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## SELF-LEARNING MATERIAL



# MA SOCIAL WORK

**MASW 103 : BASIC SOCIOLOGICAL CONCEPTS**

**w.e.f Academic Session: 2023-24**



**CENTRE FOR DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION**  
**UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY MEGHALAYA**

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Techno City, 9th Mile, Baridua, Ri-Bhoi, Meghalaya, 793101

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## **MSW 103: Basic Sociological Concepts**

### **Unit-I: Understanding Sociology**

- Sociology: Concept and Scope
- Understanding Society and Culture
- Social Structure and Function
- Types Of Societies & Community
- Social Institutions: Marriage, Family and Religion
- Social Stratification

### **Unit-II: Social Dynamics & Contemporary Social Concerns**

- Socialization
- Social Control
- Social Change
- Social Movement
- Deviance
- Suicide
- Casteism
- Communalism



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## **Unit – I: Understanding Society**

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### **Unit Structure**

- 1.1 Learning Objectives
- 1.2 Sociology: Concept and Scope
- 1.3 Understanding Society and Culture
- 1.4 Social Structure and Function
- 1.5 Types Of Societies & Community
- 1.6 Social Institutions: Marriage, Family and Religion
- 1.7 Social Stratification

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### **1.1 Learning Objectives**

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The learning objectives of Unit I are as follows:

- To learn about the basics of Sociology
- To gain knowledge about Society and Culture
- To be able to understand about society as a whole

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### **1.2 Sociology: Concept and Scopes**

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The word sociology is derived from both Latin and Greek origins: *Socius (Latin): Companion* *Logos (Greek): Study*. The etymological meaning of ‘sociology’ is thus the ‘science of society’.

According to Max Weber, “Sociology is the science which attempts the interpretative understanding of social action in order thereby to arrive at a causal explanation of its cause and effects”

August Comte is considered as the father of sociology as he has not only coined the term but was responsible for establishing sociology as a separate social science.

Prof. Ginsberg accordingly defines it “as the study of society, which is of the web or tissue of human inter-actions and inter-relations.” In other words, Sociology is the study of man’s behaviour in groups or of the inter-action among human beings, of social relationships and the processes by which human group activity takes place. Study of human social life, groups and

societies with focus on our own behaviour as social beings. Sociological study focuses not on the norms and values of the society but the way they actual function in actual realities. The study is based on the observations, findings, and evidences without bias following certain rules that can be checked upon by others. Observations made are different from that of philosophical or common sense. Philosophical observations are about moral and immoral in human behaviour and about good society; common sense observations are based on the naturalistic explanation of behaviour without questioning its own origin.

The scope of sociology is broad and encompasses the study of various aspects of human society. It includes the examination of social behaviour, social interaction, social institutions, social change, and social problems. Sociology seeks to understand how individuals and groups are influenced by social structures, cultural norms, and societal forces.

### **Characteristics of Sociology:**

Some of the Characteristics of sociology are mention below:

1. Study of society: Sociology is the scientific study of society, including its structure, institutions, and social interactions. It examines how individuals and groups interact and how social structures and systems shape human behaviours.
2. Focus on social relationships: Sociology focuses on understanding the patterns and dynamics of social relationships. It explores how individuals are influenced by social factors such as culture, social class, gender, and race.
3. Emphasis on social change: Sociology seeks to understand and explain social change and its impact on individuals and society. It examines the causes and consequences of social change, as well as the processes through which societies evolve over time.
4. Use of empirical research: Sociology relies on empirical research methods to gather and analyse data. This includes conducting surveys and examine in every social aspect.

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## **1.3 Understanding Society and Culture**

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A society is a group of people whose members interact, reside in a definable area, and share a culture. In practical, everyday terms, societies consist of various types of institutional constraint and coordination exercised over our choices and actions. The type of society we live in determines the nature of these types of constraint and coordination. The nature of our social

institutions, the type of work we do, the way we think about ourselves and the structures of power and social inequality that order our life chances are all products of the type of society we live in and thus vary globally and historically.

A culture includes the group's shared practices, values, beliefs, norms, and artifacts. Humans are social creatures. Since the dawn of *Homo sapiens*, nearly 200,000 years ago, people have grouped together into communities in order to survive. Living together, people developed forms of cooperation which created the common habits, behaviours, and ways of life known as culture — from specific methods of childrearing to preferred techniques for obtaining food. Peter Berger argued that this is the result of a fundamental human predicament. Unlike other animals, humans lack the biological programming to live on their own. They require an extended period of dependency in order to survive in the environment. The creation of culture makes this possible by providing a protective shield against the harsh impositions of nature. Culture provides the ongoing stability that enables human existence. This means, however, that the human environment is not nature per se but culture itself.

This raises the distinction between the terms “culture” and “society” and how we conceptualize the relationship between them. In everyday conversation, people rarely distinguish between these terms, but they have slightly different meanings, and the distinction is important to how we examine them. As indicated above, a culture represents the beliefs, practices, and material artifacts of a group, while a society represents the social structures, processes, and organization of the people who share those beliefs, practices, and material artifacts. Neither society nor culture could exist without the other, but we can separate them analytically.

### **Definitions of Society**

According to Maclver, "Society is a system of usages and procedures, of authority and mutual aid, of many groupings and divisions, of controls of human behaviour and of liberties. This ever-changing complex system, which we call society, is a web of social relationships".

According to C.H. Cooley, "Society is a complex of form or processes each of which is living and growing by interaction with the others, the whole being so unified that what takes place in one-part effects all the rest."

According to Ginsberg, "Society is a collection of individuals united by certain relations or modes of behaviour which mark them off from others who do not enter into these relations or who differ from them in behaviour".

According to Parsons, "Society may be defined as the total complex of human relationships in so far as they grow out action in terms of means-ends relationship, intrinsic or symbolic".

### **Characteristics of Society:**

#### **1. Society is abstract:**

If society is viewed as web of social relationships, it is distinct from physical entity which we can see and perceive through senses. Maclver argued, "we may see the people but cannot see society or social structure, but only its only external aspects". Social relationships are invisible and abstract. We can just realize them but cannot see or touch them. Therefore, society is abstract.

#### **2. Likeness and difference in society:**

Society involves both likeness and difference. If people are all exactly alike, merely alike, their relationships would be limited. There would be little give-and- take and little reciprocity. If all men thought alike, felt alike, and acted alike, if they had the same standards and same interests, if they all accepted the same customs and echoed the same opinions without questioning and without variation, civilization could never have advanced and culture would have remained rudimentary. Thus, society needs difference also for its existence and continuance. We can illustrate this point through the most familiar example of family. The family rests upon the biological differences between the sexes. There are natural differences of aptitude, of capacity, of interest. For they all involve relationships in which differences complement one another, in which exchange take place.

#### **3. Cooperation and conflict in society:**

Cooperation and conflict are universal elements in human life. Society is based on cooperation but because of internal differences, there is conflict also among its members. This is why, Maclver and Page observed that "society is cooperation crossed by conflict". We know from our own experience that a person would be handicapped, showed down, and feels frustrated if he is expected to do everything alone, without the aid of others. "Cooperation is most elementary process of social life without which society is impossible" (Gisbert,1957).

#### **4. Society is a process and not a product:**

"Society exists only as a time sequence. It is becoming, not a being; a process and not a product" (Maclver and Page, 1956). In other words, as soon as the process ceases, the product

disappears. The product of a machine endures after the machine has been scrapped. To some extent the same is true not only of material relics of man's past culture but even of his immaterial cultural achievements.

### **Definitions of Culture**

British anthropologist Edward Taylor states, "Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society".

According to Phatak, Bhagat, and Kashlak, "Culture is a concept that has been used in several social science disciplines to explain variations in human thought processes in different parts of the world."

According to J.P. Lederach, "Culture is the shared knowledge and schemes created by a set of people for perceiving, interpreting, expressing, and responding to the social realities around them."

According to R. Linton, "A culture is a configuration of learned behaviours and results of behaviour whose component elements are shared and transmitted by the members of a particular society."

### **Characteristics of Culture:**

#### **1. Learned Behaviour:**

Not all behaviour is learned, but most of it is learned; combing one's hair, standing in line, telling jokes, criticising the President and going to the movie, all constitute behaviours which had to be learned.

Sometimes the terms conscious learning and unconscious learning are used to distinguish the learning. For example, the ways in which a small child learns to handle a tyrannical father or a rejecting mother often affect the ways in which that child, ten or fifteen years later, handles his relationships with other people.

#### **2. Culture is Abstract:**

Culture exists in the minds or habits of the members of society. Culture is the shared ways of doing and thinking. There are degrees of visibility of cultural behaviour, ranging from the regularised activities of persons to their internal reasons for so doing. In other words, we cannot

see culture as such we can only see human behaviour. This behaviour occurs in regular, patterned fashion and it is called culture.

### **3. Culture is a Pattern of Learned Behaviour:**

The definition of culture indicated that the learned behaviour of people is patterned. Each person's behaviour often depends upon some particular behaviour of someone else. The point is that, as a general rule, behaviours are somewhat integrated or organized with related behaviours of other persons.

### **4. Culture is the Products of Behaviour:**

Culture learnings are the products of behaviour. As the person behaves, there occur changes in him. He acquires the ability to swim, to feel hatred toward someone, or to sympathize with someone. They have grown out of his previous behaviours.

In both ways, then, human behaviour is the result of behaviour. The experience of other people is impressed on one as he grows up, and also many of his traits and abilities have grown out of his own past behaviours.

### **5. Culture includes Attitudes, Values Knowledge:**

There is widespread error in the thinking of many people who tend to regard the ideas, attitudes, and notions which they have as "their own". It is easy to overestimate the uniqueness of one's own attitudes and ideas. When there is agreement with other people it is largely unnoticed, but when there is a disagreement or difference one is usually conscious of it. Your differences however, may also be cultural. For example, suppose you are a Catholic and the other person a Protestant.

### **6. Culture also includes Material Objects:**

Man's behaviour results in creating objects. Men were behaving when they made these things. To make these objects required numerous and various skills which human beings gradually built up through the ages. Man has invented something else and so on. Occasionally one encounters the view that man does not really "make" steel or a battleship. All these things first existed in a "state nature".



## **7. Culture is shared by the Members of Society:**

The patterns of learned behaviour and the results of behaviour are possessed not by one or a few people but usually by a large proportion. Thus, many millions of persons share such behaviour patterns as Christianity, the use of automobiles, or the English language.

Persons may share some part of a culture unequally. For example, as Americans do the Christian religion. To some persons Christianity is the all-important, predominating idea in life. To others it is less preoccupying/important, and to still others it is of marginal significance only.

Sometimes the people share different aspects of culture. For example, among the Christians, there are – Catholic and Protestant, liberal or conservation, as clergymen or as laymen. The point to our discussion is not that culture or any part of it is shared identically, but that it is shared by the members of society to a sufficient extent.

## **8. Culture is Super-organic:**

Culture is sometimes called super organic. It implies that “culture” is somehow superior to “nature”. The word super-organic is useful when it implies that what may be quite a different phenomenon from a cultural point of view.

For example, a tree means different things to the botanist who studies it, the old woman who uses it for shade in the late summer afternoon, the farmer who picks its fruit, the motorist who collides with it and the young lovers who carve their initials in its trunk. The same physical objects and physical characteristics, in other words, may constitute a variety of quite different cultural objects and cultural characteristics.

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## **1.4 Social Structure and Function**

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Social structure, in sociology, the distinctive, stable arrangement of institutions whereby human beings in a society interact and live together. Social structure is often treated together with the concept of social change, which deals with the forces that change the social structure and the organization of society.

Although it is generally agreed that the term social structure refers to regularities in social life, its application is inconsistent. For example, the term is sometimes wrongly applied when other concepts such as custom, tradition, role, or norm would be more accurate.

Studies of social structure attempt to explain such matters as integration and trends in inequality. In the study of these phenomena, sociologists analyse organizations, social categories (such as age groups), or rates (such as of crime or birth). This approach, sometimes called formal sociology, does not refer directly to individual behaviour or interpersonal interaction. Therefore, the study of social structure is not considered a behavioural science; at this level, the analysis is too abstract. It is a step removed from the consideration of concrete human behaviour, even though the phenomena studied in social structure result from humans responding to each other and to their environments. Those who study social structure do, however, follow an empirical (observational) approach to research, methodology, and epistemology.

Social structure is sometimes defined simply as patterned social relations—those regular and repetitive aspects of the interactions between the members of a given social entity. Even on this descriptive level, the concept is highly abstract: it selects only certain elements from ongoing social activities. The larger the social entity considered, the more abstract the concept tends to be. For this reason, the social structure of a small group is generally more closely related to the daily activities of its individual members than is the social structure of a larger society. In the study of larger social groups, the problem of selection is acute: much depends on what is included as components of the social structure. Various theories offer different solutions to this problem of determining the primary characteristics of a social group.

### **Structure and social organization**

The term structure has been applied to human societies since the 19th century. Before that time, its use was more common in other fields such as construction or biology.

Karl Marx used construction as a metaphor when he spoke of “the economic structure of society, the real basis on which is erected a legal and political superstructure and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond.” Thus, according to Marx, the basic structure of society is economic, or material, and this structure influences the rest of social life, which is defined as nonmaterial, spiritual, or ideological.

The biological connotations of the term structure are evident in the work of British philosopher Herbert Spencer. He and other social theorists of the 19th and early 20th centuries conceived of society as an organism comprising interdependent parts that form a structure similar to the anatomy of a living body. Although social scientists since Spencer and Marx have disagreed on the concept of social structure, their definitions share common elements. In the most general way, social structure is identified by those features of a social entity (a society or a group within a society) that persist over time, are interrelated, and influence both the functioning of the entity as a whole and the activities of its individual members.

The origin of contemporary sociological references to social structure can be traced to Émile Durkheim, who argued that parts of society are interdependent and that this interdependency imposes structure on the behaviour of institutions and their members. In other words, Durkheim believed that individual human behaviour is shaped by external forces. Similarly, American anthropologist George P. Murdock, in his book *Social Structure* (1949), examined kinship systems in preliterate societies and used social structure as a taxonomic device for classifying, comparing, and correlating various aspects of kinship systems.

Several ideas are implicit in the notion of social structure. First, human beings form social relations that are not arbitrary and coincidental but exhibit some regularity and continuity. Second, social life is not chaotic and formless but is, in fact, differentiated into certain groups, positions, and institutions that are interdependent or functionally interrelated. Third, individual choices are shaped and circumscribed by the social environment, because social groups, although constituted by the social activities of individuals, are not a direct result of the wishes and intentions of the individual members. The notion of social structure implies, in other words, that human beings are not completely free and autonomous in their choices and actions but are instead constrained by the social world they inhabit and the social relations they form with one another.

Within the broad framework of these and other general features of human society, there is an enormous variety of social forms between and within societies. Some social scientists use the concept of social structure as a device for creating an order for the various aspects of social life. In other studies, the concept is of greater theoretical importance; it is regarded as an explanatory concept, a key to the understanding of human social life. Several theories have been developed to account for both the similarities and the varieties. In these theories, certain

aspects of social life are regarded as basic and, therefore, central components of the social structure. Some of the more prominent of these theories are reviewed here.

### **Structural functionalism**

A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, a British social anthropologist, gave the concept of social structure a central place in his approach and connected it to the concept of function. In his view, the components of the social structure have indispensable functions for one another—the continued existence of the one component is dependent on that of the others—and for the society as a whole, which is seen as an integrated, organic entity. His comparative studies of preliterate societies demonstrated that the interdependence of institutions regulated much of social and individual life. Radcliffe-Brown defined social structure empirically as patterned, or “normal,” social relations (those aspects of social activities that conform to accepted social rules or norms). These rules bind society’s members to socially useful activities.

American sociologist Talcott Parsons elaborated on the work of Durkheim and Radcliffe-Brown by using their insights on social structure to formulate a theory that was valid for large and complex societies. For Parsons, social structure was essentially normative—that is, consisting of “institutional patterns of normative culture.” Put differently, social behaviour conforms to norms, values, and rules that direct behaviour in specific situations. These norms vary according to the positions of the individual actors: they define different roles, such as various occupational roles or the traditional roles of husband-father and wife-mother. Moreover, these norms vary among different spheres of life and lead to the creation of social institutions—for example, property and marriage. Norms, roles, and institutions are all components of the social structure on different levels of complexity.

Later sociologists criticized definitions of social structure by scholars such as Spencer and Parsons because they believed the work (1) made improper use of analogy, (2) through its association with functionalism defended the status quo, (3) was notoriously abstract, (4) could not explain conflict and change, and (5) lacked a methodology for empirical confirmation.

## **Structuralism**

Another important theoretical approach to the concept of social structure is structuralism (sometimes called French structuralism), which studies the underlying, unconscious regularities of human expression—that is, the unobservable structures that have observable effects on behaviour, society, and culture. French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss derived this theory from structural linguistics, developed by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. According to Saussure, any language is structured in the sense that its elements are interrelated in nonarbitrary, regular, rule-bound ways; a competent speaker of the language largely follows these rules without being aware of doing so. The task of the theorist is to detect this underlying structure, including the rules of transformation that connect the structure to the various observed expressions.

According to Lévi-Strauss, this same method can be applied to social and cultural life in general. He constructed theories concerning the underlying structure of kinship systems, myths, and customs of cooking and eating. The structural method, in short, purports to detect the common structure of widely different social and cultural forms. This structure does not determine concrete expressions, however; the variety of expressions it generates is potentially unlimited. Moreover, the structures that generate the varieties of social and cultural forms ultimately reflect, according to Lévi-Strauss, basic characteristics of the human mind.

Structures such as the human mind, grammar, and language are sometimes called “deep structures” or “substructures.” Since such structures are not readily observable, they must be discerned from intensive interpretive analysis of myths, language, or texts. Then they can be applied to explain the customs or traits of social institutions. The French philosopher Michel Foucault, for example, used this approach in his study of corporal punishment. His research led him to conclude that the abolition of corporal punishment by liberal states was an illusion, because the state substituted punishment of the “soul” by monitoring and controlling both the behaviour of prisoners and the behaviour of everyone in the society.

## **Social organization**

The onslaught of criticism launched against structural functionalism, class theories, and structuralism indicates the problematic nature of the concept of social structure. Yet the notion of social structure is not easy to dispense with, because it expresses ideas of continuity, regularity, and interrelatedness in social life. Other terms are often used that have similar, but not identical, meanings, including social network, social figuration, and social system. Starting

with his work in general sociological theory in the mid-1970s, British sociologist Anthony Giddens suggested the term structuration to express the view that social life is, to a certain extent, both dynamic and ordered.

The critical difference between social structure theory and structuralism is one of approach. Analysis of social structure uses standard empirical (observational) methods to arrive at generalizations about society, while structuralism uses subjective, interpretive, phenomenological, and qualitative analysis. Most sociologists prefer the social structure approach and regard structuralism as philosophical—that is, more compatible with the humanities than with the social sciences. Still, a significant number of sociologists insist that structuralism occupies a legitimate place in their discipline.

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## 1.5 Types of Societies & Community

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Sociologists classify societies into various categories depending on certain criteria. One such criterion is the level of economic and technological development attained by countries. Thus, the countries of the world are classified as:

- First World (highly industrially advanced and economically rich)
- Second World (industrially advanced but not as much as the first category), and
- Third World (least developed, or in the process of developing).

Another important criterion for classifying societies is on the basis of a major source of economic organization which classifies society into the following types:

### **Pre-industrial or Pre-modern Society:**

**Hunting and gathering societies:** The simplest type of society that is in existence today and that may be regarded as the oldest is that whose economic organization is based on hunting and gathering. This society depends on hunting and gathering for its survival.

**Pastoral and horticultural societies:** Pastoral societies are those whose livelihood is based on pasturing of animals, such as cattle, camels, sheep, and goats. Horticultural societies are those whose economy is based on cultivating plants by the use of simple tools, such as digging sticks, hoes, axes, etc.



Agricultural or Agrarian societies: This society, which still is dominant in most parts of the world, is based on large-scale agriculture, which largely depends on Plows using animal labour.

### **Industrial or Modern or Technological Society**

The Industrial Revolution which began in Great Britain during the 18th century gave rise to the emergence of industrial society. Industrial society is one in which goods are produced by machines powered by fuels instead of by animal and human energy.

### **Post-industrial Society**

Sociologists also have come up with a fifth emerging type of society called post-industrial society. This is a society based on information, services, and high technology, rather than on raw materials and manufacturing. The highly industrialized which have now entered the post-industrial level include the USA, Canada, Japan, and Western Europe.

### **Differences between Pre-industrial and Industrial Society**

<b>Pre-Industrial</b>	<b>Industrial</b>
Social structure is comparatively simple. Simple division of labour, which is mostly based on age and sex. E.g., such as men-hunting and fishing and women raising children or gathering food.	Social structure is complex. Complex division of labour which is based on personal talents, abilities, efficiency, experience and preferences than age and sex.
Fewer statuses and roles.	A vast number of statuses and roles emerges.
Social institutions other than family and kinship, are either non-existent or in a developing stage.	Social institutions such as marriage, family and kinship, economy, polity, education, etc. are much developed.

Social life occurs domination of primary groups such as family, kinship groups, small communities, etc. So, social relationships are intimate and emotional.	Social life occurs in the context of secondary groups and large anonymous urban communities. So, social relationships are non-intimate, impersonal, and with little or no emotional involvement.
Statuses are normally ascribed.	Many statuses are achieved. There is social mobility to move up and down the status based on personal talents, capacities, efficiencies, etc.
Homogeneous culture is the ways of thinking, behaving, dressing, conversing, believing, etc. resemble among the members. Unity and uniformity in social life are largely visible.	Heterogeneous culture as there is a diversity and pluralism of values, outlooks, opinions and beliefs.
The rate of social change is usually very slow as people are normally not ready for sudden change.	The rate of social change is usually very slow as people are normally not ready for the sudden change.
Rapid social change becomes a normal state of attire as people's identity change as progress towards a better life.	Social control i.e., the behaviour of the people is regulated by informal means such as social customs, traditions, folkways, and mores.

The other types of Societies are:

### **Hunter-Gatherer Societies**

Hunter-gatherer societies were the norm until about 10,000-12,000 years ago. These societies were based on kinship or tribes and they relied heavily on the environment. Hunter-gatherers hunted wild animals and gathered uncultivated plants for food. Since these societies were dependent on the environment for their food, they often had to move to new areas. Hunter-gatherer societies were, therefore, nomadic. They didn't build permanent settlements.

The average size of a hunter-gatherer band is only around 15 to 50 people. Only a few hundred hunter-gatherer societies remain in existence today. These societies tend to be relatively democratic, in the sense that decisions are generally reached through mutual agreement. Leadership is often personal and restricted to special cases in tribal societies.

The chief of a tribe is the most influential person (Lenski, 1974, p. 146). Most members of a given tribe are related by birth or marriage. The average amount of time a member of a hunter-gatherer society spends each day is about 6.5 hours, which is why some people consider hunter-gatherer tribes the “original affluent societies”.

### **Pastoral Societies**

A pastoral society is a type of pre-industrial society whose way of life is based on pastoralism (that is, the domestication of animals). Since the food supply of pastoral societies is far more reliable, they tend to have much larger populations than a hunter-gatherer culture could support. Pastoral societies, like hunter-gatherer societies, are typically nomadic: they do not build permanent settlements such as villages. This is because pastoralists must constantly take their herds to new grazing lands.

Cultural artifacts of these societies, therefore, consist of easily transportable items such as tents, woven carpets, jewellery, and so on. The first pastoral societies appeared when, around 10,000 years ago, humans began taming and breeding animals to grow and cultivate their plants. Pastoral societies found a more sustainable way to live because they could breed livestock for food, clothing, and transportation. This allowed them to create a surplus of goods. This is also the time when specialized occupations and systematic trading first emerged. Over time, hereditary chieftainships emerged, which is the government structure typical of pastoral societies.

### **Horticultural Societies**

Around the same time as pastoral societies, there emerged another type of society: horticultural society. It was based on the newly developed capacity to grow and cultivate plants. Horticulturists use human labour and simple instruments to cultivate the land. When a piece of land becomes barren, these societies move on to new plots.

They might return to the original plot years later and repeat the process. This type of rotation of plots of land is what allows horticultural societies to stay in one area for a fairly long period. That's why they could build permanent villages, in contrast to hunter-gatherer and pastoral societies. Horticultural societies have specialized roles for different individuals. These roles include craftspeople, shamans, and traders.

The existence of a hierarchy, as in pastoral societies, creates inequalities in wealth and power within horticultural political systems. Horticultural societies, because they relied on the

environment, usually formed around areas where rainfall and other conditions allowed them to grow crops.

### **Agricultural Societies**

Agricultural societies were those that relied on permanent tools for survival. They used agricultural technological advances to cultivate crops over a large piece of land. Lenski writes that the main thing that differentiated agricultural societies from horticultural ones was the use of the plot.

Farmers learned how to rotate the types of crops they grew on their lands. They learned how to use fertilizers. New and better tools for digging and harvesting appeared. Improved technology led to an increase in the food supply, which in turn led to the formation of towns that became centers of trade.

Agricultural societies were even more socially stratified than horticultural or pastoral ones. For example, the role of women became increasingly subordinate to that of men. Those who had more resources developed into a separate noble class. A system of rulers with high social status also appeared.

### **Industrial Societies**

Industrial societies used external energy sources, such as fossil fuels, to increase the rate and scale of production. Human labour gets replaced by machinery, so workers tend to shift towards tertiary sector activities.

In eighteenth-century Europe, the Industrial Revolution made possible the replacement of horses and human workers by machines. Steam power was far more efficient than human or horse power, so societies became more and more reliant on machine power for producing goods. This led to dramatic increases in efficiency, which, in turn, led to a greater surplus of goods than ever seen before. The population rose to unprecedented heights (as explained by the demographic transition model). Increased productivity made more goods available to everyone.

Textile mills replaced artisans, farmers started using mechanical seeders and threshing machines, and products such as paper and glass became readily available to the average citizen. More people had access to education and healthcare than ever before. One of the consequences of increased productivity was the rise of urban centres. Workers preferred living close to

factories, and the service industry had to provide labour to the workers, so city populations became larger and larger.

The study of societies is the central preoccupation of sociologists. It is, therefore, unsurprising that they conduct a lot of research on the classification of the different types of societies. There are many different ways to do this. In this article, we analysed and defined the six most commonly cited types of societies. These are (1) hunter-gatherer societies, (2) pastoral societies, (3) horticultural societies, (4) agricultural societies, (5) Industrial societies, and (6) post-industrial societies.

## **Community**

Community is a set of descriptions of what is implied. It is essentially a subjective experience which defies objective definition. It is felt and experienced rather than measured and defined. People experience communities differently. Boundaries of a community may be physical or tangible, as they configure on a map or as an administrative area. However, some boundaries may be symbolic, in that they may exist in the minds of the beholders, and therefore people feel a “sense of belonging” to the community.

MacIver and Page state that “a community is wherever the members of any group, small or large, live together in such a way that they share, not this or that particular interest, but the basic condition of common life, we call such a group a community”.

Robert Bellah defines community as “a group of people who are socially interdependent, who participate together in discussion and decision making, and who share certain practices that both define the community and are nurtured by it.”

## **Types of Community**

### **Urban Community**

An urban community is located in a large city or town and it is usually characterized by a large population (more than 2,500) with modern infrastructures that are usually absent from the rural community. Because of the high population, apartments and homes in the urban area are usually near due to the non-availability of space.

Residents of the urban community and their goods are transported via various means that include subways, trains, buses, taxis and some prefer to walk. The average cost of rent in this type of community is exorbitant, therefore, you should be prepared for that.

## **Sub-urban Community**

Otherwise known as a suburb, a suburban community is a residential area that exists at the outskirts of an urban community. Such a community is a low-density area with the commuting distance of a city.

Sometimes it could be difficult to distinguish between urban and suburban communities due to the similarities that exist between them. However, you should know that a suburban community is different and one obvious difference is the compactness of the general environment. Moreover, the cost of housing here is quite low compared to what it is in an urban community.

## **Rural Community**

The rural community is characterized by low population density with scanty homes located not too close to one another. Unlike the urban and suburban communities that are dominated by industrial and commercial buildings, the primary assignment of people living within the rural area is agriculture.

Agricultural produce, are, however, transported from here to the cities. Obviously, these people feed on fresh food directly from the source and tend to live longer than those living in the cities. Housing here is quite cheap and may cost you nothing.

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## **1.6 Social Institutions: Marriage, Family and Religion**

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Social institutions are the organizations in society that influence how society is structured and functions. They include family, media, education, and the government. A social institution is an established practice, tradition, behaviour, or system of roles and relationships that is considered a normative structure or arrangement within a society.

H. E. Barnes – “Social institutions are the social structure & machinery through which human society organizes, directs & executes the multifarious activities required to society for human need.”

### **Marriage**

Marriage is one of the universal social institutions which admit men and women to family life. It is a stable relationship in which a man and a woman are socially permitted to have children



implying the right to sexual relations. Marriage is closely connected with the institution of family. In fact, family and marriage are complementary to each other.

According to H.T. Mazumdar, marriage is “a socially sanctioned union of male and female or as a secondary institution devised by society to sanction the union and mating of male and female for purposes of a) establishing a household, b) entering into sex relations c) procreating and d) providing care for the offsprings”.

### **Characteristics of Marriage**

- Marriage is found to be more or less a universal institution. All societies adopt some form of rules for the union of male and female.
- Marriage is a union of man and woman. It indicates a long-lasting bond between the husband and wife.
- Social approval is required for a man and woman to become a husband and wife to exercise the functions.
- Marriage gets its social recognition through some form of civil or religious ceremony. The ceremony has its own rites, rituals, customs, formalities etc. that might differ from society to society.
- Marriage unites the man and woman as husband and wife. It permits them to perform certain rights, duties and support each other and their children.

### **Functions of Marriage**

- Marriage is a powerful instrument in regulating the sex life of man. It prohibits certain types of sex relations also. For example, father and daughter, mother and son, brother and sister etc. This kind of prohibition is called incest taboo.
- Marriage is a social approval / hall mark for getting involved in sexual relations of procreation and thus leads to the establishment of the family.
- Marriage creates mutual understanding and cooperation between the husband and wife as a couple to perform the household tasks.
- Marriage provides economic cooperation.
- Marriage contributes for emotional and intellectual support.

## Types of Marriage

Marriage is an institution of society which can have very different implications in different culture. Based on the culture and nature of economic activities the marriage type varies.

Monogamy and polygamy are the main forms of marriage found around the world. Monogamy refers to one man marrying one woman at a time. Polygamy is the type in which a man or woman has more than one spouse. There are two main forms found in polygamy. They are (i) Polygyny and (ii) Polyandry.

**Polygyny:** If a man marries two or more wives at a time, it is known as polygyny. Polygyny is of two types namely a) sororal polygyny and b) non-sororal polygyny. In sororal polygyny the wives of the man are sisters. In the case of nonsororal polygyny the man marries many women who are not sisters. The purpose for any kind of polygyny is scarcity of men in the group or childlessness.

**Polyandry:** Polyandry refers to one woman entering into marital relationship with more than one man at a given time. This form of marriage further exists in two categories:

a) Fraternal polyandry and

(b) Non-fraternal polyandry

Fraternal polyandry is used to refer to a woman marrying and becoming the wife of all brothers. The children they beget are treated as the off springs of the eldest brother. Whereas in the form of non-fraternal polyandry one woman has many husbands with whom she cohabits in turns but it is not necessary that these husbands be brothers. The cause for polyandry is scarcity of women populations or heavy bride price. Similarly, rules have been made in all societies to regulate the individuals to select a mate. There are two types of marital regulations found in all society. They are (i) Endogamy and (ii) Exogamy.

**Endogamy:** Hoebel defined endogamy as “the social rule that requires a person to marry within a culturally defined group of which he is a member. It refers to the system of rules which restrict marriage within prescribed limits. In other words, the rule of endogamy makes marriage compulsory within a particular group. In Hindu society, caste is an endogamous group. A Hindu can marry someone within his or her own caste. There are various endogamous groups of which caste group is the most important. Beside caste endogamy, village endogamy is found in some parts of Asia and America.

**Exogamy:** It is defined as the social rule that requires an individual to marry outside of a culturally defined group of which he is a member. In Hindu society, the marriage between members of same „gotra“ and lineage are prohibited. One must marry outside his own family and kinship group. It is believed that the members have descended from one common ancestor and they are consanguineal related. Almost all the tribes of India practice lineage and clan exogamy.

## **Family**

The family is one of the most important social institutions. It is considered a “building block” of society because it is the primary unit through which socialization occurs. It is a social unit created by blood, marriage, or adoption, and can be described as nuclear, consisting of two parents and their children, or extended, encompassing other relatives. Although families differ widely around the world, families across cultures share certain common concerns in their everyday lives.

According to Maclver, ‘Family is a group defined by sexual relationship, sufficiently precise and enduring to provide for the procreation and upbringing of children.’

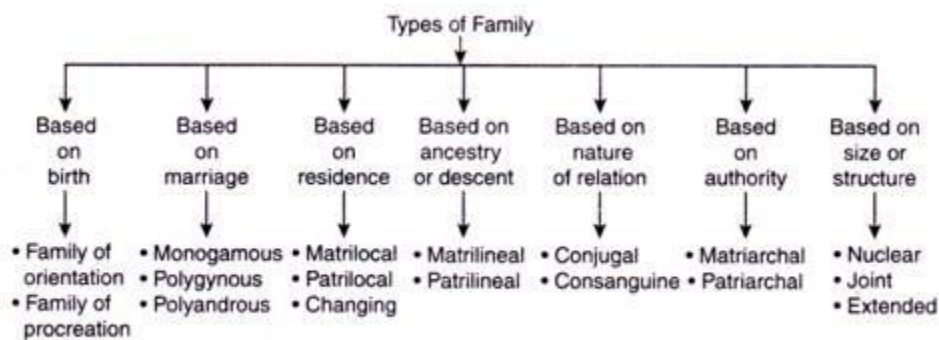
According to Burgess and Locke, ‘Family is a group of persons united by ties of marriage, blood or adoption constituting a single household interacting and inter-communicating with each other in their respective social roles of husband and wife, father and mother, son and daughter, brother and sister, creating a common culture.’

### **Characteristics of Family:**

- Family is a Universal group. It is found in some form or the other, in all types of societies whether primitive or modern.
- A family is based on marriage, which results in a mating relationship between two adults of opposite sex.
- Every family provides an individual with a name, and hence, it is a source of nomenclature.
- Family is the group through which descent or ancestry can be traced.
- Family is the most important group in any individual’s life.
- Family is the most basic and important group in primary socialization of an individual.
- A family is generally limited in size, even large, joint and extended families.

- The family is the most important group in society; it is the nucleus of all institutions, organizations and groups.
- Family is based on emotions and sentiments. Mating, procreation, maternal and fraternal devotion, love and affection are the basis of family ties.
- The family is a unit of emotional and economic cooperation.
- Each member of family shares duties and responsibilities.
- Every family is made up of husband and wife, and/or one or more children, both natural and adopted.
- Each family is made up of different social roles, like those of husband, wife, mother, father, children, brothers or sisters.

### Types or Forms of Family:



**Figure 1** Types of Family

A description of the above classification of types or forms of family is explained here:

#### 1. Based on Birth:

**Family of Orientation:** The family in which an individual is born is his family of orientation.

**Family of Procreation:** The family where an individual sets up after his/her marriage is his/her family of procreation.

The family of orientation and procreation may live together under the same roof, but can still be distinguished.

#### 2. Based on Marriage:

**Monogamous Family:** This family consists of one husband and wife, including children and is based on monogamous marriages.

**Polygynous Family:** A family consisting of one husband, and more than one wife, and all the children born to all the wives or adopted by each of them. This type of family has its basis in the polygynous form of marriage.

**Polyandrous Family:** A family made up of one wife and more than one husband, and the children, either born or adopted with each one of them. This family is based on poly-androus marriage.

### 3. Based on Residence:

**Family of Matrilocal Residence:** When a couple stays in the wife's house, the family is known as family of matrilocal residence.

**Family of Patrilocal Residence:** When a family stays in the house of husband, the family is known as family of patrilocal residence.

**Family of Changing Residence:** When a family stays in the husband's house for some time, and moves to wife's house, stays there for a period of time, and then moves back to husband's parents, or starts living in another place, the family is called a family of changing residence.

### 4. Based on Ancestry or Descent:

**Matrilineal Family:** When ancestry or descent is traced through the female line, or through the mother's side, the family is called matrilineal family.

**Patrilineal Family:** A family in which the authority is carried down the male line, and descent is traced through the male line or the father's side, is called a patrilineal family.

### 5. Based on Authority:

**Matriarchal Family:** Matriarchal families are generally found in matrilineal societies. In these families, a woman is the head of the family, and authority is vested in her. Succession of property is through the female line, i.e., only daughters inherit the property.

After marriage, the husband resides in the wife's house and descent is traced through the mother's side. Here, children are brought up in mother's house. Thus, in matriarchal societies, the matrilocal system exists. Matriarchal families are found only in matrilineal

societies, which are very limited in number all over the world. They are found in parts of Latin America, Ceylon, parts of Africa and India (the Khasis and the Garos).

**Patriarchal Family:** Patriarchal families are commonly found in all parts of the world, since most societies in the world are patrilineal societies. In patriarchal families, the head of the family is a male, and authority is vested in him. Descent and property is passed through the male line and children are brought up in father's house. Such families are patrilocal in nature.

#### 6. Based on the Nature of Relations:

**Conjugal Family:** The conjugal family is made up of adults among whom there is a sexual relationship. It refers to a family system of spouses and their dependent children. The emphasis is placed on the marital relationship that exists between spouses. In modern times, the term 'conjugal family' is being used for partners, who have a long-term sexual relationship, but are not actually married.

**Consanguine Family:** A consanguine family is made up of members among whom a blood relation exists, or those who are consanguineal kin, i.e., a family consisting of parent(s) and children, or siblings (brothers, sisters, or brothers and sisters).

#### 7. Based on state or structure:

**Nuclear Family:** A nuclear family is a small group consisting of a husband, a wife and children, natural or adopted. It is more or less an autonomous unit that is not under the control of adults or elders of the family. It consists of two generations only. In all modern societies, nuclear family is the most common type of family. In fact, nuclear family is both the consequence as well as the cause of the disintegration of joint family.

**Joint Family:** A joint family consists of three generation, living together under the same roof, sharing the same kitchen and purse or economic expenses. It is a family consisting of three nuclear families living together. According to Iravati Karve, a joint family is 'a group of people, who generally live under the same roof, who eat food cooked at one hearth, who hold property in common, and who participate in common family worship and are related to each other as some particular type of kindred'.



## Religion

Religion describes the beliefs, values, and practices related to sacred or spiritual concerns. Social theorist Émile Durkheim defined religion as a “unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things” (1915). Max Weber believed religion could be a force for social change. Karl Marx viewed religion as a tool used by capitalist societies to perpetuate inequality. Religion is a social institution because it includes beliefs and practices that serve the needs of society. Religion is also an example of a cultural universal because it is found in all societies in one form or another. Functionalism, conflict theory, and interactionism all provide valuable ways for sociologists to understand religion.

In viewing religion as a social institution, sociologists have also evaluated its impact on individuals and society as a whole. As an institution, religion is characterized by its universality, its rituals, its sacredness and its persistence. Religion can be viewed from individual and societal points of view both. The functions of social cohesion and social control are oriented towards the larger society while providing emotional and social support and other psychological explanations are more oriented towards the individual.

Although religion, like all other institutions, has changed, it continues to be a potent force, rather with more vigour in our lives throughout the modern neo-liberal risky world. The assertion that ‘God is dead’ is not true for a large part of world’s population. Despite the incredible growth in the importance of science and empiricism since 19th century, which has caused many people to regard religion as a superstition, an irrational belief and religiously and spirituality among people is increasing in some or the other way. At many times, religion persists in the face of scientific evidence.

Even, the men who call themselves as scientists are not fully devoid of religious beliefs and they take part in many religious rituals in the home as well as at workplace. We often hear a doctor saying that he or she will do his/her best to save the life of the patient but it is ultimately He (God) who saves. This proves that religion has always been present and has also been a prominent institution.

In traditional societies the religious and non-religious spheres of life are not sharply differentiated. But, in modern industrial societies, religion and society are not the same. The emergence of different modes of life experience leads to different meanings about life, producing a religious differentiation. Religion may still provide cohesion, but now only for sub-groups of society.

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## 1.7 Social Stratification

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Social stratification refers to a society's categorization of its people into rankings based on factors such as wealth, income, education, family background, and power. Someone's place within a system of social stratification is called their socioeconomic status.

Social stratification is a relatively fixed, hierarchical arrangement in society by which groups have different access to resources, power, and perceived social worth. Although many people and institutions in Western Societies indicate that they value equality — the belief that everyone has an equal chance at success and that hard work and talent — not inherited wealth, prejudicial treatment, racism, or societal values — determine social mobility, sociologists recognize social stratification as a society-wide system that makes inequalities apparent.

While there are inequalities between individuals, sociologists' interest themselves in large social patterns. That is to say, sociologists look to see if those with similar backgrounds, group memberships, identities, and geographic locations share the same social stratification. While some cultures may outwardly say that one's climb and descent in socioeconomic status depends on individual choices, sociologists see how the structure of society affects a person's social standing and therefore is created and supported by society.

### **Origins Social Stratification**

Human social stratification has taken on many forms throughout the course of history. In foraging societies, for example, social status usually depended on hunting and leadership ability, particularly in males.

Those who brought back meat for meals were held in higher status than those who rarely succeeded at hunting. Meanwhile, in parts of the world where agriculture has replaced hunting and gathering, land holdings often form the basis for social stratification. These holdings tend to be transmitted throughout generations.

This intergenerational transfer of wealth gave rise to what is known as estates, which were dominant in medieval Europe (Ertman, 1997). The rise of agriculture also brought the emergence of cities, each with its own forms of stratification, now centred on one's occupation. As the skills needed for acquiring certain occupational skills grew, so did the intergenerational

transmission of status according to one's occupational class. One example of stratification according to occupational classes are guilds (Gibert, 1986). More rigid occupational classes are called castes, which exist both in and outside India.

## **Types Of Stratification**

### **Slavery**

Slavery and indentured servitude are likely the most right types of social stratification. Both of these involve people being treated as actual property and are often based on race or ethnicity. The owner of a slave exploits a slave's labor for economic gain.

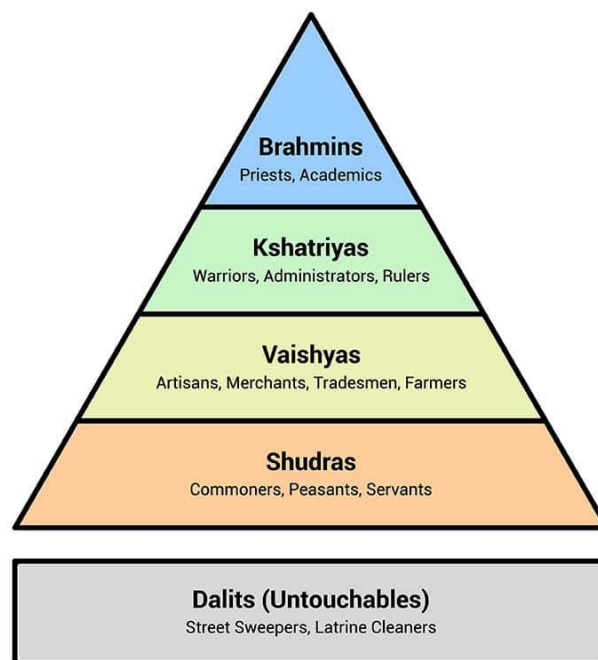
Slavery is one of the lowest levels in any stratification system, as they possess virtually no power or wealth of their own. Slavery is thought to have begun 10,000 years ago, after agricultural societies developed, as people in these societies made prisoners of war work on their farm. As in other social stratification systems, the status of one's parents often defines whether or not someone will be put into slavery. However on a historic level, slavery has also been used as a punishment for crimes and as a way of controlling those in invaded or enemy territories. For example, ancient Roman slaves were in large part from conquered regions

Slavery regained its property after the European colonization of the Western Hemisphere in the 1500s. Portuguese and Spanish colonists who settled in Brazil and the Caribbean enslaved native populations, and people from Africa were shipped to the "new world" to carry out various tasks. Notably, the United States early agricultural economy was one intertwined with slavery, a fact that would help lead the Civil War after it won its independence from Britain. Slavery still exists in many parts of the world.

Modern slaves include those taken as prisoners of war in ethnic conflicts, girls and women captured and kidnapped and used as prostitutes or sex slaves, children sold by their parents to be child laborers, and workers paying off debts who are abused, or even tortured, to the extent that they are unable to leave. Even in societies that have officially outlawed slavery, the practice continues to have wide-ranging repercussions on socioeconomic standing. For example, some observers believe that a caste system existed in the southern part of the United States until the civil rights movement ended legal racial segregation. Rights, such as the right to vote and to a fair trial, were denied in practice, and lynchings were common for many decades.

## Caste Systems

Caste systems are closed stratification systems, meaning that people can do very little to change the social standing of their birth. Caste systems determine all aspects of an individual's life, such as appropriate occupations, marriage partners, and housing. Those who defy the expectations of their caste may descend to a lower one. Individual talents and interests do not provide opportunities to improve one's social standing. The Indian caste system is based on the principles of Hinduism.



Those who are in higher castes are considered to be more spiritually pure, and those in lower castes — most notably, the “untouchable” — are said to be paying remuneration for misbehaviour in past lives. In sociological terms, the belief used to support a system of stratification is called an ideology, and underlies the social systems of every culture.

In caste systems, people are expected to work in an occupation and to enter into a marriage based on their caste. Accepting this social standing is a moral duty, and acceptance of one's social standing is socialized from childhood.

## **The Class System**

Class systems are based on both social factors and individual achievement. Classes consist of sets of people who have similar status based on factors such as wealth, income, education, family background, and occupation.

Class systems, unlike caste systems, are open. This means that people can move to a different level of education or employment status than their parents. A combination of personal choice, opportunity, and one's beginning status in society each play a role. Those in class systems can socialize with and marry members of other classes. In a case where spouses come from different social classes, they form an exogamous marriage. Often, these exogamous marriages focus on values such as love and compatibility. Though there are social conformities that encourage people to marry those within their own class, people are not prohibited from choosing partners based solely on social ranking.

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## **Unit – II: Social Dynamics & Contemporary Social Concerns**

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### **Unit Structure:**

- 2.1 Learning Objectives
- 2.2 Socialization
- 2.3 Social Control
- 2.4 Social Change
- 2.5 Social Movement
- 2.6 Deviance
- 2.7 Suicide
- 2.8 Casteism
- 2.9 Communalism

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### **2.1 Learning Objectives**

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The learning objectives of Unit II are as follows:

- To learn about various social dynamics
- To learn about contemporary social problems and concerns

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### **2.2 Socialization**

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Socialisation is an important process for the functioning and continuation of society. Different societies have different ways and methods to train their new born members so that they are able to develop their own personalities. This training of and building the personality of the child is called socialisation. Socialisation is a process of learning rules, habits and values of a group to which a person belongs whether it is family, friends, colleagues or any other group. It is the process by which a child slowly becomes aware of her/himself as a member of a group and gains knowledge about the culture of the family and also the society into which she/he is born.

Some Definitions of Socialisation

- i) Anthony Giddens: “Socialisation refers to the process which transforms a quite helpless human infant into a self-aware, knowledgeable person who is skilled in the ways of their society’s culture” (2014:263-64).
- ii) Peter Worsley:” By this is meant, simply, the transmission of culture, the process whereby men learn the rules and practices of social groups. Socialisation is an aspect of all activity within all human societies” (1972:153).
- iii) Tony Bilton: “The process by which we acquire the culture of the society into which we are born - the process by which we acquire our social characteristics and learn the ways of thought and behaviour considered appropriate in our society - is called socialisation”

## **Types of Socialization**

Socialisation is a process that continues throughout life from birth till adulthood. However, there are different phases in which the process takes place. These phases are usually spread across different age groups and have been categorised as the different types of socialisations.

### **Primary Socialisation**

Primary socialisation is the most important feature in the process of socialisation. It happens during infancy and childhood. The primary stage basically takes shape during infancy and childhood where basic knowledge and language or behaviour is taught. This phase of socialisation usually takes place within the family. During this phase infants learn language and certain basic behaviour forms of the family and the society in which she/he lives. It is through primary socialisation that the foundations for later learning are laid. As Frønes argues, “Primary socialisation refers to the internalization of the fundamental culture and ideas of a society; it shapes the norms, values and beliefs of the child at a time when it has little understanding of the world and its different phenomena, and the basic socialisation agent moulding the child is the family”

### **Secondary Socialisation**

Secondary Socialisation occurs once the infant passes into the childhood phase and continues into maturity. During this phase more than the family some other agents of socialisation like the school and friends’ group begin to play a role in socialising the child. Different kinds of social interaction through these different agents of socialisation help the child to learn the moral standards, customs and principles of their society and culture.

When the child receives training in institutional or formal settings such as the school, secondary socialisation takes shape. This level runs parallel to primary socialisation. But, unlike the family settings, children in schools are trained to conform to authority. Frønes argues that, secondary socialisation is usually carried out by institutions and people in specific roles and positions. Further, it involves the “acquisition of knowledge and conscious learning, and thus opens for critical reflection, while primary socialisation points to the transmission of naturalised cultural patterns”

### **Gender Socialisation**

Gender socialisation can be understood as the process by which different agents of socialisation shape the thoughts of children and make them learn different gender roles. According to the World Health Organisation, Gender “refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men – such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men.” Gender role refers to “social roles assigned to each sex and labelled as masculine or feminine” (Giddens, 2014: 82).

Much before children begin to know themselves as a male or a female, they receive a series of clues from adults in their family and society because male and female adults have different ways of managing infants. Infants learn quite a lot from visual and symbolic indicators. Differences in the manner of dressing, hairstyle, different cosmetic products used by men and women, provide children with indicators of variation between the male and female. Within two years of age children begin to vaguely understand what gender is. Apart from adults around them children receive a lot of clues about gender roles and differences from television programmes, toys they play with as well from their colouring and picture books.

For example, a baby girl is very commonly seen playing with dolls and/or a kitchen set while a boy would be found playing with toy cars and/or toy guns. However, today the definition of gender is no longer fixed within the binary of male and female because there is a third category which is often referred to as the third gender. The term third gender is assigned to a person by the society or by the person her/himself when one does not want be recognised as a male or a female. In some societies where three or more genders are recognised, we can find the use of the term third gender. This is usually associated with the gender role that a person performs and in some societies the gender roles are not very strictly defined. The term third gender is often used to describe hijras in the context of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. More recently the term third gender is also associated with the term Queer wherein any person not willing to



be strictly identified as male or female may be categorised as a Queer person (Towle and Morgan, 2002).

### **Anticipatory Socialisation**

The term anticipatory socialisation was introduced by the sociologist Robert K. Merton (1957). It is a process by which someone is consciously socialised for future occupations, positions and social relationships. Through anticipatory socialisation people are socialised into groups to which they wish to or have to join so that entry into the group does not seem to be very difficult. Some people suggest that parents are the primary source of anticipatory socialisation when it comes to socialising their children for future careers or social roles. For example, a child made to leave home to stay in a boarding school with the anticipation of better socialisation.

### **Re-socialisation**

Re-socialisation refers to the process of leaving certain behaviour patterns and roles in order to adopt new ones as part of one's evolution in life. Resocialisation occurs when there is a major transformation in the social role of a person. It occurs throughout life where individuals experience radical breakthroughs from their past experiences and learn new manners and values which are starkly different from what they had learnt previously. Sociologist Erving Goffman analyzed resocialization in mental asylum. According to him a mental asylum is a total institution in which almost every aspect of the resident's life was controlled by the institution in order to serve the goals of the institution. For example, the institution demands that every inmate obeys the rules and regulations even if it is not very useful for the person (Ferguson, 2002; Kennedy et al, 1973). Another common example is that of a girl who is about to get married is often re-socialised by suggestions and advice from her parents on different matters so that after marriage it is easier for her to adjust in her husband's home with her in-laws.

### **Adult Socialisation**

Adult socialisation takes place in adulthood when individuals adapt to new roles such as that of a husband, a wife or an employee. This is related to their needs and wants. People continue to learn values and behaviour patterns throughout life. Socialisation does not have any fixed time period. It begins at birth and continues till old age. In traditional societies the older people had a significant influence in important matters related to the family. Both male and female

adults had exerted their influence with increase in age (Mortimer and Simmons, 1978). In modern times we can find this elderly influence decreasing in some families. However, that is not to say that older people have completely lost their authority in the modern-day families. Even today their opinions are sought for certain important matters. Like the younger generation continues to be socialised by their adults similarly the older generation also gets socialised by their younger generation through different experiences. Apart from the family adult — socialisation continues to take place through other agents of socialisation. For example, one's workplace, social groups, senior citizens' forums, clubs for recreation and some religious institutions also.

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### **2.3 Social Control**

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The term social control is used in many ways. To compel the individuals to conform to societal norms and standards is generally thought to be the be-all and end-all of social control. However, it is a narrow meaning of social control. In broader sense, social control encompasses the regulation of entire social order aiming to achieve social ideals and objectives.

Social control has been defined as "the way in which the entire social order adheres and maintains itself- how it operates as a changing equilibrium" (MacIver & Page) , "the patterns of pressure which a society exerts to maintain order and establish rules" (Ogburn and Nimcoff), the process by which social order is (i) established, and (ii) maintained" (Landis), "a collective term for those processes, planned or unplanned, by which individuals are taught, persuaded, or compelled to conform to the usages and life values of groups"(Roucek). Thus, social control may be defined as any social or cultural means by which systematic and relatively consistent restraints are imposed upon individual behaviour and by which human beings are persuaded and motivated to behave in accordance with the traditions, patterns and value framework thought necessary for the smooth functioning of a group or society.

Social control operates at three levels: group over group-when one group determines the behaviour of the other group; the group over its members. when the group controls the conduct of its own members, and individuals over their fellows- when the individual influence the responses of other individuals.

## **AGENCIES OF SOCIAL CONTROL**

Agencies are the instruments by which social control is exercised. Agency refers to those groups, organisations and authorities that are responsible for implementing social control in an effective manner. They have the ultimate say as to what is to be implemented and what is not to be implemented. Agencies use both the means- formal as well as informal. Agencies have power to reward or punish the individuals. Family, educational institutions and the state are the agencies of social control. A brief discussion of these is attempted below:

### **1) Family**

Family is the most fundamental agency of the social control. Family refers to the smallest social grouping whose members are united by bonds of kinship. Family consists of two mature adults of opposite sex who live together in a union (marriage) accepted by the society, along with their unmarried children. It may also be defined as a social group characterised by common dwelling, economic cooperation and reproduction. Family is universal in the sense that there has never been a society in which Family in one form or the other has not existed.

Family discharges the important functional of institutionalization of mating with its attendant control over sexual outlet, cooperative division of labour between male and female, nurturing of the young in an atmosphere of intimacy and inculcation of some basic values in the coming generation. It is the primary institution of socialization. The person is born in a family and also dies in a family.

Family does not only play an important role during an individual's lifetime but also plays its role before the person is born and after the death of the person. Parents in the family control the behaviour of their children by making them learn what is right and wrong. They tell them which behaviour of theirs is desirable and which is undesirable. Family also inculcates the social values in the child. At various stages of life, family comes to the rescue of a person.

Family as a primary group moulds the behaviour of the children as the parents are the first to influence the child's behaviour and development. Appreciating the members for doing good and condemning their ill deeds family teaches a lot of lessons to them. High values of selflessness, sacrifice, tolerance, mutual coexistence, kindness, honesty and hard work are internalized in the personality of children by the family. Children are brought up under the supervision of the parents' guardians who are very affectionate to them. By making many types

of bonds compulsory to its members family controls the human beings and directs them to, be socially productive.

## **2) Education**

Educational institutions are another important agency of social control. Transmission of knowledge by either formal or informal methods is the function of education. Although education is usually thought of in terms of formal schooling, effective training for the individual's role as both of a group member and independent person is a continuous process. The primary function of the process of education is to pass on the knowledge from generation to generational process thought necessary for the development of culture.

In all periods of human society, a stimulus to creative thinking and action, which accounts in part for culture change, has been inherent. Education develops individual's personality and makes him/her learn behaviour patterns. Further, it equips an individual to distinguish between just and unjust, right and wrong. Man is what he is only because of his socialization and education. Educational institutions play an important role in children's development. How to interact with their fellow beings, how to present oneself before one's seniors, how to regard family members, teachers and other persons in society, how to develop health, traditional practices and habits, how to make adjustment with others in life, are all learnt through education by the persons.

Education also develops I power of self-control. It transforms human beings into ideal citizens by acquainting them with the social facts. It rationalizes the human behaviour and increases the analytical capacity of humans. It empowers people to face the hardships of life. In nutshell, the human qualities and traits are developed by education. Thus, education plays an important role in controlling human behaviour throughout the life of the individuals.

## **3) State**

State is one of the secondary agencies of social control. It is a political form of human association by which society is organized under the agency of government that has legitimate sovereignty over a territorial area, authority over all the members of the society and absolute right to use force whenever necessary in order to control the behaviour of its members. State is an organised and formal system of social control. State controls the human behaviour by an arrangement of law, police, jail, judiciary, government, military and intelligence department. It crushes the power of those who do not conform. It gives the welfare of its members as a top

priority and arranges for their livelihood and employment. In the complex societies of today, the role of state in maintaining social control is paramount. People obey the state orders because they either know that these are in their interest or that if they don't obey, they will be penalised and punished as per law of the state. Thus, they act in conformity with the orders of the state which helps in maintaining social control.

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## **2.4 Social Change**

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The term 'social change' is used to indicate the changes that take place in human interactions and interrelations. Society is a web of relationships and social change means a change in the system of social relationships. Thus, the term social change is used to desirable variations in social interaction, social processes and social organization. A society generally has two distinct tendencies. They are- conservative and progressive.

People in society have their tendency to conserve or preserve the social heritage of the past. Every society is proud of its own cultural history of the past. This is what may be describing as the conservative tendency of the society. But at the same time, it has the tendency to change, modify and improve the existing social heritage. Man is never satisfied with his present situation or existing condition. He wants to make changes and improvement of the existing state of affairs. This change is the law of nature and it is inevitable in the life of an individual as well as of society. So social change and development is inevitable in human society. It is also an instinctive tendency in man to have the curiosity for new knowledge and new experiences. It leads to dissatisfaction with the existing situations that result in the changes. So, social situation undergoes changes with the changes of time that result in social progress.

According to Kingsley Davis- "By social change is meant only such alterations as occur in social organization, that is, structure and functions of society."

According to MacIver and Page, "Social change refers to "a process" responsive to many types of changes; to change in the manmade condition of life; to changes in the attitudes and beliefs of men, and to the changes that go beyond the human control to the biological and the physical nature of things"

### **Nature and characteristics of social change:**

- Social change is continuous: Society is always undergoing endless changes. Society cannot be preserved in a museum to save it from the ravages of time. From the dawn of history society has been in continuous flux.
- Social change is temporal: Social change is temporal in the sense it denotes the time sequence. In fact, society exists only as a time-sequence. Innovation of new things, modification and renovation of the existing behaviour and the discarding of the old behaviour patterns take time.
- Social change is environmental: It must take place within a geographic or physical and cultural context. Both these contexts have impact on human behaviour and in turn man changes them. A social change never takes place in vacuum. Social change is human change: The sociological significance of the change consists in the fact that it involves the human aspect. The composition of society is not constant, but changing.
- Social change may be planned or unplanned: The direction and tempo of social change are often conditioned by human plans and programmes of man 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 etc. Short versus long-run changes: Some social changes may bring about immediate results while some others may take years and decades to produce results. This distinction is significant, because a change which appears to be very vital today may be nothing more than a temporary oscillation having nothing to do with the essential trends of life, some years later.
- Social change is an objective term: The term social change describes one of the categorical processes. It has no value-judgments attached to it. To the sociologist social change as a phenomenon is neither moral nor immoral, it is amoral. It means the study of social change involves no value judgment. One can study change even within the value system without being for against the change. Social change may create chain reaction: Change in one aspect of life may lead to a series of changes in its other aspects. For example- change in rights, privileges and status of women has resulted in a series of changes in home, family relationships and structure, the economic and to some extent political pattern of both rural and urban society.

## **Processes of Social Change:**

### **Industrialisation and Modernisation**

The processes of industrialization and modernization are linked. Modernization, in sociology, refers to the transformation of a traditional, rural, agrarian society to a secular, urban, industrial one. Historically, the rise of modern society went hand in hand with the emergence of industrial society. The defining features of modernity are seen to be related to the various changes that took place due to the onset of industrialization in 19th Century Europe. Thus, we can say that industrialism and industrial society are not just economic and technological in nature; rather, they include profound economic, social, political, and cultural changes.

The Industrial Revolution in Europe and subsequently, the growth of industrialization in the non-western and developing world, marked a major historical moment, setting off a wave of changes in almost all aspects of life; work, housing, family structures, leisure, healthcare and medicine, class, caste and gender relations and political processes. One of the most significant changes because of industrialization was the huge increase in population as a result of declining death rates due to advances in science and medicine, and a more regular food supply. Europe's population doubled during the 18th century, from roughly 100 million to almost 200 million, and doubled again during the 19th century, to about 400 million. However, over a period of time, as industrialization resulted in a wide-spread movement of people to towns and cities (urbanization), birth rate also began to decline, and the population increase stabilized. A similar pattern was also observed in Japan where industrialization took off after 1870; and in the erstwhile Soviet Union from the 1880s onwards. However, in most of the developing countries including India, the 'demographic transition' and huge explosion in population continued unabated. People under 15 made up more than 40 percent of the populations of the Third World, as compared with between 20 and 30 percent in the industrialized world.

### **Industrialisation and Urbanisation**

Industrialization and urbanization go hand in hand. In 1800 only 2.5 percent of the world's population lived in cities with a population of 20,000 or more; by 1965 this had increased to 25 percent, and by 1980 it had reached 40 percent. By this measure, slightly less than half of the world's population could be classified as urban in 2000. This trend has been accompanied by a great growth of large cities, of a type virtually unknown in the pre-industrial world. In 1800 the world's largest city, Beijing, had 1.1 million inhabitants. One hundred years later the world's largest city was London, with 6.5 million people. Cities of more than 1 million

inhabitants numbered 16 in 1900, 67 in 1950, and 250 in 1985. In 2000, 16 cities had populations exceeding 6 million. Today, metropolitan centres in India have large populations; Delhi and Mumbai alone account for above 20 million each. While urbanisation is associated with a 'modern' lifestyle, it also brings with it extreme poverty, squalor, insanitary living conditions, slums and shanty-towns, increase in crime and anti-social activities. Marital and family breakdown decline of moral values and feelings of anonymity and isolation are common. From an environmental perspective as well a human one, unplanned urbanization has resulted in severe degradation in the quality of air, water, and soil. The emergence and spread of new diseases, generation of hazardous waste materials, breakdown in law and social order and rising social inequalities are threatening social solidarity and stability.

Further, urbanization has led to changes in the socio-cultural patterns and inter-personal relationships. The individual is a free agent and can make independent decisions and break away from traditional bonds and obligations. While this can promote freedom, creativity, and innovation; it can also result in isolation, loneliness and depression. Mental health issues have become an area of concern.

In the Indian context, industrialization, urbanization and modernization have had an impact on traditional hierarchies like caste. The cities provide avenues for people to break away from caste-based livelihoods and seek various kinds of modern employments. Migration to the city thus becomes an important route of social mobility and social change. It has also had a major impact on gender as more and more women are coming out of the four walls of the home and seeking education and employment opportunities.

### **Secularisation and Globalisation**

Another important process associated with modernization is the process of 'secularization'. By this we mean that the impact of science, technology and rationality permeates social institutions, freeing them from the control of religious thinking. To give an example, in a traditional or pre-modern society, illness or disease may be linked to a super-natural cause, eg. the spirits of ancestors, evil spirits etc. To placate these spirits, people may take recourse to the priest or witch doctor; or undertake religious rites and rituals to appease the gods. However, modernization leads to the replacement of these supernatural and religious belief-systems with the laws of modern science. Thus, sickness would be viewed in terms of certain bio-medical variables, such as exposure to disease causing germs etc., and treatment would be based upon a scientific protocol.



While we continue to see the impact of religious beliefs and systems, the rise of other institutions such as the political system, education, science and technology, the legal system, etc, dislodge religion from its central role as an organizing principle for society as a whole. Religious practices increasingly take the form of individualized activities, and no longer retain the important legitimating power that they have in nonindustrial societies.

Globalization has been a major driver of social change and development in contemporary times. Globalization operates in the domains of economic, political, and socio-cultural processes. Economic globalization is the increasing economic interdependence of national economies across the world facilitated by the rapid movement of goods, services, technology, and capital. The standardization of international trade regulations, reduction of trade barriers, tariffs, taxes etc. have also led to globalization of businesses, thus resulting in the formation of an integrated, global world market. markets into a massive global marketplace. The growth of shopping malls in developing countries, imitating the shopping experience of the West, with a variety of international brands; multinational food and retail chains, further marginalize local, small scale economic activities and integrate them into a global system. Multinational and trans-national corporations, the growth of free-trade zones and the globalization of trade and services through business process outsourcing, are some of the significant manifestations of economic globalization.

With regards to political globalization, the emergence of the contemporary nation state, colonialism and imperialism, the World Wars, the growth of international institutions like the United Nations Organization and the unequal power relations on the global stage have been noted and studied in detail. Regarding environmental issues and international debates and discussions on these, we see that the developing countries are often forced to pay the heavy price for the unsustainable practices adopted by the rich countries. Recent debates on climate change are a good example of these international disparities and inequalities. With reference to cultural globalization, we see the spread and influence of language, culture, fashions, food, music, and popular culture, especially with the arrival of Internet technologies. We see the flow of ideas and cultural artifacts tends to be from the West to the rest. The ‘Americanization’ of contemporary culture has been remarked upon by scholars. George Ritzer (1993) wrote about the ‘McDonaldization of society’, using the name of the global fast food chain McDonalds. Hollywood films, American television serials, popular music, and performers, have gained a global popularity and reach. ‘Cultural imperialism’ has thus transformed tastes, desires, and aspirations.

From an Indian perspective, we can also speak of the global outreach of ‘Bollywood’, or popular Hindi cinema, particularly to the population of diasporic Indians across the globe. The pan-Indian popularity of Bollywood cinema finds a reflection in fashions, fads, and cultural practices across the country. Thus, the media industry along with global brands promote a lifestyle which is based upon conspicuous consumption. This has an adverse impact on the local customs, practices and traditions that have developed over generations and in harmony with environmental conditions. The above discussion has attempted to highlight how the mutually interconnected and reinforcing processes of industrialization, modernization, secularization and globalization impact social change and development.

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## **2.4 Social Movement**

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Social movements are broad alliances of people who are connected through their shared interest in social change. Social movements can advocate for a particular social change, but they can also organize to oppose a social change that is being advocated by another entity. A social movement is a persistent and organized effort involving the mobilization of large numbers of people to work together to either bring about what they believe to be beneficial social change or resist or reverse what they believe to be harmful social change. Social movements are a type of group action. They are large, sometimes informal, groupings of individuals or organizations which focus on specific political or social issues. In other words, they carry out, resist or undo a social change.

Anderson and Parker, social movement is —a form of dynamic pluralistic behaviour which progressively develops structure through time and aims at partial or complete modification of the social order.

Lundberg define social movement as, —a voluntary association of people engaged in concerted efforts to change attitudes, behaviour and social relationships in a larger society.

### **Types of Social Movements**

Sociologists distinguish between several types of social movement. This typology is on the basis of scope, type of change, targets, method novelty and scope. Alternative movements Aim to change a single type of behaviour. For example, the temperance movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, similar in focus to today ‘s antidrug movement, tried to convince

people not to drink alcohol because of suspected links to child and spousal abuse, other violent crimes, and social ills.

### Redemptive movements

Intend to bring about a more total transformation of the individual by encouraging people to adopt a new moral-religious outlook that will affect a wide range of personal behaviours. Examples include religious revivalist or fundamentalist movements that demand a deeper demonstration of commitment to the faith.

### Revolutionary movement

In contrast, aims to bring about great structural change by replacing one or more major social institutions. In the eighteenth century, the American Revolution succeeded in changing the political system of the original thirteen colonies by freeing colonists from British monarchical control and creating a democratic form of government. In the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, the French Revolution ended a monarchy and established a republic. More contemporary examples of successful revolutions include the 1979 Iranian Revolution that replaced a monarchy with a fundamentalist Islamic republic, the revolutions that swept away one-party political.

### Reform movement

Calls for change in patterns of behaviour, culture, and/or policy, but does not try to replace entire social institutions. Supporters of reform movements appeal to policymakers, attempt to elect candidates, and sometimes bring cases before courts to achieve their goals. Movements involving civil rights, women 's rights, sexual orientation, and the rights of people with disabilities all call for acceptance by the larger culture to ensure equal access to all social institutions but do not aim to replace them. Antiwar and environmental movements are also considered reform movements because they call for changes in government policy rather than sweeping institutional change.

### **Characteristics of Social Movements**

- Expresses the dissatisfaction of people.
- The members of the movement expect that something will be done about the matter.

- Social movements are highly organized. • Group of people who feel very strongly about the matter.
- Propaganda: when public attention is being drawn to the matters.
- Influences public opinion.
- Have the potential to bring about social change or to transform social structure.

### **Tribal Movements in India**

India is known for its tribal or Adivasi inhabitants. The term Adivasi connotes that they were the first or original inhabitants of the land, having original habitat, native to the soil. Rivers has defined a tribe as a social group of a simple kind, the members of which speak a common dialect and act together for such common purpose as welfare. Tribes live in a definite habitat and area, remain unified by a social organisation that is based primarily on blood relationship, cultural homogeneity, a common scheme of deities and common ancestors and a common dialect with a common folk lore. Their habitat and culture not only provide them a sense of freedom, self-identity and respect, it also empowers them to stand united against any kind of exploitation, oppression and harassment by outsiders like zamindars, kings, British and others. As a corollary, the tribal history of India is abundant with stories of uprising against the exploiters as and when such occasion arose.

### **The Santhal Revolt**

The Santhals were mainly agriculturalists living in the dense forests of Bankura, Midnapur, Birbhum, Manbhum, Chotanagpur and Palamou. The Santhals fled their original land (Bhagalpur and Manbhoom) when the oppressive zamindars brought that land under Company's revenue control. They started living and farming in hill of Rajmahal, calling it Damin-i-Koh. But their oppressors followed them and exploitation started in full swing. Apart from the zamindari and British Company, local moneylenders also cheated them with high interest rates. The simple minded Santals reeled under loans and taxes and had to lose everything. Sidhu and Kanhu, the two brothers, rose against these dreadful activities. Santhals assembled at the Bhagnadihi fields on 30 June 1855 and pledged to establish a free Santhal state. The rebels' ranks swelled and they numbered nearly 50,000 from early 10000. Almost all the postal and rail services were thoroughly disrupted during this movement. They bravely fought with only bows and arrows with the armed British soldiers. At last, in February 1856, the British could suppress this uprising by slaughtering 23,000 rebels. Overall, the Santhal Revolt was essentially a peasant revolt. People from all professions and communities such as

potters, blacksmiths, weavers, leather workers and domes also joined in (Chandra 1998). It was distinctly against the policies of colonial rulers in British India.

### **Bodo Movement**

The Bodos are recognized as a plain's tribe in the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. The major objective of the Bodo movement was to have a separate state of their own. Since the colonial period, there had been attempts to subsume the Bodos under the umbrella of Assamese nationalism. Therefore, it was under the British rule that the Bodos first raised the demand for a separate homeland along with the hill tribes of the northeast. The formation of the All Assam Plains Tribal League (AAPTL) in 1933 was evidence enough. Subsequently, formation of organisations such as the Bodo Sahitya Sabha (BSS) in 1952, Plains Tribal Council of Assam (PTCA), and All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) in 1967 reflected the Bodo people's quest for political power and self-determination. The movement of ABSU began with the slogan —Divide Assam Fifty-Fifty. In order to spearhead the movement, the All Bodo Students Union (ABSU) created a political organization called the Bodo People 's Action Committee (BPAC). Initially, the ABSU and PTCA worked in tandem to put forth the demand for a separate homeland for the Bodos, but ABSU withdrew its support to PTCA in 1979 when they felt that the PTCA had failed to fulfil the aspirations of the Bodo people for a separate state during the reorganisation process of Assam. This movement officially started under the leadership of Upendranath Brahma on 2 March 1987; but the movement was suppressed by the Government and ended up with the creation of Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC) through bipartite Bodo Accord in 1993.

### **Peasant Movements in India**

Under colonialism, Indian peasantry was impoverished and suffered from variety of problems like high rents, arbitrary evictions, illegal tax levies and unpaid labour in zamindari regions. Eventually, the peasants started to resist this exploitation and took desperate measures at several places. these activities came to be known as peasant uprisings or peasant movements in India during the freedom struggle from 1857-1947.

#### **The Indigo Revolt (1859-60)**

- It was directed against European planters who exploited the local peasants by forcing them to take advances and sign fraudulent contracts according to which the peasants were compelled to grow Indigo, rather than the more profitable rice.

- These foreigners intimidated the peasants through illegal confinements and other such atrocities.
- The Indigo revolt in Nadia district of Bengal in 1859 and was led by Digambar Biswas and Bishnu Biswas who organised the peasants to resist the force of planter 's lathiyals (armed retainers).
- This revolt has been vividly portrayed by acclaimed writer Din BandhuMitra in his play, Neel Darpan. Its publication in 1860 led to the appointment of an Indigo Commission by the government.

### **The Punjab Peasants Discontent (1890-1900)**

- Peasant discontent in Punjab occurred due to rural indebtedness and the large scale alienation of agricultural land for non-cultivating classes.
- The Punjab Land Alienation Act, 1900 was passed to prohibited the sale and mortgage of lands from peasants to moneylenders. This gave Punjab peasants partial relief against oppressive land revenue demand by the authorities.

### **The Champaran Satyagraha (1917)**

- The peasants of Champaran district of Bihar were excessively oppressed by the European planters. They were forced to grow indigo on 3/20th of their land under the tinkathia system, and to sell this at prices fixed by the planters.
- Gandhiji reached Champaran in 1917 accompanied by Babu Rajendra Prasad, Mazhar-ulHuq, J.B. Kripalani, Mahadev Desai to conduct a detailed inquiry into the condition of the indigo peasants.
- The baffled district officials ordered him to leave, but he defied the order and invited trial and imprisonment.

### **Dalit Movement**

The Dalit movement in India began around the mid-19th century. It was Jyotirao Phule, a middle caste, social revolutionary from Maharashtra, who questioned the caste system itself and its evil practices. By the end of the 19th century, there were a number of anti-caste movements in various parts of India. This includes Phule's Satyashodhak movement,

Namashudra movement, the Adi-Hindu movement, the Adi Dharma movement, the Ezahava movement of Sree Narayan Dharma Paripalana [SNDP] Yogam, the Sadhu Jana ParipalanaSamajam [SJPS] and the Pulaya Mahasabha. However, these movements were largely socio-religious in nature.

Later, Dalit movements got politicized in the early decades of the 20th century, and especially, When the Britishers introduced the system of a separate electorate in the Minto-Morley reforms of 1909. By 1917, Dalit movements got separated from non-Brahmin movements and they got a further fillip after a resolution was passed in the Indian National Congress in the same year. The resolution stressed on bringing the attention towards the socio-economic conditions and with the presidency of Gandhi in 1920, this process gathered momentum. Ambedkar and Dalit issue By the 1930s, Gandhi and Ambedkar had emerged as competing spokesmen and leaders of the depressed classes in India. Gandhi thought that untouchability was a moral issue, which is internal to the Hindu religion and that there should be a peaceful and gradual abolition of untouchability. To Gandhi, there was nothing wrong in the varna system and that 'ati shudras should be included in it too as they also constitute the part of the Hindu religion. On the contrary, Ambedkar found untouchability to be a political and economic issue. He felt that abolition of the caste system was essential for abolishing untouchability. Ambedkar favoured the issue of a separate electorate of MacDonald 's proposal of 1928. But Gandhi was vehemently against it and went on a fast unto-death. Atlast, Ambedakar had to give in and signed the Poona Pact that gave reservations to Dalits within the Hindu community.

### Chipko Movement

The Chipko movement is a movement that practiced the Gandhian methods of satyagraha and non-violent resistance, through the act of hugging trees to protect them from being felled. The modern Chipko movement started in the early 1970s in the Garhwal Himalayas of Uttarakhand state. The landmark event in this struggle took place on March 26, 1974, when a group of peasant women in Reni village, Hemwalghati, in Chamoli district, Uttarakhand, acted to prevent the cutting of trees and reclaim their traditional forest rights that were threatened by the contractor system of the state Forest Department. Their actions inspired hundreds of such actions at the grassroots level throughout the region. By the 1980s the movement had spread throughout India and led to formulation of people-sensitive forest policies, which put a stop to the open felling of trees in regions as far reaching as Vindhya and the Western Ghats. Ecofeminism and Chipko Today, beyond the eco-socialism hue, chipko movement is described

as an ecofeminism movement. Women were its mainstay, because they were the ones most affected by the rampant deforestation, which led to a lack of firewood and fodder as well as water for drinking and irrigation. Over the years they also became primary stakeholders in a majority of the afforestation work that happened under the Chipko movement. In 1987 the Chipko Movement was awarded the Right Livelihood Award.

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## 2.4 Deviance

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### Defining Deviance

Before we define deviance, we need to see the meaning of social norms. Because, norms are basic to the definition and the study of deviance i.e., the potentiality for deviance exists in every norm or rule. The line of how and when behaviour is to be interpreted as deviant or to be tolerated is constantly shifting according to public view and the view of various groups. Social norm: is a way of thinking, feeling, or behaving, generally considered right or proper within a (sub) culture; it is a rule, value or standard shared by members of a social group and anchored in that group membership; it implies how group members should or ought to think, perceive, feel or behave in a given circumstance. Therefore, for the social system to operate healthy, human social relations and behaviour should be regulated through social norms.

Deviance may be defined as follows:

1. To deviate means, literally, to move away or stray from, set of standards in society. Deviance, then, constitutes the active violation of socially constructed norms. It refers to the act of deviating from social norms.
2. When sociologists speak of deviant behavior, they are referring to behavior that does not conform to norms-behavior that in some way does not meet with the expectations of a group or of society as a whole.

However, the precise nature of the norms violated, who supports them, and the degree of societal reaction to their violation represents a major problem in the definition of deviance. Some people regard certain behavior as deviant; others don't. Thus, it is very difficult to give a universal definition to the concept of deviance.



## **Who is Deviant?**

A Deviant person is a person who engaged in any behavior that is /are not expected by the norms and values of a given social group or society; Someone who engaged in what should not be moral or appropriate according to the definition of norms and values of a given society. Therefore, a deviant person is someone who exhibit any behavior that deviate from the standard rule or social norms.

Some deviant result in a person's being termed immediately by others as a deviant. In other cases, the deviant status arises only as a result of a variety or combination of acts and status. They include:

1. That the action is regarded as a serious, threatening to other persons or to the society.
2. That there is an official governmental reaction in the form of penal sanction for the act's commission.
3. That it is repeated with some consistency or frequency or that it is seen as a threat if repeated.
4. That it involves the entire "moral character" of the person, not just a phase of his being.
5. That it is sometimes geographical and hence inefaceable.
6. That it is unlikely to be committed, is so serious that, if discovered, the person would be fully and not merely slightly discredited.
7. That the act is not impermanent and ephemeral.
8. That the language accommodates the identification of the individual as one who commits or has committed certain acts or closes of acts.

Persons may engage in deviant acts, but continue to occupy a conventional status and role such deviant behavior constitutes primary deviance when it is rationalized and considered as a function of a socially acceptable role. For example, a politician may take a bribe or a university professor may be absent without telling to his student for private business, in both cases the individual doesn't consider himself not do other consider him to before outside the conventional role. Thus, if deviant acts do not materially affect the person's self-concept or given him a deviant role, they remain primary.

On the other hand, secondary or career deviance develops when the deviant role is reinforced further participation with other more pronounced deviants with whom the individual comes to associate and often through the effects of labelling. For example, lesbian, gay, drug addicted person, and prostitutes are career deviants. Once the person becomes a secondary deviant, it

has important consequences for further deviant behavior. The secondary deviant develops a deviant role which involves greater participation in a deviant subculture, the acquisition of more knowledge and rationalizations for the behavior, and skills in avoiding detection and sanctioning.

### **What are the main causes of social deviance?**

The causes of social deviance can be linked to societal issues. These issues can influence social behavior. The following are causes of social deviance:

- Poverty
- Lack of religious morality
- Broken family and poor socialization
- Lack of basic facilities.
- Rejection by society
- Mass media influence

### **BASIC TYPES OF DEVIANCE AND DEVIANTS**

Both deviance and deviants need to be discussed in terms of their types. This exercise will clarify the nature of deviance.

#### **Three Types of Deviance**

Sociologists have classified deviance in a variety of ways. Whatever be the basis of judging or defining deviance, we may say that it is behaviour that is considered to be different from the central behaviour expectations in a certain group. It is possible to list the following three types of deviance.

1. Cultural and Psychological Deviation

In cultural deviation one departs from the norms of a culture, while the psychological deviant deviates from the norms in personality organisation, for example, the psychotic and neurotic. Both categories may be found in the same person.

2. Individual and Group Deviation

In individual deviation, the person deviates from the norms of a sub-culture. For example, a boy belonging to an educated and respected family takes to drugs and becomes a school dropout. In group deviation, the deviant sub-culture has norms which are condemned by the conventional morality of the society, for example, a street-corner gang of unemployed youth indulging in all sorts of unlawful activities. The gang will be a well-knit group having a private language (known as argot) and a set of stereotyped behaviours, i.e., they develop a distinctive sub-culture. The behaviour of the group members and their activities are condemned by others in society.

### 3. Primary and Secondary

Deviation Primary deviance refers to the violation of social norms committed by a person who is not labelled as a deviant, and who is basically a conformist in his or her life. The deviant act is trivial or tolerated or concealed so that one is not identified as a deviant. For instance, travelling ticket less once in a while, slipping an extra apple into the shopping bag without paying for it etc. Secondary deviation is that which follows from one's public identification as a deviant. One is labelled as a deviant. The labelling process is often the point of no return in the development of deviance. It leads to isolations, possible dismissal, ostracism and sometimes even imprisonment. The deviant may join the association of other deviants. Even if he or she had the choice to discontinue his behaviour, he or she cannot help but continue.

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## **2.5 Suicide**

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Suicide is a term derived from the Latin word *suicidium*, meaning the taking of one's own life. Latin word *sui* means self and *cide* means kill. Therefore, suicide means "an intentional act of self-killing". Suicide is the act by which a person directly, knowingly and freely brings about his or her own death. This presentation is not concerned with those suicides that moral theologians call indirect, nor with those persons who take their own lives in a state of mental abnormality or who cannot be held responsible for their actions. Suicide is direct when one has the intention of causing one's own death as a thing desired for its own sake (as when death is preferred to the meaninglessness of life) or as means to an end (as when one hangs himself to avoid persecution).

Suicide must be distinguished from the placing of one's life in danger for a sufficient reason as might be true in the case of military men, police, firemen, doctors, and others whose duty calls

upon them to risk their lives in the service of others. However, even in these cases due precautions should be observed. In these instances, the individual does not desire his own death but rather endangers his life for a greater good. There is no circumstance which justifies suicide, although emotional situations may be described in which self-inflicted death may save a woman's honor, be the salvation of one's companions, protect national security, or release the individual from torture or a life of pain. In none of these instances, and in no other, is suicide justifiable.

On the other hand, in many cases of suicide, the person may be severely disturbed emotionally and hence may not be responsible for his act. Suicides are of two types: conventional and personal. Conventional suicides occur as a result of tradition and the force of public opinion. Thus, among some tradition-ruled peoples, when certain, situations arise, suicide is inexorably demanded. Notable example in India is the sati of the Indian widow who was forced to immolate herself by cremation on the funeral pyre of her husband.

### **Emile Durkheim on Suicide**

Emile Durkheim was a French philosopher who was born on 15 April, 1858. Durkheim acknowledged Comte as his master. On a sociological perspective when Comte and Spencer were considered as the founding fathers of Sociology, Durkheim is considered as the grandfather and the systematic approach to study the society began with him.

Durkheim's theory of 'suicide' is related in various ways to his study of the division of labour. It is also linked with the theory of 'social constraint'. Durkheim has established the view that there are no societies in which suicide does not occur.

### **Types of Suicide**

In Durkheim's view, there are four types of suicide, based on the degree of imbalance between the two social forces of social integration and moral regulation. Durkheim pointed out the impact of various crises on social groups. For example, a war that led to an increase in altruism, an economic boom, or a catastrophe that caused anomie.

According to Durkheim, suicide is not a personal act. It is caused by a power beyond the individual or the super individual. He believed that "we know the consequences of all kinds of deaths, either directly or indirectly, resulting from the victim's own positive or negative behaviour." After defining the phenomenon, Durkheim rejected the psychological explanation.

Many doctors and psychologists theorize that the majority of those who take their lives are in a morbid state. However, Durkheim emphasised that the power to drive suicide is social rather than psychological. He concluded that suicide results from social turmoil or lack of social integration or social solidarity.

Durkheim's theory of suicide greatly contributes to the understanding of the phenomenon because it emphasises social factors rather than biological or personal factors. However, this is also the main drawback of Emile Durkheim's suicide theory. He overemphasized only social factors and overlooked other factors. Therefore, his theory of suicide is said to be highly flawed and unilateral.

The four types of suicide as mentioned in the theory of suicide are as follows:

### **Egoistic suicide**

Egoistic suicide reflects a lasting feeling of being integrated into the community and not belonging. It comes from suicidal ideation that an individual doesn't have a chain. This absence can lead to meaninglessness, indifference, and depression.

Durkheim calls it distant "excessive personalisation". It is generally seen that individuals who commit suicide are not attached to society, are left out and receive little social support or guidance. Durkheim found that suicide is more common among unmarried people, especially unmarried men, as there is less need to restrain them or tie them to stable social norms and goals.

### **Altruistic suicide**

Altruistic suicide is marked by the feeling of being overwhelmed by the group's goals and beliefs. It occurs in a highly integrated society where the needs of individuals are considered less important than the needs of society as a whole. Durkheim explained that there would not be any significant motivation for people to commit an act as heinous as suicide in an altruistic society, as personal interests were considered important. However, he provided one exception-when an individual is expected to commit suicide in the name of society, for example, in military service.

### **Anomie suicide**

Anomie suicide reflects an individual's moral turmoil and lack of social orientation associated with dramatic social and economic upheavals. It is the product of a failure to define legitimate

aspirations through moral deregulation and restraint of social ethics that can impose meaning and order on an individual's conscience. Anomie suicide is a sign of the failure of economic development and the division of labour to create organic solidarity, as mentioned by Durkheim.

In this condition, people do not know whether they are suitable for society. Durkheim explains that anomie suicide is a state of moral disability in which people are unaware of the limits of their desires and are always in a state of disappointment. Anomie suicide can happen when they experience extreme wealth changes due to economic or natural phenomena. In either case, the expectations of the previous life are set aside, and new expectations are needed before assessing the situations associated with the new frontier.

### **Fatalistic suicide**

Fatalistic suicide occurs when a person is over-regulated, their future is constantly hampered, and repressive discipline causes intense choking of passion. It is the opposite of anomie suicide, which happens in an oppressive society where its inhabitants want to die rather than live. For example, some prisoners may want to die rather than live in prisons with constant abuse and over-regulation. Unlike the other concepts he developed, Durkheim thought that fatalistic suicide was only a theoretical concept and highly unlikely to exist in reality.

### **Conclusion**

Emile Durkheim's theory of suicide is a study in sociology that examines the event of suicide and the different types of suicide. Despite its limitations, Durkheim's work on suicide has influenced supporters of control theory and is often referred to as classical sociological work.

Durkheim also examined the rates of suicide between Protestants and Catholics and argued that greater social control among Catholics leads to lower suicide rates. According to Durkheim, Catholic societies show a normal level of integration, while Protestant societies show a low level. This interpretation has been challenged often. It is considered that Durkheim may be over-generalising this idea, as he got most of the data from his previous researchers, especially Adolph Wagner and Henry Morselli. Later researchers pointed out that the difference between Protestant and Catholic suicide seems confined to German-speaking Europe, suggesting that other factors need to be considered as well.

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## 2.6 Casteism

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Caste is a system of social stratification. It lies at the root of Indian social structure. It involves ranking according to birth and determines one's occupation, marriage and social relationships. There is a prescribed set of norms, values and sanctions which govern social behaviour within caste. Sociologists have defined caste (locally referred to as "jati") as 'hereditary, endogamous group, which is usually localised. It has a traditional association with an occupation and a particular position in the local hierarchy of castes. Relations between castes are governed, among other things, by the concepts of pollution and purity, and general maximum commensality that occurs within the caste' (Srinivas 1962).

What is Casteism?

Casteism is a form of discrimination that has been present in Indian society for centuries. It is based on the hierarchical divisions of society, which are determined by birth. This system of social stratification means that people are born into a certain caste and remain there for their entire lives.

Casteism is often used to justify inequality and oppression, as it provides a way to rationalize why some people are born into poverty or low social status. It also reinforces the notion that people should stay in their place and not try to move up in the world. This can lead to stagnation and prevent social mobility.

There have been many attempts to eradicate casteism, but it still persists in many parts of Indian society. It is an entrenched system that will take time and effort to change. In the meantime, it continues to impact the lives of millions of people in India.

### III-effects of Casteism

- Casteism perpetuates the practice of untouchability and becomes an obstacle in providing social equality and justice.
- Casteism proves to be a threat to social order, stability, peace and harmony, in the society.
- Prevalence of casteism shows that the people are tradition-bound, conservative and orthodox in thinking. It may cause a hurdle to the upliftment of women because of lack of encouragement from caste-conscious groups.

- Casteism divides society into different segments and results in conflicts and tensions in and between these segments. These continuous conflicts and tensions between various segments hinder the development of the nation and growth of nationalism.
- Casteism results in political disunity and affects the smooth and successful functioning of multi-party democracy like India.
- Casteism, indirectly, can be the cause of corruption. Members of a caste try to give all facilities to the persons, who are from their own caste and in doing so, they do not hesitate to involve in the most corrupt activities.
- Casteism has become an instrument in the hands of political leaders. Many political leaders, during elections, try to procure votes on communal and caste basis, rather than their own capacities and capabilities. This results in election of under-serving candidates, who do not hesitate to promote their own caste interest at the cost of common good. Thus, casteism proves to be a hindrance to democracy.
- Casteism sometimes leads to religious conversions, especially among the low caste groups, who are not financially sound. Another cause for such conversions is that certain unbearable exploited conditions arise out of dominance of certain caste groups over other caste groups.

#### **Solution to the Problem:**

- Providing value-based education to children from childhood can solve the problem of casteism to some extent.
- Various social agencies like family, school, and Mass media must be given the responsibility to develop a proper, broad outlook among children, which will negate the feelings of casteism, for example, creating awareness about the ill-effects of perpetuating the traditional caste system.
- Literary programmes must be taken up in rural areas as the caste feelings, which further perpetuate casteism, are more in rural areas. These feelings of casteism can be minimized by the provision of social education among rural population.
- By encouraging inter-caste marriages, the feelings arising out of casteism can be minimized as these marriages bring two families of different castes closer to each other.
- Provision of cultural and economic equality among different sections of the society reduces the chances of jealousy and competition. Thus, economic and cultural equality is important in eliminating casteism.



- According to G. S. Ghurye, the conflict originating in casteism can be removed by encouraging inter-caste marriages. Co-education should be introduced at the primary level and boys and girls should be given the opportunity to come together. This will lead to improvement of behaviour between different sexes simultaneously, with which casteism will be actively refuted.
- According to V. K. R. V. Rao, in order to put an end to casteism and to deprive it of its very basis, the creation of some optional groups is necessary through which the communal tendencies of the individuals can be manifested and organized. As these increases, casteism decreases because the individuals will have the chance to express their instincts and motives outside the caste.

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## 2.7 Communalism

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The term community and commune stand for two different concepts and should not be used in common parlance as the same. Yerankar (1999:26) argues that community and communal are two different concepts. The former is used to express the fellowship of relations or feelings, common character, agreement and sharing a common culture and space. The latter means an expression of heightened sense of community feelings. Since it is associated with a religious community, it implies exclusive loyalty to one's religion and all its related dimensions.

According to Seth (2000:17), it signifies inter communal rivalries and social tension, economic, political or cultural differences of the rulers and the ruled. It is an ideology which determines the gradual evolution of relationships between two communities both within and without their respective folds. Dixit (1974:1) argues that communalism is a political doctrine which makes use of religious-cultural differences to achieve political ends. When, on the basis of religious-cultural differences, a community initiates political demands deliberately, then communal awareness turns into communalism.

Sabrewal (1996:130) argues that communalism as a concept emerged due to the fact that members of a multireligious society had to witness and confront the behavioral pattern practiced by specific community per se. It clearly shows that the term multi religiosity may sound unique as a Sociological proposition, however the differences need to be understood. For instance, social unease and tension is generated in the communities by sheer differences in clothing patterns, life style, facial marks, one's language and manners. These differences are

equally governed by religious sanction of each specific community that creates a specific identity for the groups in the community. Awareness of socio-religious identities gradually get established and are mutually acknowledged. The awareness of socio religious identities help one constitute useful social maps in one's mind demarcating the social territory into sacred, friendly or neutral and hostile. Generally, this may be due to the propaganda and other factors such as prejudices, hostilities and negative feelings against each other. It is therefore argued that all depends upon the nature and type of interactive patterns between people of different religions and cultures. In case they do not hurt the religious sentiments and challenge religious identities, then there is no problem. But if they do, by chance or choice develop hostility against the other this is what leads to outbreak of communal outbursts and communal conflicts.

Kamath (2003) tries to explain the meaning of communalism through the concept of communal harmony in the context of a multi-religious and multi-ethnic society. When various communities live together within a territory with understanding and cooperation, there is communal harmony. On the other hand, whenever such groups, either ethnic or religious, fight for their exclusiveness, group identity or group interest even at the cost of national interest or try to impose their way of life on other group, there is communal disharmony and this is termed as communalism. This explanation signifies that lack of understanding and cooperation between religious communities is the basic reason of communalism.

### **Factors Responsible for The Growth of Communalism In India**

There may be several factors that may be attributed to the cause and growth of Communalism in India. Some scholars attribute this cause due to stagnant economy during the British Rule. The stagnation of economy may have affected the aspirations and economic prosperity for certain sections within society. Scholars opine that this section of society usually termed as 'Middle Class' used communalism as a weapon for their own survival at the cost of other classes in society. Subsequently, other leaders from the community and political parties joined to fuel the tension of Communalism in India. This may be well illustrated with the emergence of modern politics with its roots in partition of Bengal in 1905 and feature of separate electorate under Government of India Act, 1909. Later, British government also appeased various communities through Communal award in 1932, which witnessed strong resistance from Gandhiji and others. All these acts were done by the British government to appease Muslims and other communities, for their own political needs. This feeling of communalism has deepened since then, fragmenting the Indian society and being a cause of unrest.

## **British Policy of Divide and Rule**

In the pre-independence period, the British used the policy of Divide and Rule to weaken the nationalist aspirations by creating a cleavage between the Hindus and Muslims, favouring one community against the other in terms of services and opportunities. It resulted in communal tensions between the two groups and therefore, it is considered that the Hindu-Muslim disunity took shape during the continuation of British Rule in India.

In this regard, clear demarcation was made by many historians between the ancient period of Indian history and the medieval. Prominent among them was British historian James Mill of the early nineteenth century. They endorsed that since ancient India was ruled by Hindu rulers, it was a period of much growth and prosperity against the continuous decay of the medieval period under the Muslim rulers. This readily suggests that the basic character of polity in India is defined by religion which relied on the beliefs that Indian society and culture had reached ideal heights in the ancient period. On the contrary, Muslim communalism harped upon the glory of the Muslim rulers. Such distorted texts of Indian history significantly contributed to the rise of communalism.

During the national movement, a strong Hindu religious element was introduced in nationalist thought. The orientalist writings which glorified the Hindu religion and period in history became the basis for the propagation of nationalist ideas and pride for the motherland. In the process the Muslim were seen as alien. Other factors which are believed to fan the flames of communalism include rumours and distorted news publicized by media which disseminates false information to the public. Also, political parties resorted to the politics of appeasement whereby sanctions were used to appease different ethnic, religious, cultural groups for votes. This vote bank politics greatly followed tactics of appeasement by provisioning services and opportunities to a few sections of the population against the other sections.

## **Understanding Communalism**

This section tries to understand the various viewpoints offered to explain communalism in Indian contexts.

### **Colonialist Viewpoint**

The British seemed to see 'Hindu-Muslim antagonism' much earlier than the term 'communalism' emerged. Colonial thinkers like Hugh McPherson in his work 'Origin and Growth of Communal Antagonism' rejects the idea that 'communalism' is "a modern invention, the product of recent political developments", which refers specifically to the politics of separate electorates. In order to prove his point McPherson cites the Benares riots of 1809 and the testimony of a "landholder of Bengal" to the age-old animosity between Hindus and Muslims which dates back to the Muslim invasion of India. McPherson emphasizes that "the religious basis of communal dissension" began to be "reinforced by political factors" with Tilak's establishment of the 'Anti-Cow Killing Society' in 1893, which he suggests was designed to "stimulate the militant spirit of Hinduism and establish its domination of the Indian political world"

### **Nationalist Viewpoint**

For the colonialist, 'communalism' is a pre-colonial problem which is irremediable. For the nationalist, 'communalism' is a colonial problem with its remedy being nationalism. Under this rubric, communalism in India develops as a concomitant to Indian nationalism and is nothing but nationalism driven into religious channels. For the nationalist, while both nationalism and 'communalism' were responses to colonialism, the former was the 'right' response and the latter, the wrong one. The nationalist project a unitary and symbiotic culture of historic co-operation between Hindus and Muslims which was thwarted with the colonial rule especially with the policy of Divide and Rule, of the British rulers in India which gave rise to communalism.

### **Some Scholarly Responses**

The most notable theorist on 'communalism', Bipan Chandra, who wrote *Communalism in Modern India* in 1984 worked very clearly within nationalist frames. Chandra and other nationalist historians emphasised that the phenomenon of 'communalism' is a 'modern' one and could not have existed before colonialism. Clearly, since any form of 'popular' politics could not have existed before the British advent, Chandra attributed 'communal politics to colonial origins. As Chandra writes "Communalism was not a partial or sectional view of the social reality; it was its wrong or unscientific view. Communalism was not narrow or false because it represented only one community but because it did not do either. The communalist

not only failed to represent national interests; he did not represent even the interests of the ‘community’ it claimed to represent” (Chandra 1984: 17).

Thus, nationalism represented the struggle for national liberation from the colonial state and for the formation of an independent state. It was historically valid at the moment as it provided a real solution to a real problem – national liberation as against colonial domination (Chandra 1984: 22). Colonial and nationalist explanations of ‘communalism’ seemingly do not enjoy much credit today. Most contemporary work on ‘communalism’ would be dubbed constructivist. The foremost in this section is Bernard Cohn. However, Cohn’s brand of constructivism has seen several tributary developments and branches. While Cohn’s basic argument was that the colonizer’s structure of administration generated sociological categories (such as, the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes etc.) that often became the source of conflict in India. His supporters and followers have found a variety of reasons besides colonial administration to prove that the colonisers succeeded in implementing not only sociological categories through administrative techniques but identities, consciousness and nationalism also emerged through the prism of the colonial knowledge system. Gyanendra Pandey’s (1992) writings reflect these views. Pandey treats ‘communalism’ as a product of nationalism. However, he seeks to distinguish his stand from those who have considered communalism as ‘deviant’ or ‘under-developed’ nationalism.

### **Anti-Modernist**

The last section is essentially devoted to the work of only one scholar who speaks not of ‘communalism’ so much as an analysis of ‘secularism’. It is perhaps ironic that one can see the problem in greater clarity in his work. In his ‘The Politics of Secularism and the Recovery of Religious Tolerance’ (Nandy, 1998), Nandy begins by explaining why one needs to examine the “category” of secularism. His proposition is that “post-colonial structures of knowledge in the third world” are often characterised by a “peculiar form of imperialism of Communalism categories” which hegemonize a “conceptual domain” so effectively that the original domain vanishes from our awareness and is replaced by a concept that is produced and honed in the West (Nandy 1998: 321). His project then is to recover the domain of ‘religious tolerance’ which is the question relevant to South Asia, from the hegemonic discourse of ‘secularism. He goes on to suggest that traditional India had answers to questions of religious tolerance.

Nandy’s arguments get caught up in a binary mode of tradition/modernity and faith/ideology. He acutely points out how colonialism has subjected certain knowledge domains to an

imperialism of categories such that all traces of the original problem disappear. Given this proposition, his investigation of the concept of secularism is well founded. However, he does not answer why he sets out to rescue 'religious tolerance' from the domain of secularism. Was secularism an answer to religious intolerance in India? Nandy traces a trajectory of the concept of 'secularism' in Indian politics but ignores the fact that the word gained legitimacy in colonial India. Thus, Nandy's problem itself seems a little skewed. He presumes that there was peace within traditional society and that this peace was connected to religious tolerance and it is this traditional religious tolerance that he wants to recover. Instead, one could ask whether tolerance had anything to do with religion at all.



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