

## Preface

Student friends, in the previous chapter we studied the concepts of society, community, association, caste etc. Now, in this chapter, we will learn about social institution. There are many social institutions in our society such as marriage, family, caste etc. Sociology studies social institutions. Life of any person is regulated by institutional norms and s/he can not live in an uncontrolled way. Institutions like marriage, family caste teach human beings the ways of performing their activities in a society. Socialization of human beings also occurs through social institutions. Social institutions are foundation of social structure and they emerge from attempts to satisfy various needs of individual and society and this in turn leads to the continuation of social institutions. However, according to time, changes occur in structure, functions and form of social institutions.

## Social institution

**Definition of social institution :** Social institution is an established procedure which determines the mutual roles and way of behaving of people in a society. Such ways of behaving help in satisfying the needs of people. MacIver and Page defines social institution as - 'established method of work of group activity'. Similarly, Johnson has defined social institution as "normative mode applicable to certain types of social relations".

Thus, on the basis of above mentioned definitions, it can be said that institution is a method of work established by folkways, mores, and social standards. Therefore, it is accepted by all and is also instrumental in satisfying needs of people.

## Features of social institution

Though every institution has certain characteristics of its own, we find some common features in all social institutions :

**(1) Mode of attitude and behaviour :** Institution expresses mode of attitudes and behaviour of people. For example, attitude of mutual love, loyalty, feelings of respect and responsibility are expressed in family. This attitude shapes the mode of mutual behaviour of family members.

**(2) Cultural symbols :** Institution has certain specific cultural symbols which identify the former. For example, national anthem and national flag are symbols of the institution of state.

**(3) Common utilities :** Institution has certain tools and convenience to carry out its activities which can be identified as cultural features formed on the basis of the use of that institution. For example, house for a family or a temple for religion etc.

**(4) Norms of behaviour :** Institution is a complex of customs, behaviour patterns, and laws. There is an arrangement of guiding the behaviour and role applicable to certain types of social relations. For example, we find norms that determine the mutual relation and roles of husband and wife and children in the family.

**(5) Ideology :** Ideology is a cluster of thoughts, beliefs and norms. Norms indicate the way human beings should behave. Ideology backs the norms and it expresses the fundamental beliefs and thoughts of an institution. For example, monotheism and polytheism are ideologies of religion.

## Family Institution

**Meaning of family :** Family is a universal social institution, though its form, structure and function vary in different times and in different societies. According to MacIver, "Family is a group formed on the basis of sexual relations that are clear and sustainable for a long time and through it birth and nurturing of children become possible. An important fact about the family is that this group comes into existence through marriage, blood or adoption relations. According to Ogburn, family, to a certain extent, is a long-term group of husband and wife with or without children. As Kingsley Davis put it, "Family is a social group whose members are linked with each other through the process of reproduction". Rights and duties of such members are determined by the social norms of the community.

### Features of family

**(1) Sexual relations between man-woman :** The institution of family is meant to achieve triple purposes of satisfaction of sexual desires of man and woman, extension of family and nurturing of children.

**(2) Marriage :** Marriage is considered essential to make sexual relations between man and woman socially acceptable. Therefore, marriage is the first step towards formation of family. In different times and different societies form of marriage may vary but like family, the custom of marriage exists universally.

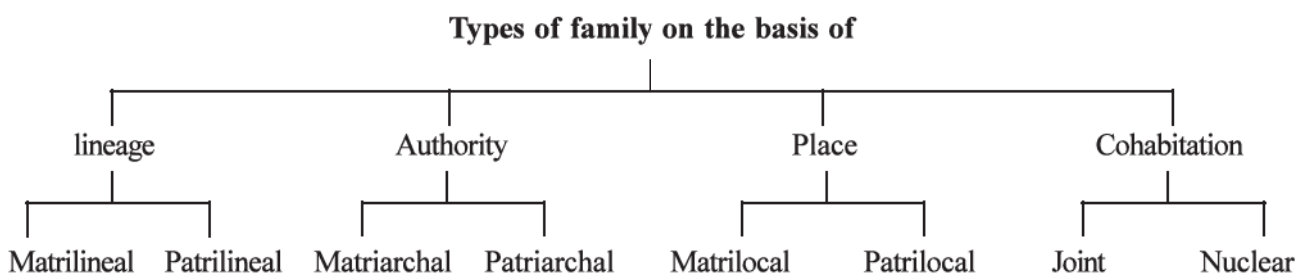
**(3) Living together :** After marriage husband and wife live in a house together. Therefore, family is a group residing at one place. Patrilocal families are more common where wife goes to stay at the husband's home after marriage.

**(4) Lineage and descent :** Each family has its lineage through which relations between ancestors and heirs can be understood. In societies where matriarchal families exist, children's lineage is known by the name of mother and in societies where patriarchal families prevail, children's lineage and the children are known by the name of father. In the present time, names of both mother and father can be applied after the name of child.

**(5) Economic participation :** Participation in economy is one of the important features of family. Family makes arrangements to satisfy the needs of family members and particularly takes up the responsibility of Birth and satisfying economic needs related to brining up of children. New-born children may not even survive if family does not take up this responsibility. Each family carries out certain economic activities in order to sustain its members.

### Types of family

Different types of families, on the basis of lineage, authority, place and cohabitation, are shown below :



**(1) Matrilineal family :** In this type of family lineage is known by the name of mother. Mother's name is used after the child's name. Only female-child gets the inheritance of property and authority. Religious rituals are also performed by women only.

**(2) Patrilineal family :** In this type of family lineage is known by the name of father. Father's name is applied after the child's name. Religious rituals are performed by male-child only.

**(3) Matriarchal family :** The family in which mother's authority is superior or the mother is known as the root of the family is known as matriarchal family. In such families, women hold higher status and dominate the economic, religious, social and political fields of social life. Matriarchal families are mostly matrilineal and matrilocal families. After marriage, woman stays in her mother's house and husband comes to live with her. We find such matriarchal families in tribal society of *Khasi* and *Garo* of Assam and among *Nairs* of South India.

**(4) Patriarchal family :** In patriarchal family men hold higher status and authority. As a result, they dominate economic, religious, political and social fields. Patriarchal families are mostly patrilineal and patrilocal families. Property is inherited by male-child. Male-child holds more importance and therefore if the family has no male-child, family adopts child from close blood relation.

**(5) Matrilocal family :** In such family woman is inheritor of her mother and after marriage she lives with her mother's family. Husband comes to live with his wife's family. All decisions in the family are taken by women.

**(6) Patrilocal family :** Male - child becomes the inheritor of his father in this type of family. After marriage, woman lives with her husband's family. Male-members dominate in all family activities.

**(7) Joint family :** In a joint family people of two or more generations live together at one place and share the same kitchen. Property of the family is considered joint. The family is managed by either father or mother as head of the household. In a joint family head of the household has a vast authority. His/her decisions are accepted by other family members. In this type of family, aged, widow, handicapped, weak family members obtain social security.



**Joint family**

**(8) Nuclear family :** Nuclear family includes husband-wife and their unmarried children and therefore it is smaller in size. Main responsible person holds the authority. Decisions are taken with the consent of all family members. This lessens the chances of conflict or opposition in the family. Nuclear family provides more opportunities for personal development as all women and children have access to freedom. In addition, we also find single parent family (either mother or father) in present time. According to the Census 2011, joint families account for



19 percent and nuclear families account for 81 percent of all families in India. In all four states of South India, joint families account for 10 percent of total families.

#### **Functions of family :**

Family carries out various activities in order to satisfy fundamental needs of individual and society. Following are the functions carried out by family :

**(1) Biological function :** Sexual satisfaction and reproduction are biological functions of family. Satisfaction of sexual desires of man and woman in the family is socially sanctioned and accepted. Similarly, reproduction is extremely important for the continuation of the society. Family regulates this function and provides stability.

**(2) Psychological function :** Family is not only instrumental in satisfying physical needs of individual but it also takes care of emotional needs of its members such as security and affection. Family renders affection, love and warmth to its members to satisfy their emotional needs. No other group can perform this function to the extent a family does.

**(3) Economic function :** Family becomes center of production in societies based on agricultural economy. Men and women participate in maintaining the family and earning livelihood. Activities such as bringing up children and housekeeping are performed by women. However, in modern industrial society families as center of economic production are apparent to a limited extent. Family carries out activities to satisfy physical needs of its members.

**(4) Social function :** An individual obtains certain social status through family relations such as son or daughter or brother or sister. Further, an individual automatically obtains the reputation being enjoyed by the family. Family, as a second important function, trains individual to live social life. A child learns social traditions and way of behaving from his/her family as well as cultural heritage.

**(5) Cultural Functions :** Cultural heritage of human society is conveyed through family. Through family, cultural traditions are not only maintained but they are transmitted from one generation to another. Through its distinct life style, each family sustains different elements of culture and teaches them to their children.

#### **Changes in family**

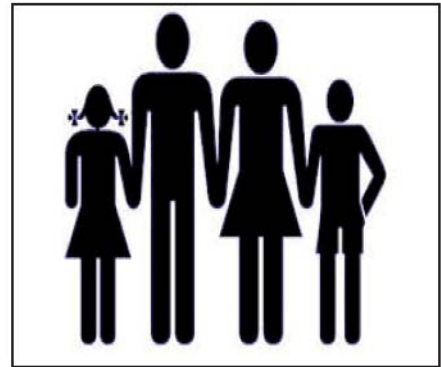
In the modern time, changes have occurred in the institution of family due to the influence of various factors, such as industrialization, urbanization, spread of education and means of communication. These changes are as follows:

**(1) Decline in size :** Due to the impact of various factors traditional large sized joint families are replaced by small sized families.

**(2) Restricted field of responsibility :** People of modern generation pay less importance to distant blood relatives. It is becoming difficult to perform duties and responsibilities towards members of the joint family.

**(3) Changes in relations between husband and wife:** In traditional Indian family relations between husband and wife were based on the pillars of authority and subordination. It was compulsory for wife to obey her husband. However, in the present time notable change has occurred in the relations between husband and wife with the development of new form of relations which are based on the concept of equality.

**(4) Relations between mother-father and children :** Relations between parents and children were also based on authority and subordination. Father's decision was considered as final. Now father's



**Nuclear family**

authority has weakened. Children have started reacting against their father's decision by expressing their views. It is also not expected nowadays that children should lead their lives under the control of their father. Attitude of mother and father towards their children has also been changing.

### **Marriage institution**

Earlier we discussed the institution of family. Now we will discuss the institution of marriage as it is an important institution closely linked with family.

Marriage is the first step towards formation of family. According to social ideals and values we find difference in purposes and form of marriage in different societies.

### **Meaning of marriage**

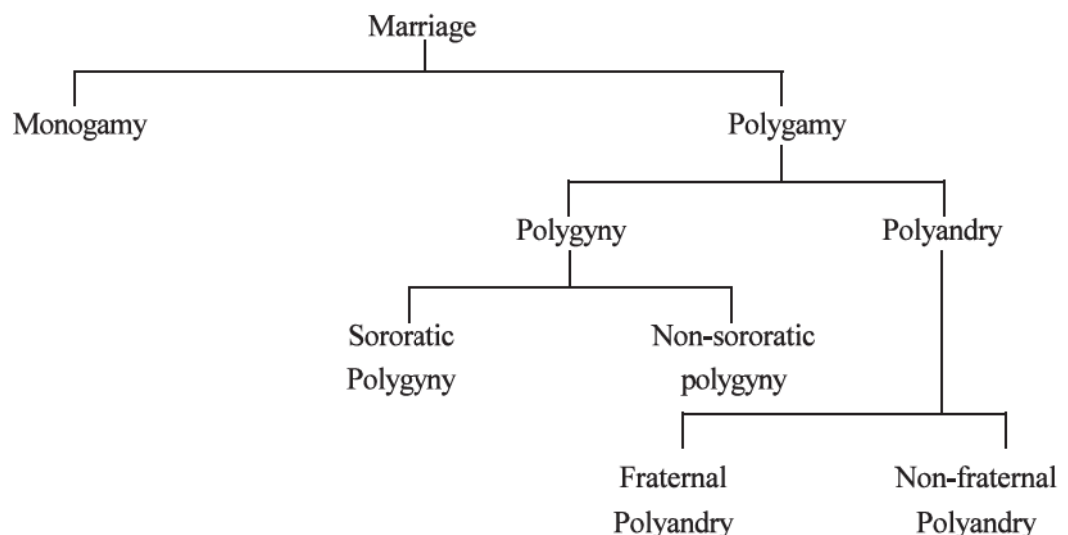
Marriage is a specific relationship between man and woman in which sexual relations are socially accepted and legally sanctioned. According to Johnson, "The important element of the marriage is that man and woman enter in a stable relationship and without losing their social position they get social permission for reproduction". Wester Mark notes, "Marriage is a relationship of one or more men with one or more women which is accepted by the customs and laws of the society. Such relationships include the mutual rights and duties of persons marrying and the children born thereafter". There are certain rights and obligations associated with marriage.

### **Purposes of marriage**

Execution of religious duties, reproduction, sexual satisfaction and living in home are main purposes of marriage in each religion. Socially accepted norms and laws are followed to satisfy different needs of society.

### **Types of marriage**

According to number of partners i.e. number of husbands or wives there are mainly two types of marriage, as shown in the following figure.



**(1) Monogamy :** When a man or a woman at one time marries a woman or a man in a socially sanctioned way it is known as monogamy. This type of marriage is more common and accepted by most of the societies across the world.

**(2) Polygamy :** When a man marries with more than one woman or vice versa it is known as polygamy.

**(1) Polygyny :** When a man marries with more than one woman it is known as polygyny. Polygyny has two sub types:

**(A) Sororatic polygyny :** When women who marry a man are real sisters it is known as sororatic polygyny

**(B) Non-sororatic polygyny :** When women who marry a man are not real sisters it is known as non-sororatic polygyny.

**(2) Polyandry :** When a woman marries with more than one man it is known as polyandry. It is one type of polygamy. It also has two sub types.

**(A) Fraternal polyandry :** When men who marry a woman are real brothers it is known as fraternal polyandry.

**(B) Non-fraternal polyandry :** When men who marry a woman are not real brothers it is known as non-fraternal polyandry.

### **Fields for mate selection**

Freedom given to individual for selection of marriage partner is limited in each society. Every society has different norms about who can or cannot marry whom. Traditions and customs of the society, caste rules, norms etc. regulate the field of selection of marriage partner. These are described below.

**(1) Endogamy :** In endogamy, an individual has to select his/her marriage partner from his/her own community/group. Members of the group among whom marriages are allowed are known as endogamous groups. Caste is an endogamous group. According to the traditions of Hindu society, marriage partner can be selected only from one's own caste or sub-caste. This practice also prevails in other religious communities of India.

**(2) Exogamy :** Exogamy implies marriages outside one's own group. However, in this context, different rules prevail.

**3. Homologous, hypergamy and hypogamy :** When life partner is selected from own or equivalent group or caste it is known as homologous marriage. When a man of higher caste marries a woman of lower caste it is known as hypergamy. And when a woman of higher caste marries a man of lower caste it is known as hypogamy.

### **Prominent norms in selection of marriage partner :**

**(1) Aristocracy :** In certain groups or societies it is believed that parents should marry their daughter to the man who belongs to a family having higher social status than theirs. Such marriage is known as aristocratic marriage which takes place even today in certain castes.

**(2) Remarriage with husband's younger/elder brother/ sister-in-law :** We find such marriages in certain communities. When a woman, after the death of her husband, remarries with husband's younger brother or with the elder brother it is known as levirate marriage. When a man remarries with the sister of his deceased wife it is known as sororate marriage.



**(3) Cousin marriage :** In certain communities marriages take place between children of father's sister (paternal side) and the children of maternal uncle or mother's sister (maternal side). Such marriage is known as cousin marriage.

**Changes in institution of marriage :** The institution of marriage has undergone several changes due to the influence of factors such as industrialization, urbanization, social legislations, secularism, individualism, freedom and equality, female education and women's entry into diverse occupations, development of science, technology and means of communication etc. Changes are described below.

**(1) Religious aspect of marriage has weakened :** Execution of religious rituals at the time of marriage ceremony has now become a formality. The ideal of perceiving marriage as a sacred relationship has also weakened. *Kanyadan* (giving a daughter in marriage) is an important element of marriage ceremony. However, the religious elements inherent in *Kanyadan* earlier have now been replaced by social and physical elements. Several gifts given to daughter by parents are more indicative of materialism, social reputation, dowry etc.

**(2) Development of contractual form of Hindu marriage :** Traditional Hindu marriage is accepted as a *sanskar* (sacred ceremony). However due to development of individualistic attitude traditional values associated with marriage have changed. Now as per The Special Marriage Act 1954, divorce can be obtained by mutual consent. Both man and woman have right to obtain divorce.

**(3) Age of marriage is going up :** Legally age of marriage is fixed at 21 years for a boy and 18 years for a girl in India. It is also going up due to factors like education, change in marriage related perceptions, increase in female education, etc. Compared to earlier times, there has been a remarkable decline in child-marriages.

**(4) Change in norms of selection of marriage partner :** Traditionally, life partners were selected by parents or the elders of the family and marriage was perceived as an association between two families. This has changed remarkably. Now more importance is given to choice of the boy and girl who are going to marry. Individual qualifications assume more importance in selection of life partner.

**(5) Inter-caste marriages have become possible :** Various legal efforts and reform activities have been instrumental in creating a favourable environment towards marriage relations between different castes. The 1954 Special Marriage Act fully supports inter-caste marriages.

**(6) Polygamy has become illegal :** Polygamy, a man marrying more than one woman or a woman marrying more than one man, has been made illegal by different laws. This custom ended completely with the implementation of 1955 Hindu Marriage Act.

**(7) Marriages based on self-selection have become prominent :** As far as approval is concerned, there have been changes in the field of marriage. Under the influence of various factors, marriages based on self-selection are becoming more common. Such marriages are now accepted and treated with generosity and tolerance.

**(8) Legal sanction to divorce :** Both men and women are legally entitled to obtain divorce if they wish so. Now both men and women can opt. for divorce to end their distressing married life. The 1955 Hindu Act has a provision for divorce.

## **Caste institution**

Caste institution is a unique feature of Indian society. Even today, as an important social force, influence of caste prevails in different fields of social life in Indian society in more or less degrees. In almost each field of social life of Hindus warp and woof of caste institution are interwoven, and its extensive impact is visible in their diet, clothing, marriage, customs and traditions, family life, occupation etc.

### **Meaning of caste**

According to M.N. Srinivas, "Caste is hereditarily an endogamous group generally residing at one place". Concepts of purity and pollution regulate the relations between different castes. Dining together generally occurs within the caste only. As Ghurye has mentioned, Hindu society is divided into different groups and these groups have different levels of social prestige and different fields of social intercourse.

### **Features of caste**

Ghurye has shown following fundamental features of caste in order to understand its traditional form.

**(1) Division of Hindu society into different groups :** Various castes divide Hindu society into different parts. Since ancient times Hindu society has never been an undivided community. Each caste of the Hindu society exists as an independent social unit in which an individual gets the membership of the given caste by birth. Each caste has its unique and independent caste panchayat. Each caste also has its unique culture. It becomes clear from these details that caste exists as an independent social unit.

**(2) Hierarchy :** Ghurye has mentioned that there is a hierarchical order of castes with perception of higher/lower status. In this hierarchy, Brahmins are considered at top from the religious point of view but it is very difficult to determine the place of other castes. In particular, there is a lack of clarity about the status of the castes lying in the middle and this is one of the notable features of Hindu Society.

**(3) Restrictions on commensality and social intercourse :** Each caste has very detailed social norms about commonsality and social intercourse with other castes. For example there are norms about with whom they can eat and drink and with whom they cannot. However, in this regard, there are many differences in the norms of different castes in different states of India.

**(4) Civic and religious disabilities and privileges :** The concepts of superiority and inferiority prevailing among various castes of India have created a sort of inequality regarding civic and religious rights among castes considered as lower and higher. Castes considered as lower were deprived of many types of civil and religious rights while castes considered as higher had many privileges. Disabilities and privileges were in existence regarding residence, use of village well, use of public roads, entry in schools, temples and many other such things.

**(5) Restrictions on selection of occupation :** Traditionally castes had hereditary occupations. It was considered as duty for each member to follow traditional occupation of his/her caste. Thus occupation of father was followed by the son.

**(6) Restrictions on marriage :** Endogamy is one of the notable aspects of caste system. It was compulsory for each person to marry within his/her own caste or sub-caste. Violators of this rule were punished to the extent that they were socially excommunicated.



## Changes in caste institution

In India, caste institution prevailed in a rigid form till the end of medieval period. However, with the start of British regime caste institution started witnessing changes. The process of change was attributed to British education system, social legislations, industrialization and urbanization, democracy and liberal ideology etc. The process of change in caste institution got more momentum after India became independent.

**(1) Change in group wise division :** Traditionally an individual used to get the status of the caste into which s/he was born and in this regard s/he had no alternative or choice. Today also s/he gets status by birth but now against this ascribed status of caste an individual can improve his/her achieved status through acquiring education, pursuing new occupation and earning good income. Therefore, compared to ascribed status, the importance of achieved status has increased.

Unique culture of each caste was mainly responsible for division of Hindu society into various groups. This was felt more sharply as each caste had its own lifestyle, language, clothing, norms of behaviour etc. In short, each caste had its own world.

However, today unique cultures of castes have started fading under the influence of education, sanskritization, westernization, modernization and globalization. Clothing, language, food, and occupations across the castes are becoming similar and thus they are mingling with each other. Like culture, caste *panchayats* were also instrumental in sharpening the division between castes. Each caste had a unique panchayat which used to regulate its members' behaviour and keep its community safe. However, with the implementation of the Caste Disabilities Removal Act and other acts, authorities of the caste panchayats are abolished. As a result, people belonging to weaker castes started living modern style of life and also started revolting against caste restrictions.

Thus, increased importance of achieved status against the ascribed one, deterioration of caste culture and weakening of caste panchayats, have reduced the social distance between castes.

**(2) Change in social hierarchy :** Unequal status of different castes has resulted in social inequality. These castes with unequal status are arranged in a hierarchical order which is known as social hierarchy. In whole of India, certain castes had higher status while certain castes had lower status. Status of castes lying in the middle range was determined on the basis of land ownership, traditional authority and other criteria of the society.

There has been a notable change in this feature of caste due to the influence of factors like education, industrialization, modern urban values, sanskritization, legalization etc. Castes having larger population and skill-assets-income have come up in the social hierarchy.

**(3) Change in commensality and contact related restrictions :** In the traditional caste system, there were strict and firm restrictions about commensality and contact with other castes. Who can eat what, with whom food can be taken, from whom food can be taken, in whose house drinking water can be consumed, from whom raw food or cooked food can be accepted etc. were specified. However, under the impact of education, industrialization, urbanization, sanskritization, modernization, westernization, legalization, globalization and means of communication all these restrictions have now been weakened.

This is more visible in urban areas. In villages, these restrictions still exist, though to a lower extent. Such types of restrictions cannot stand in the age of junk and fast food.

**(4) Change in civil and religious disabilities and privileges :** As mentioned earlier, the concepts of superiority and inferiority persistent with castes of India have created a sort of inequality regarding civil and religious rights among castes considered as lower and higher. Lower castes were deprived of many types of civil and religious rights while certain upper castes had privileges. The authority and the rights enjoyed by upper caste people in public life were removed under the influence of education, modernization, industrialization, urbanization and acts related to untouchability removal, atrocity, etc. These variables also removed the disabilities of lower caste people. Practice of discrimination mentioned above is now punishable.

**(5) Change in restrictions on selection of occupation :** In traditional caste system occupations were hereditary. Accordingly, all caste members were required to follow the caste occupation. However, occupations like trade, cultivation, agricultural labour, and service in army were open to all. Following industrialization, spread of education, urbanization, mechanization and scientific revolution new occupations emerged with increased importance of skilled knowledge. As a result, attraction towards traditional occupations lessened. Not only this, but it also became difficult to sustain on traditional occupations. The control of *Mahajan* association on occupations also weakened. Thus restrictions on selection of occupation were removed and today the relation between caste and occupation has weakened.

**(6) Change in restrictions on marriage :** In traditional caste system, marriage of an individual belonging to one sub-caste with the individual of another sub-caste was restricted. In each sub-caste, the field of marriage was confined within the same. Endogamy was followed strictly and violators of this rule were punished to the extent that they were out-casted. However, due to the influence of The 1955 Hindu Marriage Act, Caste Disabilities Removal Act, education, industrialization, urbanization and acceptance of modern democratic values, custom of endogamy has been loosened with removal of the system of village endogamy where marriages were solemnized within certain number of villages and sub-caste related restrictions. However, inclination of marrying within one's own caste still persists. Nonetheless, due to above mentioned factors, proportion of inter-caste and inter-religious marriages has been increasing. Thus, restrictions on marriage have been loosened.

### **Social class**

We make use of the word class to denote a particular group in our general conversation, such as class of students, children, youth, women etc. In sociological language, all these classes are structural units of society and not numerical entities. Class is related to status. Different statuses emerge in the society as people follow different activities and occupations. Classes emerge from the comparative evaluation of different occupational statuses.

**Meaning of class :** Each social class is made of statuses which hold nearly similar prestige and one class is considered either higher or lower than the other class in relation to status. MacIver and Page have mentioned, "Social class is one such part of the society which differs from other parts of the society in relation to status". Sorokin mentions that "Social class is a group of such people of the society who

hold similar position in terms of occupational, economic and political status". Thus, social class can be identified as a group of people who hold similar social status. Class is related to life style.

### **Features of social class**

**(1) Class consciousness :** Members of each class are aware of the class they belong to and this is an important subjective feature of the class. On certain specific occasions such class consciousness is manifested.

**(2) Acceptance of high and low status :** An important feature of the social class is that members of each class accept that they are superior to certain class and inferior to certain class.

**(3) Similar social status:** Each class is a group of people who hold by and large similar status. In terms of income, property, occupation, education, political status all members of a class possess similar social status and treat each other as equal. Similarity of status is expressed in their mutual behaviour and relations.

**(4) Endogamy :** Each class is an endogamous group in more or less degree. Formally, members of a class tend to select life partner from their own class.

**(5) Family as a unit of class :** Class is a stratum made of families and family is a unit in the hierarchy of class. All members of a family hold similar class status. An individual obtains the class status by birth.

**(6) Similar life-style :** Each social class has its own life-style and it differs from the life-style of other class. Members of a class possess similar values, attitudes, and life-style. Life-style is an extensive concept which includes housing, occupation, recreation and many other things. Members of any particular class have similarity regarding these things.

**(7) Self-generated :** Social class is a self-generated group. General features of society such as group-life, division of labour, congenital differences, differences of social atmosphere etc. lead to the emergence of classes in one or other form. Therefore, classless society is not possible.

Student friends, Human society exists since centuries. Social institutions, developed by human beings, play an important role in maintaining human society. In this chapter, we have made an attempt to understand the fundamental social institutions like marriage, family and caste. You also learnt about the features of these institutions and changes witnessed by them under the influence of modern forces. In sociology, certain methods and tools have been developed for the study of different institutions. We will learn about sociological research methods in the next chapter.

### **Exercises**

#### **1. Answer the following questions in detail :**

- (1) Describe the meaning and features of social institution.
- (2) Describe the meaning and types of family.
- (3) What is institution of marriage ? Explain its purposes.
- (4) Discuss the features of caste system.



**2. Answer the following questions concisely :**

- (1) Features of family
- (2) Functions of marriage
- (3) Changes in caste institution
- (4) Changes in family institution

**3. Answer the following questions in short :**

- (1) Define caste.
- (2) What is social class ?
- (3) What is fraternal polyandrous marriage ?

**4. Answer the following questions in one sentence :**

- (1) What is nuclear family ?
- (2) By whose name is lineage known in matriarchal family ?
- (3) What is monogamy ?
- (4) What is homologous marriage ?

**5. Choose the right option from the following and write :**

- (1) What kind of 'method of work' is social institution ?  
(a) Established      (b) Displaced      (c) Certain      (d) None of the three
- (2) Who inherits the property in matriarchal family ?  
(a) Daughter      (b) Son  
(c) Both son and daughter      (d) No one
- (3) How are decisions taken in nuclear family ?  
(a) One sided      (b) Unanimously  
(c) By head of the household      (d) By mother
- (4) In which year was the Special Marriage Act enacted ?  
(a) 1954      (b) 1956      (c) 1958      (d) 1961

**Activity**

- Make a family tree of your family.
- Collect information about the custom of marriage in different religions.
- Organize discussion on whether inter-caste marriage is acceptable or not.
- Caste system in Indian society is being eradicated ? Discuss.
- According to you, what changes have occurred in the features of caste?-Make a note on that.