culture:** It is the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings and transmitted from one generation to another and it includes the behaviours and beliefs characteristic of a particular social, ethnic, or age group
- **Customs:** It is a group pattern of habitual activity usually transmitted from one generation to another.
- **Material culture:** It is the assortment of physical objects or artefacts used by a society.
- **Non-material culture:** It is the aggregate of values, mores, norms, etc., of a society.
- **Norms:** These are established standards of behaviour shared by members of a social group to which each member is expected to conform
- **Tradition:** It is a long-established or inherited way of thinking or acting
- **Values:** A principle, standard, or quality considered worthwhile or desirable.

## Exercises

**Answer the following very short answer questions in 1-15 words each:**

1. State the basic elements of culture.
2. Who called culture a "total way of life of the people"?
3. In what way is culture transmitted in non-literate societies?

4. Give a broad classification of culture.
5. Name few examples of non-material culture.
6. Who gave the theory of cultural lag?

**Answer the following short answer questions in 30-35 words each:**

1. What is culture?
2. What is cultural lag?
3. What are social norms?
4. What are the central values of modern India?
5. Mention some values of traditional Indian society.
6. How is the cognitive component of culture expressed?

**Answer the following long answer questions in 75-85 words each:**

1. How is culture a total way of life of the people?
2. Write a note on material and non material culture.
3. Discuss in brief the basic elements of culture.
4. 'Culture is learned behaviour'. Explain the statement with suitable examples.

**Answer the following long answer questions in 250-300 words each:**

1. How does the understanding of culture in social analysis differ from the everyday use the word 'culture'?
2. What do you mean by culture? Highlight the characteristics of culture.
3. Explain the two types of culture in detail.
4. Write a detailed note on cultural lag.



## Chapter 6

# Socialisation

### Highlight :

6.1 Meaning

6.2 Stages

6.3 Agencies

6.3.1 Formal

6.3.2 Informal

### Introduction

The individual and society, personality and group, culture and the process of development of 'self' have been studied from various perspectives in Sociology, Social Anthropology and Social Psychology. At the time of birth, an infant can neither speak nor walk or recognise any person or a thing. The infant can only cry for her/his basic needs. As one grows up, one is able to recognise her/his mother and subsequently, the other members of the family. Slowly and gradually an infant learns to move, walk and talk with the support of the family members. This process of learning that takes place in a group situation is called socialisation. Besides learning, it is a process of reception and internalisation.

### Meaning of Socialisation

Socialisation is a lifelong process and it starts from infancy. Through this process a biological being becomes a social being. Without the process of socialisation an individual can never behave like a human being. For instance, if we keep a child away from the company of human beings for a considerable period of time, we will find that s/he does not develop any human characteristics other than biological features. Even the way of walking, speaking and eating of an individual is culturally determined. This process of moulding and shaping the personality of the human infant is called socialisation.

### **BOX:1**

The best example of isolation from society is that of 'wolf-child' Ramu, who was found in a wolf den. He walked like an animal on all fours (hands and knees on the ground), preferred a diet of raw meat, howled like wolves, lacked any form of speech and did not have any attributes of a human child. Later, he was kept in the company of human beings in the society but he could not survive and died after some time.

A similar case was found in America. Anna was an illegitimate child. She was kept in a complete isolation in a room when she was only six months old and lived there till she attained the age of five. When she was released from the confinement, she could neither speak nor walk. She was completely different from the people around her. She was given careful training, after which she could rapidly develop human qualities. She died after 3-4 years. This case further strengthens the theory that human nature develops only when one is in the company of other beings and only then one tends to learn/share common life.

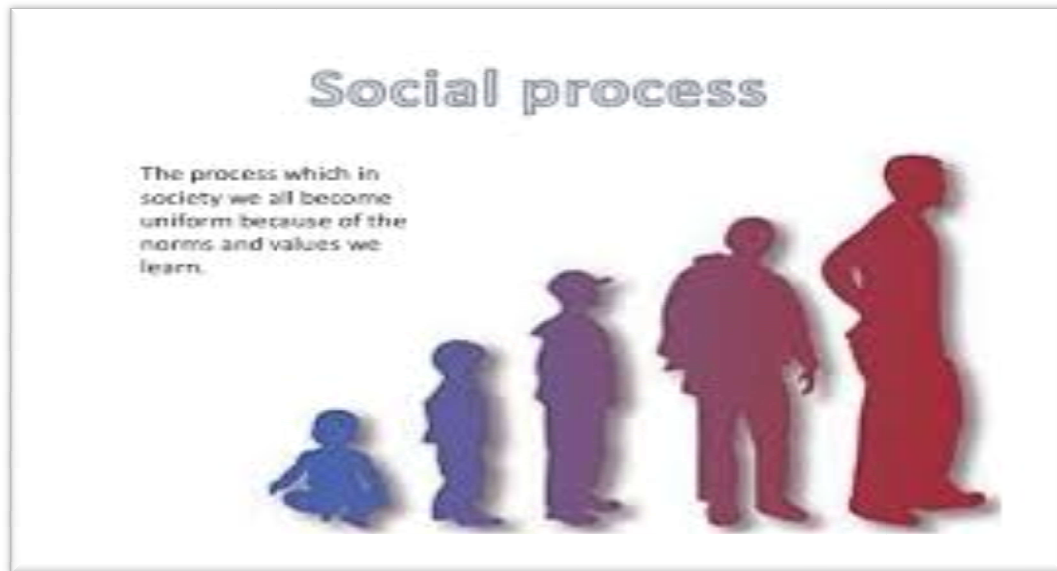
At the time of birth, the human infant knows nothing about what we call society and social behaviour. S/he only needs to satisfy certain physical needs which are provided by the other members in the family. A newborn baby cannot differentiate between the mother and other members of the family. As the child grows up, s/he keeps on learning certain behaviour patterns slowly and gradually by interacting with other family members. Little by little, the child internalises the norms and values of the family and in due course of time, s/he learns the accepted behaviour patterns of the society. In other words, socialisation is a process of learning of the beliefs, social values, patterns and social roles of the society and culture.

### **The Process of Socialisation**

Socialisation is the process through which individuals are prepared to participate in social systems. It includes understanding of symbols, ideas, systems, language, and the relationships that construct social systems. We are not socialised to understand systems, but to try and analyse how they actually function and their consequences.

Socialisation is a lifelong process which continues as children grow older and become more independent, an inevitable development that calls upon parents to reshape their roles in relation to their children. At different stages of their lives, people acquire new roles and adjust in accordance to the loss of the old ones. For instance, when an individual marries, s/he goes through a considerable period of socialisation. S/he undergoes this process again when s/he becomes the parent of a child. In old age, roles may actually reverse if parents become disabled and dependent upon the care of their children.

## Process of Socialisation



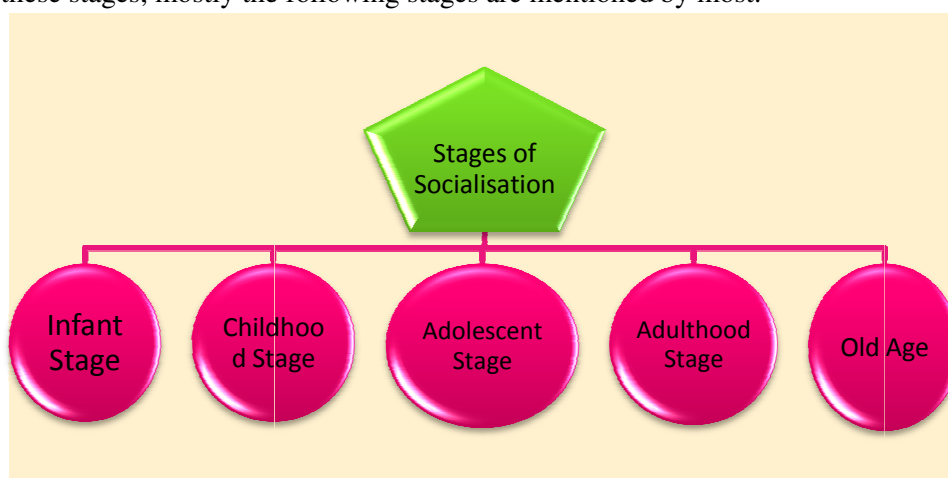
From the perspective of individuals, socialisation is a process through which we create 'self' and a sense of attachment to social systems through participation and interaction with others. Socialisation is necessary if the social system is to continue and function effectively, since every social system depends upon people who are motivated and prepared to perform the various roles that it encompasses.

Socialisation includes all those processes which involve learning of skills, roles, patterns, values and personality traits from childhood till old age, i.e., from birth till death. Sociologists do not focus only on the contribution of the physical aspects in the individual's socialisation. Both the physical and social aspects of the individual play a significant role in the process of learning. An individual has eyes and ears through which one sees, hears and receives messages. All these are parts of the biological aspect that helps one in the course of socialisation. But this aspect has its limitations so far as the process of learning is concerned. For example, if a newborn baby is isolated from human society, s/he would not be able to learn language, norms, values, etiquettes and even walking. At the time of birth, the human infant is merely a biological being and it is through constant interaction with other human beings that s/he gradually gets transformed into a social individual who has language, culture, relationships, values and assumptions etc. This process of transformation of the human infant from a

biological being into a social individual is known as socialisation. The child is just like clay and the parents, other family members and the society in general prove very influential in moulding the behaviour of the child in a desired manner in accordance with the norms of the society through the process of socialisation. More importantly, this process does not end here as one continues to learn and imbibe the customs, traditions, values and ideals of society throughout one's life.

## Stages of Socialisation

Socialisation is a gradual process of learning. The newborn child is not taught all the things about social life at once. During the early stages of life, i.e., infancy and childhood, socialisation takes place within the simple limited social world. Slowly this social world becomes wider and the child is faced with a number of things to learn and to adjust. While there is no fixed time regarding the beginning and the end of the socialisation process, however, sociologists have referred to some stages of socialisation. Although a number of scholars have given different models relating to these stages, mostly the following stages are mentioned by most.



### Infancy

This stage starts with the birth of the child and continues up to the completion of one year. First of all the infant comes into contact with the mother, father and other members of the family. At this stage the main source of socialisation is family. It is within the family that the infant learns to speak, walk, eat and comes to understand relationships with brothers, sisters, parents and other members of the family. In this stage the child also learns to regularise her/his daily activities related to the cleanliness of the body. In a nutshell we can say that the basic behaviour pattern is learnt by the child at this stage.



Infancy

## Childhood



Children playing



Children in nursery school

After family, the child comes into contact with the outside world. Gradually s/he makes friends, plays and interacts with other children in the neighbourhood. At the age of three or four parents get her/him admitted in the school. Then in the school, interaction with schoolmates and teachers also becomes important in child's process of socialisation. Till the age of nine to ten the child's behaviour is checked and also influenced by the various members of the family, teachers, classmates and the children of the same age-group in the neighbourhood who become one's peer group and play an important role in one's socialisation. For instance, in tribal areas children's socialisation takes place in family, through the process of physical activities. In such

societies human life is quite close to nature, therefore, the child learns a lot about seasons, hunting, fishing, crops, agriculture etc. S/he also learns about their folk traditions, songs and dances from her/his tribal community. To a great extent this applies to the children of rural areas also. On the other hand, the urban children have comparatively lesser knowledge of one's age old traditions but numerous researches have shown that as compared to rural and tribal children, the urban children have greater vocabulary development due to more exposure. In this way, the process of socialisation is different in tribal, rural as well as urban societies.

## **Adolescence**

During the adolescent stage, an individual's contacts and requirements also change according to cultural and social differences, i.e., s/he comes in contact with many more people, who influence her/his behaviour in the process of socialisation. In fact, adolescence can be defined as a very crucial time for an individual as at this stage one is neither a child nor fully grown up. Further, during this age various biological, physical and hormonal changes take place in a youngster which may cause numerous psychological problems.

### **Activity -6.1**

Do you think adolescence is a confused stage?

Are you still treated both as a child and an adult at home and school?

Do you think this generates conflict in your mind?

Discuss such situations with your teacher in the class.

## **Adulthood**

During this stage the social circle of the adult becomes wider as compared to that of an adolescent. A person is also associated with some trade or profession. It is also possible that one may become a member of some social group, club, political party, trade union etc. During this stage an individual gets married and apart from parents, neighbours and friends also come into contact with one's spouse and spouse's family members. The adult is no more dependent on others but rather becomes a responsible person and performs different roles like husband/wife, father/mother, head of the family, and a citizen of a country etc. Thus, one's new roles and the expectations of certain type of

behaviour also result in further socialisation, as one makes an effort to adjust according to the changing circumstances.



## **Adults at work and with family**

### **Old Age**



An elderly person's life is influenced by ecology, occupation, friends and membership of different groups. Many social values are internalised and the individual learns the art of adjustment. In fact, adjustment is much more important at this stage. During this period a person learns to adjust in accordance with the adverse situation because now s/he is no more as strong as one used to be in one's younger age. A person also gets new roles like father/mother-in-law, grandparent, retired person, senior citizen etc. without much change in the values,

behaviours and cultural standards. One learns to adjust to the new social circumstances. This is the last stage of socialisation. However, the process of socialisation does not stop here. It continues till the death of the person. Hence, socialisation is a process of learning that starts from the very beginning of an individual's life and continues till death.

### **Agents of Socialisation**

During the various stages of one's life the individual comes into contact with different groups, institutions, communities and individuals. S/he learns quite a lot from them during her/his entire life. Various institutions and organisations play important roles in developing one's personality and institutionalising the various elements of culture.



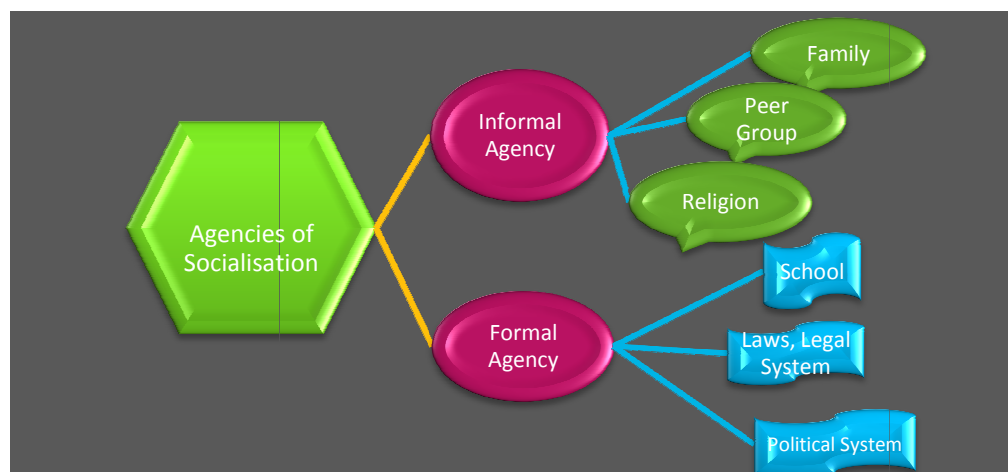
Every society has agents of socialisation – individuals, groups, organisations, and institutions – which provide substantial amounts of socialisation during the life course. Agents are the mechanism by which the self learns the values, beliefs, and behaviour pattern of the culture. Agents of socialisation help new members find their place, just as they prepare older members for new responsibilities in society.

### Box 2

There are two phases of socialisation – Primary and Secondary. In these two phases many informal and formal agents are responsible for the process of socialisation. These are institutions or people that socialise a person into the values and norms of their particular society.

People and groups that influence our self-concept, emotions, attitudes, and behaviour are called agents of socialisation. Agents of socialisation are the sources from which we learn about society and ourselves. Persons who serve as socialising agents include family members, friends, neighbours, the police, the employers, teachers, political leaders, business leaders, religious leaders, sports stars, and entertainers such as film personalities, fictional characters etc.

**Types of Agents:** The agencies of socialisation can be divided into two types – Informal or Social Group agents and Formal or Institutional agents.





## **Informal (Social Group) Agents**

These include individuals and social institutions that socialise the individual in an informal manner.

### **Family**

It is the first and the most important agency of socialisation, followed by play group and neighbourhood. The family is the smallest unit of the society and represents it in all respects. Family performs several functions in the society. Child's various needs, for instance, psychological, recreational, protection, educational, religious and economic – are fulfilled by family. Some persons live in joint families while others live in nuclear families. In a joint family grandparents may be the key socialising agents, whereas, in nuclear families this role is being played by parents. Mother plays a crucial role in the socialising process in all types of families. According to C. H. Cooley, family contains all the norms, values, behaviour patterns, statuses and roles of society in its fold. Therefore, the role of family in socialising individuals to become a part of society is most important. The child observes that every member in the family is assigned a status such as father, mother, sister, brother, husband, wife etc. All the family members behave according to the defined roles associated with their statuses. The child learns to identify her/himself with these statuses and roles and internalises them. By the time the child moves out of the family to participate in social activities of the society, s/he has learnt most of socially accepted behaviour patterns from the family. In the family, child learns and acquires the sentiments, emotions, beliefs and knowledge of one's culture.



Family at a wedding



Family praying at a temple

### Activity 6.2

Every family follows certain specific norms which regulate the behaviour of its members.

1. Which norms are specific to your family and may not be applicable to all families?
2. How do you think that grandparents play an important role in the socialisation of the young ones?

### Peer Group and Neighbourhood

Peer group is a group of people usually of similar age, background, interests and social status, with whom a person associates and who are likely to influence the person's beliefs and behaviour. Because children spend a lot of time with their peers, the peer group provides a great deal of informal socialisation. The peer group lets children escape the direct supervision of the adults and peers tend to be open and democratic unlike the family. From the peers, children tend to learn how to form relationships on their own. Members of the peer group share common interests like lifestyle, fashion trends and secret fantasies, which they cannot share with adults in the family.

In peer groups a child discovers a different kind of interaction, within which rules of behaviour can be tested out and explored. The peer group provides a social setting within which adult roles can be tried out. For instance, in peer group children generally play different roles and sometimes unconsciously the boys behave like their fathers and girls like their mothers. It is a form of anticipatory socialisation, as in this way they prepare themselves for their future life. The influence of the peer group increases with age, hitting the highest point during adolescence.



Children dressed as medical staff



Children playing house

### Activity-6.3

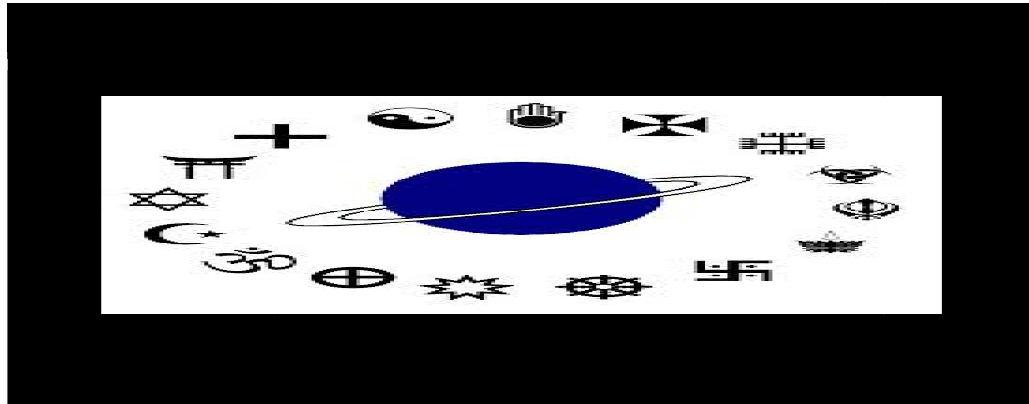
1. Peer group influences you the most in the adolescent stage. Can you think of some positive and negative peer pressures? List them out.
2. How and why do you think possession or the lack of the items given below would affect you?
  - a) TV set/music system.....
  - b) A room of your own.....
  - c) Mobile phone
  - d) Computer.....

In this regard, neighbourhood is another agent that plays an important role in socialising a child. Friendship ties with the children of a similar age are especially formed with those who live in the neighbourhood. When the child comes into contact with the neighbours, gradually s/he makes friends with other children in the neighbourhood. S/he is not only influenced by the children in the neighbourhood but also by their parents and expects similar behaviour from one's own parents. In neighbourhood groups a child learns to imitate the behaviour of their neighbour and tries accordingly to adjust with them. While interacting with the neighbours, children also tend to learn different types of cultural activities like singing, skits, food habits, music, games, and so on. In a diverse country like India, people celebrate different types of festivals like Holi, Deepawali, Eid, Christmas, Guruparva etc. with their neighbours and through these interactions the child gains knowledge about, and learns to respect different religions, as well as, different cultures.

## Religion

Although religion is somewhat less important in people's lives now than it was a few generations ago, it still continues to exert considerable influence on our beliefs, values, and behaviours. In a country like India, religion governs every aspect of our life and can therefore be a very powerful agent of socialisation.

Several types of rituals and rites, beliefs and faith, values and norms have been transmitted from one generation to another through religion. Religious festivals are generally performed collectively which helps in the process of socialisation. It has been seen that the biggest determinant of adult religiosity is parental religiosity. If a person's parents are religious, one is likely to be religious as well.



Symbols of various Religion

#### Activity-6.4

1. In what way do you celebrate social and religious festivals in your school? Make a collage of Independence day celebration, Gurupurav, Deepawali etc.
2. List the activities that are integral part of your school calendar.

### Formal (Institutional) Agents

These are social institutions in a culture that provide formal socialisation. These include school, law and the political system.

### School

School is a formal and an effective agent of socialisation. At school, interaction with schoolmates, as well as, the role of teacher become important in the process of a child's socialisation. In school an individual learns formal rules and etiquettes. Here the child's classmates, friends, means of recreation, sports and books matter a lot to the child. Along with the formal curriculum there is what some sociologists have called a hidden curriculum conditioning a child's learning, and convey the other lessons informally. In school, the child learns for the first time to do her/his own work systematically in a routine manner which makes an individual's life more disciplined. School teaches children a wide range of knowledge and skills for their future life.



School building



Prize distribution function in school

Through different activities school helps in inculcating values of patriotism, democracy, justice, honesty and competition. Various efforts are made to introduce the child to the economic, social, religious and political system as part of one's academic socialisation. For example, from time to time school authorities organise different activities like debate, essay writing, dance competition etc. which help the child in her/his socialisation. Political socialisation is also a product of formal education. Through activities such as mock parliaments children get basic knowledge of the political system.

## Law and the Legal System

Law is another formal agency of socialisation, which educates individuals about the rules by which they may receive reward and punishment. Law acts as a mechanism of social control and provides learning about institutional and non-institutional practices. Every country has its own rules and regulations regarding law which may be different from other countries. For example, Indian Law is different from the American law. Law is governed by the power of state. The teaching of law and legal system starts from the very childhood. When parents and peers conform to and obey certain legal norms of the state and respect institutions such as courts, police station, etc., a child learns to follow the law and the legal system.



The Legal System: Court Room



Women Police Officers



## Political System

The study of political system helps the child to learn the developmental processes by which the people of our society acquire status. We learn about the acceptable norms of behaviour which are necessary for the proper running of a political system. Political beliefs formed at a very young age help in developing an ideology in a person. Political parties directly influence young minds and sometimes a child learns the good and positive thoughts of political leaders of high stature.



Political System: Elections in India

## Mass Media

The mass media are another agent of socialisation. Mass media refers to the diffusion of information to a wide audience, by means of television, newspapers, radio, and the Internet. Since the average child spends a lot of time every day on various media forms, it can greatly influence social norms, beliefs and behaviour. One learns about objects of material culture like new technology and transportation options, as well as nonmaterial culture – beliefs, values and norms from media. Television shows, movies, popular music, magazines, web sites, and other aspects of the mass media influence our political outlook, our preferences in popular culture, our views about women, people of colour and disabled persons and other beliefs and practices. The mass media are often criticised for teaching violence to children, for reinforcing racial and gender stereotypes and for promoting consumer culture.

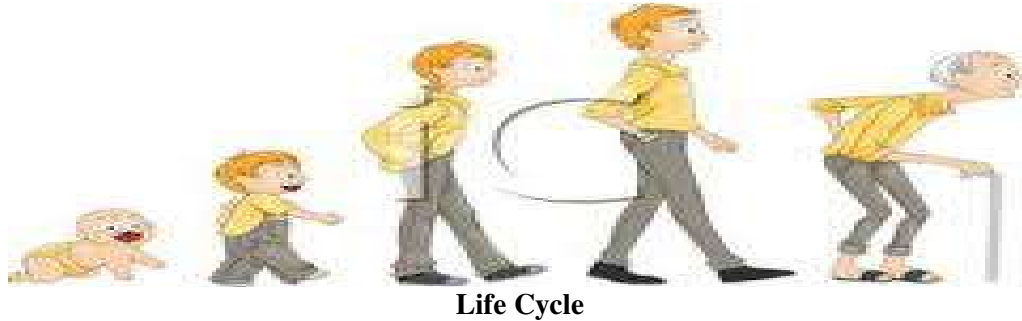


Villagers using a computer



Family watching television

## Conclusion



This chapter was concerned with the concept of socialisation as an important process of learning. A child is merely a biological being at the time of birth. Gradually, s/he becomes a social animal. The process of learning by interacting with others is referred as socialisation. Through the group an individual learns to inculcate habits, modes of dressing, etiquette, social norms and values. The individual comes into contact with different groups and individuals during infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age. The main agents of the individual's socialisation are family (during infancy), the school and friends (during childhood and adolescence), religion, law etc. (in adulthood). The process of socialisation has two aspects. In the first aspect individual internalises the social values under the influence of social and cultural patterns. The second aspect helps to develop her/his personality. Thus, through socialisation the aim of social responsibility and individual autonomy are achieved. The individual's 'self' develops through the process of socialisation.

These days it is generally said that parents and teachers have lost their authority over the children. It means that children do not recognise their elders' authority. Authority does not mean the use of force. The fear of punishment may force obedience in the child but it may not create a voluntary urge to submit oneself to rules and norms of the society. If the parents abide by social rules and the attitude of parents, teacher and others towards the child is affectionate, the child also learns to reciprocate. Contrarily, indifferent attitude of parents towards the child may develop the feeling of disobedience in the child. Affectionate behaviour towards the child on the part of the parents, teacher and friends develops a rapport between the child and other individuals. Freedom given to the child increases her/his inner commitment. The child should have freedom to do her/his work and develop her/his own aptitude. In the process of socialisation hard punishment, high rewards or utmost freedom to children do not prove effective. It is only right kind of process of socialisation which matters most.

## Glossary

- **Adolescence:** the transitional period between puberty and adulthood in human development, extending mainly over the teen years and terminating legally when the age of majority is reached.
- **Formal agents of socialisation:** Also known as institutional agents these are social institutions in a culture that provide formal socialisation. These include school, law and the political system.
- **Infancy:** The state or period of being an infant or very early childhood, usually the period before being able to walk.
- **Informal agents of socialisation:** Also known as social group agents these include individual and social institution that socialise the individual in an informal manner.
- **Peer group:** A group of people, usually of similar age, background, and social status, with whom a person associates and who are likely to influence the person's beliefs and behaviour.
- **Self:** the distinct individuality or identity of a person or thing.
- **Socialisation:** A continuing process whereby an individual acquires a personal identity and learns the norms, values, behaviour, and social skills appropriate to his or her social position.

## Exercises

**Answer the following very short answer questions in 1-15 words each:**

1. What do you mean by socialisation?
2. Name the stages of socialisation.
3. What is adolescent stage?
4. What is infancy stage?
5. Which are the primary agencies of socialisation?
6. Give two examples of formal agencies of socialisation.
7. Mention two informal agencies of socialisation.



**Answer the following short answer questions in 30-35 words each:**

1. Define socialisation.
2. Write down the stages of socialisation.
3. Discuss the role of family in the process of socialisation.
4. Describe three formal agencies of socialisation.
5. Write a short note on primary socialisation.
6. Discuss mass media as an agency of socialisation.

**Answer the following long answer questions in 75-85 words each:**

1. Discuss the characteristics of socialisation.
2. What is the importance of peer groups in socialisation?
3. Describe in brief the process of socialisation in youth and old age.

**Answer the following long answer questions in 250-300 words each:**

1. Discuss the development of an individual through the process of socialisation.
2. Write down about the various stages of socialisation.
3. Write a note on the agencies of socialisation.
4. Discuss the relationship between the various stages of the individual's development and the agents of socialisation.



## Unit-4

## Social Institutions





## Chapter 7

# Marriage, Family and Kinship

### Highlight :

- 7.1 Meaning and Features of Institution
- 7.2 Marriage: Forms, Rules of Mate Selection, Changes
- 7.3 Family Characteristics, Functions, Forms, Changes
- 7.4 Kinship: Types

### Introduction

All societies are composed of institutions which emerge or are established to meet certain basic human needs. An institution is any structure or mechanism of social order and cooperation which governs the behaviour of individuals within a given community. Institutions are means of satisfying specific ends, which are vital for continued existence of a society.

### Meaning and Definitions of Institutions

The term institution is usually used by a lay person to indicate a particular established formal organisation, such as a school, a hospital, a prison. However, in Sociology it may be used to refer to a well-established and structured pattern of behaviour or relationships that are accepted as a fundamental part of a culture, such as marriage. It may also be used to describe a custom, practice, or law that is accepted and used by many people. As defined by MacIver and Page, institution is the established form or condition of procedure characteristic of group activity. Institutions are not groups of people. Sociologists use the term institution to describe the normative systems that operate in the basic areas of human life. Thus, social institutions are a complex set of social norms, belief, values and role relationship that arise in response to the needs of the society. These institutions meet the social and cultural needs of human beings.

Social institutions can be both 'macro' like the State or 'micro' like the family. Social institutions provide distinct identity to our human existence and make our social life

vibrant. The important social institutions include family, marriage, kinship, political parties, banks, factories, religion, etc.

## **Characteristics of Institutions**

The following are the important characteristics of institutions:

### **1. Satisfaction of Specific Needs**

Every institution satisfies some specific needs of the individual. For example, family meets the needs of procreation, rearing and socialising children and providing economic security to its members, while the government meets the need to maintain law and order within a society.

### **2. Prescription of Rules**

Every institution prescribes certain rules and regulations that are to be followed, e.g., marriage as an institution governs the relation between the husband and wife, rules pertaining to mate selection etc. Similarly, school or college as educational institutions have their own rules and procedures.

### **3. Abstractness**

Institutions are abstract in nature. They are neither seen nor felt, e.g., the institutions of marriage, family or religion cannot be seen or measured.

### **4. Cultural Symbols**

Institutions have their own cultural symbols which can be either material or non-material in nature. For instance, a country has a flag and a national anthem as its symbols, a school has its own motto, uniform etc.

### **5. Universality**

Social institutions are universal in nature. They are found in every society and at every stage of social development.

### **6. Social in Nature**

Collective activities of the people lead to the formation of institutions. They are essentially social in nature.

### **7. Oral and Written**

Institutions may persist in the form of oral/written traditions. Primitive societies were highly oral as compared to modern complex societies.

## 8. Permanence and Rigidity

Institutions are long lasting and rigid in nature. Although, institutions change and vary across and within different societies and cultures, modifications in them take place at a very slow pace and do not occur suddenly.

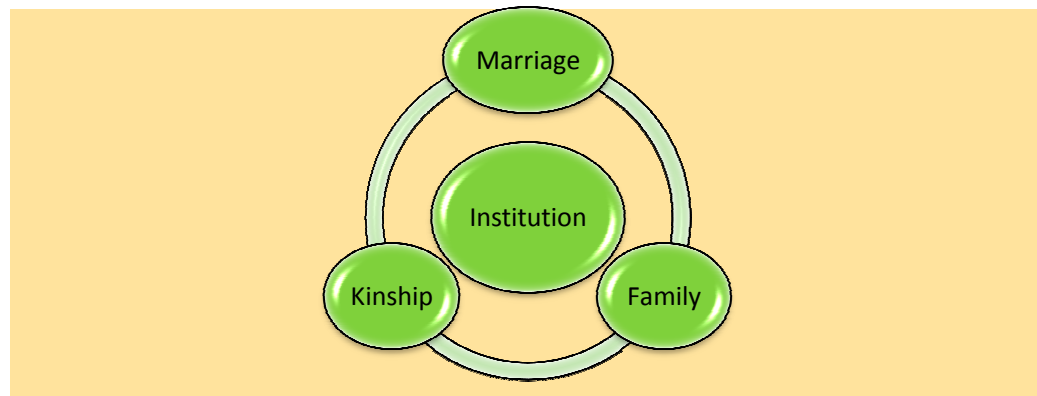
## 9. Controlling Agencies

Institutions act as controlling mechanisms for society, e.g., religion, law, morality, legislations, etc. regulate the behaviour of the individual and thereby help in maintaining social order and stability in society.

## 10. Institutions are Inter-related

Although each institution is diverse in nature, they are interrelated. Change in one institution brings about a corresponding change in the other.

In this chapter we will be discussing marriage, family and kinship as important components of social institutions and in the following chapter, the focus would be on the government, religion, economy and education.



## Marriage

Marriage is an important social institution and is found everywhere in the world. Marriage is the basic institution of human society. Through marriage, two persons of opposite sex get social approval to live together as husband and wife. Marriage becomes the nucleus of the social structure with which individuals are related to each other through kinship ties.



Marriage is an institution created to satisfy physical, social, psychological, cultural and economic needs of men and women. It permits man and woman to establish a relationship with each other in order to form a family. Regulation of sexual activities through stable relationship is the primary aim of marriage. In simple words, marriage can be defined as an institution that allows men and women entry into family life, sanctions the birth of children and lays the foundation of the various rights and obligations of husband, wife and children.

Society gives its approval to the marital relationship between a man and woman generally in a civil or religious ceremony. Married couples have to fulfil many obligations towards each other and society in general. Marriage also serves an important economic function as it defines property rights of inheritance. Thus, we can see that marriage includes a multi-dimensional relationship between a man and a woman.

## Reasons for Emergence of the Institution of Marriage

The important bases for emergence of the institution of marriage are:

- a) **Biological need:** Marriage is considered as one of the basic institutions that provides legitimacy to heterosexual relationship. It is a social contract usually of two opposite sexes for the satisfaction of physical and biological needs.
- b) **Psychological need:** Marriage satisfies not only the biological needs but also psychological satisfaction of having children. Bearing and rearing of children is an important component of marriage which requires a relatively stable union and marriage ensures this to happen.
- c) **Procreation:** Production of children is another integral aspect of marriage.
- d) **Nurturing need:** Along with bearing of children, marriage also involves bringing up of and socialisation of children.

### Activity 7.1

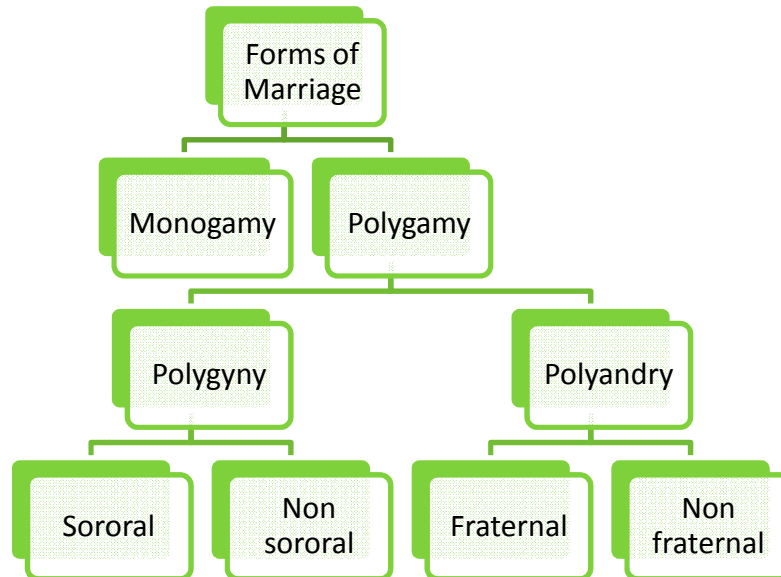
1. You must have attended marriages in your family/relatives/neighbours. List out the rituals and customs associated with marriage.
2. Discuss some of these rituals in class.



## Forms of Marriage

There are two forms of marriage prevalent in different parts of the world – Monogamy and Polygamy.

### FORMS OF MARRIAGE



**Monogamy** refers to a marriage union consisting of a husband and wife. Most marriages in the world are monogamous. In a society where monogamy prevails a man or woman can remarry only after the death of the spouse or the dissolution or ending of a marriage. Majority of the societies of the world are monogamous in nature.

**Polygamy** is that arrangement of marriage in which either a woman has more than one husband or a man has more than one wife at the same time.

Polygamy is of two types, namely, Polygyny and Polyandry.

**a) Polygyny** is that form of marriage in which man is married to more than one woman at a time. Muslims are one of the few communities who are found practicing polygyny under the



sanction of their religion. However, Polygyny has two types, namely, sororal and non-sororal. Sororal polygyny involves the marriage of a man with more than one woman who are related as sisters. In non-sororal polygyny the various wives are not related with each other.

**b) Polyandry** – In polyandry a woman is married to more than one man.



Polyandry itself has two forms. The first is Fraternal Polyandry and the second is Non-Fraternal Polyandry. In fraternal polyandry the woman is wife to all the brothers while in non-fraternal polyandry, the wife has several husbands who are not brothers. Fraternal polyandry is usually practiced in some agrarian societies to avoid division of farming land. On the other hand, in tribal societies men go for non-fraternal polyandry because of excessively high bride value or *kanya-mulya*.

## Rules of Mate Selection

Society lays down certain rules to govern the marital alliances among its members, which are called rules of mate selection. Every society has devised its own mechanisms for mate selection. For instance, there was a time when there was no age bar for marriage in India. In fact, marrying girls before puberty was the norm. But now the age of marriage has been fixed at 18 years for girls and 21 years for boys. Also, members of a society are not allowed to marry whosoever they want. There are some prohibitive and prescriptive rules of marriage to be followed while selecting a life partner.

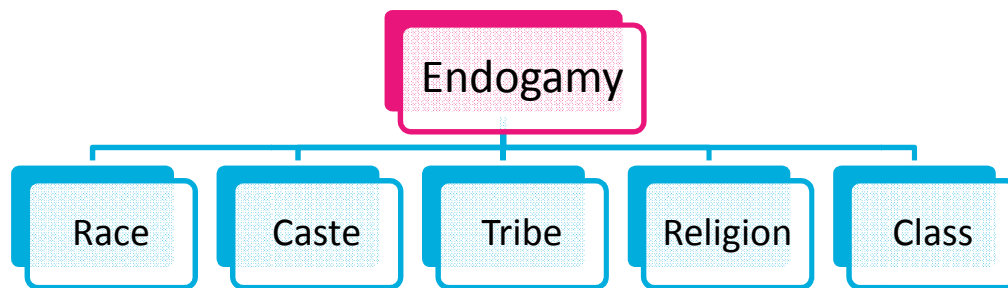
## Prohibitive Rules

Prohibitive rules are those which put restrictions on the selection of mates. These rules forbid men and women from entering into marital alliance with certain categories of people according to religious norms or local customs.

- a) **Incest taboo** implies biological or marital relations between two persons who are related to each other by blood ties or who belong to the same family. It is

prohibited in all human societies, although different norms may exist among different cultures regarding which blood relations are acceptable as sexual partners and which are not.

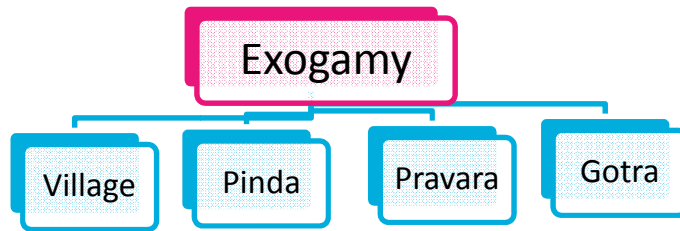
In every society marital relation is prohibited between father and daughter, mother and son, brother and sister. This prohibition is known as incest taboo. Norms of incest taboo are based on universal principles. However, in some societies marriages among close kin are permitted. For example, in many cultures, marriage with certain types of cousins is not only allowed but even preferred.



b) **Endogamy** is a custom that requires marriage within one's social group. The social group may be one's own tribe, caste or religious group. A person of one religion is not expected to marry a person of another religion. Tribes are also endogamous social units as marriage outside the tribe is not permitted. Caste among the Hindus is endogamous. Among the Muslims there are two endogamous units namely 'Shias' and 'Sunnis'. Among the Christians there are endogamous groups such as Roman Catholics and Protestants.

c) **Exogamy** is a custom that requires an individual to marry outside a specific group of which one is a member such as kinship group, a family, a clan, a village group or any social unit to which one may belong.

In Hindu marriage *Gotra* and *Sapinda* are exogamous groups. Gotra refers to a group of families which trace their origin from a common mythical ancestor. Sapinda means common parentage involving persons of seven generations on the father's side and five on the mother's side. A person is not permitted to marry into his/her own gotra. Similarly, those who belong to the same pinda or sapinda (common parentage) cannot inter-marry. In some of the states of India, especially western UP, Haryana and Rajasthan there exist rules of clan (extended kinship group) and village exogamy.



Persons violating the rules of clan and village exogamy invite the anger of caste panchayat. The cluster of village panchayats, i.e., multi village panchayats termed as khap panchayat have severe objection to persons marrying within the same village and gotra (their opposition may be restricted to a single clan living in groups of villages). The reason behind such a ban was to avoid marrying members within the same village since they are presumed to be kindred or descendants of a common ancestor.

### Box 1

**Hypergamy (Anuloma)** is a social custom in which a boy from upper caste can marry a girl from lower caste.

**Hypogamy (Pratiloma)** is the marriage in which a boy from a lower caste marries a girl from a higher caste. Such marriages are not encouraged in the traditional Indian society.

## Prescriptive and Preferential Rules

There are some rules concerning marriage, which give preference to certain types of alliances over others.

- a) **Parallel cousin marriage** is a marriage between the children of either two brothers or two sisters. This form is preferred among Muslims.
- b) **Cross cousin marriage** is the marriage of a man with his maternal uncle's daughter (mother's brother's daughter) or paternal aunt's daughter (father's sister's daughter). This form had been followed in several parts of India including among the Gonds of Madhya Pradesh and the Oraon and Kharia tribes of Jharkhand. Interestingly, maternal uncle is the prescribed mate among some south Indian Hindus.

- c) **Levirate** is the custom in which a widow marries her deceased husband's brother. Generally, the husband's younger brother marries the widow. This is prevalent in parts of Punjab and among the Toda tribes of Nilgiri Hills.
- d) **Sororate** is the custom in which the widower marries the younger sister of his deceased wife. This is prevalent among the Gonds in India and the Pukhtoon tribe of Pakistan.

In Hindu society, marriage is an important religious duty. Every Hindu must perform the religious duty, i.e., dharma, of getting married. On the other hand, among the Muslims the marriage is contractual in nature. It is called Nikah. The Muslim marriage contract can be broken at the will of the husband.

### Activity 7.2

1. Have you seen matrimonial advertisements? What stands out in them?
2. Do you think the rules of mate selection play an important role in today's society? Discuss your findings in the class.

## Changes in the Institution of Marriage

The processes of industrialisation, urbanisation and the new age of information technology have brought about significant change in the traditional institution of marriage. Marriage bureaus, matrimonial advertisements and several websites are acting as diverse agencies in the role of service providers. Marriage ceremonies and functions are being handed over to event managers to handle. Even the amount of money spent on marriage functions has, unfortunately, become a subject of social status. Hence, commercial pursuits have taken over the complex marriage rituals of early years.

There has been change in the forms of marriage too, i.e., from plurality of partners to monogamy in relationship. In the modern era monogamy is much preferred form of marriage. Inter-caste marriages are now becoming common and increasingly accepted by the family and society. Marriage is based on love and mutual attraction. Girls today have the freedom to choose their partners as new ideas have begun to provide women the right to exercise their choice. Working women have begun to exercise their

independent choice in negotiating marriage. Legislative restrictions (The Child marriage Restraint Act, 1929) have also put marriage below 18 years for girls and 21 years for boys as illegal. The role of parents in the selection of mate is decreasing, especially in urban areas. New modes of seeking alliances are cutting across caste, religion and regional boundaries.

The influence of western countries, modern education and industrialisation has led to the development of the individualistic ideology in India. Empowerment of women in general and the role of women as bread earners have led to significant changes in the institution of marriage. Divorce rates, failures in marriage and its instability, however, have also increased. Despite that, the relevance or importance of the institution of marriage has not decreased.

## **Family**



The family as a universal institution is considered a major basic group in human society. It is the institution of marriage that leads to the formation of family. Family is an important social institution and every individual in this world is part of one family or the other. Most of us are born and brought up in a family. Family is made up of individuals related to one another either through marriage or blood ties. The smallest family consists of husband and wife with or without children. In the widest sense it refers to all relatives of several generations connected to each other by blood, marriage or adoption. Family members cooperate and support each other in every sphere.

## **Importance of Family**

The study of family is significant as it plays a vital role in the formation of human society by binding men and women and children in a stable relationship. Transmission of culture takes place within the family. Cultural wisdom and knowledge about social norms, customs and values are passed on from one generation to another. The family in

which one is born is called the 'family of orientation'. Another term for such a family is consanguine family which consists of members among whom there exists blood relationship – brother and sister, father and son etc. The family which a person sets up after marriage is called the 'family of procreation' or the conjugal family which consists of adult members among whom there exists sexual relationship.

## **Characteristics of Family**

1. **Universality:** Family as a social unit is universal. There is no society where one cannot find the institution of family in some form or the other. It performs many functions which are necessary for the individual and society. The biological, economic, social and psychological functions are performed efficiently and simultaneously by the family.
2. **Emotional Basis:** Family relationships are based on human emotions and sentiments such as love, affection, sympathy, co-operation etc. Members of the family support each other emotionally. They provide love and care and protection to the other members and are ready to make sacrifices for the welfare of the family.
3. **Small Size:** The size of a family is usually small because it is a biological unit which includes those persons who are born in it and are closely related by blood ties or adoption. Thus, a family includes father, mother and their unmarried children. There are also single parent families. In simple words, membership within the family is either through marriage or blood ties.
4. **Nucleus Position:** Family is the centre or nucleus of all social groupings. It is family around which the whole structure of society is built. It performs all the primary functions for the individuals in the society.
5. **Social Regulations:** Family members are trained to follow social norms and customs through the process of socialisation. Family is considered as the link between individual and society. It is the family which makes its members responsible citizens by inculcating societal norms and values in them.
6. **Both Permanent and Temporary:** Family as a universal social institution is enduring in nature but it is also temporary as a group of certain persons which lasts till husband and wife are together. After their death or divorce the families of the son and daughters perpetuate the family name and tradition and this cycle continues generation after generation.

### Activity 7.3

During census data collection of 2011 the census officials moved from door to door and asked several questions from each family. What are the questions relating to families that are asked while collecting Census data? List them out and discuss.

### Social Functions of the Family

The family occupies a central position in society. Functions such as production of the economic services, protection of the young and sick are all performed by the family. Economic needs are fulfilled by this institution. The couple work together to support the family they have set up. They also take care of the children's requirements such as food, clothing, shelter, education, medical care, recreation etc. Traditionally only the husband was the bread earner and the wife was expected to be a homemaker but in the modern times it is quite normal to see both husband and wife contributing to family earnings and also sharing the burden of household activities.

Some of the major functions of family are:

1. **Reproduction:** Family provides an institutional framework for regulating sexual relationship. Child bearing is the most crucial function of the family which is necessary for the continuance of society and human race.
2. **Rearing and Nurturing:** Not only the production of children but child rearing is another important function of family. Arrival of a new baby brings with it not only joy for everyone but also a sense of responsibility. The family takes care of the newborn baby. Mother of the baby also gets the support of the members of the family in bringing up the child. Thus, the family meets the needs and requirements of its members.
3. **Identity Formation:** Individuals born in a family acquire a distinct identity. The family is a group of individuals related to one another within a system of defined status and role. The status that is acquired by the individual with the association with family helps them interact with others.
4. **Socialisation:** The family helps its members learn the norms of the society. Family also works as a cultural transmitting agency as it hands down the culture of a society to the new members.

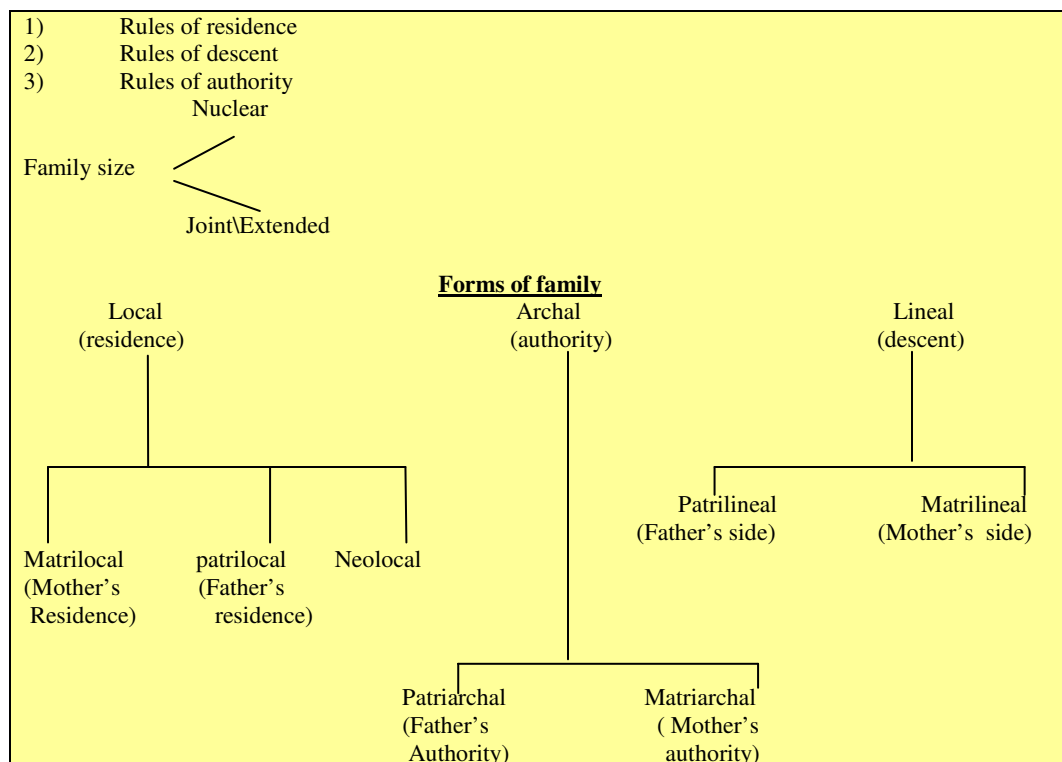


**5. Social Control:** Family acts as an agency of social control by exercising authority on the child. Senior members of family control the behaviour of the younger members thereby making them conform to the accepted standards. Apart from the above primary functions, family also acts as a unit performing some secondary functions such as fulfilling economic needs, providing primary education, transmitting religious beliefs, taking care of health and acting as a source of recreation.

## Forms of Family

Family can be classified on various bases:

1. On the basis of composition – nuclear and joint/extended
2. On the basis of residence – patrilocal, matrilocal and neolocal
3. On the basis of lineage – patrilineal and matrilineal
4. On the basis of authority – patriarchal and matriarchal



## 1. Classification on the basis of Composition/Size

Depending on size family may be nuclear, joint or extended.

a) **Nuclear Family**

This type of family is commonly found in the urban areas in which the size of the family is small comprising of husband, wife and their unmarried children.

b) **Joint Family:** In this the size of the family is big as it comprises blood and marital relatives of three or more than three generations. The members provide financial, as well as, other kind of help to each other and all live under one roof and have common kitchen.

c) **Extended Family:** In this type of family, certain close relatives also live with the couple. The close relatives could include more than one spouse or some blood relatives. This type of family is known as an extended form of nuclear family, e.g., brothers living together because of common business or common property.



Nuclear family



Joint family



Extended family

## 2. Classification on the basis of Residence

Based on the place of residence of the husband and wife, the family can be patrilocal, matrilineal or neolocal.

a) **Patrilocal:** Under this rule of residence the newly wedded couple after marriage goes and lives in the groom's parent's house. This is common among Indian families.

b) **Matrilocal:** In this case the couple lives in the wife's parents' house. This is common in the North-eastern tribes such as the Garos and Khasis of Meghalaya.

c) **Neolocal:** In this the newlywed couple lives independently in their own home away from their parents. This is common in the western countries and in the cities of India as well.

### 3. Classification on the basis of Lineage/Descent

Based on rules of descent, family can be patrilineal or matrilineal.

- a) **Patrilineal:** When ancestry is traced through father's lineage, i.e., when descent is determined through the male line it is called patrilineal family. In this system of descent, the boys are known by the name of their father. It is generally reported that there is a dominance of patrilineal form of family in the world.
- b) **Matrilineal:** When the ancestry is traced through mother's lineage, it is called a matrilineal family. In matrilineal descent systems daughters are known by the names of their mother. In other words, if the children in a culture take their mother's last name, and not their father's, this is a matrilineal tradition.

### 4. Classification on the basis of Authority

Based on authority families may be patriarchal or matriarchal.

- a) **Patriarchal:** In this type of family the male head is the final and absolute authority. He is the formal head and has the ruling power in the family. It is a family where the father is the authority figure and everyone gains his approval or follows his instructions. This is common among most cultures including traditional Indian families and Chinese families.
- b) **Matriarchal:** Matriarchy is a social system in which familial and political authority is wielded by women. In this form of family, the authority of the mother is supreme and she wields all the power and influence. She is the central figure in the family. In India it is common among the Nayars of Kerala and the Garo and Khasi tribes of the Meghalaya, in the North-East.

### Changes in the Family System

The institution of family is undergoing change all over the world. Industrialisation, urbanisation, westernisation and modern education are some of the factors which have brought changes both in the structure and the functions of the family. Composition and interrelationships within the family have undergone significant changes, which in turn, induced changes in its functions in the modern era.

The changes are as follows:

1. **Smaller families:** Due to urbanisation and industrialisation, the family has shrunk in size and usually comprise husband, wife and unmarried children. That is, the joint

family system is being slowly replaced by nuclear family as the younger generation does not like interference in their life.

2. **Democratisation:** Families are becoming more egalitarian and democratic. As there is an increase in the number of nuclear families, the problems in the family are discussed and decided among the husband and wife. Families are characterised by a joint process of decision making.

3. **Family Breakup:** Due to conflict arising from generation gap the younger generation move away to live separately.

4. **Weaker kinship ties:** The family members have become self-reliant and self-centred and therefore, the ties of kinship are not as strong as before in the families today. The emotional bonds are weakening and families are becoming more individualistic.

5. **Change in women's role:** Delayed age at marriage, economic independence, and increased family headship are factors that have resulted in a major change in women's attitudes and relationships in their family roles. Although marriage and motherhood continue to be part of women's lives but women are redefining these family roles by developing a sense of autonomy and self-esteem.

6. **Changes in functions:** The functions earlier performed by the large family have been taken over by external agencies. Crèches, day care centres and old age homes are some examples of this change.

7. **Increase in Divorce:** Separation and divorce among couples have become very common leading to instability and this has contributed to the changes in the family structure and functions.

8. **Emergence of new forms:** New forms of marriage and relationships have emerged which have transformed family. For instance, live-in relationships, where the couple live together without getting married is an emerging phenomenon in urban areas.

Regardless of the various changes in the family structure and functions, the family continues to help in socialisation of children and provide emotional support to family members. Families are still the building blocks of all societies.

## **Kinship**

The three related sets of concepts, i.e., marriage, family and kinship are the extension of family ties. Family relationships get extended to form an elaborate group of kinship ties. In every society kinship ties are of fundamental importance. Social recognition of relationship is formed on the basis of marriage, procreation or adoption. It is the oldest and most enduring social bond.

Kinship system is not a random unstructured aggregate of individuals. It is a system of the way the relations between individuals in the family are organised. Anthropologists consider kinship system as a part of the social structure and insist upon its study as a field of rights and obligations.

## **Types of Kinship**

### **1. On the Basis of Relationship**

Members of kinship groups related to each other may be recruited on the basis of blood, marriage and adoption. The basis of recruitment reflects the nature of social bond that brings the members together. The social groups are recruited through affinal (marriage), consanguineous (blood) and fictive (imaginary) ties.

- a) **Affinal Kinship** (based on marriage): In this kinship the members are related to each other on the basis of marriage. They are called affinal kin, e.g., husband, wife, wife's mother, parent-in-laws, son-in-law etc.
- b) **Consanguineous kinship** (based on blood): The members are related to each other through blood and are called consanguineous kin, e.g., father, mother, son, daughter, brothers etc. The consanguineous kin form a common ancestry and a common descent. This highlights how the social connections and its recognitions are significant. Recruitment through adoption of a child is an example of social recognition being overriding principle of kinship.
- c) **Fictive Kin** (based on imagination): Another basis of recruitment of members is fictional bonds, i.e., they are not related by blood or marriage (e.g. residents

of a village). These are called fictional ties. The members of the village are not related by blood or marriage but may establish fictional bonds of kinship. This is a way of creating a wider circle of kin. Such members are called fictive kin.

## 2. On the Basis of Nearness and Distance

Kin members may be ranked in terms of the relationship that they may have with the ego, i.e. the father. The distance between the kin is understood by the degree of kinship. On the basis of nearness and distant relationship, kin can be divided into three types – primary, secondary and tertiary kin.

- a) **Primary kin:** These kin are those who are very closely related, i.e., they have a direct relationship. Further, they may be primary consanguineous kin, i.e., related through father or they may be primary affinal kin, i.e., related through the mother. There are eight such relations. They include husband-wife, father-son, father-daughter, mother-daughter, mother-son, younger-elder sisters, younger-elder brothers, and brother-sister.
- b) **Secondary kin:** These family members are related through primary kin, e.g., on the father's side, ego's father's brother is secondary consanguineous kin while ego's step mother is ego's secondary consanguineous kin. Similarly ego's mother's brother and mother's step father is ego's secondary affinal kin. Thus, persons such as father's father, mother's father, brother's daughter, father's sister, sister's husband are some of the secondary kin. The number of secondary kin is 33.
- c) **Tertiary kin:** These kin members are related through secondary kin. Each secondary relative has primary relatives who are neither primary nor secondary relatives of an individual. They are known as tertiary relatives, e.g., husband's brother's wife (bhabhi), wife's sister's husband (mausa), first cousins, etc. Simply put, the tertiary kin are those persons who are the primary kin of the secondary kin. The kin of this kind include the great-grand-parents, spouses of all uncles, nephews, nieces etc.

## Box 2

Prem Chowdhary (2004) in her study ‘Caste Panchayats and the Policing of Marriage in Haryana’ has explained in detail the principle of village exogamy. The members living in one village are bound by the morality of brother and sister. It is significant to note that terms as *bhai* or *behen* are used in the villages even for persons who are not related by blood. These prohibitions create *bhaichara*. The ideal notion of *biradari* is the hallmark of fictive kin ties. In some north Indian villages there is a practice of treating persons as *dharm bhai* or *dharam behen*. Accordingly, rights and obligations are reciprocated on the occasion of *bhaiya duj* and *Raksha Bandhan*.

## Terminology of Kinship

Kinship system is governed by cultural norms. In each cultural group terms are used to designate relatives who may be related through blood, marriage, adoption or fictive kinship bonds. Kinship terminology can be of two types – Classificatory and Descriptive.

**Classificatory:** Under the classificatory system several kin members who are consanguineous kin or affinal kin may use a common term of designation, e.g., uncle may be used for father’s brother and mother’s brother. The purpose here is to describe the relationship rather than identification of kin. In some tribal societies one common term is used for maternal and paternal aunt and uncle. For example *Apu* is used for *chacha*, *tau*, *fufa*, *mausa* and *mama*.

**Descriptive:** In the descriptive system the terms are used to identify the exact relationship, e.g., father is a descriptive term. Other examples may be *mama*, i.e., mother’s brother, *chacha* or father’s brother, *nanke*, i.e., people from *nana*’s (maternal grandfather/mother’s father) household indicating relatives on the mother’s side or *dadke*, i.e., people from *dada*’s (paternal grandfather/father’s father) household indicating those who are relatives on the father’s side.

## Changing Kinship Relations

Kinship system has been very significant in rural and tribal societies. Relatives of several generations on both paternal and maternal sides remain in close contact. With the impact of industrialisation and urbanisation, however, the kinship system has also

undergone a drastic change. As the size of the family has become considerably small, the extended family system is slowly coming to an end and the number of relatives with whom regular contact used to be maintained earlier has also reduced. Today individualism has forced people to become self-centred and feel concerned only about their close and primary relatives. This has definitely shrunk the kinship bonds. However, we see that at the time of marriage and death, kin play a very significant role even today. This indicates that the kinship system will remain relevant as long as there is continuance of the institution of family in human society.

## Conclusion

This chapter dealt with the various aspects of family, marriage and kinship which are all mutually related. The main points discussed in it were:

- Marriage is stable relationship between man and woman.
- Marriage is a taboo among close relatives.
- The family is universal and is the basic unit of society.
- Family and marriage are interdependent.
- The family plays a big role in performing the biological, social, psychological and economic functions.
- The size and form of the family is determined by the types of authority, residence, lineage, ancestry and marriage.
- Kinship is a fundamental feature and basis of human societies.
- All kinship systems are marked by a kinship terminology.
- Factors such as industrialisation, urbanisation, immigration and ideologies have brought about a change in the institutions of marriage, family and kinship.

## Glossary

- **Affinal relationship:** relationship through marriage such as husband and wife
- **Classificatory term:** class of relatives referred to by a common term
- **Consanguineous relation:** relation based on blood having descended from the same ancestor
- **Descent:** system of tracing ancestry for recognising succession rights and rights of inheritance
- **Descriptive term:** class of relatives showing exact relationship with a person
- **Endogamy:** marriage within a defined group e.g. caste, kinship
- **Exogamy:** a tendency to marry outside the group



- **Extended family:** family in which the husband and wife live with their parents including one or two relatives of the father's side.
- **Hypergamy:** marriage of daughter with a man of higher class or caste
- **Hypogamy:** marriage of daughter with a man of lower class or caste
- **Incest taboo:** customs that restrict marriage between primary kin members
- **Joint family:** family in which members of three generations or more live together under a common roof with a common kitchen
- **Kinship:** social relationship based on real, putative or fictive consanguinity
- **Matriarchal:** when authority in a family is recognised through the mother
- **Matrilineal:** tracing the lineage from the female side
- **Matrilocal:** bride and the groom live with the bride's family after marriage
- **Monogamy:** marriage of one man with a woman
- **Nuclear family:** family consisting of husband, wife and unmarried children
- **Patriarchal:** when authority in a family is recognised through father
- **Patrilineal:** tracing relationship from the male side
- **Patrilocal:** bride lives with the groom's family after marriage
- **Polygamy:** marriage between one man with many women or one woman with many men

## Exercises

**Answer the following very short answer questions in 1-15 words each:**

1. What do you mean by endogamy?
2. Name the important bases for emergence of the institution of marriage.
3. What is monogamy?
4. What is sororal marriage?
5. Mention the types of polyandry.
6. State the types of polygyny.
7. Give few examples of endogamy.
8. Define marriage.
9. Mention two functions of family.
10. Write the name of the forms of family on the basis of composition.
11. Write the name of the forms of family on the basis of authority.
12. What is affinal relationship?
13. What do you mean by joint family?
14. What do you mean by kinship?
15. Name the degrees of kinship.

**Answer the following short answer questions in 30-35 words each:**

1. What do you understand by the term institution?
2. What are prescriptive rules?
3. What are anuloma and pratiloma?
4. Write a short note on the two types of polygamous marriages.
5. What is fraternal polygamy?
6. Discuss incest taboo.
7. What is gotra?
8. Differentiate between parallel and cross cousin marriage.
9. What is kinship on the basis of nearness and distance?

**Answer the following long answer questions in 75-85 words each:**

1. Discuss the important social institutions in brief.
2. What are the important features of marriage?
3. Distinguish between monogamy and polygamy as forms of marriage.
4. Discuss the functions of family.
5. Explain the terms a) Hypergamy b) Hypogamy c) Levirate d) Sororate

**Answer the following long answer questions in 250-300 words each:**

1. What do you mean by institution? Discuss its characteristics.
2. Write a note on marriage as a social institution.
3. Discuss in detail the different types or forms of marriage.
4. Define marriage. Write the rules of mate selection in detail.
5. What is family? What are the basic features of family?
6. Discuss in detail the different types of family.
7. Highlight the changes that have taken place in the institution of family in contemporary period.
8. Define kinship and discuss its types in detail.
9. Discuss the importance of kinship in social life.
10. Differentiate between affinal and consanguinal relations.

## Chapter

# 8

## Polity, Religion, Economy and Education

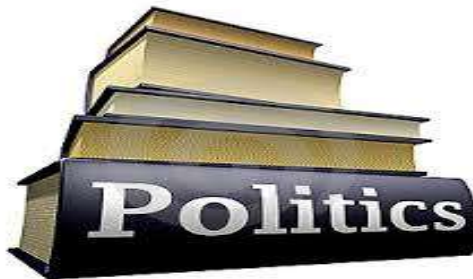
### Highlight :

- 8.1 Polity
- 8.2 Religion
- 8.3 Economy
- 8.4 Education

### Introduction

As we learnt in the previous chapter, social institutions can be defined as established or standardised patterns of rule-governed behaviour. They include family, marriage, kinship, education and religion along with economic and political institutions. We have already discussed the institutions of family, marriage and kinship. In this chapter we will be discussing polity economy, religion and education as social institutions.

### Political Institutions



Political system is a sub system of society. It defines the roles that human beings occupy in order to maintain law and order. There is a close link between polity and society. In Sociology the study of political institutions helps us understand elements like power, leadership, authority, voting behaviour and how they are influenced by caste, class, race, region and religion. Political institutions are the agencies relating to the exercise of power for motivating peace and order within a society.

Political institutions are concerned with the distribution of power in society. Two concepts which are essential in understanding political institutions are **power** and **authority**. Max Weber makes a distinction between the two.

## **Power**

Power is the ability of individuals or groups to carry out their will even when opposed by others. It implies that those who hold power do so at the cost of others. There is fixed amount of power in a society and some individuals groups or organisations with greater power exercise their influence over others who have lesser power. Power is thus, the ability to take decisions for oneself and others and to see that others abide by the decisions taken on their behalf, e.g., the head of the family and the General Manager of a company have power over the other members of the family and the organisation, respectively.

## **Authority**

The notion of power is exercised through authority. Authority is that form of power which is accepted as legitimate, right and just. It is based on legitimacy and is institutionalised. The power exercised by those in positions of authority is generally accepted by all as it is considered to be fair and justified. Authority not only applies to individuals but also groups or institutions. For example, in monarchy the authority is centralised in the hands of one person, namely, the king or queen, whereas in a parliamentary democracy the authority rests with various institutions of the State. Similarly, we obey the orders given by the police officers because we accept their use of authority over us in specific situations.

According to Weber the three bases of legitimisation of power and authority are the traditional authority, the charismatic authority and the legal-rational authority. Traditional patriarchal family is an example of traditional authority. Under charismatic authority people obey the person due to their faith in and respect for him/her, e.g., the whole of India followed Mahatma Gandhi because he had a charismatic personality. The authority in the modern society is legal-rational in nature which is formal and is defined by law. Under this type of authority, the actual power is not with the person who wields it but in the position s/he occupies. This type of authority is impersonal and rational in nature and its best example is bureaucracy.



Bureaucracy

## **Political Institutions in Different Types of Societies**

As societies have developed from simple to complex industrial societies, political institutions have also become more complex and heterogeneous.

### **Stateless Societies**

Societies with no state in the modern sense are known as Stateless Societies. These were the simple or primitive societies. Such societies with low population and with the possibility of face to face relationships did not require any formal established agencies of social control like state and government. Instead here the authority rested in the elders' council and the chief of the community and the political order was maintained through the ties of kinship and lineage.

### **State and Modern Society**

In modern industrial society, however, power is centralised in the institution of state and dispersed among its citizens. Max Weber has defined state as a human community which successfully claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.

### **The State**

The State is the most fundamental institution of a political system. The essential elements of the State are:

**Population:** The citizens who regard themselves as a part of a single state.

**Territory:** States are defined by their boundaries which form their territories.

**Sovereignty:** The power wielded by the government over the people within the territory of the state.

**Government:** The group of people with the authority to govern a country or state.  
The Government further consists of three organs:

**Legislature:** it is the elected body of representatives in whom authority is vested to make laws to regulate the society

**Executive:** this organ executes the laws passed by the legislature.

**Judiciary:** this organ defines and interprets the laws to ensure an impartial administration of justice which is necessary for the welfare and security of the citizens.

To maintain an orderly system of social relation, people need to be disciplined. Simply having external agencies such as the police, army or judiciary may not ensure discipline in an ordered society or state. More importantly, a voluntary acceptance of the norms and values of the society is an essential component which is a moral aspect binding the citizen.

Modern states are very different from traditional ones as these states are defined by **sovereignty, citizenship and nationalism**.

**Sovereignty** refers the undisputed political rule of a state over a given territorial area. It implies the supreme power or authority of a state to govern itself or another state. Sovereign states did not come into existence easily. They were acquired after the people's movements and much struggle. The French Revolution and the Indian Independence struggle are instances of such movements.

**Citizenship** rights include civil, political and social rights. Civil rights include the freedom of the individual to live where they want or freedom of religion and speech, right to own property, right to equality and justice. Political rights include the right to stand in elections for public office and the right to vote. Social rights include health benefits, minimum wages, right to education etc. These are the rights of an individual to enjoy a minimum standard of economic welfare and security.

**Nationalism** can be defined as a set of symbols and beliefs providing the sense of being part of a single political community. Thus, individuals feel a sense of pride and belongingness when they regard themselves as Indians.

### Activity 8.1

Do you know that in earlier times women were not allowed to vote? Find out when women started casting votes in different countries.

Sociology is concerned with not only the formal machineries of the government but is interested in the study of the broader aspects of power. It involves learning about the distribution of power between the parties, classes, castes and communities based on race, language and religion. It is also interested in studying aspects such as the **political system, Panchayati Raj, political parties and interest groups.**

### Political System

A political system includes institutions, interest groups (such as political parties, trade unions etc.), the relationships between those institutions and the political norms and rules that govern their functions (constitution, election law). The traditional values of orthodoxy, hierarchy, monarchy and autocracy have gradually started getting replaced by modern values of rationality, equality and democracy. The political authority has shifted from Church and the Monarch to the body of people called ‘government’ elected by the people. The democratic form of government is the most popular political system in the world. There are two basic categories of democracies – direct and representative.

In a **direct democracy** all the citizens can participate in making public decision without the intermediary of elected or appointed officials. That kind of democracy is only possible where there is small number of people, e.g., in a commercial organisation or a local unit of trade union where all members can assemble under one roof.

The **representative democracy** or indirect type of democracy is the one in which citizens elect officials to make political decisions, formulate laws, and administrative programmes for public welfare. India is an example of a successful representative democracy. The success of Indian democracy has been facilitated by a political process which aimed at creating a modern society, democratisation and economic development.

## Panchayati Raj



Panchayati Raj is an important institution of the Indian polity, the objective being decentralisation of power in such a way that the ordinary villager gets to enjoy an effective control on the village development programmes. It is a system of local self-governance in which the Gram Panchayat functions as a unit of self government.

It is three tier system of governance. The basic unit is a 'gram panchayat' or the village level panchayat; next at the intermediate level there is 'panchayat samity' or the block level panchayat and at the district level there is a 'zila panchayat'. The 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act gave greater powers and responsibilities to the elected members of the panchayat. It also reserved seats and thus enabled women to participate in larger numbers in the political process.

The merits of the Panchayati Raj system in terms of development are:

1. Panchayats provide a forum for preparing plans for economic development and social justice
2. People's participation in decision making and implementation helps in choosing target programs for the respective villages
3. People's participation results in sustainability of the rural development programs

Some weaknesses of the Panchayati Raj system are:

1. There is lack of clarity in terms of the objectives of the panchayats. For some these are just administrative organisations while others view them as extensions of democracy at the grassroots level.
2. The shortage of funds hinders the successful working of the Panchayati Raj.



3. The panchayats at all three levels experience administrative problems, such as political interference in the local administration, lack of co-ordination between the three levels, lack of motivation and advancement opportunities for administrative personnel and uncaring attitude of the government servants towards development programmes.
4. Non-cooperative and antagonistic relations exist between the three tiers.
5. There is lack of connect between the common person and the Panchayati Raj officials.

## **Political Parties**

Political parties occupy an important place in democracy. A political party is an organised body of people with common interests and ideologies. Some parties have national status such as Congress and Bharatiya Janta Party while some parties are regional in status like the Akali Dal, Samajwadi Party, Shiv Sena etc. as they represent the people of some specific regions of the country only.

The key functions of political parties are to assemble and organise people to attain control of the government, to develop policies favourable to their interests or the groups that support them, and to organise and convince voters to elect their candidates to office. They also work towards representing the interests of their constituents and help in making policies. Sadly they have also become the breeding grounds of corruption, exploitation and oppression.

Coalition politics is an important aspect of the multi-party situation. Under a coalition, like-minded parties join to form a common front towards achievement of political goals. This form of coalition government is found in many countries. Political coalitions are usually formed when no single party is capable of forming a government. Thus, they help in averting political crises and reducing internal fighting among parties in a society. Hence, if they work sincerely, political parties help to develop a channel between the people and their representatives by expressing and articulating the needs of the people.

## **Interest Groups**

With the increase in division of labour, many occupational groups have emerged. All these groups have their own specific interests which they promote in their day to day activities. Groups or organisations representing particular interest in society are called

Interest Groups. These have specific interests of their own sections. These groups act to influence political decisions and processes in democratic states. For example, there are associations which work for the safeguarding the social economic and cultural interests of their members. They try to influence the decision making of the government through members of political parties. The objective of some interest groups is to occupy an important and powerful position in the national politics. Since they exert pressure on the government to support their demands these groups are also called **pressure groups**. They can be economic groups like trade unions, or cause groups like people fighting for rights of women or the disabled. They can also be private bodies like a university fighting for survival or even government bodies like schools striving for funds.

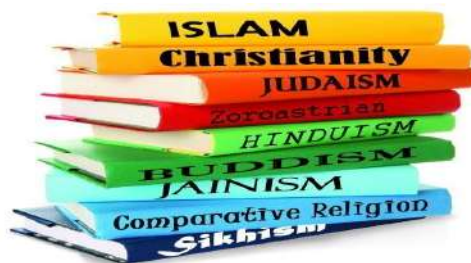
### Activity 8.2

Discuss the concept of coalition governments and the way it has affected the politics in our country.  
Give examples of major coalitions at the national level.

### New developments in Political Thinking

Sociologists have been studying political institutions for a long time. In the process of making a sociological analysis of political institutions, a branch of Sociology namely Political Sociology has developed. It lays stress on the study of society, the state and the government and the mutual relationship that exists between the social structure, economic development and political development. It analyses the relationship existing between social structure, the political system, political parties and ideology, as well as, the relationship between the religion, caste, class, tribe, language, pressure groups, and political behaviour. It emphasizes the need to study the aspects of political changes, political development and social movements.

### The Institution of Religion



Religion has existed throughout history of human society. As an important part of culture it forms an integral component of human social life. Religion plays an important role in the society. Religion is considered a storehouse of morality, a source of public order and inner individual peace. Religion has three aspects – rituals, beliefs and organisation. Rituals deal with religious behaviour, belief with the sources, as well as, patterns of faith and organisation deals with mechanisms by which religions manage the behaviour expectations, statuses and roles of the members concerned.

## Theories of the Origin of Religion

Anthropologists and sociologists have put forward various theories of the origin of religion. E. B. Tylor gave the theory of ‘animism’ which held that religion emerged from the idea of the spirit or the soul. It stated that the origin of religion lays importance on the experiences of living and death. What the individual sees in one’s dreams and what is it that leaves the body at death, were the questions that puzzled the primitive man and thus the emphasis on animism – a belief in the existence of the soul. It is simply the belief of primitive societies in numerous spirits being concerned with human affairs and capable of helping or harming human interests. Hence, the need to fear them and worship them. Max Muller offered the theory of ‘naturism’ to explain the origin of religion. He believed that to the primitive man at the first stage of human development nature appeared to be most surprising, fearful and marvellous. He called it “the vast domain of surprise and of terror”. Religion began with the worship of natural entities, such as sun, moon, stars, etc., because they aroused a feeling of fear and wonder in human beings and these are beyond the control of a person.

Eminent sociologist Emile Durkheim rejected the above theories of religion and put forth a sociological theory of religion. According to Durkheim ‘totemism’ was the most primitive form of religion. The word ‘totem’ first originated among North American Indian tribes and has been widely used to refer to animals and plants believed to have supernatural powers. Durkheim made a distinction between sacred and profane things. **Sacred** things are those which are treated as respectable and superior. They are supposed to be extraordinary and fall outside every day cases of events and things. However, most things we come across in life can be distinguished as quite ordinary elements of everyday life. Durkheim calls these things **profane** – the routine aspects of our day to day existence. The profane things are kept at a distance from the sacred. Religion then, is a social institution involving beliefs and practices based on recognising the sacred.

According to Durkheim all religious ideas such as totem have emerged from the social group. Religion is extremely social: it occurs in a social context. People respect the totem because the totems represent the social values and collective consciousness. Religion according to him is not only a social creation, but is the society divinised. When individuals celebrate sacred things, they unknowingly honour the power of their society. The deities which we worship together are only projections of the power of society. Thus, it is religion, which binds people together to the community. Durkheim emphasises that on special occasions in life, such as, birth, marriage and death, the collective ceremonies and rituals help the affected people to adjust with the new situations.

### **Activity 8.3**

In Hinduism there are various sacraments which are observed from birth till death, the important ones being naming ceremony, thread ceremonies, etc. Can you suggest some other sacred ceremonies associated not only with Hindu religion but also with others?

### **Activity 8.4**

Rituals associated with religion are very diverse in nature. Ritual acts may include praying, chanting and eating certain kinds of food. List out various religious rituals associated with Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism and Christianity that are observed on special occasions and festivals.

Religion has been defined in various ways. E. B. Tylor calls it ‘a belief in supernatural being’. Emile Durkheim defined religion as a unified system of beliefs and practices related to sacred things, i.e., things set apart and forbidden beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a church.

## **Characteristics of Religion**

1. Belief in supernatural power.
2. Beliefs associated with a set of symbols invoking feelings of reverence, fear, happiness, awe etc.
3. Religious practices involve material objects such as charms, flower, leaves, incense sticks etc.
4. Material objects in religious practices vary from culture to culture.
5. Every religion evolves its specific rituals such as dancing, chanting, fasting and eating certain kinds of food.

6. Religious rituals are performed in isolation but occasionally religion is ceremoniously practiced collectively
7. Every religion has its specific modes of worship and specific place of worship.
8. The concepts of heaven and hell and sacred and profane are associated with religion.

## **The Prominent Religions**

There are a number of prominent religions in modern times, namely, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Sikhism, etc. India is a multi religious country and almost every religious group is represented in India. These can be divided into 2 groups: religions of Indian origin and Semitic religions.

**Religions of Indian origin** include Hinduism, Buddhism Jainism and Sikhism. These are rooted in the long traditions in India. Hinduism is the oldest of all the religions in the world and is polytheistic in nature where several Gods and deities are worshipped. Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism are other religions which have emerged from Hindu religion. Sacrament is an important religious activity associated with sacred objects. In Hinduism there are many sacraments and samskars which are observed from birth till death such as conception, naming ceremony, thread ceremony, marriage, last rites, etc.

**Semitic religions such as** Judaism, Christianity and Islam are those which originated in the Middle East. These are monotheistic in nature. They believe in a single God and his prophets. Islam is the second largest religion after Christianity in the world today. Catholics also observe sacraments such as baptism, ordination and marriage. Among Protestants there is a liberal attitude towards these sacraments. Islam also lays stress on sacraments.

## **Religious Organisations**

Different forms of communities of believers exist such as the church, the sect and the cult and all of them are religious organisations.

**Church** implies a religious institution, a place of worship or group of worshipers, usually Christian. The Church is a well established organisation. It has a hierarchy of office bearers. Among the Christians the Catholic and Protestants are two main churches. This religion is highly organised. Hinduism, on the contrary, has no

organised body. It has important temples which are looked after by a body of persons entrusted with the responsibility to manage the same. The priests are generally selected conventionally.

A **Sect** is a subgroup of a religious belief system, usually an off shoot of a larger religious group. It refers to any organisation that breaks away from a larger one to follow a different set of rules and principles. It is a religious organisation that is generally small in size which grows out from the rejection of the tenets of the old conventional religious practices. A sect is started by a few individuals and later joined by others. The teachings of the Arya Samaj, neo Buddhism and the Ramakrishna Mission are examples of sects.

**The Cult** is a religious organisation that is formed based on the thoughts and ideology of one individual leader. The cult is small in size and has a short life span. The Jai Gurudev, Sai Baba, Kabir Panth are examples of cults. A member of a cult may also be a follower of other religions.

### **Social Role of Religion**

Religion has many functions for society:

- It fulfils the spiritual, social and psychological needs of the individual.
- It is functional because it binds the society and gives rise to spirit of brotherhood and unity.
- Religion regulates one's life and is an important instrument of social control.
- Religious assumptions enable one to distinguish between desirable actions and control the undesirable ones. Use of scriptures, teaching of priests, prayer meetings and convention plays a significant role in social control.
- Religion works as an integrating force although it sometimes becomes the cause of strife and communal tensions.

The modern society cherishes values of rationality and secularism. Science and technology control the nature of economic lives of the people. In the present modern society religion has undergone change along with changes in other aspects of social life. Today a large number of societies have religious pluralism which means coexistence of different religions.

## Economic Institutions



Every individual in a society needs food, clothing, shelter, health care, etc. but to get these things one needs money. So every individual has not only to work to earn money but has also to cooperate with and assist the other members of the society with the common purpose of earning their living. This situation gives rise to activities and practices, which when established, become economic institutions. Social institutions concerned with the management, production and distribution of human resources are referred to as economic institution. According to sociologists, the activities of individuals in relation to food and property constitute the economic institutions.

## Types of Economic Systems



Hunting and gathering



Pastoral



Agrarian



Industrial

Societies having different economic systems can be listed as the following:

### **Societies with Hunting and Gathering Economy:**

This is the earliest type in which the society was very small. There were no organised and formal economic institutions. There was no division of rich or poor, men were the hunters and women gathered crops, did the cooking and looked after the children.

**Societies with Pastoral Economy:**

In this type of economy the society relied upon the domesticated livestock for their livelihood. They were called pastoralists. They would rear and herd sheep, goats, cattle, camels or horses. These societies came up in areas of dense grasslands or hills and mountains. The people migrated from one area to another according to seasonal change. A regular supply of food and large tracts of land occupied by them gave rise to institutionalised practices at the community level.

**Societies with Agrarian economy:**

This type grew at the same time as the pastoral economy. Some members began to sow crops rather than simply collect food material from elsewhere. This practice grew into small cultivation called horticulture. This activity became a more assured source of food supply than the hunting and gathering. People engaged in horticulture began to settle in particular places leading to the formation of villages. Once groups became settled some amount of trading ties began between villages in the course of time. Individual ownership of land became common, leading to the creation of land ownership, land aristocracy and peasantry. Distinction between private property and common land became established. Growth of agriculture on a big scale led to food surplus, expansion of trade and commerce and the development of transport system, which in turn gave rise to creation of cities and the urban culture. Thus, the modern industrial society arose out of developed agrarian society.

**Societies with Industrial Economy:**

An industrial society is a social system where the production processes are mainly targeted on the manufacture of goods with the help of machinery. This implies a shift in the place of production from the rural to urban areas and from home to factories. Industrialisation was an outcome of industrial revolution in the eighteenth century in England. It was a form of technological revolution that affected the means by which people produced materials for their livelihood. The pace of technological change was so fast that it brought about significant changes in industry, agriculture, transport, communication and several other areas. More and more people shifted to cities and towns, as there were more employment opportunities in factories and shops instead of agriculture. Gradually, people became regulated by rules which made their lives impersonal.

**Societies with Capitalism:**

Capitalism is an economic system centred on the concept of capital which emerged in Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. In it the means of production are



owned and controlled by those who employ workers to produce goods and services in exchange for wages. The basic component of capitalism is the relationships among the workers, the means of production, factories, the machine tools and those who own the means of production. The members of the capitalist class own the means of production but do not produce wealth. They buy labour of the working class in exchange for wages. Members of the working class do not own or control means of production but use them to produce wealth.

The writings of Karl Marx tell us about two major classes in the capitalist society – capitalists (bourgeoisie) and workers (proletariat). Marxian theory is that while the bourgeoisie class exploits the proletariat, it would be in the interest of the proletariat to overthrow the bourgeoisie through revolution in order to create a classless society. In modern industrial societies, capitalism has taken an advanced form called ‘monopoly capitalism’. In this form, large corporations and enterprises merge together to become larger global centres of economic power and exercise so much influence over resources and production that they control not only the economy of the state but also life in general.

### **Socialism:**

This system was conceived by Marx in the nineteenth century in which the means of production are owned and controlled by a democratic state or a collective organisation of workers. According to Marx socialism will replace capitalism as a result of workers’ revolution. The basic goal of socialism is to destroy the class system so that the exploitation and oppression of workers and their alienation will be eliminated. Socialism aims at collective well being.

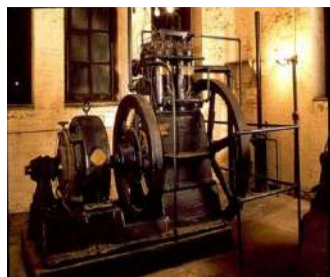
### **The Process of Division of labour**

Work in modern societies has become divided into large number of different occupations in which people specialise, resulting in a highly complex ‘division of labour’. So, one of the most significant features of the economic systems of modern societies is division of labour through which social life actually takes place in which individuals are directly involved. In traditional societies, the number of tasks to be performed was not many and the division of labour was relatively simple. But in the modern industrial societies, simple skills have been replaced by large scale production processes. Different people are dealing with different tasks, making it a complex process.

According to Emile Durkheim, division of labour affects social cohesion. The simple division of labour in pre-industrial societies was based on people's similarities with one another. It gave rise to a form of social solidarity called 'mechanical solidarity'. On the other hand, in industrial societies solidarity is not based on uniformity but on differences because division of labour in these societies is complex and produces numerous specialised tasks where all parts are different but interdependent. This form of social unity is called 'organic solidarity'. According to Durkheim, the change from mechanical to organic division of labour is similar to the evolution of organisms from simple to complex ones.

The institutional aspect of division of labour is clearly reflected in the caste system. Traditionally, the economic functions in a village economy were performed by direct exchange of services between castes. The system was known as Jajmani which referred to social, cultural and economic ties between jajmans and kamins (service providers). It was a system through which individual castes provided services according to their specialised occupation system. This relationship between the servicing caste and the served caste was long term in nature. It was a situation where high caste land owning families were provided services by various lower castes. In fact, the service providing lower castes were given names according to their occupations, e.g., a carpenter was known as the barahi or khati, barbers were called nai or hajjam, the washerman was called the dhobi etc. However, the rapid growth in industrialisation and the occupational diversification disintegrated the caste system and today the caste and occupation no longer go together. The division of labour has become far more complex and caste has very little relevance from the point of view of division of labour.

## Changes in the Institution of Economy



Mechanisation



Multinational companies



Call centres

In the twentieth century some major developments took place in the economic field. The full scale application of mass production called the assembly line techniques emerged as the only viable system of production under which men and machine are aligned to carry out precise sequence of operations. Since the late nineteen eighties India along with the rest of the world has entered a new era in its economic history. The policy of globalisation and liberalisation has not only interconnected societies globally in the economic aspect but also stimulated growth. The software service industries and business process outsourcing (BPO) industries (such as, call centres) are some of the major avenues which have connected India to the global economy. Mechanisation of production has spread to all types of industries.

## **The Institution of Education**



An individual is born only a biological being but soon becomes a social being. The transformation from biological to social takes place through socialisation and education. Education is a process that develops the personality and inherent capabilities of a child. It socialises the individual to play adult roles in society by providing the necessary knowledge and skills and makes one a responsible citizen of society.

From the ancient times in the Indian society, we had well developed educational institutions based on guru-shishya (teacher-student) traditions. Universities such as Nalanda and Taxila were important centres of education. In traditional Indian society there was a close relationship between education and the spiritual aspect. Moreover, education was meant to help the individual in the realisation of the ultimate and absolute reality.

Sociologists have been interested in the study of education, particularly in context to society. French sociologist Emile Durkheim defined education as the influence exercised by the adult generation upon those who are not yet ready for adult life. He believed that society can survive only when homogeneity exists among its members, which is reinforced by education. It is through education that a child learns basic rules,

regulations, norms and values of society. The functional role of education has been also highlighted by Kingsley Davis and Wilbert Moore. According to them social stratification is a mechanism for allocating positions in society to suitable persons. The purpose is served by the education system and it also ensures that competent people occupy significant positions in society.

## **Functions of Education**

The basic aims of education are to maintain the society and to develop the personality of individuals. To achieve these objectives, education performs many functions. These are:

- a) Education integrates individuals with society
- b) It helps to maintain society
- c) Education perpetuates culture
- d) It increases efficiency of individuals

## **Formal and Informal Education**

Broadly there are two systems of education – Formal and Informal.

### **Formal Education:**

Where education is imparted in a well-defined institutional setting is known as formal education. Modern education system is characterised by formal education.

Its main features are:

- 1) It refers to school education with a formalised institutional set-up. The three important components of formal education system are:
  - a) An organised structure
  - b) A definite and properly spelt out content of education
  - c) Definite rules and regulations
- 2) There are three levels of formal education – elementary, college and university levels and each level has its own organisational structure consisting of the teachers, the students and the administrative staff.

3) The modern formal education is mass education. Nobody can be denied admission in schools and colleges on the basis of caste, creed or religion etc. In ancient Indian society education was the privilege of only the higher caste people, while the people of the lower castes were deprived of education. But the constitution of independent India guarantees education to every section of society under the goal of universal education.

4) Distance education is an important form of formal organisation which provides higher education to those who cannot enrol themselves in regular schools, colleges or universities as full time students. It is an off-campus education programme carried out through postal and electronic media.

### Activity 8.5

1. Are you aware that in Delhi the public and aided schools have to reserve 25% of the seats for the students of the economically weak sections (EWS) and disadvantaged groups?
2. What is the criterion to determine the economically weaker sections of society?



Formal education



Informal education

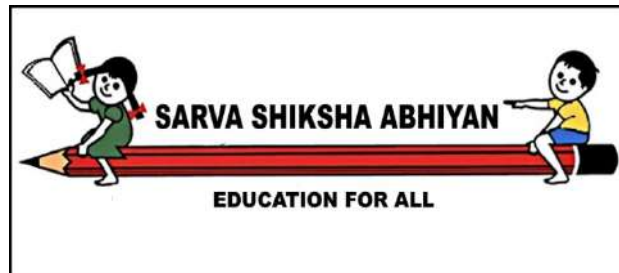
### Informal Education

It refers to those activities through which the individual acquires knowledge in the course of one's day to day life in the family and outside. It is mainly dominant in societies where there are no schools or insufficient schools to provide education to children. Family and kinship groups impart informal education and it generally relates to the activities involved in day to day behaviour related to their social and economic needs.

## Educational Policies in India

Some of the landmarks in terms of educational policies have been:

1. Article 45 of our Constitution makes education free and compulsory for all children up to the age of 14 years.
2. The Kothari commission 1960 laid emphasis on universal enrolment and retention.
3. A National Education Policy was adopted in 1986 with thrust on vocational education and equal educational opportunities for deprived groups.
4. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan 1986 and 1992 laid emphasis on providing useful and relevant education for all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years.
5. Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act (2010) states that every child in the age group of 6-14 years will be provided 8 years of elementary education in age appropriate class room, in the vicinity of the child's neighbourhood.



## Privatisation of Education

A trend in education system is the privatisation of education. But in India where the poor do not have any access to education, the privatisation of education may further harm the interest of the common people. In privatisation system the administration and management of education would be handed over to the private bodies and there is every likelihood of education becoming the exclusive preserve of the elite. Thus, privatisation would, in fact, lead to further inequality. The need in the country is to lay down a system where the education is easily available to the ordinary person which can only be possible through mass education based policies.

In India education is a source of modernisation, social change and national development. Education not only enhances knowledge and skills but is oriented to promote the values of an urban, industrial, secular, democratic consumer society.

## Conclusion

- Power is the ability of individuals or groups to control others in spite of opposition.
- Authority is a legitimate use of power.
- Legitimation is a process by which power is not only institutionalised but is also given moral grounding. People consider the distribution of power just and valid.
- The major components of the nation states are territory, sovereignty, government and nationalism.
- An interest group is an organisation whose purpose is to influence the distribution of and use of political power in society.
- Religion is a moral community of people united through common beliefs and behaviour.
- Durkheim holds that religion is related to sacred objects.
- Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism and Confucianism are major religions of the world.
- Functionally religions fulfil the individual's spiritual, social and psychological needs.
- The system of rules connected with economic activities and needs is called an economic institution.
- Societies have passed through various economic forms.
- A major feature of the economic system of modern society is the development of a highly complex and diverse division of labour.
- Historically, education has existed in all periods of time and it helps in transmission of knowledge, skill, traditions and culture to the new generation.
- The formal and informal are the two systems of education.
- Educational policies have made special contribution towards developing the national education policy in India.

## Glossary

- **Animism:** phenomena such as dreams and death by reference to the spiritual existence of animals and plants
- **Authority:** power or influence established by political rule within a community or society
- **Barter system:** exchange of things of utility in agrarian sector
- **Cult:** belief and practices of a small religious group.
- **Division of labour:** work processes divided into number of parts with each part being handled by a separate person or group of persons according to their skill and competence
- **Economy:** system of production and distribution
- **Education:** formal process of giving intellectual, moral, physical and social instructions to a child for all round development
- **Globalisation:** the process of international integration arising from the interchange of world views, products, ideas and other aspects of culture
- **Jajmani system:** customary exchange of goods and services between the jajman (patron) and client (kulin)
- **Nation state:** a particular type of state, characteristic of the modern world in which the government has sovereign power within a defined territorial area and the mass of the population are citizens who know themselves to be a part of a single nation
- **Pressure groups:** a specific group which acts to influence political processes in democratic states
- **Rituals:** formal actions expressed through symbols and following a set of pattern
- **Sacred:** religious beliefs which are considered extraordinary and outside the everyday events and things.
- **Sect:** a religious group having some specific rituals
- **Sovereignty:** supreme power of government exercised by a state or its people living within defined territorial limits
- **State society:** society which posses a formal apparatus of government
- **Stateless society:** a society that lacks the formal institutions of the government
- **Symbol:** gesture, architect, sign and concept which signifies or expresses something else
- **Totem:** a plant and animal or object which is symbol of a sacred group



## Exercises

**Answer the following very short answer questions in 1-15 words each:**

1. What do you mean by power?
2. Name the three types of authority given by Max Weber.
3. What do you mean by economy?
4. Mention any two elements of state.
5. Who gave the theory of animism?
6. Who made a distinction between sacred and profane things?
7. Who discussed the idea of naturism?
8. Who calls religion 'a belief in supernatural being'?
9. Give the names of two Semitic religions.
10. What do you understand by sect?
11. Give the meaning of cult.
12. Name the two major classes in the capitalist society as given by Karl Marx.
13. What is formal education?
14. Define informal education.

**Answer the following short answer questions in 30-35 words each:**

1. What is stateless society?
2. Discuss charismatic authority.
3. What is legal-rational authority?
4. Write down two merits of Panchayati Raj system.
5. What do you mean by animism and naturism?
6. What is an interest group?
7. Write a short note on sacred and profane.
8. Write a short note on totemism.
9. What is a pastoral economy?
10. How does agrarian economy differ from industrial economy?
11. What is Jajmani system?
12. Discuss capitalist society.
13. What is socialist society?
14. Give example of privatisation of education.

**Answer the following long answer questions in 75-85 words each:**

1. Discuss the views of Emile Durkheim on religion.
2. In what way does religion play an important role in society?
3. What is an educational institution? Write down the educational policies adopted by the government.
4. Write the functions of education in brief.
5. Write a short note on types of authority by Max Weber.
6. Differentiate a state society from a stateless society.

**Answer the following long answer questions in 250-300 words each:**

1. What is meant by political institutions? Discuss in detail.
2. Write a note on Panchayati Raj.
3. In what way do interest groups act as pressure groups?
4. Define religion. Describe its features.
5. In what way is religion useful and harmful for the society?
6. Briefly discuss the characteristics of primitive, pastoral, agrarian and industrial economies.
7. Write a note on division of labour.
8. Define economic institution. Write down the changes taking place in economy system.
9. Define education. Differentiate with examples between formal and informal education.
10. Discuss the views of functionalist sociologists on the role of education in society.

## Unit-5

# Social Structure, Social Stratification and Social Change





## Chapter 9

# Social Structure

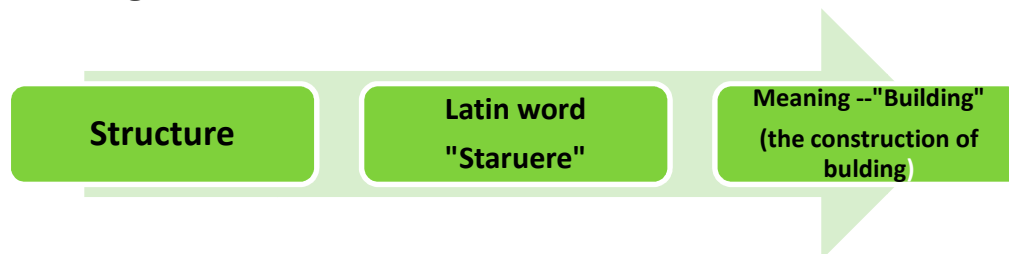
### Highlight :

- 9.1 Meaning
- 9.2 Characteristics
- 9.3 Elements
  - 9.3.1 Status
  - 9.3.2 Role

## Introduction

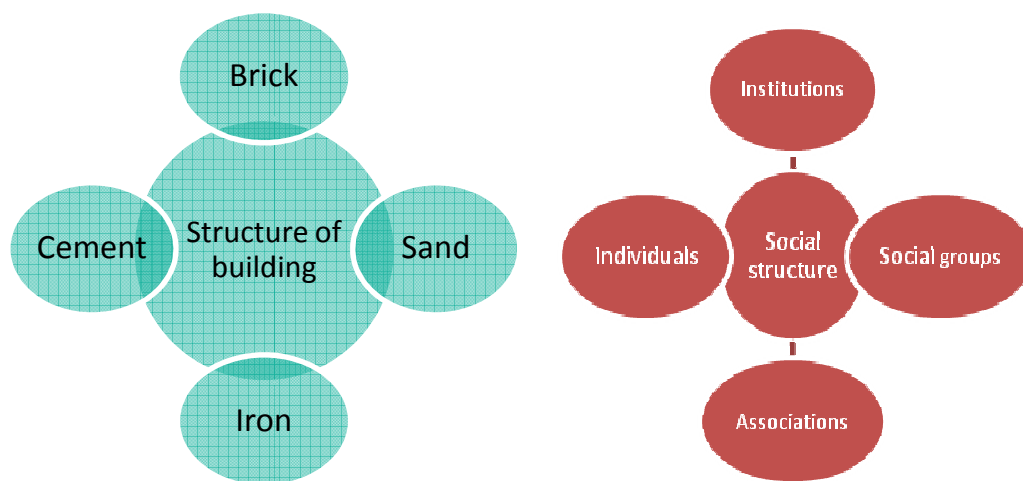
Social structure is a basic concept in Sociology. Herbert Spencer was one of the first scholars to focus on social structure and its analysis. Later, it became very popular in sociological studies and many sociologists and other social scientists wrote about it. The literal meaning of structure is the form of sequence of various units. Just as a bicycle is a whole that comes into existence when its various parts are put together in a systematic way, in the same manner broadly speaking, social structure means the social organisation of a society constituting an integrated whole or the systematic arrangement of various units in society. In the sociological sense social structures are recurring patterns of behaviour and interaction which are restraining, omnipresent and long-lasting. They may themselves be invisible, but they make social life predictable, organised and familiar.

## Meaning of Social Structure



The word 'structure' is derived from the Latin word *staruere*, which means 'building'. The English meaning of the word structure means orderly arrangements or the

construction of a building. It refers to some kind of orderly arrangements of different parts, which implies an outer arrangement, composition or organisation of the constituent elements. For example, a musical composition has a structure, which is made up of musical notes, beats, verses etc. Similarly, a building has a structure consisting of various parts such as stones, sand, bricks and iron and so on. The structure of a building comes up only when various parts are arranged in a proper order. Similarly, society too has its own structure, which is created by individuals through interactional network of social relationships

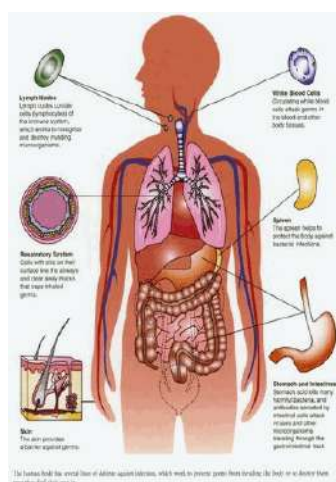


The above figures depict how the structure of a human society is similar to the structure of a building, which has three features: (i) It has the building material such as bricks, mortars, beams, and pillars, etc. (ii) All these are arranged in a definite order and (iii) All these come together to obtain the shape of a building as one unit. In the same way the structure of a society consists of (i) Males and females, adults and children, various occupational and religious groups, and so on, (ii) The interrelationship between various parts (such as relationship between husband and wife, between parents and children, and between various groups), and (iii) All the parts of the society come together to work as a unit. Thus, the term social structure describes how the various parts of society are organised and follow stable patterns of collective rules, roles, and activities. However, the structure itself remains invisible, i.e., it silently shapes actions of its members.

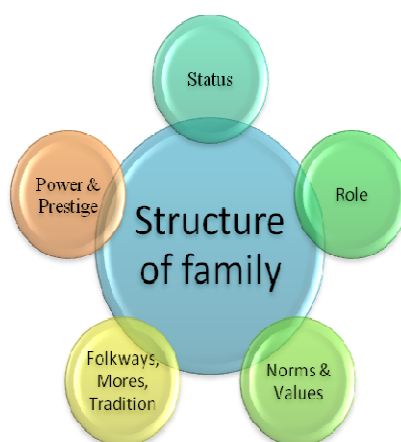
The concept of social structure began to be used in Sociology as result of the influence of Biology. Herbert Spencer was the first sociologist who used the term social structure and compared it with the structure of the human body or the biological organism.

According to him, society is a super organism. Human body has various parts and in the same way social structure also has various aspects. The body structure, depicted scientifically, has various parts such as hands, feet, eyes, ears, cells, respiratory system, stomach, and so on. However, these different parts are not the body in themselves. Their collected sum is the body or a whole structure. That is, various organs of the body are incapable of independent existence. It is only when they come together that structure comes into existence. The parts of the whole are mutually related and have definite functions to perform. In the same way, the components or units of a social structure are individuals or human beings in a society, occupying a position in social structure. The arrangement in the social structure remains stable even though the persons are subject to change (due to death, mobility, and so on). Thus, a nation, an organisation, a school, a church and similar social units can continue to exist as structural arrangements though the personnel of each may change from time to time.

### Pictorial Examples of Structure



Structure of human body



Structure of Family

Following are some of the important definitions of social structure:

#### Box 1

- **A. R. Radcliffe-Brown** defined social structure as an arrangement of persons in institutionally controlled or defined relationships (such as the relationship of a king and a subject, or that of a husband and a wife).

- **Talcott Parsons** says that the term social structure applies to the particular arrangement of the interrelated institutions, agencies, social patterns, as well as, the statuses and roles which each person assumes in the group.

So social structure is an abstract entity whose parts are dynamic and changing.

## Characteristics

The main characteristics of social structures are:

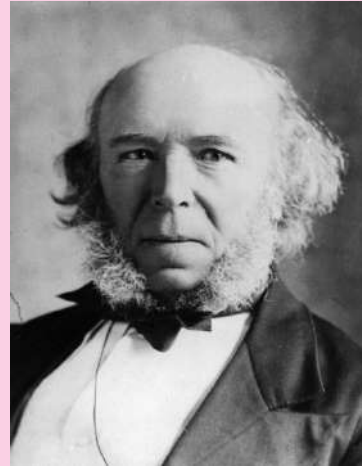
- Social structure is an abstract phenomenon. It is largely invisible in the sense that it is not observable in a material form in a physical setting but is dispersed in all levels of society, from the most macro-sociological level, such as the United Nations, to the most micro-sociological level, such as a parent-child interaction.
- The individuals are the units of association and institution in a society. Therefore, they constitute the social structure.
- All these institutions, organisations, etc. are inter-related and they co-exist for the smooth functioning of society.
- The patterned and differentiated arrangements constitute the model of social structure.
- The units of social structure in almost all the societies are same but their form may vary from society to society.
- Social structures are constraining because they determine appropriate behaviour in any given social situation.
- They are universal because, as members of society, we are surrounded by social structures, from informal small group settings (family, friends) to formal larger group settings (workplace, public agencies).
- They are enduring because these structures existed when we were born, and they will probably exist when we die and persist over generations.
- Social structure depicts the external ambience of society which remains the same. However, the functioning of the internal parts keeps changing.



## Box 2

### Historical Roots of the term Social Structure:

The term Social Structure became very popular in sociological studies after 1850, with the work of Herbert Spencer. Spencer was fascinated by the biological analogies (organic structure and evolution), and applied the term 'structure' to his analysis of society and spoke of 'social structure'. In his book *The Principal of Sociology*, Spencer discussed the concept of Social Structure by comparing 'structure of societies' with the 'structure of living organisms'. Any organism has a 'structure' that consists of number of interrelated parts such as head, limbs, and heart. Each of these parts has a 'function' to perform to maintain the life of the total organism. In the same way, Spencer argued that a society has a structure; it also consists of interrelated parts, such as the family, religion and so on. Ideally, each of these components also has a 'function' that contributes to overall stability of the social system.



Herbert Spencer

Thus, according to Spencer, 'a whole society' is a set of connected structures, like 'system of organs'. Durkheim later undertook the reworking and usage of the word 'social structure'. He used this term to refer to overall pattern of social life in societies studied as whole. Later, G. P. Murdock in America, A. R. Radcliffe Brown and others in Britain and Claude Levi-Strauss in France used this concept frequently and popularised it.

From the above discussion it can be concluded that social structure depicts structure of a society. It is static but has dynamic parts. It is developed in order to achieve definite goals. It refers to some kind of ordered arrangements of different parts or components. A nation, an association, a university, a religious organisation, etc. can continue to exist as a structural arrangement over a long period of time.

### Activity 9.1

Trace out the social structure of your family and your community.

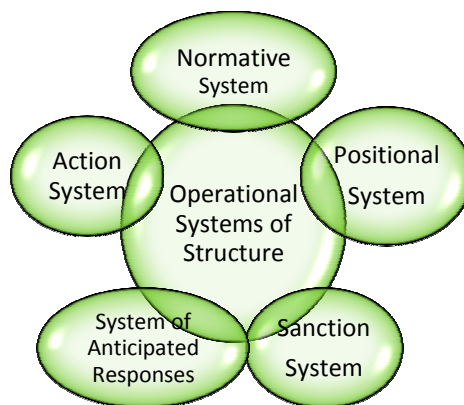
### Box 3

#### Illustration of School having Structure

A school or any educational institution has a structure of its own. It has a patterned arrangement of components which have their own functions. All the components of the school tend to change but structure retains its stability. Every year, senior students exit and new students are admitted. Some faculty members may be replaced by the new members. They, along with the students participate in planning the session and activities and form rules and regulations and even renew these rules and regulations depending upon the need and necessity of the institution. New members design their courses, assign work to students and evaluate their progress. The ways in which individual faculty members and students perform their roles vary, but the general patterns are much the same, and fit together into an overall structure of a school or an educational group. Although the structure itself remains invisible, it silently shapes actions. Thus, analysing the form and influence of a social structure gives Sociology its distinctive nature in understanding society and human affairs.

### Maintenance of Social Structure

In social structure, human beings organise themselves into associations for the confirmed pursuit of some standard goals. This aim can be fulfilled only if the social structure is based upon operational systems that help in its maintenance. Some of these systems are as follows:



## **1. Normative System**

The normative system presents some ideals and values before the members of a society. The members attach emotional importance to these norms. The various groups, institutions and associations are inter-related in accordance to norms and values. The individuals perform their roles in conformity with the accepted norms of society.

## **2. Position System**

Position system refers to the statuses and roles of the individuals. The desires, aspirations and expectations of the individuals are varied, multiple and unlimited. In the society each individual has more than one status. For example, in a family, a man is a father, brother, son, husband etc. When he interacts with the wife, he has the status of husband and he cannot play the role of brother and son with his wife. In other words, the proper functioning of social structure depends upon proper allocation of roles and statuses.

## **3. Sanction System**

Society provides a sanction system for the proper enforcement of norms. The integration and coordination of the different parts depends upon conformity of norms. Sanctions can be positive or negative. Those who conform to social norms are rewarded. Those who do not abide by the norms are punished by the society. The stability of a social structure depends upon the effectiveness of its sanction system.

## **4. System of Anticipated Responses**

The anticipated response system calls upon individuals to participate in the social system. It is the participation of members of a society that sets the social structure in motion. The successful working of social structure depends upon the realisation of duties by the individuals. Members of a society internalise the expected behaviour through socialisation process, which prepares them to anticipate or predict the behaviour of others in each situation and act accordingly in an expected manner. This system of anticipated reaction is the cause of stability of a social structure.

## **5. Action System:**

Talcott Parsons has given special emphasis on the concept of social action. According to him the web of social relationships is born out of the actions and interactions of the

members. The action system thus, becomes a vital component that makes the web of social relationships active and sets the social structure in motion.

## **Elements of Social Structure**

According to H. M. Johnson, the basic elements of social structure which guide our actions are status, roles, norms, values, power and prestige. In this chapter we will focus on status and role.

## **Status and Role**

Status and role are the twin concepts. They go side by side. Each status has a corresponding role. A status is a position that a person holds in the society or within various groups of which one is a member. At any given time, the individual can occupy the statuses of a student, athlete, friend, lover, or a number of others, depending on the setting. With each change of status, the individual plays a different role or roles. Thus, in every society and every group, each member holds a position or status and performs one's role accordingly. This helps in the proper functioning of the society.

## **Status**

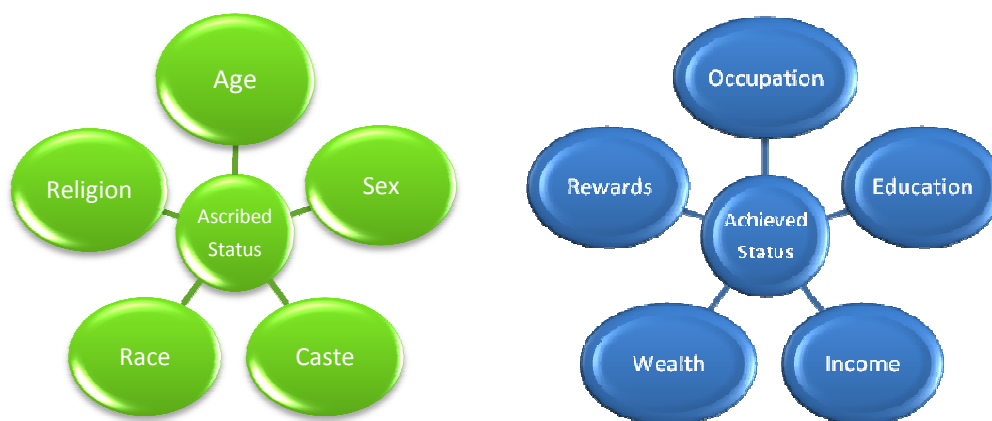
Status is generally defined as the rank or position of an individual in a group or in a social system. Status refers to the position of the individual within a particular group, such as, one's family, neighbourhood, club, etc. Each such position carries certain rights and duties. Each person holds a number of statuses, which are constantly changing as one drops some old ones and gains new ones.

According to Ralph Linton, status is primarily a position in a social structure involving rights, duties and reciprocal expectations of behaviour, none of which depend on the personal characteristics of the status occupants. According to him, an individual may hold several statuses simultaneously, for example, a man can be a husband, an advocate and a member of religious sect or caste. There are two ways in which an individual in society can acquire status – through ascription and through achievement or merit. That is, one's status can either be ascribed or achieved.

**Ascribed Status** is an assigned status. It is given by the society or the social group without regard for any particular or unique qualities, nationality, parentage, etc. and is involuntary and fixed at birth. One's gender or caste, religion, age etc. are ascribed

statuses. However, biologically based ascribed statuses like age, gender and caste are unchangeable while some of the above mentioned statuses can be changed for example, our nationality or religion.

**Achieved Status** is any social position attained by an individual as a result of one's personal efforts in open, formal market competition with others and it includes aspects like education, occupation, power etc. In other words, it is not hereditary, i.e., not fixed at birth. The marital status of a person, for instance, is an achieved status. So is one's educational qualification and professional position



## Characteristics of Status

### 1. External symbols to identify the status

According to Kingsley Davis, a person's identity in a social situation reveals one's status. Though not always certain, external symbols help the identification of one's statuses in the society. The style of dress is one such indicator. Soldiers and army officers, nurses, doctors, advocates, policemen, religious missionaries and priests wear different dresses. Their statuses can be gauged by means of their dresses.

### 2. Every status has its own rights, duties and obligations

The nature of these rights and duties is decided by the normative system of society. For example, it is the right of an employer to expect a particular behaviour from one's employee and it is the obligation of the employee to behave in a certain manner.

### **3. Norms governing status are contextual**

Status related norms vary from person to person, for different statuses and in different situations, even though they are believed to be common to all. For example, the norms like 'be honest', 'be truthful' etc., are believed to be common to all. But in practice we know that a doctor cannot always tell the truth to the patient regarding the state of the person's disease. Thus, norms are always relative to situation.

### **4. One individual may have several statuses**

Each society has numerous groups, each of which has many statuses. Since each member of society is member of many groups, every individual occupies a number of statuses which may vary from situation to situation. One's status may differ with the type of group. For example, college student may be student to one's teachers, a customer to the shop owner, a brother to one's sister, a son to one's father, and so on.

### **5. Statuses add to social order and social stability**

All of us are born into a society in which statuses already exist. They are embedded in the structure of our society. We cannot create them afresh. The statuses of farmers, soldiers, teachers, clerks etc., are not our creations. Hence, these statuses create order and maintain stability in society.

## **Role**

Whereas a status is a position within the social structure, a role is the set of social expectations attached to any given status. A role determines how we are expected to behave and interact based on the status we occupy in a given social situation. Hence, we occupy a status but we play a role. Vilfredo Pareto introduced the concept of role in 1916 and was the first to recognise the sociological significance of the labels such as lawyers, physicians and artists, etc., that indicate their roles.

Linton defines role as the expected behaviour of an individual in a certain status. Role is a dynamic expression of a status. Individual holds a status and performs a role. For

example, an individual who holds the status of a student has to attend classes and complete assignments as part of her/his role. In addition, a role is the expected behaviour associated with a specific social status. Each distinctive status, whether ascribed or achieved has certain role expectations. For instance, one may occupy the status of a son or a daughter and thus, have expectations of receiving food and shelter from one's parents, while in return one may have to meet their expectations that one takes one's studies seriously, behave well and show respect to them. Both are examples of role.

## Definitions of Role

**W. F. Ogburn and M. F. Nimkoff** define role as a set of socially expected and approved behaviour patterns consisting of both duties and privileges, associated with a particular position in a group.

**Ralph Linton** describes role as a term used to designate the sum-total of the cultural pattern associated with a particular status. It includes attitudes, values and behaviour given by the society to any and all persons occupying that status.

Roles are significant components of a social structure. They contribute to the society's stability by enabling members to anticipate the behaviour of others and to pattern their own actions accordingly. Both status and role vary by culture. Every social role has a cultural basis.

A role defines the rights, obligations and privileges of a person who occupies a particular status. However, we must remember that members of the society occupy different statuses at different times and places. As society itself is a network of such statuses, each status has a set of expected behaviours called roles. There may be more than one role attached to any given status; a **role set** is the sum of all the roles attached to a status.

### Activity 9.2

1. Compare the rights and duties of a teacher in India and America.

2. Compare the teacher student relationship of Indian Society and American Society.
3. Make a list of the various statuses occupied by your mother and father.

## Characteristics of Role

Social role has the following important characteristics. They are as follows:

1. **Role is the action aspect of a status:** It involves various types of actions that a person has to perform in accordance with the expectations of the society. The number of roles that a person plays depends on the statuses that one assumes.
2. **Role is learned:** Roles are a set of behaviours that are learned either through the process of socialisation or through observational learning. Along with the basic values that go with the role and which give it meaning, an individual learns social roles.
3. **Role has a psychological dimension:** The concept of a role has an aspect of social psychology. The individual is trained psychologically from childhood through socialisation to take up a role, be it that of a son or a daughter, brother or sister, father or mother, teacher or clerk etc.
4. **Roles are reciprocal:** Roles carry the notion of reciprocity. They not only comprise the expected behaviour of an individual in a situation, but also the behaviour of others towards one.
5. **Roles vary in importance:** All the roles are not equally important. Some roles are more important than others. The roles that are important are called key roles while the roles that are less in significance are called general roles. Key roles are valuable for the organisation of the society while general roles are helpful in the fulfilment of day-to-day activities.
6. **Role is dynamic:** Role is dynamic in many ways. It is constantly changing as the individual grows up. Also, the ideas, values and objects on which a role is based, may change and so does the concept of role. The role which is justified at a particular time may not be justified at some other time.



7. **Role is status in action:** Role is the action aspect of status. It involves various types of actions that a person has to perform in accordance with the expectations of the society.

8. **Limited area of operation:** Each role has a limited area of operation and the role has to be confined within that area. For example, a police officer has a role to play in the police station, but when one is with one's, family the former role ceases and the other role takes over.

### Activity 9.3

1. Is there any conflict between your role as student and as son or daughter?
2. Have you noticed the conflict or strain among your father or mother as parents and as professionals?

### Relation between Status and Role

- Role and status are interrelated.
- A status is simply a position in society or in a group. A role is the behavioural aspect of status.
- Statuses are occupied and roles are played.
- Both status and role are dynamic and constantly changing. Hence, role changes with each new incumbent in a status.

Everyone has a combination of many social statuses or a **status set**. Status set includes our gender, occupation, ethnic group, volunteer associations, and hobbies. So, one person may have a status set that includes being a woman, a sales professional, a mother, a daughter, a sister, a person with a Punjabi heritage, and a volunteer social worker.

Similarly, **role set** is the term used to describe the variety of roles and relationships you have as a result of your status in society. For instance, a high school student interacts with a variety of different people as a student, including teachers, the principal, guidance counsellors, persons in the school administration and one's fellow students. One's role set includes the different behaviours, or roles, one uses to meet the demands of this one social status of 'student'.

## Conclusion

Social structure implies a social organisation based on time-honoured patterns of social interaction between different relationships that are regulated through accepted norms and shared values. It includes social status, which is the position or rank of a person or group, within the society and which may be ascribed or achieved. Structure also consists of social roles, which are the behaviour expected of an individual who occupies a given social position or status.

## Glossary

- **Achieved status:** status achieved by an individual through skill and talent
- **Ascribed status:** status assigned by birth to an individual
- **Multiple roles:** the term multiple roles refer to the complex of roles associated not with a single status but with various statuses. For example a professor is also a father, son, husband, brother, friend, citizen etc.
- **Role:** role is the expected behaviour of an individual who holds a certain status
- **Role conflict:** when a person has many role sets, performance of one role may be in conflict with another role. This situation is called as role conflict. For example, a teacher on invigilation duty might find the son of a friend cheating. In such a situation one is in a dilemma whether or not one should report the student.
- **Role set:** Robert Merton introduced the term 'role set' to identify a number of roles attached to a single status. The status of a student involves one's role as a pupil, one's role as a peer or a friend of other students, one's role as a user of the library and one's role as a member of a school team.
- **Status:** refers to the social position of the individual
- **Status set:** the term was first used by Robert Merton when he referred to a set of statuses. It is believed that there are certain statuses which have importance only with regard to certain other statuses. For example, husband-wife, parent-child, teacher-pupil, doctor-patient, etc.
- **Structure:** orderly arrangements of different parts are called social structure

## Exercises

**Answer the following very short answer questions in 1-15 words each:**

1. Give the meaning of the term social structure.
2. From which the word 'structure' is derived?
3. Who was the first sociologist to use the term social structure?
4. Name the elements of social structure.
5. Who wrote the book '*The Principal of Sociology*'?
6. What is status?
7. Name two types of social statuses.
8. Who gave the terms ascribed and achieved status?
9. Give two examples of ascribed status.
10. Give two examples of achieved status.
11. Define role.
12. Mention any two characteristics of role.

**Answer the following short answer questions in 30-35 words each:**

1. Define social structure.
2. Give two points of similarities between status and role.
3. Give the diagrammatic representation of structure of family.
4. Distinguish between ascribed and achieved status.
5. In what ways are roles learned behaviour?
6. Write a short note on status and role.
7. What is status?
8. What is role set?
9. What do you mean by role conflict? Give its example.

**Answer the following long answer questions in 75-85 words each:**

1. State the three characteristics of social structure.
2. What is ascribed status? Give its example.
3. Role is an element of social structure. Discuss in brief.
4. Status is an element of social structure. Discuss.
5. Discuss how status and role are interrelated.

**Answer the following answer questions in 250-300 words each:**

1. Define social structure and discuss its characteristics.
2. Which systems help in the maintenance of social structure?
3. What is social structure? What are the elements of social structure?
4. Define status. Write its characteristics in detail.
5. Define role. Write its characteristics in detail.

# Chapter 10

## Social Stratification

### Highlight :

10.1 Concept

10.2 Forms

10.2.1 Caste

10.2.2 Class

### Introduction

Social inequality is a fact of life and exists in every society. Some small children or teenagers are attending school while others are found delivering newspapers in the morning or selling various products at traffic lights. Similarly, some little children stay at home and are looked after by their family while others are often seen performing acrobatics on the roads in the hope of getting some money from the passersby so that they may buy some food to eat. All these are instances of social inequality which is found in every society and becomes visible through caste, class, gender and power relations.



Inequality in varying degrees is found in terms of access to property, prestige and power in societies. In fact, such inequality is the characteristic feature of all societies. Most of the inequality is socially patterned, that is, governed by social laws and norms. The amount of inequality and its type has a bearing on the society, as well as, on each individual member of those societies. People who do not have equal power, prestige and property, differ in terms of their life chances, their institutional patterns of conduct, their life styles, culture patterns and in their attitudes, ideologies and beliefs.

Rights over goods and services or property, the power or ability to secure oneself against opposition and the prestige or social honour are the three things that are scarce but at the same time much desired and sought after by people in every society. These three things reach people in different amount, as a result of which a hierarchy of positions or group of positions are created in every society which are called strata. Each stratum is distinct from the other on the basis of its access to amount of property, power and prestige and this disparity is called 'stratification'. Therefore, stratification is a social phenomenon in which society is divided into groups on the basis of the status or roles occupied by the people. People of one group or stratum have common interests and common identity and lifestyles distinguishing them from members of other social strata. Therefore, social inequality is quite common in every society but when this inequality creates different strata or groups then that situation leads to social stratification.

Sociologists use the term social stratification to refer to a system by which categories of people in a society are ranked in hierarchy. This hierarchy shapes people's identity and influences their relations with others. Moreover, it determines their access to resources and opportunities.

### **Box 1**

#### **Definitions**

**W. F. Ogburn and M. F. Nimkoff:** The process by which individuals and groups are ranked in more or less enduring hierarchy of status is known as stratification

**George A. Lundberg:** A stratified society is one marked by inequality, by differences among people that are evaluated by them as being "lower" and "higher."

**Pascual Gisbert:** Social stratification is the division of society into permanent groups of categories linked with each other by the relationship of superiority and subordination.

**Melvin Tumin:** Social stratification refers to arrangement of any social group or society into hierarchy of positions that are unequal with regard to power, property, social evaluation and psychic gratification.

**Anthony Giddens:** Stratification implies structural inequalities between different groupings of people.

**Raymond W. Murrey:** Social stratification is horizontal division of society into “higher” and “lower” social units.

## Characteristics

From the above definitions we can identify certain features of social stratification:

1. It is social in nature, i.e. it is a characteristic of society not just of individuals.
2. It persists over generations. Stratification has existed from very early times. It is not a recent phenomenon.
3. It is universal and has been found in every society.
4. It also varies in form and degree in different societies.
5. The inequality is founded on the beliefs of the people in society. The members of one group believe that they are superior to the members of the other groups.
6. It affects the life chances, life styles and mobility of individuals.

## Principles of Social Stratification

The main principles of social stratification are as follows:

1. It is a peculiar feature of a society because of which social resources are distributed unequally among people, irrespective of the personal abilities of the individual.
2. It is linked to the family position and is, therefore, passed on from one generation to another. That is, the children assume the social position of their parents. A person’s social position is thus ‘ascribed’ and gets reinforced with the marriage being restricted to members of one’s own group.
3. It persists over generations because it is supported by prejudices, which can be defined as predetermined fixed notions or attitudes and inflexible beliefs held by members of one group against another. The prejudices are often grounded in stereotypes, which can be defined as having predetermined and oversimplified images or ideas about another person or group.
4. Those who enjoy social privileges tend to support stratification but those who have faced exploitation and sufferings oppose it.

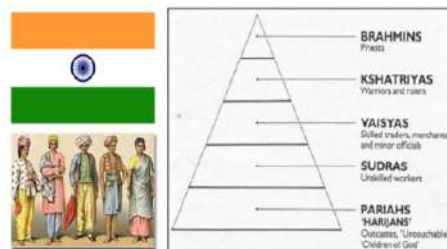
## Major Forms of Stratification

The major forms of stratification are:

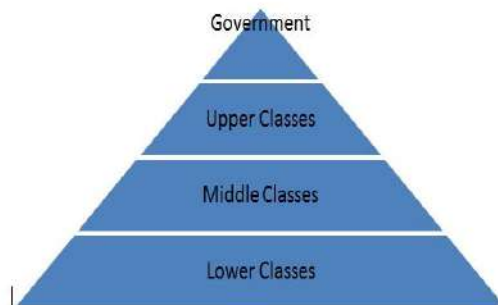
- (i) Caste
- (ii) Class
- (iii) Estate
- (iv) Slavery

**Caste** is a hereditary endogamous social group in which a person's rank and its accompanying rights and obligations are ascribed on the basis of one's birth into a particular group. Stratification on the basis of **class** is dominant in modern society. In this, a person's position depends to a very great extent upon achievement and one's ability to use the inborn characteristics and wealth that s/he may possess. **Estate system** of medieval Europe provides another system of stratification which gave much emphasis to birth, as well as, to wealth and possessions. **Slavery** had an economic basis. In slavery, every slave had a master to whom one was subjected. The master's power over the slave was unlimited. In this chapter we will focus on caste and class.

### The Indian Caste System



Caste System



Class System





Estate System



Slavery System

## Caste

The word 'caste' has been derived from a Spanish and Portuguese word *casta* which means race, lineage or breed. In the Indian context the term refers to a broad institutional arrangement that in Indian language is referred to by the distinct terms Varna and Jati. Varna and jati have both been described as caste. However, although related both are not the same thing. Varna was the name given to the four-fold division of society into Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. This system was created to have harmony and cooperation between people living in the society and even if people in the Brahmin Varna were treated with respect by other Varnas, within the Varna it meant nothing and each member had no special identity as a Brahmin. It was when Varna of a person was decided on the basis of birth rather than qualities that it became the distorted Jati. Jati is a general term and commonly refers to the institution of caste in Indian languages. Varna was mainly based on division of labour and occupation falling broadly in the categories of priests, warriors, commoners or tradesmen and the so-called lower jobs like those of a barber, cobbler etc. Varnas are four in number whereas jati (caste and sub-castes) are numerous. There are more than three thousand castes and sub-castes in India. Hence, the present caste system is said to be a distorted form of the original Varna system.

### Activity 10.1

1. Recall and identify some scenes or events from films which you have seen depicting caste inequality in Indian society.
2. Discuss the differences in the society on the basis of caste.

## Features of Caste

G. S. Ghurye has listed the following as the principle features of caste:

1. **Segmental division of society:** Segmentation means division of society into clear-cut segments or parts. Caste system involves strict segmentation of society, with the various groups being rigidly defined and membership in them determined by birth. Castes are also divided into sub-castes and further divided into sub-sub-castes.
2. **Ascribed status:** Caste is determined by birth. It is hereditary and one gets one's caste from one's parents. Caste is not a matter of choice.
3. **Hierarchy:** Castes have hierarchy, i.e., every caste has a specified place in the hierarchy of all castes. It is a hierarchical system that defines a ranking place for all of the castes.
4. **Fixed occupations:** Castes are linked to occupations, i.e., a person of one caste can involve oneself in the occupation traditionally associated with one's own caste and members of other castes cannot enter that occupation. Thus, there exists limited choice of occupation, which is enforced within a caste, as well as, by other castes. A caste might follow more than one traditional occupation but its members would still have restricted choice.
5. **Endogamy:** Caste is a closed group and therefore there are restrictions regarding marrying outside one's own caste. Endogamy applies to the various sub-groups within a caste too, preventing marriage between the sub-groups. In endogamy a person can marry within her/his own caste only.
6. **Restrictions regarding food and social interaction:** Rules in castes also include what kind of food is to be eaten and with whom food can be shared. There are restrictions on dietary and social interactions that set down rules regarding who can consume what and accept food from whom. These restrictions apply not only at the caste level, but also at sub-caste level.
7. **Purity and pollution:** The hierarchical ordering of castes is based on the notions of 'purity' and 'pollution'. Castes that are considered ritually pure have

high status, while those occupying lowest position in the hierarchy are supposed to be impure.

8. **Mutual interdependence:** Despite being unequal and different from each other in hierarchical and ritual terms, castes are supposed to be complementary and non-competing groups. Caste system has led to interdependent interaction between different castes following different occupations in a village or cluster of villages through Jajmani system.

Thus, caste system ensures the continuity of the traditional social organisation of India. But caste system has certain dysfunctions also as it creates obstacles by imposing social restrictions and ideas of purity and pollution. Castes at the bottom of the hierarchy have suffered discrimination and exploitation, especially the 'untouchable' castes. Untouchability is the social practice of casting out a group by regarding them as "ritually polluted" and segregating them from the mainstream. The people who were considered untouchable came from a section of society which is not only held in the lowest esteem, but which is deemed by the other castes as unclean, and thus, unfit for human society or co-mingling. However, with the advent of education, modernisation and westernisation, the institution of caste has also experienced many changes.

### **Changes in Caste System**

Realisation of caste as a social evil and as a colonial strategy to divide Indians made the nationalist leaders work towards uplifting the lower castes. Reform movements by Mahatma Jotiba Phule, Babasaheb Ambedkar in eastern India, Periyar E. V. Ramasamy in the south and the protests against untouchability by Mahatma Gandhi and B. R. Ambedkar brought significant changes in the caste system. In the post-independence period, radical reforms took place.

The following changes have come in the structural and functional dimensions of caste:

### **Structural Changes**

1. There has been a weakening of the supremacy of Brahmins. With the process of modernisation, they do not enjoy the same social status, which they once used to.
2. Changes have come in caste hierarchy too. It is no longer a clearly demarcated system of hierarchically-ordered caste groups as it used to be. With

industrialisation and urbanisation, many new forms of occupations emerged which could not be placed in the traditional hierarchy.

3. Constitutional measures have been taken to ensure the protection of the rights of the lower castes. As a result, their social status has improved to a large extent.

### **Functional Changes**

1. Birth no longer constitutes the basis of social prestige. Criteria such as wealth, ability, education, efficiency etc. have become the determinants of social status.
2. Today occupation is not the hereditary monopoly of a caste any more. One is free to take up any occupation one likes according to one's ability and interest. Modern industries have created all kinds of new jobs for which there are no caste rules.
3. The impact of western philosophy, coeducation, working together of males and females of different castes in the same place and legal provisions have reduced endogamic restrictions and declared inter-caste marriages as legally valid. However, although things have changed, endogamy still remains the dominant mode of marriage in India.
4. There has been increase in the social interaction between castes, especially in the urban areas where there are fewer restrictions on intercaste relations.
5. The importance of the ideas of purity and pollution in Hindu social life has considerably decreased due to education and modernisation. Moreover, collective living in cities made it difficult for the people to follow caste segregated patterns of behaviour in their day to day life.
6. The relations of jajmani have been replaced by market relationships in urban area.
7. Westernisation and modernisation have resulted in increasingly similar life styles of all castes. Nowadays, different castes do not appear to be distinct as they used to earlier.

Thus, change in the structures and functions of caste system have weakened this system and it has become less rigid. Modern education, liberal ideas of individualism have resulted in the abandoning of many caste practices.

## Factors of Change in Caste System

1. **Social and Religious Reform Movements:** Various social and religious movements have criticised the caste system. For instance, the Brahmo Samaj movement led by Raja Ram Mohan Roy rejected the barriers of caste divisions and stood for universalisation and brotherhood.
2. **Modern Education:** Modern education introduced into the country by the British has played an integral role in changing the attitude of people about caste system. It has introduced many liberal ideas which have resulted in an open-minded approach in the people.
3. **Industrialisation:** Industrialisation has made available new sources of livelihood to people and also made occupational mobility possible. All this helps in weakening the hold of caste.
4. **Urbanisation:** With the coming up of towns and cities with new institutions like hotels, restaurants, theatres, clubs and schools, it became impossible to observe caste restrictions and taboos. Cities characterised by anonymity, overcrowding, mobility, secularism and flexibility make the operation of the caste quite difficult.
5. **Development of transportation and communication:** Development of modern means of transport and communication has brought different castes closer and has helped diminish its hold on the individuals.
6. **Liberal ideas of materialism, individualism and meritocracy:** Growing importance of wealth, individuality and achievement orientation has resulted in weakening the ideology of caste.
7. **Government efforts:** Legal, administrative and constitutional provisions have played a major role in giving a severe blow to the caste system.

Thus, caste dominance no longer depends on ritual status. Education, economic strength, political network and numerical strength also determine the dominance of caste today. A new development since the 1980s has been a process of **politicisation of caste**. It began with the emergence of caste based political parties and each of such political parties trying to win votes in the elections on the basis of caste solidarities. Caste has made inroads in politics and from a ritual unit it has become an interest group.

It is interesting to note that in present times while for the upper castes their adherence to caste norms and observance of caste customs and practices is limited to the aspects of marriage, religious practice or kinship, for the lower castes, the caste factor has become very important. There is now a new politics of **caste identity**. Identity politics involves the realisation by members of certain social groups of their shared experiences of injustice. These groups, which were marginalised till now, attempt to attain empowerment, representation and recognition from other social groups. They attain this by emphasising and highlighting the very same indicators of their caste group, which had earlier been used to degrade their status. Today, the same features are being utilised to assert their selfhood and distinct identity. They are not seeking equality but a self-identity based on difference.

### Box 2

Caste panchayats are reasserting themselves as guardians of village morality. In October 2004 the Rathi khap panchayat in Asanda village of Jhajjar district ordered Sonia who had been married a year ago, to dissolve her marriage with Ram Pal, abort her unborn child and accept her husband as her brother if she wanted to stay in the village. The fault of the couple was that they both belonged to the same gotra, even though the Hindu Marriage Act recognises such unions. The couple were able to live together only after the intervention of the High Court in the matter which directed the Government of Haryana to provide security to the couple.

(Sunday times of India, New Delhi 2006)



### Activity 10.2

1. Do you know the meaning of honour killing?
2. What are the reasons that can be attributed to honour killings?
3. Have you come across any instances of honour killing in your area?
4. Do you agree with such a system?

## Class

Social class is a form of social stratification which is most evident in industrial societies. It is generally defined as a stratum of people occupying similar social positions in terms of wealth, income, occupation etc. Therefore, a class may be defined as a large scale grouping of people to share economic resources which strongly influences the type of life style they are able to lead. It is a status hierarchy in which individuals and groups are ranked on the basis of esteem and prestige acquired mainly through economic success and accumulation of wealth.

According to R. M. MacIver and C. H. Page the structure of social class involves:

1. A hierarchy of status groups
2. The recognition of superior-inferior stratification
3. The permanency of structure to some degree

### Box 3

#### Definitions

According to **Morris Ginsberg**, a social class is one of two or more broad groups of individuals who are ranked by the members of community in socially superior and inferior positions.

According to **Max Weber**, classes are aggregates of individuals who have the same opportunities of acquiring goods and the same exhibited standard of living.

## Types of Classes

W. Lloyd Warner divided classes into the following types:

1. Upper class which consists of wealthy employers and industrialists who own or directly control productive resources
2. Middle class which includes mostly white collar workers and professionals such as doctors, engineers lawyers etc.
3. Lower class or the working class which includes the blue collar workers or those doing manual jobs.

Interestingly, there is an important category of peasants who are engaged in traditional types of agricultural production. It is found in developing countries such as India.

Class is, thus, a system of stratification in which a person's social status depends upon the individual's achievement. Membership in a class is not based on inherited position.

An individual's class is at least in some part achieved and not simply obtained at birth as is common among other stratification systems.

## Features of Class

Some important features of social class are:

1. **Status group:** Class is a status group. In a society when people do different things, perform different activities and practice different occupations, different statuses emerge.
2. **Economic in nature:** Class depends on the economic differences, e.g., inequalities in possession and control of material resources.
3. **Achieved status:** Class status is an achieved status. Although one may inherit a class status at birth, but birth is not the criterion of this status. It is the achievements of an individual that mostly decide one's class status. Besides, class status can be changed at any time.
4. **Unique lifestyle:** A social class is distinguished from other classes by its established kind of behaviour, which is often referred to as the life-styles of a particular class. It includes manner of dressing, living standard, the recreation and cultural products one is able to enjoy, relationships within the family etc. Life-styles reflect the preferences, tastes and values of a class.
5. **Open groups:** Social classes are open groups. They represent an open social system in which upward vertical social mobility is possible.

### Activity 10.3

1. Do you think that the community in which you live has different social classes? What are they?
2. What are the advantages of belonging to the upper class?
3. Who according to you falls in the middle class?
4. Do you understand the meaning of consumer culture? Do you approve of it?



## **Theoretical Perspectives on Class – Karl Marx and Max Weber**

There are varied opinions over the development of social class. These opinions are guided by certain approaches given by prominent social thinkers. Two major theories of class have been given by Karl Marx and Max Weber.

### **Box 4**

#### **Karl Marx on Class**

According to Karl Marx, a class is a group of people who are related on the basis of means of production and means of livelihood. From Marxian perspective, a class consists of people who have the same role in the process of production. The two basic classes under capitalism are the capitalist (or ruling) class who own and control all productive processes, and the working class who, because they lack that control, have to sell their labour for wages. Thus, there are mainly two classes in society – one, the *bourgeoisie* who own the means of production and the other called the *proletariat* or the working class.

For Marx the history of all societies in the world has been the history of class struggles. That is, ever since human society came into existence, it has been divided into classes who clash in the pursuit of class interests. Conflicting groups have existed in the slave society and feudal system. However, it is in a capitalist society that the opposition of social classes can be best seen. For Marx each society has its own mode of production (nature of its technology and division of labour). Each mode of production produces a typical class system in which one class controls the process of production while the other class acts as the producers and providers of services to the dominant class. Factory becomes the primary site of hostility between the two classes, namely, the capitalists or the *bourgeoisie* and the workers or the *proletariat*. The two classes represent the haves and the have-nots, the exploiters and the exploited, the buyers and sellers of labour power, the oppressors and the oppressed, the powerful and the powerless.

When conflicts become extreme, and the working class gains a class consciousness (self-awareness and the capacity to act in its own rational interests), it challenges the dominance of the capitalist class who are the existing rulers of society. Marx distinguished between a ‘class in itself’ and ‘class for itself’. A ‘class in itself’ is simply a social group whose members share the same relationship to the forces of production. Marx argues that a social group only fully becomes a class when it becomes a ‘class for itself’ when its members have class consciousness and class solidarity. Consequently, the opposing interests of the two classes and consciousnesses eventually lead to class conflict, resulting in a socialist revolution and the establishment of a classless society.



Class in itself



Class for itself

## Box 5

### Max Weber on Class

According to Weber, wealth, power and status form the basis of inequality. Class is associated with the economic aspect, status with community and power with politics. Like Marx, Weber also considers class in economic terms. According to Weber, those who share a similar class situation also share similar life-chances.

Class is based on the fact of owning property and not owning any property.

Weber makes a distinction between:

1. Ownership or Propertied classes who own mines, cattle, slaves, capital goods, stocks, money, land and real estate, buildings, etc.
2. Working class whose labour is directly exploited by capitalists
3. Acquisition classes who have no property but special skills on the basis of which they offer various services (specialists, persons with rare skills, entertainers, sportspersons)
4. Commercial class comprising privileged person such as merchants, bankers, professionals, industrial and agricultural entrepreneurs etc. who possess similar financial resources.

Weber in his theory on capitalism and class structure states that the unequal distribution of power is the basis of social stratification. Classes are stratified on the basis of their relations with goods produced for market. Status groups represented by similar styles of life are stratified on the basis of their income. These elements express a class situation.

While discussing class power Weber believes it is an “unequal access to material

resources.” If someone possesses something that you want or need, then this makes that person more powerful than you since s/he controls access to a desired social resource. For example, the relationship between an employer who is in a dominant position and the employee who is in a subordinate position.

## **New trends in Class System**

Class is no more a simple concept. The present times are seeing the emergence of many new classes. For instance, in India, the restructuring of agrarian system has set in as a result of the land reforms and the green revolution. Introduction of new technology in agriculture has transformed the mode of agricultural production. Along with the traditional landowning class a new class of farmers is emerging who have different skills and experiences. They are people who have retired from civil and the army and have invested their savings in agricultural farms and are not the traditional landowning upper classes. This new class has come into being called ‘**Gentlemen Farmers**’.

Another class of farmers, although small in size, is the ‘**Capitalist Farmer**’ who have become powerful commercial farmers by utilizing the benefits of new technology, high yielding variety of seeds, improved farming methods, better irrigational facilities, credit facilities and better transport and communication facilities. The emergence of the ‘capitalist farmers’ reveals a shift in the agrarian social structure which has helped not only increasing efficiency and productivity but has also helped in the industrial growth and development.

However, the actual tillers of the soil are still the wage earning labourers employed by the traditional and the capitalist farmers who are only engaged in the activity of earning profits. The upper caste rich landowners have become richer while the small peasant farmers have remained poor. Thus, the benefits of the land reforms or the new technology have not been enjoyed uniformly. It is the middle caste farmers who have derived the maximum benefits from agrarian reforms, the migration of upper caste farmers to cities and the state agricultural development programmes. The growing economic prosperity of the middle caste farmers also added to their political clout, e.g., Yadavs of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and Vokkaligas of Karnataka.

The culture of consumerism has given rise to a **New Middle Class** which is looked upon as a potential market that has attracted the Multinational Companies (MNCs). Advertisements portraying the urban middle class have created a perception of an

affluent consumer. The feelings of austerity and dependence on state protection that had prevailed earlier among the middle class has given way to a new middle class that has embraced social practices of taste and consumption and a new cultural standard. Thus, the emergence of the new middle class is an interesting development in the age of economic liberalisation in India.

The most important feature of the class structure in modern India is that all classes have integrated to form a single national economy under a single state regime. The new middle class is now recruiting new members from better off sections of the villages. The village craftsman or artisans are no longer isolated. Caste divisions among workers have little relevance and there is lesser feeling of class consciousness among workers. Everyone is seeking a place in the middle class which is getting more and more diversified.

## Conclusion

- Social inequality is the existence of unequal opportunities and rewards for different social positions or statuses within a group or society.
- It occurs when resources in a given society are distributed unevenly.
- Caste and class are two major forms of stratification.
- Caste structure was defined in terms of purity and pollution in traditional India.
- Caste system in India has undergone considerable changes over the years.
- Castes as interest groups have gained strength.
- Class is a social group whose members share a similar relationship to the means of production.
- Modern class system is open and achievement based.
- With economic, political and social changes, new groups and classes have emerged in society.

## Glossary

- **Class:** An economic grouping based on common position in social relations of production income levels lifestyle and political preferences.
- **Dominant caste:** A middle or upper middle ranking caste with a large population and newly acquired land ownership rights. This combination makes these castes politically economically socially dominant across the country.

- **Jati:** The word for caste, a region specific hierarchical ordering of castes that marry within boundaries, pursue hereditary occupations and are fixed by birth.
- **Lifestyle:** A way of life or the specific kinds and levels of consumption that define the everyday life of particular social groups
- **Stratification:** The hierarchical arrangement of different segments of society into strata or sub groups whose members share the same general position in the hierarchy. It implies inequality.
- **Untouchability:** A social practice within caste system whereby members of lowest caste are considered to be impure and are excluded from most social institutions.
- **Varna:** Caste system dividing society into four hierarchically ordered varnas or caste groups, namely, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras

## Exercises

**Answer the following very short answer questions in 1-15 words each:**

1. What do you mean by social stratification?
2. Name the forms of social stratification.
3. Name the elements of social stratification.
4. What is estate system?
5. From where has the word 'caste' been derived?
6. What is Varna system?
7. Name the hierarchical positions of the different varnas in Hindu society.
8. What do you mean by untouchability?
9. Name some reformers who protested against untouchability.
10. What is class?
11. Name the types of classes.
12. What are the two classes mentioned by Marx?

**Answer the following short answer questions in 30-35 words each:**

1. What is social inequality?
2. Name two forms of social stratification.
3. Write two features of caste system.
4. What is endogamy?

5. What do you mean by pollution and purity?
6. Write a short note on industrialisation and urbanisation.
7. Write two features of class system.
8. Write a short note on new middle class.

**Answer the following long answer questions in 75-85 words each:**

1. Write down four characteristics of social stratification.
2. How is class related to social stratification? Discuss it briefly.
3. Differentiate between caste and class system.
4. Write the four factors of change in caste system.
5. Distinguish between caste and class as two major forms of social stratification.

**Answer the following long answer questions in 250-300 words each:**

1. Define stratification. What are the features of social stratification?
2. Discuss in detail the forms of stratification.
3. What factors are causing change in caste system?
4. Define class system. Write down its characteristics.
5. What new classes have emerged in India?
6. Bring out the main features of class system in India.
7. What are the Marxian and Weberian perspectives on class?

# Chapter 11

## Social Change

### Highlight :

- 11.1 Meaning
- 11.2 Characteristics
- 11.3 Forms
- 10.3 Factors

### Introduction

Change is a very broad concept. Though change is all around us, we do not refer to all of it as social change. Thus, physical growth from year to year or change of seasons does not fall under the concept of social change. In Sociology, we look at social change as alterations that occur in the social structure and social relationships.

### Meaning and Definitions

Social change means change or modification in ways of doing and thinking of people. It is the modification in the life pattern of people and involves changes in the structure and functioning of social forms. All these reflect change in social organisation. There is transformation in social relationships, which implies a change in social processes, social patterns and social interaction. Alteration may occur in norms, values, cultural products and symbols. Other aspects of society can be altered over time as a result of the process of social change. Society may change rapidly or slowly but change in society is an inevitable and continuous process. As we know society has a social structure that weaves the network of social relationship. Therefore, social change means change in the social structure and social relationships of a society. In other words, the process by which social institutions, statuses, roles, norms, values, associations, organisations etc. are altered over the time is known as social change.

### **Box 1**

#### **Definitions**

Social change refers to any modification in established patterns of inter-human relationships and standards of conduct. -**George A. Lundberg**

Social change means only such alterations as occur in social organisation, i.e., structure and function of society. -**Kingsley Davis**

Social changes are variations from the accepted modes of life.

- **John L. Gillin and John P. Gillin**

Put simply, social change denotes an important and long term modification either in social structure or cultural characteristics or both. On the basis of these definitions we can say that change mainly influences three aspects of the society:

- a) Behaviour of the group
- b) Social structure
- c) Cultural attributes

Any process of change brings change in all these three aspects.

Thus, social change is a broad process. Any alteration in any aspect of society – economic, political, religious, ethical, physical, social etc. – can be called social change. This alteration or change may be created by nature itself or planned by the human society.

### **Characteristics of Social Change**

The main characteristics of the nature of social change are as follows:

**1. Social change is a universal phenomenon:** Change occurs in all societies. No society remains completely static. This is true of all societies, primitive as well as civilised. The speed and extent of change may differ from society to society but no society escapes this phenomenon.

**2. The pace of change varies in different societies:** While social change occurs in all societies, its speed is not uniform everywhere. For example, social change in India occurred very slowly when there was no innovation and no planning for development. But with their introduction, various developmental programmes have brought rapidity in the process of social change. Similarly, social change in urban areas is faster than in rural areas. Thus, social change may occur rapidly or slowly.

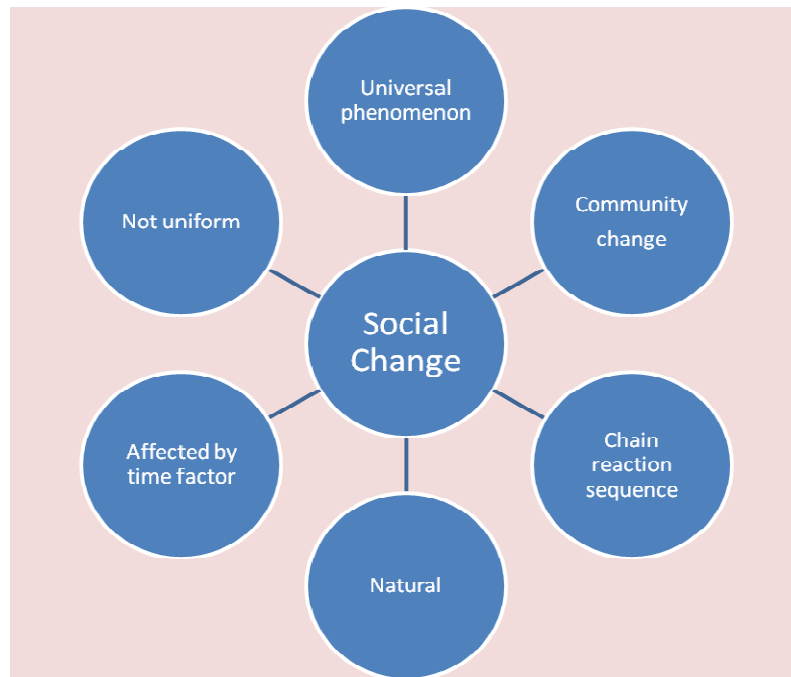


**3. Social change is community change:** It is a change which occurs in the life of the entire community, and not at individual level or a group level. Social change does not refer to the change in the life of an individual or the life patterns of several individuals. It is a change which occurs in the life of the entire community. Social change is social and not individual.

**4. Social change cannot be predicted definitely:** Although change is inevitable, it is difficult to make predictions about the forms of social change. This difficulty arises because there may be some unexpected factors that contribute to the process of social change. For examples, we may say that on account of social reforms movement, untouchability will be abolished from the Indian society or that the basis and ideals of marriage will change due to the marriage laws passed by the government or that industrialisation will increase the speed of urbanisation, but we cannot predict the exact form which social relationships will assume in future. Likewise, changes in social relationships, attitudes, ideals, norms and value cannot be predicted.

**5. The concept of time is associated with change:** When we speak of social change we see society at two different points of time and compare them before drawing conclusions about change. In modern times, the speed of social change is faster today than it used to be in the earlier times. The reason is that the factors which cause social change do not remain uniform and constant. For example before Independence, in a less industrialised India, social change occurred at a slower speed than after 1947, when India became more industrialised.

**6. Social Change may create a chain reaction:** Social change depicts a chain reaction sequence. Change in one aspect of life may lead to a series of changes in other aspects. To take a concrete example, industrialisation destroyed the domestic system of production, which in turn brought women from home to factory and the office. The employment of women further resulted in their independence from the bondage of man. This freedom brought about a change in their self-confidence, attitudes and ideas, which then affected every facet of the family life. Thus, we can see how home life, family relationships, family structure, economic and to some extent, the political patterns of both rural and urban societies are being affected by each other.



**7. Social change results from the interaction of a number of factors:** Social change may not occur due to a single factor but could be the consequence of a number of factors. It occurs due to the change in various aspects such as technology, education, economic development etc. A single factor may cause a change but it is itself always associated with other factors that set off the change. The reason for this is that social phenomena are mutually interdependent and none of them can act as an isolated force that brings about change. In any totality, modification of one part influences the other parts and these further influence more parts, until the whole is involved.

**8. Social change may be planned or unplanned:** Social change occurs either naturally or as a result of planned effort. The direction and rate of social change are often conditioned by human efforts. Plans, programmes and projects may be launched by humans in order to determine and control the rate and direction of social change. Unplanned change refers to change resulting from natural calamities such as famines, floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions etc.

## **Social Change and Cultural Change:**

Social change and cultural change tend to overlap. Some people consider social and cultural changes as identical. Others feel that each social change must be followed by a cultural change and vice-versa. But that is not so because in literal terms culture is broader than society. Cultural change includes change in religion, knowledge, beliefs, customs, science, philosophy, literature, art and artefacts etc. On the other hand, social change brings changes only in the social organisation and social relationships. Social change can be considered as the part of cultural change.

The difference between social and cultural change is as follows:

- a) Social change is a change that occurs only in the social relationships, while cultural change occurs in the field of religion, knowledge, beliefs, customs, science, philosophy, literature, art, laws, etc.
- b) Social change involves change in social structure, while cultural change implies change in various aspects of culture.
- c) Social change may occur consciously or unconsciously, while cultural change primarily occurs through conscious efforts.
- d) The rate of speed of social change may be very rapid, while rate of speed of cultural change is relatively slow. It means there may be rapid change in the relationships, but the speed of change in religion, beliefs and values is very slow.

Thus, it is clear that social change and cultural change are different. However, there is a close relationship between the two and each is influenced directly or indirectly by the change in the other. In practice, this distinction is seldom used and maintained. Quite often, the term socio-cultural change is used to include changes of both kinds.

## **Three Basic Sources of Social Change**

William F. Ogburn proposed that social change takes place basically in one or more of the following three ways:

- Innovation
- Discovery
- Diffusion

### **Innovation**

Innovation means creating something new, using an already known element. It is often defined as a new combination or a new use of existing knowledge, e.g., the assembling of the automobile from an already existing idea. Innovations can be material

(technology) and social (alphabet, trade union). They may be new in form (i.e., in shape or action), in function (what it does), in meaning (its long range consequences) or in principle (the theory or law on which it is based). Innovations bring about changes in the social structure.

## **Discovery**

Discovery involves the act of finding or learning something for the first time, for example, scientists discovering (finding) a new species of plant or the discovery (recognition) of a new talent or the discovery (detection) of pollution in a river. It means finding out elements that exist in the world but are unknown to us. A discovery adds something new to the culture because this reality may have always existed but it becomes part of the culture only after its discovery. However, it becomes a factor in social change only when it is put to use, not when it is merely known. Social and cultural circumstances either encourage or discourage the capacity of discovery.

## **Diffusion**

Diffusion implies the spreading of something more widely. For example, when cultural ideas spread from one group to another, this is an example of diffusion. Most of the social changes in all known societies have developed through diffusion. It operates both within and between societies. It takes place whenever societies come into contact and is a two way process. Diffusion generally involves some modification of the borrowed elements of culture either in form, function or meaning. For instance, the British gave us their language. Yet, the Indian variety of English is quite different from the native English varieties in terms of the choice of words or meanings. In addition, diffusion is a selective process. As we know, although Indians may have adopted the English custom of drinking tea, but they have not taken up their practice of eating beef. Thus, diffusion implies an approach that seeks to explain how, why, and at what rate new ideas and technology spread through cultures.



Innovation



Discovery



Diffusion

## Exogenous and Endogenous Origin of Change

There are certain sources and conditions for change in any society. These sources and conditions may be found in the inner structure of society or these may be interpreted through external causes.

The influences, sources and conditions may be divided into two parts:

- a. Endogenous (internal causes)
- b. Exogenous (external causes)

Endogenous change refers to change originating from within the society and exogenous change is a change being caused by outside factors. It is very difficult to determine where and how change originates. It can be argued that wars and conquests (exogenous origin) have played an active part in bringing about major social changes in societies across the world. Again, it could also be said that in the modern world, the changes taking place in the developing countries have been stimulated to a large extent by Western technology, which was introduced in most cases following colonial rule. But in all societies, including those in which the initial impetus has come from outside, social change has depended to a great extent upon the activities of various social groups within the society. As students of Sociology our task is to identify the spheres and groups that are mainly affected by change, and the ways in which innovations are diffused from one sphere to another.

### Activity 11.1

Discuss changes you have observed in your society over time.

## Forms of Social Change

Social change may occur in various forms. Some of the generally known forms are **evolution, development, progress** and **revolution**. Many times these concepts are used synonymously. However, sociologically, they are quite different from one another and exhibit different characteristics.

**Evolution:** Evolution literally indicates gradual change from ‘within’ and not from ‘without’. It is a spontaneous change that takes place on its own accord. The term evolution applies more precisely to the internal growth of an organism. Sociology came to use this concept under the influence of biological studies. The term ‘organic evolution’ from Biology is replaced by ‘social evolution’ in Sociology. While ‘organic evolution’ is used to denote the evolution of the organism, the expression ‘social evolution’ is used to denote the evolution of human society. Thus, social evolution involves a gradual and slow process of change in various social institutions leading towards development from simple to complex forms. The thinking of many scholars has been influenced by evolutionary theories. According to natural historian Charles Darwin, animals came into being as a result of the process of evolution. Herbert Spencer who has made an important contribution towards systematizing the concept of social evolution believed that society also evolved in the same manner. Works of other scholars like Auguste Comte, Karl Marx, and Emile Durkheim were also influenced by evolutionary approach.

Social evolution has the following characteristics:

1. Society moves upwards in a straight line from lower stage to a higher stage.
2. At the lower level, social structure is simple and homogeneous. As society moves upwards, social structure moves towards complexity and heterogeneous.
3. According to Spencer, the principal of biological evolution applies to all kinds of evolutions.
4. Growth in population and social differentiation are two factors that move society from the lower stage to the higher stage.

**Development:** Development is another aspect of social change. In contemporary sociological writings, the term ‘progress’ is used to indicate industrialisation and the predominance of modern technology in all societies. The world is divided into developing and developed societies. In the first category are included the industrially developed nations. By developing nations is meant those nations which are industrially

backward and whose socio-economic system is based on agriculture and rural communities. From this viewpoint, L. T. Hobhouse has used the concept of social development in place of evolution. According to him, there are four criteria to measure development. These criteria are Quantity, Skills, Mutuality and Independence. The growth in these conditions implies development. The concept of development is clearly seen in the thought of Comte and Spencer. However, in their writings, the concept of development and progress are intermingled.

**Progress:** Progress is another form of change. It implies movement towards a goal. Progress is an effort to attain the goal which is definite and which gets support from social values. It thus implies a steady improvement of a society or a civilisation. Spencer and Hobhouse were the early thinkers who talked about progress. Progress may occur slowly or rapidly. It may or may not be associated with any evolutionary process of social change. Discussing the principles and reasons of progress, Spencer held that whenever we consider principles of progress – earth, life, society, government, commerce, language, culture and science – everything moves from simple to complex, from less to more differentiation and from homogeneous to heterogeneous forms. However, one must remember that the concept of progress is not identical to development. Progress emphasises moral advancement, which development may not. Hobhouse believes that moral degradation is possible amidst economic development and efficiency. The discovery of atomic energy indicates development but the fear of human destruction associated with it indicates moral degradation.

### **Comparing Evolution, Development and Progress**

The concept of social **evolution** is biological. It holds that animals have evolved and in the same way, society moves from simple to complex, less differentiated to more differentiated and homogeneous to heterogeneous stages. The concept of **development** emerges from social, economic and technological factors. Spread of education, improvement in health, growth in economic production and improved technology are indicators of development. Development also envelops evolutionistic elements. The concept of **progress** is moral. In spite of evolution and development, moral degradation is possible in the society. Progress considers development from the viewpoint of propriety and desirability. Increase in the rate of divorce, in spite of prosperity and increase in the fear of human destruction, in spite of scientific development are some of the issues that bring out the difference between development and progress.

**Revolution:** Revolution is another important form of social change. It takes place suddenly and may bring swift and overall changes in the structure of society in a definite direction. It is a basic and rapid change in a society's political, economic and stratification system. Revolution takes place through conflict between classes and between political groups, which may often be violent. Clashes between them lead to social change. Revolution seeks basic changes in the political, economic and cultural institutions. For Marx, revolution brings structural change in a society through the introduction of new modes of production. The new mode of production gradually brings changes in political, social and other institutions of the society.

Revolution brings social change at very fast pace. History of human society is full of revolutions. Whatever may be the kind of revolution – social, cultural, political or technological – it brings a great change in the existing society. These changes may bring a new set of social relationships, a new culture, a new political system, or new technology. Therefore, revolution triggers overall changes in a social system.

Thus, we can say that social change is a wide concept. There are a number of misunderstandings about the concepts of evolution, development and progress. The difference between the three is not clear. Therefore, these concepts do not have a clear, definite, standard and scientific form. However, the concept of social change has a definite, standard, and scientific form. Change is an objective concept. A dispassionate objectivity is found in it which is essential for scientific study.

### **Factors that Affect Direction and Rate of Social Change**

Social change occurs due to various factors. Some of the factors of change are internal to the society concerned, while others are external. Some theories of social change put emphasis on the role played by people in modifying the social structure. Theorists like Wilbert Moore suggest that people always try to find solutions to their problems and these solutions produce social change. For them the role of individuals has also been quite important in social change. For example, the role of Vladimir Lenin in Russia and that of Mahatma Gandhi in India has been very important in the process of social change. Some other theories are deterministic. They emphasise the impact of forces of change on society which are beyond human control. Some of these forces are natural disasters and unexpected developments in technology. Some other scholars combine both these explanations of change. For instance, Karl Marx felt technological changes are outside human control. But he also said that social classes had to be aware of their



interests and then they would engage in revolutionary action. Such revolutionary actions would produce social change.

As mentioned earlier, while considering the sources of social change sociologists focus their attention specifically on the contribution of certain social factors. These have been classified into the following:

1. Ecological factors
2. Values and Beliefs
3. The Great Men
4. Biological or Demographic Factors
5. Technological Factors
6. Education

## **Ecological Factors**

Ecology denotes the relationship between organisms and their environment. Hence, ecological factors of social change are those characterised by the interdependence of living organisms with their environment. These factors are seen to bring about sudden changes or set a limit on social change. Climatic conditions, natural resources, physical location of country, natural disasters can be important sources of change. Natural disasters like floods may destroy an entire population, force people to migrate to another place, or make them rebuild their community all over again. Similarly, increase and decrease in the size of human population through birth, death or migration can pose a serious challenge to economic and political institutions. Today, many geographic alterations and natural disasters are caused by the activities of the inhabitants of a region. Many times human behaviour intensifies the problems of soil erosion, water and air pollution to such a great extent that it becomes necessary to formulate new norms and laws regarding how to use resources and dispose waste products.

## **Values and Beliefs**

The role of values in social change has been clearly brought out in Max Weber's book 'The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism' in which Weber argues that the religious ideas of groups such as the Protestant sect Calvinists played a role in creating the capitalistic spirit. Weber is trying to say that in some historical situations, ideas and values may affect the direction of social change. He tried to show that the rise of modern capitalism was based on religious values of the Protestant religious ethic or moral principles.

In addition, conflict over opposing values and beliefs can be an important source of change. For instance, values regarding racial or caste superiority may clash with the values of equality of opportunity and status. New laws have emerged to ensure that people do not face discrimination on the basis of caste or race. Similarly, conflicts between groups within a society have been and are a major source of innovation and change. For instance, the establishment of political democracy in Western Europe can be said to be largely the outcome of class struggles.

### **Individuals as Factors in Social Change: The Great Men Approach**

There is the belief that history can be largely explained by the impact of “great men” or heroes who are highly influential individuals. Such persons, due to their personal charisma, intelligence, wisdom, or political skill, employ their power in such a way that it changes history. The point being made is that the contribution by persons of genius and leaders to social change is important. These “great men” face a set of circumstances, and being charismatic leaders having unique personal qualities leave their mark upon events.

Although the above factors have an important role to play in causing change, yet the most decisive factors of social change are the demographic/biological, technological and educational ones.

### **Biological or Demographic Factors**

Demographic factors consist of the features of the size and composition of population. As a part of the biological process, human procreation, fertility, death rates, immigration and density of population also influence social change. When population increases or decreases, the size and composition of a population also change. Change in the size of a population may impact the economic life of the people, which may bring further changes in other aspects of life. For instance, excessive increase in population affects the resources, quality, health and welfare programmes of the society. The increasing pressure of population is the cause of increasing poverty in many developing countries. Migration from villages increases the process of industrialisation.

The phenomenal growth of population in the 19<sup>th</sup> century has led to vast social changes and brought social problems. Food problems, housing problems, unemployment, poor

health, poverty, low standards of living, etc. are its direct outcomes. In contrast, there are countries facing a problem of under-population. The falling rate of population has posed a serious problem for many European and western countries. Due to low fertility rates the proportion of younger population is decreasing in some countries like U.K., U.S.A., Sweden, etc. On the other hand, the death rate has fallen and hence the number of the elderly is increasing in many societies, which has its own social implications.

Decline in population may solve many social problems. It helps to minimise economic insecurity, unemployment problems, crimes and social tensions. Increase of population may create problems in all these spheres of life. The balance between the size of the population and natural resources of a country is important. Any change in this balance brings social change. Industrialising nations need to maintain this balance. Otherwise, they will not be able to keep the continuity of development due to lack of resources.

Similarly, the change in death rate, birth rate, and the marriage rate are responsive to and also determine the changes in social attitudes and in social relationships. For example, countries with growing population and relatively limited resources, under appropriate conditions, aspire for imperialism and militarism, while these attitudes in turn encourage a further increase of population. On the other hand, in some cases with the growth of population, the practice of birth control may take a new turn and may have repercussions on family relationships and even attitudes towards marriage. With the consequent decrease of size of the family, the relation between husband and wife, the relation between children's and parents, the mode of upbringing of the child, the position of mother in the house, and the degree of self sufficiency of the family have all been changing.

## **Technological Factors**

Technology is recognised as one of the most crucial factors in social change. The technological factors represent the conditions created by humans which have a profound influence on one's life. In an attempt to satisfy one's wants, fulfil one's needs and to make one's life more comfortable, humans created civilisation. Technology is a product of civilisation. When the scientific knowledge is applied to the problems of life, it becomes technology. Thus, science and technology go together. Technology can be defined as a systematic knowledge which is put into practice to serve human purpose, (for example, using tools and operating machines for economic production). Technology is the application of the knowledge of science, which is growing at a fast

pace. In utilising the products of technology, humans trigger social change. The social effects of technology are far reaching. According to Karl Marx, even the formation of social relations and mental conceptions and attitudes are dependent upon technology.

## **Box 2**

### **Science and Technology Distinguished**

To discuss the influence of technology on society, we must know the difference between science and technology because both are confused with each other. Kingsley Davis has tried to distinguish the two by saying that science is that part of cultural heritage which represents a systematic knowledge of nature, and technology is that part which contains the application of this knowledge. He also believes that the outcomes of technology are empirical which can be practically demonstrated.

Technological factors include:

- Introduction of machines industries
- Development of the means of communication
- Development of the means of transport
- Development of new agricultural techniques

Technological development, social needs and change are closely connected from the pre-stone age. In fact, the technological factors bring faster changes than any other factors. The development of new techniques, new inventions, new modes of production and new standards of living, all have brought rapid changes in the society. Mechanisation has profoundly altered our thinking and approach to life. More and more people are staying in the cities with consequent changes in their ways of living and social relationships. They are more removed from nature and think that things are more determined by man than by nature.

Technology has passed through many stages. Depending on their social needs and skill levels, humans developed new technology in the field of transport, communication, production, mining, etc. and the social organisations also changed accordingly. The needs of the primitive individual of pre-stone age were very limited and accordingly the social organisation of that period was also very simple. The social system based on plough technology and animal energy was organised around agriculture and rural communities. Manually operated small and simple technology such as handloom, the blacksmiths' furnace and wheel, developed very simple economies that had family based production systems. The present day social organisations is more complex,

specialised, secondary, indirect, impersonal and formal because of huge machinery, extremely complicated communication system and developed means of transport.

The modern factory, means of transportation, medicine, surgery, mass media of communication, space and computers technology etc, have affected the attitude, values and behaviour of people across societies. To take a simple example, automobiles and other modern means of transportation have resulted in the diffusion or spread of culture, by increasing the interaction among people who live far away from each other. The technological feats in the area of transport and communication have altered leisure activities, helped in maintaining social network, and stimulated the formation of new social relationships. It is due to technological advancement that we come closer to each other and our ways of living, thinking and behaving have changed. Technology has helped considerably in urbanising our society. Every technological invention changes the very outlook of our life. Division of labour, trade unionism, and specialisation, which are quite common these days and are rapidly influencing and changing out social order, are the outcome of advancement of technology. Due to advancements in technology, simple division of labour of the traditional societies has changed into complex forms of division of labour. This complex form of division of labour has helped in the development of occupational specialisation. Development of occupational specialisation has divided the population of a society into a number of groups.

Thus, technology is constantly developing and with its development the structure of society is also changing continuously.

## **Educational Factors**

Education is also one of the important factors of social change. The role of education as an instrument of social change and development is widely recognised today. Education can initiate social change by bringing about a change in the outlook and attitudes of individuals. It can bring about a change in the pattern of social relationships, thereby causing social change. One of the purposes of education is to change a person and one's life and living style. To change a person is to change society ultimately.

The changes brought about by education are many. Education has affected our customs and traditions, manners and morals, religious beliefs and philosophical principles. It has removed to a great extent the superstitious beliefs and illogical fears about the supernatural beings. It has widened our vision and removed our narrow ideals,

prejudices and misunderstandings. It has contributed to a radical improvement in the status of women and their outlook towards life and social relationships. It has helped them seek employment outside the family and in so doing changed the dynamics of family relationships.

Planned educational innovations, policies and programmes have contributed to the social integration, and a more highly skilled educated labour force and electorate. Education brings about wider political changes with increasingly organised participation of people in national politics. It makes one become more conscious of one's rights and duties to provide and guard similar rights of others.

As Alex Inkles has pointed out, different levels of education have different levels of effects. In the developing countries like India, primary school education is enabling the whole population to do things they would never have been able to do before. Literacy helps them to read labels on cans, bottles, tins, to read sign boards, newspaper, birth-control leaflets, to move around the strange city, etc. These events are social changes. Thus, in the developing countries, primary school education is more important than higher education. However, even though widespread primary education can have great impact upon people in the developing countries, the ideological content of primary school education remains almost conservative and depicts stereotyped reflections of the society. There is little or no scope to build new ideology or a new way of life. Thus, there is an equal need for higher education which provokes a person to question the values of everyday life and thus, to develop critical thinking.

## **Conclusion**

In this lesson, we have looked at different dimensions of the complex phenomenon of social change. We began our examination by defining social change and outlining its characteristics. We also outlined the difference between social and cultural change. Further, we said that innovation, discovery and diffusion are the three basic ways in which change can occur, and the origin of change can, be endogenous, exogenous or both. We then proceeded to discuss the various forms of social change, viz., evolution, development, progress and revolution. These terms are generally confused with the concept of social change, and thus need to be clearly understood. We came to know that social change is caused by a number of forces – ecological factors, values and beliefs, influential individuals, demographic/biological factors, technological factors, and educational factors. We have discussed the demographic, technological and

educational factors in more detail. However, there are many other factors that can be discussed while dealing with the questions of why and how social change occurs.

### **Glossary**

- **Diffusion:** The process by which cultural traits spread from one culture to another.
- **Evolution:** A particular process of change, (intrinsic in nature) which expresses continuity and direction of change, involving alterations in size and structure, of a system.
- **Innovation:** introducing a new idea, device or process or making a novel and better use of something already existing. Discovery and inventions are together termed as innovation.
- **Progress:** Alterations which proceed in the direction of some desired goal.
- **Social change:** Alterations that occur in the social structure and function of a social system.
- **Technology:** Knowledge of tools and techniques by which man produce something for their use in a society.

### **Exercises**

**Answer the following very short answer questions in 1-15 words each:**

1. Define social change.
2. Name the basic sources of social change.
3. Give two feature of social change.
4. What is endogenous change?
5. Name some factors responsible for social change.
6. What is progress?
7. Give examples of planned change.
8. Give two examples of unplanned change.

**Answer the following short answer questions in 30-35 words each:**

1. Explain the meaning of social change.
2. What is diffusion?
3. State a brief note on evolution and revolution.
4. List out the three basic ways in which change takes place.

5. What are the three sources from which change can originate?
6. Briefly outline the difference between social and cultural change.

**Answer the following long answer questions in 75-85 words each:**

1. What are the main types of social change? Briefly discuss them.
2. Discuss briefly the demographic factor of social change.
3. Describe any four factors responsible for social change.
4. Highlight the few points of differences between educational factor and technological factor.

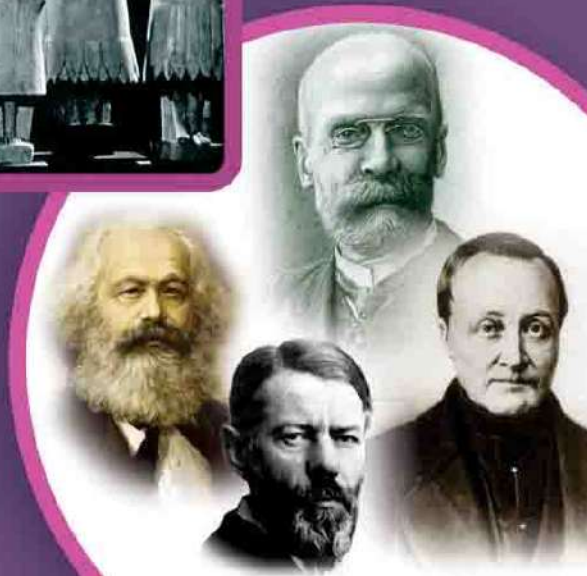
**Answer the following long answer questions in 250-300 words each:**

1. Define social change. Discuss its features in detail.
2. Explain in detail the sources of social change.
3. Write down the factors influencing social change.
4. What do you mean by social change? Highlight the demographic factor of social change.
5. Discuss the role of educational factor in the process of social change in detail.
6. Write a detailed note on technological factor of social change.



## Unit-6

### Founding Fathers of Sociology





## Chapter 12

# Western Sociological Thinker

### Highlight :

- 12.1 Auguste Comte
  - 12.1.1 Positivism
  - 12.1.2 Law of three stages
- 12.2 Emile Durkheim
  - 12.2.1 Social Fact
  - 12.2.2 Division of Labour
- 12.3 Karl Marx
  - 12.3.1 Class and Class Conflict
- 12.4 Max Weber
  - 12.4.1 Social Action
  - 12.4.2 Types of Authority
  - 12.4.3 Religion

### Introduction

The formal study of society as an academic discipline originated in Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is believed that the Sociology emerged as a subject in order to understand the rapid changes occurring in European society. The European society was witnessing several changes in social institutions in previous three centuries due to Industrial Revolution, French Revolution and the spread of the ideas of Enlightenment. These three factors are considered very important in development of Sociology as an independent discipline to understand, explain and predict the nature of society.

The Industrial Revolution in Europe resulted in massive spread of industry throughout Europe in the late 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century. The invention of spinning jenny and printing press represented the supremacy of science over religion and superstitions. The society witnessed changed life patterns based upon the time calculations generated by the industries. Enlightenment was a period of remarkable intellectual development and changes in philosophical thought in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century. The most important thinkers associated with enlightenment were French philosophers Charles Montesquieu

and Jean Jacques Rousseau. These thinkers believed in the supremacy of science and reason over faith. The enlightenment thinkers led to the need for scientific study of the social phenomena.

French Revolution in 1789 is a very important occurrence in the history of Europe and influenced events all over the world. As a consequence of it the ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity got prominence. The revolution focused on creation of an egalitarian order which led to the weakening of the religious ideas and customs.

Although these three major revolutions resulted in bringing prominence to the ideas of science, rationality and equality, however, there was opposition to the rapid changes brought about by them. Thinkers like Louis de Bonard (1753-1821) were disturbed by the revolutionary changes and wanted a return to peace and harmony. Some of them like Auguste Comte were unhappy with the rapid changes happening in the social structure of the western society. They tried to find ways to restore the social order on the basis of scientific understanding of society.

In this chapter, we will discuss the major contribution of some of the key classical thinkers of Sociology. Auguste Comte, Karl Marx, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim are the major western thinkers who have contributed significantly to the discipline of Sociology. These doyens not only contributed great ideas, but also have had great influence on the coming generations of sociologists and the schools of thought in Sociology.

### **Auguste Comte (1798-1857)**

Auguste Comte, a French philosopher is known as the Father of Sociology. He was a brilliant student in school and in 1814 he entered the newly created Ecole Polytechnique in Paris. However, after the school was closed and reorganised in 1816, Comte did not return. He lived a marginal life in Paris, tutoring in Mathematics until 1817, when he became a secretary to the socialist scholar Henri de Saint-Simon. Although Comte separated from Saint-Simon in 1824 due to intellectual disagreements,



Saint-Simon had a deep influence on the philosophical ideas of Auguste Comte. Comte wrote several books such as *The Course on Positive Philosophy* (1830-1842, six

volumes) *System of Positive Polity* (1851-1854, four volumes) and *Early Writings* (1820-1829).

## **Main Contributions**

### **Positivism**

Auguste Comte coined the term 'positivism'. The positivists believe that the social phenomena can be understood in terms of scientific explanations. He proposed a new subject 'Social Physics'. He believed that like the natural scientists, the social scientists could study society to find out the laws which govern social behaviour. It will be possible to predict and change the social structure on the basis of these laws. This over-fascination with science led him to believe that societies also evolve in a fashion similar to the development of human intellect.

Comte held that the new science of society called Sociology should be based on reasoning and observation like all natural sciences. Just as science tries to explain all phenomena through theories based on natural laws, Sociology should have the same aim, i.e., to discover the laws which determine social stability and change. More importantly, like the natural sciences, Sociology should be used to create a better society. The new science should promote the welfare of humankind. It should impart learning that helps us improve society. It would determine the laws that control human interaction and relationships, set up institutions that ensure order in society and give us directions for social change.

Comte also felt that the methodology of Sociology should be the same as it is for the natural sciences. It should include:

Observation

Experimentation

Comparison

**Observation:** It implies the direct observation of human behaviour, guided by a basic theory of what one expects to observe.

**Experimentation:** Although formal experimentation is not really possible in the study of many social phenomena, such as a mother's love, yet experimentation takes place whenever the normal course of any social phenomenon is hindered in any way.

**Comparison:** Since different parts of the world are at different stages of development, comparison of these different social systems would, therefore, allow us to comprehend social order and social change in a better manner.

Thus, Comte defined Sociology as the science of social order and progress. He suggested that the ultimate aim of Sociology is to discover the successive stages passing through which, human society has reached the stage of European civilisation. Comte named two branches of Sociology – Social Statics and Social Dynamics. Social statics is concerned with the structure and order of society. Social dynamics is concerned with social development.

### **Law of Three Stages**

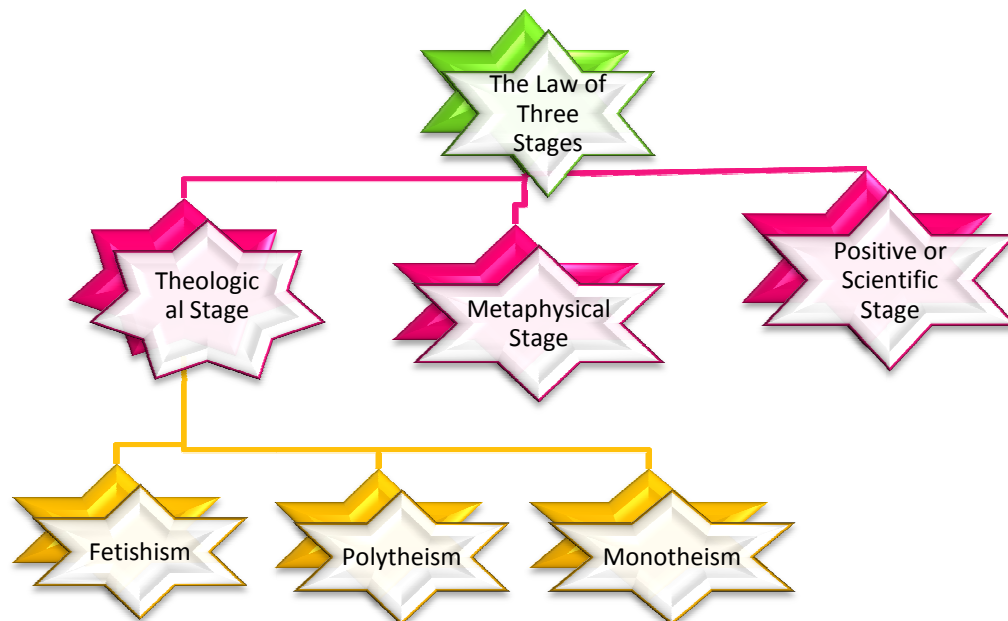
The most important contribution of Auguste Comte was 'the law of three stages' in which he described how every society evolves through three stages – Theological, Metaphysical and Positive.

**Theological Stage:** Comte held that in the most primitive form of society, people failed to understand nature in terms of science. They feared natural incidents like lightening in the sky, storms, earthquakes and changing seasons. They started worshipping nature out of fear. Therefore, they explained every natural and social activity on the basis of religion and Gods. Religious activities formed the basis of all the social interactions and activities. Religion required only faith and hence, the theological practices continued for several generations.

According to Comte, Theological Stage can be sub-divided into:

- i) **Fetishism:** There existed a stage in the earliest societies, when it was believed that Gods are present in everything whether material or non-material. This stage was known as Fetishism. People worshipped natural objects like stones, trees, feathers, earth, wind and fire due to fear of nature.

- ii) **Animism:** In Animism people believed that Gods are present in only moving or living things. The word ‘anima’ means ‘soul’ or movement. The people started worshipping animals, birds as well as earth and wind.
- iii) **Polytheism:** In this stage, people believed in the existence of a variety of Gods and deities who caused rain, storm and even fertility. It was believed that different deities are responsible for various phenomena. For example, in the Indian context, Hindus believe in the existence of deities such as Indra, Vayu, Agni etc.
- iv) **Monotheism:** Monotheism means believe in one God. Comte believed that the religion based societies finally turn towards monotheism where the existence of only one God is believed. This seems to be a gradual movement of the development of the intellect. The societies evolve and discard the existence of multiple Gods whether material or non-material.



**Metaphysical Stage:** The second stage is the metaphysical stage. ‘Metaphysical’ means beyond this material world. In this stage, people reached the conclusion that some supernatural power is not responsible for the creation, governance and destruction of this universe. But it is an abstract power which is responsible for guiding and

controlling human and natural activities. People resorted to magic and witchcraft to control the forces of nature. Magic dominates the explanation of every phenomenon happening in the society. In this stage people believed in the existence of both the good and bad spirits. However, these spirits could be controlled and also directed towards betterment or destruction of others. This was the first step towards scientific and rational explanations of rituals and practices present as the social reality around them.

**Scientific or Positive Stage:** The last stage of evolution of human society is based upon the formation of society on scientific lines. In this stage, people believe in the supremacy of science and the explanation for every activity is based upon science. They question the existence of metaphysical forces and employ facts to understand and explain society. The cause and effect relationship between social activities is established. For Auguste Comte, this is the ultimate stage of development of the human intellect. The solution to the problems of society lies in scientific study of social phenomena. The society needs to be based upon scientific principles in order to remain stable.

Auguste Comte's theory has been criticised for suggesting that countries like India, where the explanations were being given on the basis of religion were backward, whereas the societies, particularly the western societies were more evolved. He has been proved wrong that the institution of religion will be replaced by science. Even today, religion continues to guide the social life of individuals in many countries of the world.

### Activity 1

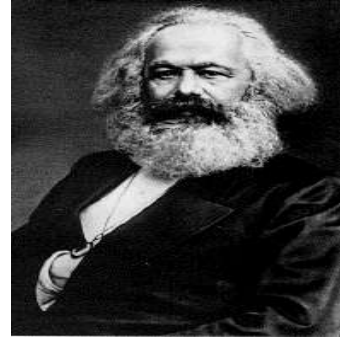
1. Identify and explain the various kind of religions and sects present in your state.
2. Try to find out the role of religion in the life of individuals. Do you think that the institution of religion will lose its importance in the years to come?

### Karl Marx (1818-83)

Karl Marx (1818-1883), a German thinker and political activist is well known in the academic world for his ideas on class struggle and revolution. He was born on 5<sup>th</sup> May, 1818 in a Jewish family. He studied law at University of Bonn and then at University



of Berlin. He completed his doctoral thesis in Philosophy from University of Jena. After marriage to Jenny von Westphalen, he moved to Paris. He met Friedrich Engels in Paris who became his lifelong friend. Apart from Engels, Karl Marx was influenced by German philosophers Georg Hegel and Ludwig Feuerbach. His main ideas can be understood from his works such as *Capital Vol. I* published in 1867 and *The Manifesto of Communist Party* written with Engels released in 1848.



## **Main Contributions**

### **Class and Class Conflict**

The focus of Karl Marx's writings was on the understanding the inequalities existing in the society and removing them. We know that various kind of inequalities exist among people in all the societies of the world. The basis of such inequalities has been social, education, economic and political status. Karl Marx understood 'class' as a category of individuals who share similar economic status. Since people differ from each other in terms of unequal access to material resources, as well as, power and privileges in society, there can be many classes in a society. However, citing examples from the western society, Marx explained how the various periods of history have witnessed struggle amongst two main classes, i.e., owners and non-owners of the means of production. He aimed to create a classless society which would result in establishment of an equal and just social system.

In order to understand his thought in a better way we have to understand his conception of class and class conflict. Also, Karl Marx's views on the role of economic institutions in the social structure are important to understand. We know there are various types of institutions in every society such as economic, political, education, culture and family. It appears that all of these institutions are interrelated and have influence on each other, as well as, on the individual members of any society. Marx, however, maintained that economic institution is the most important institution in any society and it has influence over all other institutions in a society. Economic institution in simple terms is explained as a system of production, distribution and consumption of goods and services in any society. According to Marx, production of materials is the most important activity of individuals, as material needs are the most important needs of individuals. Men and women are constantly engaged in the activity of production. Societies use different modes of production for the production of food, shelter and other necessities, according to the level of technology available at that time.

Here, Karl Marx introduced the concept of class. Some people become owners of the means of production whereas others do not own the means of production. Thus, there can be two kinds of relations to the production, namely, ownership and non-ownership. The group of individuals who share the same relation to the means of production were termed as one 'class.' He believed that if all the individuals in a society have the same relation to the means of production, there will be only one class and hence, a classless society. Generally there can be two types of relations with the means of production. Either an individual can be owner or non-owner of the means of production. Therefore, there are generally two classes of people in all the societies.

The other concepts used frequently by Karl Marx in his work "Capital" were modes of production, forces of production, means of production, and relations of production. These are the aspects of social organisation (society).

**Mode of production:** It is a central concept in Marxism and is defined as the way a society is organised to produce goods and services. It consists of two major aspects: the forces of production and the relations of production.

**a) Forces of production or Productive Forces:** The forces of production include all of the elements that are brought together in production. It further consists of:

- i) **Labour power** – mental and physical capabilities of humans to perform useful work.
- ii) **Means of production** – These are the materials of production, such as tools, machines, water power, steam power, nuclear power and raw materials of production like coal, ore, uranium etc., that is, the actual method through which we earn a living, produce from land, rent, industrial production, profit, etc.

**b) Social relations of production** – These are the sum total of social relationships that people must enter into, in order to survive, to produce and reproduce their means of life. Participation in them is not voluntary. The totality of these relationships creates a somewhat stable and permanent structure, the "economic structure". These include relationships among people and people's relationships to the forces of production. The term refers to the socioeconomic relationships typical of a particular period, for example, the slave masters' relationship to their slaves during the slave owning era, a

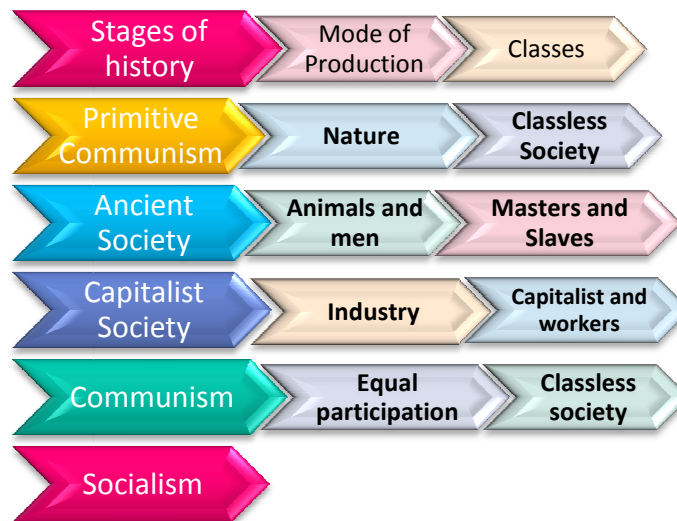
feudal lord's relationship to his property and the serf's (bonded agricultural labourer) relation to the lord in the feudal society and a capitalist's relationship to a capital good, and a wage worker's relation to the capitalist in the capitalist era.

Simply put, the means of production along with technology were together called as forces of production by Marx. The relations of individuals to the forces of production were called relations of production. In order to understand the relation between the forces of production with the relations of production, a method of dialectics was used. Corresponding to every mode of production, some means of production were used, e.g., in agriculture society, land, seeds, fertilisers, etc. are used and in the industrial society, the means of production used are factory, machines and tools.

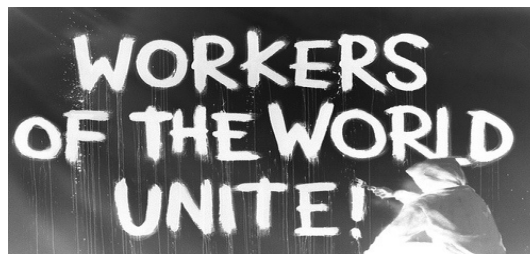
The above understanding was used by Karl Marx in his book Communist Manifesto, where he wrote "*the history of all hitherto existing societies can be understood in terms of class struggle*". Marx explains that the history of Western society can be understood in terms of the change of mode of production and the relations of production.

He described that the Western society has passed through various stages in different periods of history. In each stage, except primitive communism, the society had two classes whose interests were opposite to each other. With the development of technology, the production increased and the mode of production also changed. The owner class was always placed in higher strata. They controlled education, political institutions, marriage and other institutions in society. The other class was placed low in social hierarchy and suffered because all the social institutions favoured the owner class. The mode of production, as well as, nature of relations changed in different epochs (periods) of history.

The western society, thus, passed through different stages. These stages were termed as primitive communism, ancient society, feudal society and capitalist society according to the mode of production. The ancient society used lower level of technology based upon animals and men for production. It had masters and slaves as the two classes. The agricultural mode of production resulted in two classes of people such as feudal lords (landlords) and serfs.



The phase of capitalism is characterised by production of goods and services in the factories. The owners of factories are called *Bourgeoisie* (capitalist) class and the worker class is called *Proletariat* (labourers). In the capitalism mode of production, the production rises due to advancement of technology. Due to free competition, the factory owner who sells the products at the lowest prices is able to earn profit and thus able to appropriate or grab surplus value. This results in low wages of the workers. However, the labour class also have the freedom to join the employer who pays them the best. Due to the free competition amongst the members of owner class, many of them loose their factories and join the non-owners class.



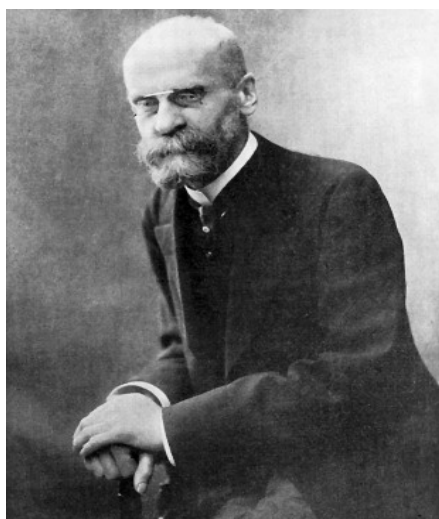
For the first time in the history of societies, the class consciousness emerges in the non-owner class. According to Marx, this can lead to revolution and result in a classless society. Marx believed that the gap amongst the two classes is the greatest in this period of history and the worker class is exploited most in the capitalist society since the ownership of the means of production is not shared by all in the society. And this can be solved only through change in system from capitalism to communism and then socialism.

Marx's prediction that there will be revolution in all the societies and result in end of the system of capitalism does not seem to have come true in several parts of the world. Although, countries like China, Russia and the Eastern Europe region witnessed communist revolutions, yet most of the world now appears to follow the capitalist mode of production. However, the books and writings by Karl Marx gave a new vision to the labour class movement and resulted in establishment of labour unions and workers' associations all over the world. And Marx's influence on contemporary sociological theory is vast and Marxist sociology has already become an established branch of the discipline.

### Activity 2

1. Find out the name of Trade Unions working for the welfare of workers in the nearby factories.
2. Give examples of persons falling in bourgeoisie and proletariat classes.

### Emile Durkheim (1858-1917)



Apart from August Comte, Emile Durkheim is recognised as one of the greatest French social thinkers. Durkheim had a strong academic base and he is known as the first professor of Sociology. He was born in 1858 in an orthodox Jewish family. His father and forefathers were rabbis or Jewish priests. He was appointed Lecturer in Social Sciences and Education at University of Bordeaux. His doctoral thesis was on Division of Labour in Society which was published in 1893. In 1897, he founded *L'Année Sociologique*, the first social sciences journal in France.

In 1902 he joined the University of Paris. His chair was renamed as chair of Education and Sociology in 1913. He taught the subject of Sociology in France for several years. The First World War became the main cause

of his anxieties and adversely affected him physically and mentally. He lost his son and many of his dear friends and students in this war. He could not bear the loss and Durkheim died on November 15, 1917.

Durkheim is considered a positivist, who like August Comte believed that a scientific study of social phenomenon is possible. His major contribution included defining the subject matter of Sociology. He also laid general principles for studying Sociology. He believed that society is more important than the individual and explained that social order is maintained through collective consciousness.

## **Main Contributions**

### **Social Facts**

In order to understand Emile Durkheim's ideas it is important to start with his book "The Rules of Sociological Methods". In this book published in 1895, Durkheim explained the subject matter of Sociology as distinct and different from other subjects. He believed that the subject matter of Sociology should include 'facts'. He defined Sociology as the study of Social facts.

In order to identify which facts are social facts, Durkheim described three major characteristics which can help us differentiate Social facts from other facts. These features were termed as generality, exteriority and constraint. It means that in Sociology we should study only those facts which are general and widely prevalent. Secondly, only those facts should be studied which are external to the individuals, (not internal as in case of biology). Lastly, only those facts should be considered as social facts which have some influence on the individuals. Examples of social facts can be marriage, family, religion, law and culture.

The examples of social facts given by Durkheim were Suicide, Division of Labour and Collective solidarity of the society. Durkheim discussed that the collective consciousness is also a social fact and it controls and guides individual consciousness.

### Activity 3

- How are family, marriage and religion social facts? If we apply Durkheim's methodology, the institutions of family, marriage and religion have the features of externality, generality and constraint.
- Now apply the same conditions to understand how Durkheim considers Division of Labour, Social solidarity and Suicide as social facts.
- Can you apply the same logic to explain how suicide is social fact.

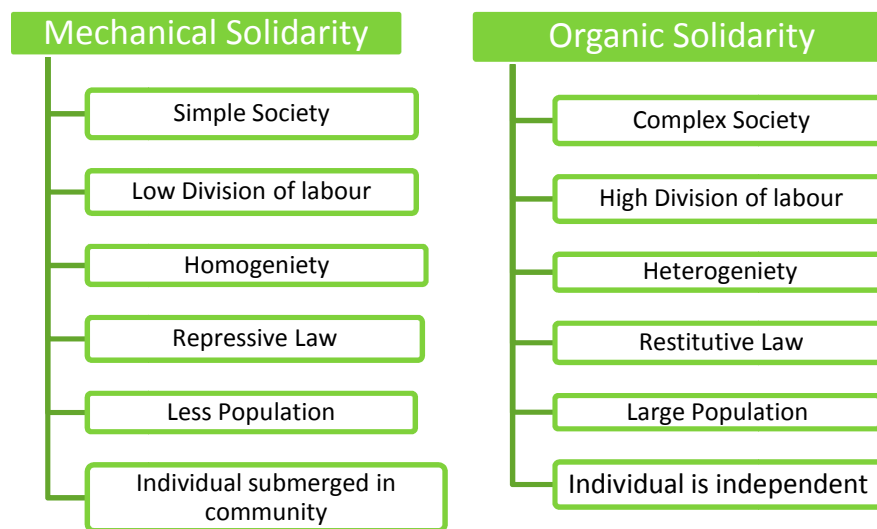
Another important proposition in Durkheim's rules of studying social facts was that every social fact has effect on other social facts. In simple terms, religion has effect on marriage, marriage is connected to family, etc and education decides the job classification of individuals.

### Division of Labour

In his *Division of Labour in Society* published in 1893, he described how division of labour causes change in the type of solidarity in any society. This is explained in the following paragraphs. Division of labour is an ancient phenomenon. It results in increased efficiency of the society. The gender based and age based division of work has been present in almost all the societies for a long time. The women have been doing household chores and men have been entrusted with duty of going out to earn the bread and butter for the family, although the traditional division of labour is now changing as the women are now doing jobs in companies, universities police and scientific laboratories.

Durkheim traced the evolution of society from Primitive to Modern. He classified the society by the nature of solidarity existing in that society. Primitive society is based on mechanical solidarity which is founded upon the similarity of its individual. It is found in societies with small populations where community norms were very important. Any violation could lead to disintegration of community. Here the society appears as simple and people are connected to each other because they are similar. Such a kind of solidarity amongst people is called 'mechanical solidarity'. The basis of such solidarity amongst people is homogeneity and any dissimilarity in the society is curbed on the basis of repressive laws. The individual is almost submerged in collectively.

In modern society 'organic solidarity' is based on heterogeneity of its members. It is found in societies with large populations where most social relations are impersonal. Each of the constituent groups present in the modern societies is dependent upon other constituent units. Later, with increase in division of labour, the society gets more differentiated. This leads to specialisations resulting in heterogeneity or difference. The interdependence of individuals and institutions leads to formulation of restitutive laws. These laws tend to restore the losses caused to individuals and thus do not punish heterogeneity. This kind of solidarity allows individuals to be different from each other and recognizes their multiple roles and organic ties. Individual is given autonomy. Individuals come together and volunteer to form groups. The differences between two kinds of solidarities are shown in the following figure.



In this way, Durkheim described the division of labour as a social fact, being present in all the societies and forcing or giving the individuals the choice amongst one or more occupations based upon simple basis such as age and sex as was in the case of earlier societies and later on based upon specialisations in industrial societies. On the basis of the above premises, Durkheim was able to establish that the division of labour leads to change in basis and nature of solidarity amongst people. His theory is based on logic and his attempt was regarded as scientific. He made a great impression on America and all of Europe with his fundamental principles of social analysis. However, Durkheim has been criticised for giving undue importance to society and ignoring the subjective decision making of the individuals. Especially in industrial societies, individuals may choose different occupations according to their individual preference.



## Max Weber (1864–1920)



Max Weber was born in the Prussian city of Erfurt to a distinguished family. His father, Max Sr., came from a family of merchants and industrialists in the textile business who went on to become a prominent National Liberal parliamentarian. Thus, Max Weber was brought up in a prosperous, cosmopolitan, and highly cultivated family environment that had high political, social, and cultural connections. He was educated mainly at the universities of Heidelberg and Berlin and was trained in law. After a short period of practicing law, his first university appointment was at Freiburg in 1894 and was followed two years later by a prestigious professorship in political economy at Heidelberg. Despite various disruptions in his academic life due to personal and family problems, Weber wrote extensively and contributed to our understanding of the sociological perspective, the nature of social change and the nature of social inequality.

## Main Contributions

### Social Action

Weber started by writing about social action. He distinguished between four types of actions, namely, *zweckrational* or goal oriented rational action, *wertrational* or value oriented rational action, affective action and traditional action.

***Zweckrational*** action is a rational action which is performed in relation to a goal. In such actions, an actor clearly knows his/her goals and selects specific means to attain these goals, for example, the action of an engineer who is building a bridge or a student preparing for examination. These are actions which are planned and taken after evaluating the goal and after thorough consideration of various means and consequences to achieve it. It is also known as instrumental action.

**Wertrational** action is a type of action which is also rational but in relation to values. For example, a brave captain goes down with his sinking ship. His action is rational not because it seeks to attain a definite and external goal; but because to abandon the sinking ship would be regarded as dishonourable.



Studying for exams  
(Zweckrational action)



Captain going down with ship  
(Wertrational action)



Mother holding her child  
(Affective action)



Offering daily prayers at home  
(Traditional action)

**Affective** action is emotional and is determined mostly by the state of mind of the actor. In this case, the action is not aimed towards a goal like *zweckrational* action or a system of value like *wertrational* action; rather it is determined by an emotional reaction of the actor in a given set of circumstances. Its example can be a mother slapping her child on his/her misbehaviour.

**Traditional** action is dictated by beliefs and customs which become habitual. In this case, the individual performs the action according to the customs or traditions which have become a part of one's personality because of conditioning. An example of this would be the behaviour of members of any religious gathering engaging in long-established rituals.

## **Types of Authority**

Weber goes on to relate his types of action to types of authority, which he distinguished from power. Power can be exerted by the use of force or violence. Authority, by contrast, depends on subordinate groups consenting to the use of power wielded by superior groups. Weber defined authority as the chance of commands being obeyed by a specifiable group of people. Legitimate authority is that which is recognized as legitimate and justified by both the ruler and the ruled.

He described three main types of authority which are as follows:

### **(a) Rational-Legal Authority**

This type of authority is based on rational grounds and justified by laws, rules and regulations. It is rooted in impersonal rules that have been legally enacted or contractually established. This rational-legal authority has increasingly come to characterize hierarchical relations in modern society. The rational legitimacy rests on a belief in the legality of rules and the right of those having legal authority to issue commands.

### **(b) Traditional Authority**

This type of authority is based on supremacy of past customs or traditions. It is generally found in pre-modern societies. The traditional authority is based on the belief in the sacred quality and legitimacy of the traditions. This type of authority is exercised by persons who have inherited it, e.g., monarchy. In simple terms, the traditional legitimacy rests on an established belief in the sanctity of past traditions and the legitimacy of those exercising authority under them.

### **(c) Charismatic authority**

This type of authority is based on a commitment to the sacred quality or the model character of a person and of the order created by him/her. For example, Mahatma Gandhi exercised authority which can be called charismatic. This type of authority is

neither based on the rationality of rules and regulations nor on long-standing tradition but on the devotion of individuals for certain other persons who are able to influence them on the basis of their character, virtue and honesty. Charismatic authority rests on the appeal of leaders who claim loyalty because of their extraordinary ability, whether ethical, heroic, or religious.

## **Sociology of Religion**

Weber's essay 'Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism' is considered as the classical study in the field of sociology of religion. In this work, Weber sought to demonstrate that Karl Marx's view that economic factors are a determining factor for all social phenomena was incorrect. In this book Weber analysed the relationship between the religious values and economic interests. He wanted to ascertain whether there is an essential harmony between the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism. Weber argues that the religious ideas of groups such as the Calvinist Protestants played a role in creating the capitalistic spirit.

Weber says that the modern spirit of capitalism sees profit as an essential element of economic activity, and pursuing profit as a good quality. After defining the spirit of capitalism, Weber's goal is to understand the source of this spirit and he turns to Protestantism for an explanation. Protestantism offers a concept of the worldly "calling", which gives worldly activity a religious character. He goes on to say that according to the new Protestant religions, an individual was religiously duty-bound to follow a worldly career with as much fervour as possible. A person living according to this worldview was more likely to accumulate money. Since the new religions banned sinful spending on luxuries, donations or charity, the only option left was to re-invest the accumulated capital in further economic activity, namely, capitalism. This unique combination of religious values that constituted the Protestant ethic, i.e., limitless accumulation of wealth and refraining from enjoyment resulted in giving a boost to capitalism.

Weber does not argue that Protestantism caused the capitalistic spirit, but rather that it was one contributing factor. He also admits that capitalism itself had an impact on the development of the religious ideas.

Apart from his famous ideas on social action, authority, capitalism and religion, Weber wrote on many other subjects such as bureaucracy, social stratification and methodological topics like ideal types and *verstehen*. It would not be wrong to say that Weber's writings helped form the basis of not only modern sociology, but his influence can be seen in politics, religion and economics as well.

### Activity 4

1. Read up on Weber's views on bureaucracy and make a list of the main features of a bureaucracy.
2. Give examples of the three types of authority from the events and organisations around you.
2. Compare Marx, Durkheim and Weber's views on capitalism.

### Conclusion

The four thinkers, Auguste Comte, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber can thus be considered as pioneers in Sociology. The ideas of positivism given by Auguste Comte have led to the emergence and continuance of the discipline of Sociology. Karl Marx's ideas led to communist revolutions in many parts of the world. Emile Durkheim has been accepted as first professor of Sociology who laid rules for studying Sociology. And Weber's analysis of the history of Western societies made us aware of a unique and central force shaping all Western institutions, including economics, politics, religion, family, stratification systems, and music, namely rationality.

### Glossary

- **Authority:** It is a particular form of power supported by the norms of a social system and generally accepted as legitimate by those who participate in it.
- **Calling:** It is a religious conception – that of a task set by God, usually used to describe the act of giving worldly activity or a vocation a religious significance.
- **Class:** A group or category of individuals who share same relation to the means of production
- **Class consciousness:** The awareness among members of a class about their common interests.
- **Class struggle:** The non-owner and owner classes have always conflict of interest. This conflict of interest may result in class struggle among the two classes. Class struggle however is more when there is emergence of class consciousness among the people.
- **Fact:** Anything which exists and can be verified by everyone is a fact.
- **Historical materialism:** Understanding history in terms of the relations of the people to the means of production.

- **Mechanical solidarity:** The feeling of unity among the members of a society based upon similarities among them.
- **Organic solidarity:** The feeling of unity among the members of the society based upon their interdependence due to heterogeneity.
- **Positivism:** In this perspective, it is believed that the society operates on certain fixed laws, which can be discovered.
- **Rationality:** It is the quality or state of being reasonable, based on facts or reason.
- **Social action:** It is an act which takes into account the actions of and reactions of individuals. It is 'social' if the acting individual takes account of the behaviour of others.

## Exercises

**Answer the following very short answer questions in 25-30 words each:**

1. The formal study of society as an academic discipline originated in which country and in which century?
2. Name the three factors responsible for the development of Sociology as an independent discipline.
3. State the names of two thinkers associated with enlightenment.
4. French Revolution took place in which year?
5. What does the term 'positivism' stand for?
6. Who named two branches of Sociology social statics and social dynamics?
7. Make a chart of Auguste Comte's law of three stages.
8. Karl Marx theory of class is based on which determinism?
9. Who wrote the book '*Communist Manifesto*'?
10. What are the stages of social change given by Karl Marx?
11. Who classified the society by the nature of solidarity existing in the society?
12. Name the two kinds of solidarities discussed by Emile Durkheim.
13. List the types of social action given by Max Weber.
14. Name the types of authority mentioned by Max Weber.

**Answer the following short answer questions in 45-50 words each:**

1. What is enlightenment?
2. Write a short note on theological and metaphysical stages.

3. What do you mean by animism?
4. Discuss class as defined by Karl Marx.
5. What do you mean by class consciousness?
6. Define historical materialism.
7. Write a brief note on social facts.
8. Discuss organic solidarity.
9. What do we mean by zweckrational action?
10. What is affective action?
11. Define authority.

**Answer the following long answer questions in 75-85 words each:**

1. Explain the law of three stages as propounded by Auguste Comte.
2. Discuss the features of mechanical solidarity.
3. Discuss the features of organic solidarity.
4. Differentiate between theological and metaphysical stage.
5. Do you think capitalism will be replaced by communist societies in near future?

**Answer the following long answer questions in 200-250 words each:**

1. Has Sociology developed as a full-fledged science as envisioned by Auguste Comte?
2. What is Marx's theory of class struggle?
3. Write a note on communist revolutions in Russia and China.
4. What is the contribution of Durkheim to Sociology?
5. Discuss the types of social actions given by Weber.
6. How does Weber relate economic activity to religion?

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