

BSW-122
Society, Social Institutions and
Social Problems

Block

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INTRODUCTION TO SOCIETY

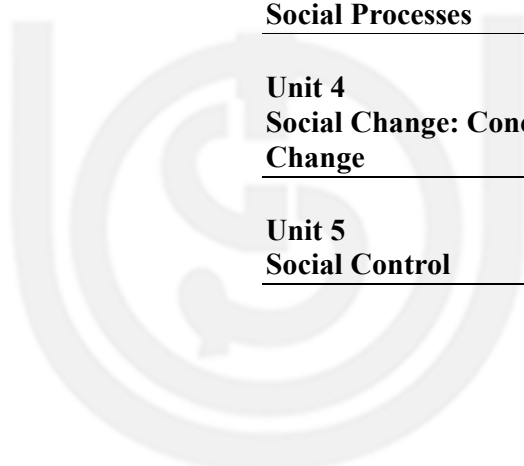
UNIT 1
Basic Sociological Concepts

UNIT 2
Evolution of Human Society: Nature and Characteristics

UNIT 3
Social Processes

Unit 4
Social Change: Concept and Factors involved in Social Change

Unit 5
Social Control

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COURSE INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the course on, ‘Society, Social Institutions and Social Problems’. There are four blocks in this course.

Block 1 is on “Introduction to Society”. This block deals with the basic concepts of sociology, which are frequently used in social work practice. In this block, we discuss the evolution of society from complex form to simpler forms as a result of social forces within the society as well as from outside it. Concepts of social change and social control are also explained in this block.

Block 2 is on “Social System and Social Sub-system”. In this block, some of the important components of the society, such as family, class, caste, culture and the State are discussed. The mutually interacting components of social structure and culture, dynamics of caste and class and the role of State in the promotion of welfare of the people and protecting their rights, are discussed in detail in this block.

Block 3 deals with “Social Institution of Marriage”. In this block, we discuss about the historical development of marriage, functions and purpose of marriage, various forms of marriage etc. In this block, we also discuss the changing patterns in family life, role expectations in marital life, role conflicts and role changes in different phases of marriage.

Block 4 is on “Social Problems and Services”. This block brings in a systematic learning about the causative factors which cause social problems and suggest different solutions to the social problems. Various social issues like migration and displacement, environmental degradation, communalism, youth unrest and corruption, substance abuse, juvenile delinquency etc. are discussed in detail. The block also explains the concept and practice of social defense in India.

This course will give you a comprehensive understanding of the society, social institutions and social problems in India.



BLOCK INTRODUCTION

'Introduction to Society' is the first block of the course. This block deals with the basic concepts of sociology. Sociology is a discipline from which social work borrows a significant amount of knowledge. However, the use of this knowledge is through the application of social work methods, which means that social workers creatively use the knowledge borrowed from these disciplines.

The first unit on 'Basic Sociological Concepts' deals with sociological terms that are frequently used in social work practice. The second unit 'Evolution of Human society: Nature and Characteristics' discusses how society evolved from simpler forms to complex forms as a result of social forces from within the society as well as from outside it. The third unit 'Social Processes' deals with processes like competition, conflict, assimilation and cooperation. The fourth unit is on 'Social Changes: Concept and Factors involved in Social Change,' which explains the forces of changes in society and its consequences on an individual and society. The fifth and last unit is on 'Social Control,' which deals with the concepts of social control. Agencies of social control and its functions are described in this unit. While studying sociology which mainly deals with how society evolved and social groups behave, the social worker should remember that the influences of social groups can be positive or negative. Together, these five units will introduce you to society, its structures, processes and functions.

UNIT 1 BASIC SOCIOLOGICAL CONCEPTS

**Joseph Varghese*

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- 1.10 Answers to Check Your Progress

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the concepts of society;
- Describe the different ways in which individuals relate to each other;
- Identify the differences in the concepts; and
- Explain ways in which these concepts are used in social work.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit you will be introduced to the basic concepts used in sociology. Social work and sociology are related disciplines and social work borrows liberally from sociological theory and sociological concepts to understand social problems and society. *Community, association, institutions* and *groups* are concepts that you will frequently come across in your theory as well as your field work. Therefore, it is important that you must be familiar with these concepts and their usage at the initial stage itself.

1.2 SOCIETY

Before we understand these concepts, it is important that we must clarify what a concept means. A concept is expressed in one or more words. Also, concepts are abstractions, which are derived from experience and are results of mental exercise. Once the scientific community accepts a concept, all those who practice or use it, accepts the meaning assigned to it. For example, in everyday language 'a road' means 'a way'.

Sometimes there is need for further clarification of the concept. For example, a road can be a street, a *pukka* road or *kacha* one or even a highway. So, there must be a description associated with the concept so that the concept gets clarified and precise. Similarly, in scientific language, we qualify concepts, when we want to say something more specific. For example, communities

can be further classified into rural community, urban community and tribal community. So, it is essential to be specific, when quoting a concept. Sometimes, social scientists do not agree with the meaning attached to a specific concept and after a debate among them, meanings attached to the concept undergo a change and the final decision will be taken only after mutual consensus.

According to Horton and Hunt, concepts are used for the following reasons. One, it enables scientific discussion to take place. Concepts help social scientists find common ground for initiating discussions on theories. Secondly, new knowledge is also created when concepts and theories are debated and its limitations are identified. Thirdly, concepts allow easy communication by reducing need for elaborate description. Otherwise, the communicator would have to explain the social phenomena every time he/ she has to use it.

Society

According to Horton and Hunt society is an organization of people whose associations are with one another. Whereas, Maclver describes society as a web of relationships. There are a number of definitions of society. Most of them point to the following characteristics of society.

Society involves mutual awareness: The first condition for calling a set of individuals a society is the awareness among them about each other. It is only when individuals are aware about the presence of others, they can form a social relationship.

Society comprises social relationships: Any two individuals or objects are said to be in relation with each other when there is mutual interaction and when the actions of one affect the other. Thus, in a society, individuals are affected by the ways, in which others behave.

Society has values and norms that guide these social relationships: Social relationships are guided and controlled by the values and norms of a society. Every individual has a specific role assigned to him/ her by the society. The performance of these roles is guided by the values and norms of the society. These values are taught to the

individuals through the process of socialization and it becomes part of the individual personality. Apart from this, there are informal and formal agencies of social control which apply positive and negative sanctions on the individual for making him/her conform to the societal values and norms.

Society has general goals: Every society wants to perpetuate itself. Certain functions have to be performed if the society has to maintain itself and prevent its own destruction. These are called *functional prerequisites*. Some of the most common functions identified are the following; common goals; common orientation towards environment; communication; set of common values; reproduction and rearing of children, socializing the children, attaining food and other resources required for its members' survival, protecting its members from natural and man-made disasters and specific ways to deal with conflicts and disagreements within the members. The way these functions are performed vary from society to society.

Society has several complementary social processes: We find a variety of social processes and attributes in the society. We find instances of association, cooperation, competition and conflict in society. Similarly we find that in many ways the members of society are alike and in many other ways they are different. There are groups and subgroups with these groups that have their respective dynamics. All these different social processes make up the society.

Society has division of labour: One individual cannot perform all functions required to maintain a society. The work has to be divided among the members. The criteria by which the functions are divided among the members and its social consequences are important part of study for the sociologist. Division of labour can be based on sex, education, profession, ethnicity, caste or class. Division of labour depends on the level of complexity of the society.

Society is more than the sum total of its members:

The society influences individuals in many ways. It is the environment along with hereditary factors that determine the personality of the individual. Thus, the society comes to have a force of its own by which it influences the members. This force is applied through social institutions like laws, religion and family.

Classification of Societies

Sociologists have classified societies according to different criteria.

Societies classified on their geographical location:

Examples of this classification are Western society, Indian society, Chinese society and so on. This kind of classification is broader in nature where the society is identified to share certain common and significant characteristics. the classification can be also used narrowly when we want to refer to a regional group, for example we talk of Manipuri society or Rajasthani society.

Societies classified on the basis of the language:

Language is a medium which unites people and one mode by which the culture of the people is expressed. So, language is sometimes used to distinguish societies from each other. Examples of such

classifications are Tamil society and Telugu society.

Societies classified based on core values: Sometimes opinions regarding the nature of the society are based on essential core-values which the members adhere to. For example, Western society is considered modern, rational, individualistic and consumerist while Indian society is considered as to be traditional, religious, group-oriented and spiritual. In most cases such classification results from stereotyping and labeling. It is based on insufficient and inaccurate information on the societies other than one's own. Social workers should be able to see how such images, often negative, about other societies, influence the behaviour of members.

Societies based on level of complexity of social life:

Simple societies are those societies that have the following characteristics: small-sized with fewer members; relatively isolated from other societies-spatially, culturally and economically, means for getting food is hunting and gathering; low level of technology used in production of articles; division of labour is limited and based on age and sex; barter and gift taking and giving are the major ways for exchange of goods between the members; political system is based on hereditary principle and traditional authority; group consciousness dominates individual consciousness and unity in the group is maintained by the likeness among the members.

On the other hand, complex societies are based on the following characteristics: large numbers of members and, therefore; close relationship with other societies mainly due to advanced technology used in communication and transport; high level of technology used in producing all goods including foodstuffs; division of labour is highly diversified; market is the main form of exchange of goods while other forms of exchange like barter play a marginal role; political system is highly advanced with different competing interests; a large bureaucracy based on rational-legal values; individual consciousness and individual freedom is promoted; diversity in life-styles is encouraged and unity is based on interdependence of members.

Societies based on its economic system: Sociologists influenced by Marxism argue that the economic factors have a predominant influence on how the society is structured and how society functions. Based on this criteria societies are classified as capitalistic societies and socialistic societies. Both these societies are complex in nature, but in capitalistic society, the forces of production (land, factories) are privately owned. Workers working in these factories are paid wages in exchange of the labour they contribute. Markets determine the costs of the goods and services that are produced. Private property-ownership and profit-making are encouraged. The state has no or minimal role in the economy of the country.

In a socialistic society, all or significant part of the forces of production are owned by the state in different forms. The state uses its ownership of industries to influence the economy. Equally important is the role of planning in a socialistic economy. The market is only allowed to have limited influence on the economy. The supply of goods and services are determined by the plan which the government prepares after assessing the needs and demands of

different sections of the society. The government through its policies tries to ensure that the differences in income between various sections of the society are not very large. After the collapse of the Socialist, bloc planning has lost much of its appeal for governments around the globe. Most countries have given significant role to market and private entrepreneurs in their economies. Nevertheless, it is also true that classical capitalist society no longer exists as all governments in the modern times play a significant role in the economy of the country.

Societies based on the political system: Societies can be classified also on the basis of the nature of political system, which is *democratic* or *authoritarian*. A democratic society has a state whose leaders are elected by popular vote. Regular elections are held to elect the leaders. Though free and fair elections are important, other conditions needed for democratic society are: freedom of association, freedom of speech, tolerance of different opinions, protection of minority rights, equality before law and respect for human rights. Authoritarian society neither allows dissent nor freedom of association. No other organization is allowed to challenge the authority of the state.

Societies classified based on historical periods:

Ancient societies, medieval societies and modern societies are some of the societies based on historical periods in which they existed.

Check your progress I

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.
b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) What are the major characteristics of a society?

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1.3 COMMUNITY

Like society, different sociologists have also defined ‘community’ differently. Horton and Hunt define a community as a local grouping within which people carry out a full round of life activities. Explaining it in detail includes the following characteristics.

Community is a grouping of people: Community comprises a number of people living together and sharing a common life. They interact with each other frequently and purposefully.

A fixed geographical area: This is an important characteristic of the community. A community has well-defined boundaries that are recognized by the members of the community and outsiders. To

become a member of the community, one need to have some relationship with the specific geographical area. Sometimes, membership of the community can be inherited if one's parents belong to the specific community.

Division of labour: In every group, many functions have to be performed, so that the group survives. No individual or group can do all these functions by themselves. There are also differences in the skill and aptitude of the individuals. These factors lead to division of labour and occupational specialization.

Members are conscious of their unity and of belongingness to the community: Members are aware of their membership in a particular community. It affects their behaviour in many ways. They take pride -in the achievements of their fellow-members and are concerned when undesirable things happen to them.

Members act collectively in an organized manner to achieve common goals: Members live in a particular area and share common interests. Therefore, they can be easily organized to achieve common objectives. This condition enables the practice of social work method — community organization. Also, many programmes are implemented because it is felt that the community as a whole will participate and benefit from the programme, for example, the community development programme.

Common culture: Culture of any group develops because of group living. A common way of thinking about the different aspects of life develops and this is transmitted from one generation to other. Cultural influences from outside the group are accepted or rejected collectively by the group. As a result of common experiences, a common culture develops and regulates the group behaviour.

Use of the Concept 'Community'

The concept also helps in describing and differentiating existing communities. The most commonly used classification is to distinguish between urban community and rural community. Rural communities are characterized by the following attributes: strong community sentiment; importance of neighbourhood; relatively high incidence of extended families; predominance of primary relationships; majority of community members' occupations are related to the primary sectors like fishing, agriculture, hunting, etc.; high degree of informal social control; greater degree of homogeneity. On the other hand, urban community is defined as characterized by the following: weak community sentiments and lesser importance of neighbourhood; predominance of lower degree of informal social control; major occupations of the members are related to industry and services sector and heterogeneity.

Further when the community is taken as a unit for action, it simplifies the formulation and implementation of programmes. Without delineating the boundaries of the community and understanding its structure it would be difficult to analyze the needs

of the community.

Limitations in using the Concept ‘Community’

Though the concept is quite clear on paper, in real life its application is confusing due to these reasons. Firstly, no community seems to fulfill all the characteristics required to be termed as a community. Also, the distinctions between different types of communities are not clear. We find that characteristics that are attributed to the rural characteristics are also found in the urban areas and vice versa. Secondly, in some Indian villages, there is less or even no ‘We feeling’ among the members because the community is divided on the basis of caste. Thirdly, it is observed that when people say ‘community’ they seem to have in their minds only the male members of the community. In many village communities, women do not have a public voice and sometimes are not even seen. In the coming lessons, you will learn how these factors influence the practice of social work methods.

1.4 ASSOCIATIONS

Modern societies are characterized by presence of numerous associations. These associations are of different varieties, of different types, of different sizes and with different objectives. MacIver defines an association as ‘an organization deliberately formed for the collective pursuit of some interest or set of interests, which its members share’. The following are the characteristics of associations:

Associations are groups of individuals: Associations comprise number of individuals who share common interest or common likes. They relate to each other so that they can promote the group’s interests. Attaining group interests will eventually mean that the individual member’s interests are also promoted.

Associations have objectives: These interests are specific and all the members know of these interests. In most cases, the objectives of the association will reveal those interests of the members, which it wants to pursue.

Objectives are framed after considering reality of the situation. The success and failure of the association depends on whether it attains its objectives or not.

Association has formal rules and regulations: A small association may not have any formal rules as members may be functioning based on the personal relationship they have with each other. But if the association grows larger and its functioning becomes complex, then normal rules and regulations are formulated. Formal rules and regulations of the association determine how the members will act in specific situations. In many associations, these rules and procedures are written down. In your fieldwork agency you can request the officials to allow you to show the ‘Memorandum of Association’(MoA). This document will show you the objectives of the agency, its mode of functioning and other relevant information.

Membership is voluntary: Associations are product of modern societies. Membership is voluntary, that is, members join the association out of their own desire. The association can set standards for allowing members to join. Once the aspirant meets these standards, he or she is allowed to join the association.

Association survives as long as it has members:

Unlike families, associations survive even if the original members leave or expire. The only condition is that new members should join the association and replace those who're leaving.

Associations and their relevance in modern society:

Modern societies freely allow and even encourage the formation of the associations. Therefore, we find that there are associations that have serious objectives like influencing government policy and there are associations that want to promote bird watching. Tocqueville, a prominent social thinker, who studied the American society in the eighteenth century, was the first to point out that associations promote democracy. Modern thinkers have agreed with these observations. Associations allow citizens to organize themselves, articulate their demands, thereby restricting the authority of the government. This prevents the government from accumulating all authority in itself at the cost of individual freedom. Two, associations allow for plurality of opinions. Associations also provide a number of services, which improve the quality of life of the people.

In traditional society, individuals become part of the groups on the basis of their ascribed status. For example, medieval cities had merchant guilds where membership was based on the caste of the individual. In modern India, there is a proliferation of caste associations. These associations have characteristics of both traditional groups and modern associations. Its objectives are related to that of a modern society like influencing government policies and building educational institutions. However, membership is based on primordial considerations like caste and religion. So these associations cannot be called fully modern or fully traditional. However, they play a significant role in the lives of most Indians.

Check your progress II

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer
b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) What are the characteristics of modern associations?

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1.5 INSTITUTIONS

In everyday language, people use the term ‘institutions’ while referring to ‘organizations’. For example, college is called educational institution. But in sociology the concept ‘institution’ has a specific meaning. According to MacIver, institutions are ‘established forms or conditions of procedures characteristics of group activity’. According to Horton and Hunt, an institution is a system of norms to achieve some goal or activity that people feel is important, or more formally an organized cluster of folkways and centered around a major human activity. Institutions have the following characteristics.

Institutions emerge out of social interactions within a group:

According to Sumner, there are two types of institutions — crecive institutions and enacted institutions. Crescive institutions are those in which norms emerge unconsciously in the society. Its origin is unclear. On the other hand, enacted institutions are consciously created for specific purposes. Rules and legislations conceptualized and listed in the modern era, are rationally formulated and a typical example of enacted institutions.

Institutions are structural processes that control human behaviour:

Any member of society is expected to follow the rules, regulations and usages prevalent in the society. These rules, regulations and usages can be informal or formal. If it is formal, then it is codified and, in most cases, will have responsible body to monitor whether the individuals follow these rules or not.

For example, in Indian society if a person wants to get married, he/she has to register it under any of the Marriage Acts formulated by the government so as to make it valid and socially accepted. There will be an agency for conducting marriage and to verify whether conditions and standardized criteria for marriage has been fulfilled. The male and female accepts and agrees to perform the duties as a husband and as a wife respectively. In cases of conflict between the partners, there is a legal system to deal with such issues which includes the police and family courts. The totality of these processes can be called the institution of marriage in India.

All institutions have roles and status: Every institution gives a particular role and status to the individuals involved in it. Role is a set of behaviour expected out of an individual in a particular social context. Whereas status is the position of the individual in society. For example, in an educational institution, individuals who come to learn are given with the status of students, and the individuals who teach are given status of teachers. In his/her role as a student he or she has to attend class, maintain discipline, obey the teachers and participate in the class discussions. In his/her role as a teacher as her/she has to take classes, evaluate students’ notebooks, control the students and follow the principal’s instructions. Institutions operate through the means of roles.

Institutional roles are learnt by socialization: Every institution prescribes specific roles for the particular individual. The different

roles individuals perform are learnt through the process of socialization. Main agencies of socialization are family, educational institutions, peer group, state and religion.

Institutions influence each other: There are many institutions in a society and they influence each other. For example, the school teaches the students how to be a good citizen which ultimately tries to make them good citizens who are aware of the laws and their responsibilities.

At times various institutions give contradictory norms, which result in confusion in the individual. For example, feudalism and modern democracy co-exist in some parts of India, each of which makes opposing demands on the individual. Democracy advocates equality while feudalism advocates structured inequality.

The major institutions which are the subject of the sociological study are political, economic, family, educational and religious. Other important institutions in society are bureaucracy, welfare institutions and military.

Relationship between an institution and organization: As mentioned in the start of the section, institutions and organizations are different conceptually. Institutions are recognized way of thinking while organizations are formal groups created to achieve specific objectives. At the same time, they are related to each other as every organization has an institutional framework, which allows it to survive.

1.6 PRIMARY GROUPS AND SECONDARY GROUPS

According to Horton and Hunt, groups are described in many ways. Some define a group as a collection of individuals who live in close physical proximity. Other definition emphasizes the need for common characteristics among the members if a collection of individuals has to be called a group. Yet another set of definitions require the members to have common consciousness and regular interaction in order to be called a group. We will describe a collection of individuals as a group if it is marked by the following characteristics:

A group should have a given number of individuals:

One or two members cannot be called a group. Similarly, a very large number of individuals cannot be called a group. It would be more appropriate to call it a community, crowd, mob or a society. You will learn about these concepts later.

The group members should have regular interaction between themselves: Interaction between the members

should be purposeful and considered as such by the members. Thus, individuals waiting for a bus and having casual conversations cannot be called a group considering these standards.

Awareness about each other: The members are conscious about other members' behaviour, emotions, needs and this consciousness

influences their own behaviour.

Members are aware of themselves being a unit:

Group members see themselves as distinct from others. They acknowledge that their membership in the group makes them different from others.

Common goals: A group, if it has to sustain itself has to have goals. Goals can be same for all members or in some cases goals can be different. It is also possible that the stated goals of the group may be different from the actual goals. A group may declare that its aim is to help the poor but members may join it primarily to meet and socialize with each other.

Common ideals and values: When the above conditions are met it is likely that as far as the group purpose is concerned, the members will have shared values. In matters not concerned with group, the members can have different views. For example, members of group dedicated to promoting wildlife photography will agree with each other on the importance of promoting such a cause. But, they may belong to different political parties and adhere to different ideologies.

Established group patterns: Regular and purpose full interactions formulates group patterns. These interactions can be formal or informal depending on the nature of the groups. In case of formal interactions,

rules, regulations and procedures are followed while in case of informal relations, there is spontaneity.

Primary Groups

Primary groups are those groups whose members have face to face contacts, intimate, personal and non-formal relationship with each other. They have the following characteristics:

Primary groups are of small size: The size of the group is important as in larger groups it is difficult for the member to have intimate contacts with everyone. Small groups allow better interactions both qualitatively and quantitatively. Therefore, members have personal relationship with each other.

Primary group members share common goals:

Members of a primary group may have different characteristics. For example, a family may have an adult male and adult female and their children. Though they are different in many ways they share common goals, which they all think are important and contribute towards their collective happiness.

Primary group offers its members a total experience:

Total experience means that it affects the members in a number of ways. Individuals are accepted as total personalities. For example, the family is a primary group, which has face-to-face and intimate relationship. It is also a total relationship in the sense that members benefit in a number of ways. Children are given love and affections, provided with education and taken care of when they are sick etc. The husband and wife help each other in more than one way. Hence a very important part of the lives of the members is spent in the family. Peer groups are another example of primary groups.

Primary group has relationship as an end in itself:

Primary group members see the relationship as an end in itself. In other words, the relationship is valued for what it is i.e., more than any specific benefit the members may get because of their membership. For example, if a man marries only because he wants somebody to cook for him then it cannot be called a 'genuine marriage'.

Primary groups generally have long life: Families and peer groups exist as long as the members of the group live. If any member dies or leaves the group the group itself ends. For example, if the father of the family dies, the group in its original form also come to an end. The surviving members may continue to act as group but roles and interaction patterns undergo a major change. It is, therefore, correct to call it a new group.

Primary groups play an important role in determining the individual's personality: The family and the peer group are important agencies of socialization. Both of them are primary groups and provides services, emotional support and education to the members. While other agencies of socialization do play an important role, it is the unique experiences that the individual experience in the primary groups which becomes basis of his or her personality.

Primary groups sometimes compete for individual loyalty: Primary groups seek high degree of loyalty from its members and in certain cases may advocate, different values. In such a situation, the individual may be in a dilemma as to which group value to adopt. For example, a teenager's family may want the individual to dress conservatively while his peer group may want him to dress according to the latest fashion and style. This can lead to personality conflicts.

Some sociologists have held that primary groups must have members living in close proximity with each other and having face-to-face relationships. But it need not be so as even when there is physical distance between the members, if they can still be emotionally close to each other and thus satisfy the criteria of the primary group.

Secondary Groups

Secondary groups are generally larger than primary groups. Members in secondary groups have formal, impersonal, and need-based relationship with each other. A secondary group has the following characteristics:

Secondary groups have relatively large number of members: Secondary groups consist of many members who share common interests. Some secondary groups may have lesser number than a large joint family. But the manner in which they relate with each other is different, as we will see now. The members can also be spread over large distances. Now a days, there are secondary groups whose members are all around the globe. They interact through the web and conduct effective global campaigns without meeting each other face-to-face.

Secondary groups have specific interests: While primary groups

have relationship as an end in itself, in secondary groups, relations are maintained so that some other ends can be achieved. Members are also aware of this condition and as such, their emotional involvement is much less as compared to secondary groups.

Secondary group has clear objectives: The aim of forming a secondary group is to attain some objectives which the members feel are important. In most cases, the objectives are unattainable by a single individual. He/she needs the cooperation from others. A secondary group is conceptually closer to the concept of association.

Secondary group members relate to each other formally: Since secondary members have specific objectives in mind there is no need for them to know each other intimately. There is no need of meeting each other face-to-face either. A common newsletter or a website as is the case now a days, is all that is needed to share information and pool resources. Once the objective is attained, the secondary group may end its existence.

Secondary groups play an important role in furthering members' interest: In democratic societies like ours, there is a need for mobilizing people on the basis of common interests. People can influence decision making at different levels only if they organize themselves and make their voices heard. Secondary associations are used to articulate the demands of various groups.

Relationship Between Primary and Secondary Groups

Primary and secondary groups are related in more ways than one. Firstly, primary groups like family provides members to the secondary groups. They prepare them to cooperate and interact with each other. Some behavioural problems among individuals occur when families do not prepare their children to deal with the demands of secondary groups. Secondly, primary groups like sub-groups and cliques which are part of secondary groups play a vital role in their decision making process. Their influence on the performance of the secondary groups may be positive or negative depending on their intentions, their power and the power of those who may oppose them. Thirdly, primary groups within the secondary group give emotional support to the members. Most secondary groups cannot give its members a real sense of identity and nor can they give them individual attention. This can be seen in a college or even in the army and in such places, the primary groups of peers give support to the member.

Differences and Similarities in Concepts

You have been introduced to the basic sociological concepts. You would have noticed that these concepts have some similarities and some differences. Any social group is seen as being more than sum total of its members and characterized to have a distinct life of its own. You should keep in mind that a sociologist's major interest is in the way human collectivities function as a whole and exercise their influence on the behaviour of the individuals.

The difference between the various collectivities is due to the following factors: size of the group, that is, the number of members; geographical area over which the members are located; type of relationship between the members; relationship of the members to the collectivities; the nature of goals of the collectivities the duration of their life and finally collectivities, influence on the individual members.

We shall differentiate the various concepts based on these factors as it will help in better understanding of the same.

Size: The society is the largest collection of individuals. It consists of a number of communities, associations, institutions, primary groups and secondary groups. A community is always a part of the larger society. Associations and secondary groups are often smaller than a community and the primary group is the smallest social unit.

Geographical location: The society is spread over the largest area, followed by the community and primary group. Associations and secondary groups may have members from a wide area but all people living in the area need not be members of the association. For example, everybody living in India is an Indian and everybody living in a village is part of the village community. But a political party while having members from all over India cannot claim that all Indians are its members.

Voluntary nature of membership: The above stated difference is due to the type of membership of the various collectivities. An individual becomes a member of a society and a community naturally, that is, by being physically present in the area and sharing essential characteristics. On the other hand an individual has to formally apply to be a member of an association or a secondary group.

Nature of interaction: The interaction between the members is most frequent and intense in a primary group. Community, associations and secondary groups have less frequent and less intense interaction. Individuals are considered in their wholeness in a primary group while in a secondary group and association only a few aspects of the personality are taken into consideration. A political party is not concerned whether a member is healthy or educated as long as he or she performs useful work for the party. The primary group, however is concerned about many aspects of the personality and does not just keep in view the usefulness of the member.

Goals of the collective: The goals of secondary groups and associations are specific while the goals of the society and community are general and broad in nature. Primary groups have many goals and perform many functions for their members. The existence of primary groups is crucial for the continuance of other collectivities of social life.

Relationship between the members and the larger whole: The loyalty and sense of identity the members feel in primary groups is greater than the feelings of identification among members in a

community or a secondary group. In a society, these feelings are weaker still and more imagined than real.

Duration of the collective: The duration of groups and collectivities varies. The family as primary group exists as long as the members are alive or do not leave. On the other hand, secondary groups, associations, community and society exist for long durations even as members die or leave. The persistence of these collectivities is irrespective of the presence and absence of any member or group of members.

Check your progress III

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.
b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

- 1) Give two examples of primary group and secondary group.
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1.7 LET US SUM UP

We have seen that the basic concepts related to society and the study of society. Some of these concepts will seem confusing mainly because people, including sociologists, use these terms in a general sense. These are used inter-changeably. But you must use them with care and without ambiguity.

A clarity about the terminology and concept will enhance your ability to work in group.

Society is a larger collection of people who have patterned social relationship with each other as individuals and as groups. Society has values, norms, folkways and mores which guide the members' behaviour. Society has to perform certain functions if it has to maintain itself. Community is relatively a smaller collective where the members have more intense interaction between each other. They live in a specific geographical space and have a sense of "we" feeling. While society and community are considered natural in their origin, associations are created purposely by individuals. Their objectives are specific in comparison to those of society and community. Relationships between the members are formal and issue based. Modern society is characterized by presence of numerous associations with different purposes. Groups are smallest social units when compared to society, community and associations. Primary

group consists of small number of members who have intimate face-to-face relations with others. Families and peer-groups are examples of the primary groups. They treat members in their totality and perform a number of important functions for them. These groups engage in the primary socialization of the individual. Secondary groups are similar to associations. They help individuals further their particular interests in society. The relationship between members are segmentary in nature.

Social concepts are related to social relationships. Understanding the nature of social relationship and using them to benefit is primary function of the social worker.

1.8 KEY WORDS

Roles	:	A set of behavioural patterns expected from an individual having a specific status in society.
Status	:	A position an individual occupies in society.
Socialization	:	Process by which an individual learns the values, norms, mores of the society.
Norms	:	Standards of behaviour of a particular society
“We feeling”	:	A feeling of oneness and of having a common identity; a sense of being part of a larger whole and sharing a common destiny.
Ascribed status	:	A position an individual occupies in society by virtue of his/her birth. His/her efforts cannot make any difference in his/her status.
Achieved status:	:	A position in society an individual occupies by his/her efforts and not by virtue of his/her birth.

1.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

Horton, P.B. and Hunt, C.L., (1984), sociology, Tata Mcgraw-Hill, Singapore.

Maclver, I.M. and Page, C.H. (1964), society-An Introduction analysis, Macmillan Press Ltd, London.

1.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answers to check your progress

Check your Progress I

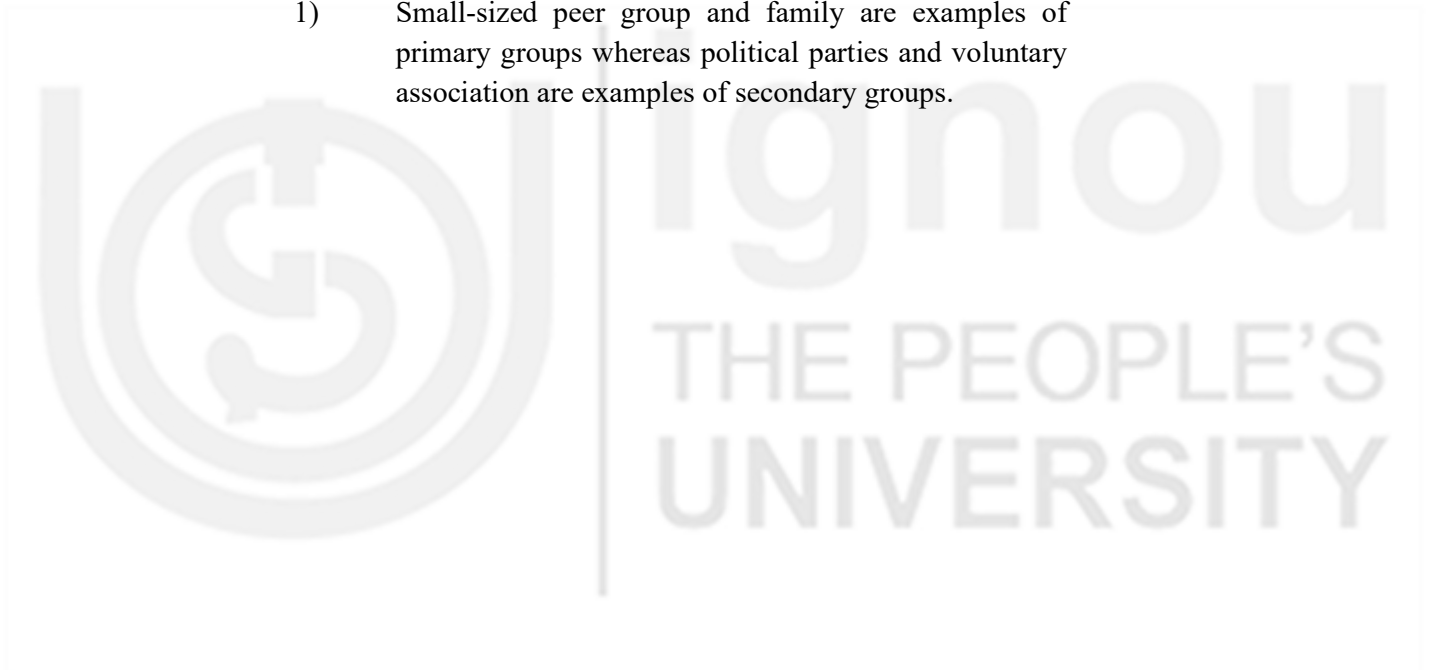
- 1) Society consists of large number of individuals who have mutual awareness of each other. Secondly, there exists meaningful and purposeful interactions between them. These interactions are guided by norms and values of society. Division of labour is the third condition. Social processes like competition and cooperation are found in society.

Check your progress II

- 1) Modern association have the following characteristics: clear objectives which the organization has to achieve; voluntary membership; rules and regulations which govern the functioning of the association.

Check your progress III

- 1) Small-sized peer group and family are examples of primary groups whereas political parties and voluntary association are examples of secondary groups.



UNIT2 EVOLUTION OF HUMAN SOCIETY: NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS

** M.K. Saju*

Contents

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Evolution of Society
- 2.3 Society as a System of Relationship
- 2.4 Individual and the Society
- 2.5 Socialisation
- 2.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.7 Key Words
- 2.8 Suggested Readings
- 2.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

2.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit aims at creating a fair comprehension of the society and to give an orientation to the social perspective. The unit will also deal with the close relationship that exists between individuals and society. Apart from these, the process of socialization is also discussed with an intention to elaborate the significant aspects of socialization, a fundamental function of the society by which individuals learn to be participants of social interaction. Social interaction is a process basic to social life. It occurs in terms of five basic patterns including cooperation, conflict, social exchange, coercion and conformity. An individual learns to be a part of social interaction through the process of socialization. Society's continuity depends on its socialization process since it is through this process that the members of society learn to establish social relationships.

After completing this unit, you should be able to know:

Gradual development of human society;

- Society and its nature and meaning;
- Social relationships and their nature;
- The relationship between individual and society;
- Nature of socialization;
- Development of personality through socialization; and

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The most distinctive feature of human life is its social character. All human beings interact with other human beings in order to survive. Man lives in society and he has to depend on society for his survival. Therefore, both nature and necessity impel man to live in society. Man, from times immemorial, has been trying to comprehend the social environment and in his search for understanding society, he created different social sciences like Sociology, History, Economics, Political Science, Psychology etc. However, the study of society, its functioning, the social relationships present therein and social interactions have been of great significance in this effort to study society. While studying social relationships, which form society, it is essential to study the evolution of society, its systems and structures, the development of institutions and their functions, the customs and rules regulating social relationships, the groups and communities formed by man throughout history, the nature and interdependence of these groups like, family, government, economic groups, religious groups and the phenomenon of social change. In this unit, we will analyse society, the relationship between individual and society, constituents of society and socialisation process.

2.2 EVOLUTION OF HUMAN SOCIETY

Society is a complex system of relationships, which are diverse in nature. Society passes through various stages and undergoes enormous changes. In the most primitive stage, society was very simple and every individual lived an individualistic life, trying to know and do things about him/her alone. Every man was more or less similar, in so far as his ignorance about organized life was concerned. In this sense, people were homogenous in nature. In the primitive stage, neither they were able to organize their social life, nor could they work together. Thus, the primitive society was a homogenous one with simple social relationships. However, as the time advanced, society took the shape of complex network of social relationships, which were heterogeneous in nature.

Evolution Theory According to Herbert Spencer

Evolution theory, propounded by Charles Darwin was related to organisms. Herbert Spencer was one of the pioneering Sociologists who had introduced theory into Sociology. Herbert Spencer who had formulated the organic analogy about the society, opined that society also passes through various phases of development, exactly the way organisms did. Herbert Spencer had presented his evolutionary scheme in 'First Principles' and again in 'Principles of Sociology'.

As we know, the evolution theory says that simple organisms developed into complex organisms through a process that consumed hundreds of centuries. Similarly, the evolutionary approach explicates that society also passed through many stages before assuming the present complex state. Since the evolutionary theory of society was woven around the concept that society resembles organism, a mention

of the Organismic theory is essential. Organismic theory conceives society as a biological system, a greater organism, alike in its structure and function, exhibiting the same kind of unit as the individual organism and subject to similar laws of development, maturation and decline. Society's cells are individual persons; its organs and systems are associations and institutions. Herbert Spencer said that society has its youth, its prime, its old age and death.

According to Spencer, the principles of evolution are:

(a) that forces tend to persist; (b) that matter is indestructible; and (c) that everything moves along the lines of least resistance or greatest attraction, impelled by some source, matter, accompanied by a concomitant dissipation of motion, tends to integrate. Spencer said, "Evolution is the integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion during which matter passes from an indefinite incoherent homogeneity to definite, coherent heterogeneity." For Spencer, society is also subject to a similar process of evolution that is changing from a state of 'incoherent homogeneity' to a state of 'coherent heterogeneity'. Evolution is, thus, a gradual growth or development from simple to complex existence.

In the primitive societies, there was no system, nothing definite, except their incoherent or loose group formations. Thus, they formed an 'indefinite, incoherent homogeneity'. But gradually their experiences, realizations and knowledge increased. They learnt to live and work together. The task of social organization was taken on, division of labour was elaborated and each found particular type of work, which could do best. All worked in an organized and definite way towards a definite goal. Thus, a state of 'definite, coherent heterogeneity' was reached.

Spencer said that the main fact of evolution was the movement from simple societies to various levels of compound societies. By the aggregation of some simple societies, compound societies arose; through further aggregation of compound societies, doubly compound societies arose; by aggregation of doubly compound societies, trebly compound societies arose. A simple society consists of families, a compound society of families unified into clans, a doubly compound society finds clans unified into tribes, and the trebly compound societies such as our own, are those in which tribes have been brought together into nations or states. With the increase in size, structure increases as well as differences in power and in the occupations of the members.

Development of Society According to August Comte

August Comte, the father of Sociology, also had presented a well-knit theory on the development of society. Comte's theory on the development or evolution of society was based on his Law of Three Stages. According to his Law, human knowledge evolves through three different stages; or in other words, there are three different ways, in which human mind explains the phenomena, each way leading to the next in successive order. The three stages are;

1) ***Theological or Fictitious State:*** In this phase, human mind seeks

to understand the essential nature of beings, the first and final causes (the origin and purpose) of all effects, in short the Absolute knowledge.

- 2) ***Metaphysical or Abstract State:*** This state is a modification of the first in so far as the mind supposes abstract forces and personified abstractions, instead of supernatural beings, inherent in all beings and capable of producing all phenomena.
- 3) ***The Positive or Scientific State:*** In the final state, the mind gives up vain search absolute notions, the origin and destination of the universe, and the causes of phenomena, and applies to the study of their laws, that is their invariable relations of succession and resemblance. Reasoning and observation, duly combined are the means of this knowledge.

Comte traced a direct relationship between the stages of human thinking and social organization. In other words, Comte's contention is that each type of human thinking represents a particular type of social organization.

When human mind was in the theological state, political events, for example, were explained by the will of the God, and political authority was based on divine right. Military and monarchial social organization was the keynote to the theological thinking. Kings were considered as the direct representatives of, or, next to God on earth, ruling the society under the direction of God.

In the metaphysical state of mind, the political authority was based on the doctrines of abstract right. Divine rights were dropped, and in their place, natural right determined the political relations of human beings. The legal aspect of social organization was developed, with the result that it tended to be formal and structural.

Whereas in the positive stage society enters into an industrial era. At this stage, the whole of our knowledge is characterized by positivism, or scientific outlook. Scientific outlook resulted into material inventions and therefore, into proper utilization of natural resources.

Characteristics of the Evolution of Society

- Movement from simple to complex society
- Homogeneity to heterogeneity
- Gradual and slow process
- An adaptation to changing environment and social context
- Series of related changes in social system
- Progress towards greater size, coherence and definiteness.

It is unambiguous that society, as it exists today, has come a long way by registering gradual but continuous changes and modifying itself. Change in any aspect of society was not introduced abruptly. All the same, social change has been incessant and the society is an ever-

changing phenomenon, which grows, decays, renews itself and accommodates itself to changing conditions and undergoing vast modifications in the course of time.

Check Your Progress I

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.
b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) What do you understand by the evolution of society?

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2) According to Comte, the present society is in which stage of development?

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2.3 SOCIETY AS A SYSTEM OF RELATIONSHIP

Aristotle said that man by nature is social animal. Human beings are animals who live in societies. However, human beings are not the only creatures who live in societies. Ants, termites, birds, monkeys, apes and countless other creatures and animals do the same. But mere life in a group does not mean that these animals have a 'society' among them or the society of human beings is the same as animal society. To differentiate between the animal society and the human society, it is necessary to define society and social relationships that exist in human society.

In the context of Sociology, the word 'society' refers to a complex pattern of norms of interaction that arise among a group of people. Whereas in common parlance, the word 'society' is used for designating the members of a specific group and it is generally understood in relation to tangible observations. In Sociology, people are valuable only as agencies of social relationships, which are intangible. Therefore, society is a system of relationships, the pattern of norms of interaction by which the members of the society maintain

themselves.

Definition of Society

MacIver and Page defined society as, “It is the web of social relationships.” T. Parsons says, “Society may be defined as the total complex of human relationships in so far as they grow out of action in terms of mean-end relationship, intrinsic or symbolic.”

Giddings defined society as, “Society is the union itself, the organization, the sum of formal relations in which associating individuals are bound together.” Lapiere laid emphasis on the complex pattern of interaction that is seen in the society. He defines, “The term society refers not to group of people, but to the complex pattern of the norms of interaction, that arise among and between them.” Prof. Wright emphasized that a collection of people need not be called a society. He said, “Society is not a group of people, it is the system of relationships that exists between the individuals of the group”.

Generally, there are two approaches while defining society and the relationships present in the society.

- 1) **Functional approach:** Society is defined as a complex of groups in reciprocal relationship, interacting upon one another, enabling human organisms to carry on their life-activities and helping each person to fulfill his wishes and accomplish his interests in association with other members of the group. The approach takes social relationship as a tool for a certain end.
- 2) **Structural approach:** According to this approach, society is the total social heritage of folkways, mores and institutions, of habits, sentiments and ideals. In other words, the entire society could be divided into systems of social relationships, which are closely related to one another.

The discussion on society would be simpler once the ‘social’ nature of relationships is defined. Some Sociologists say that society exists only when the members know each other and possess common interests or objects. If two persons are traveling in a train, their relationship of co-existence in the same compartment, of being at the same time in the same place, does not constitute a society. But as soon as they come to know each other, the element of society is created. Therefore, the reciprocal awareness is necessary for any social relationship.

Besides, physical proximity is not the sole parameter for the social relationship. By comparing the relationships of inanimate objects like sun and earth, fire and smoke and typewriter and desk we can establish that there is a distinguishable difference between the relationships of inanimate objects and human beings. The typewriter and the desk are in no intelligible sense aware of the presence of one another. Their relationship is not in any way determined by mutual awareness. Without this recognition there is no social relationship and

society. Society exists only when individuals have psychological awareness of the presence of one another. This is why we call social relationship as 'reciprocal awareness'. To further clarify the meaning and the nature of social relationships it could be said that society exists only where social beings behave towards one another in ways determined by their recognition of one another. Any relations so determined; we may broadly call 'social'.

Society as a Web of Social Relationships

According to MacIver and Page, society is "a web of social relationships", which may be of numerous types. Society, as MacIver and Page said is a network of diverse social relationships or in other words, it could be called as the entirety of social relationships that exist in a group.

Society consists of mutual interactions and mutual interrelations of the individuals and it is also a structure formed by these relations. The beings who constitute society must realize their likeness and their interdependence. They must have a community feeling. Society is not a mere agency for the comfort of beings but it's the whole system of social relationships. The social relation of mother and child for instance, is revealed in their attitude towards each other. It is the social fact and not the biological fact, which constitutes the society.

The true nature of society consists not in the external factors of interdependence or likeness or authority but in the state of mind of the beings who compose society. It is the pattern, not the people, which is termed as society, and it is not a group but a process of relationships. Therefore, society is a pattern of social relationships or a system of social relationships.

All societies involve a certain level of association. Similarly, society involves more a state or quality of mind than a mere structure. The beings who constitute society must realize their likeness and their interdependence. The relationships between individuals must be in accordance with the norms of the society and therefore, society is not just a collection of people but is the system of relationships that exists between the members of that group.

It should be borne in mind that society is a permanent institution. Its origin goes back to the dawn of history and stretches to those remote corners of the planet where people are living together. It is a kind of natural organization, which has emerged out of the natural instincts of man. That's why Aristotle truly said that man by nature is a social animal. This means that society will exist as long as man will exist.

Characteristics of Society

- 1) ***Society involves Likeness:*** Without likeness and the sense of likeness there could be no mutual recognition of "belonging together" and, therefore, no society. Society exists among those who resemble one another in some degree, in body and in mind and who are near enough or intelligent enough to appreciate the fact.
- 2) ***Society involves Difference:*** Though likeness serves as the

basis, society also depends on differences. If people were all alike, their social relationships would be as limited as those of the biological organisms like ants and bees. Groups of ants and bees do not have reciprocity, as every member of is uniquely similar. In human society, different individuals complement one another and there is meaningful social interaction. In our society there is an indefinite interplay of likenesses and differences. The reciprocal relationship of differences is seen at every level of society. For example, family rests on the biological difference between sexes. There are also natural differences of aptitude, capacity and of interest in the society.

- 3) ***Difference Subordinate to Likeness:*** Society needs likeness and differences or similarities and dissimilarities. While difference is necessary to society, difference by itself does not create society. Difference is subordinate to likeness or likeness gets precedence while difference or dissimilarity works as the basis for the reciprocity among the members of the society. As MacIver observes, “Primary likeness and secondary difference create the greatest of all social institutions – the division of labour.” The division of labour which works on the principle of difference is basically cooperation before it is division. Or, this is a deliberate attempt to utilize the diverse abilities of individuals for a common objective.
- 4) ***Inter-dependence in the Society:*** In addition to likeness, interdependence based on cooperation is yet another essential element to constitute the society. No society can exist without the interdependence of its units. Members of society should be inter-dependent and should cooperate with each other for the smooth running of the society. Individuals cannot live a secluded life in society as society is a necessity for them. Therefore, there has to be interdependence among the members of society.
- 5) ***Multiplicity of Relationships:*** Society consists of numerous social relationships, which may be hundreds or thousands of types. There are as many as fifteen relationships based on age, sex and generation in a family alone. Outside the family there is no limit to the number of possible social relationships. Social relationships are as varied as society is complex. The relations of voter to candidate, mother to child, employee to employer, friend to friend, teacher to student, student to student etc are some of the social relationships to name a few. These social relationships can be categorized into “economic”, “political”, “personal”, “impersonal”, “friendly”, “antagonistic” and so on.

These characteristics explain the nature of society and the mode of social relationships. Besides, the above discussion also clarifies that the social nature of relationships that exist in the human society between individuals distinguishes human society from the animal society.

Check your progress II

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.
b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) Society is not a group of people, it isthat exists between the individuals of the group.

2) Society exists only when individuals have awareness of the presence of one another.

3) Explain how human relationships are social.

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2.4 INDIVIDUAL AND THE SOCIETY

Society consists of individuals who are social by nature. It explains that individual and society are inter-dependent. The relationship between them is not one-sided, both are essential for the comprehension of either. Neither the individuals belong to the society as cells belong to the organism, nor the society is a mere contrivance to satisfy certain human needs. The fundamental attribute of man, i.e., his social nature, makes him live in society.

In order to establish the relationship between individual and society, it is necessary to explain in what sense man is a social animal. Similarly, there are some other pertinent questions, which need to be answered. In what sense do we belong to society? In what sense does society belong to us? What is the nature of our dependence upon it? How shall we interpret the unity of the whole to which our individual lives are bound? All these questions are aspects of one fundamental question – the relation of the unit, the individual, to the group and to the social system. The following sections will help us answer the aforesaid fundamental questions.

Human Beings are Social by Nature

Man is social animal by nature and he cannot afford to live alone. No human being is known to have developed normally in isolation. Individuals learn social habits and acquire social qualities by living in the presence of others. There are cases, to show that the normal development of an individual's personality is hindered whenever the individual is secluded from society. MacIver cited a case in which two

Hindu children who were discovered in a wolf-den in 1920 and who had their abilities seriously retarded. The younger one aged less than two years died immediately after retrieval from the wolf-den. The other child, aged eight, could walk only on all fours, possessed no language except wolf-like growls. She was shy of human beings and felt scared in the presence of human beings. It took strenuous, sympathetic and extensive training for making her learn some social habits. Human nature develops in man only when he lives in society, only when he shares common life with his fellow beings. Human traits that are present in the child could only be developed in the company of human contacts. Society fulfils a vital need in every individual's constitution and the social aspect of human life is a necessity.

Necessity Makes Human Beings Social

Also, human beings live in society because necessity compels them to. Many of their needs will remain unsatisfied if they do not have the cooperation of their fellow beings. Every individual is the offspring of a social relationship established between man and woman. The child is brought up under the care of his parents and learns the lessons of citizenship in their company. The child is totally dependent on the society for his existence. If the newborn baby does not receive protection and attention of the parents, he would not survive for even a day. The newborn is so helpless and dependent that it cannot protect itself for many years. Unlike this, the newborns of other animals are independent within hours of their birth. It takes barely an hour for a newborn calf to stand on its legs and within hours it starts eating grass. This is the same case with the newborns of most of the animals. Individuals get the needs of food, shelter and clothing fulfilled only by living and cooperating with others. The importance of society for physical and mental development is thus obvious and no individual can become human being unless he lives in society. Sometimes it is the fear of animals or the urge to get acceptance and recognition from others or satisfaction of hunger, thirst and sex drives that make individuals live in a group. The need for self-preservation, which is felt by every being also makes a man social. Therefore, it is not due to his nature alone but also due to his necessities that man lives in society.

Society Determines Personality

It is not just for the survival and fulfillment of needs that man lives in society, but he lives in society for his all-round mental and intellectual development. Society preserves our culture and transmits it to succeeding generations. It liberates and limits our potentialities as individuals and molds our attitudes, beliefs, morals and ideals. The mind of a man who would live outside a society would be the mind of an infant even at the age of adulthood. The cultural heritage, which an individual imbibes by living as the member of the society, directs the personality and thus determines the mental equipment of that individual.

Theories on the Relationship between Man and Society

There are many theories on the origin of society which include, the divine origin theory, force theory, patriarchal and matriarchal theories, social contract theory and organic theory. The divine origin theory says that God had created society. Just as God had created all the animals and inanimate objects of this world, so he created society as well. Whereas the force theory makes society the result of superior physical subjugating weaker, while the patriarchal and matriarchal theories make society the expansion of family system. Besides, there are two theories, which are widely accepted by sociologists. These are Social Contract theory and the Organismic theory. A brief explanation of these two theories will further explain the relationship between individual and the society.

- 1) ***Social Contract Theory:*** Since at least the fifth century before Christ, various philosophers have viewed society as a contrivance or mechanism deliberately set up by men for certain ends. According to some, such as Thomas Hobbes society is a means for the protection of men against the consequences of their own intolerant and conflicting nature. According to him, man in the state of nature was in perpetual conflict with his neighbours on account of his essentially selfish nature. In the words of Hobbes, "life of man was solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short." Every man was enemy to every man. To protect himself against the evil consequence, man organized himself in society in order to live in peace with all. Locke, JJ Rousseau and Adam Smith also supported this theory. Adam Smith said that society is an artificial device created to foster a mutual economy.

As a criticism to this theory, it is said that this theory seems to assume that man as individual is prior to society since man had deliberately created society for the fulfillment of his objectives. This notion is untenable as sociality is inborn in man and he can survive only by living in society.

- 2) ***The Organismic Theory of Society:*** This theory is as old as Plato and Aristotle. This theory conceives society as a biological system, a greater organism, alike in its structure and function, exhibiting the same kind of unity as the individual organism and subject to similar laws of development, maturation and decline. Society's cells are individual persons; its organs and systems are associations and institutions. According to the Herbert Spencer, the state is subject to the same laws of growth and decay to which the human body is. It has its youth, its prime, its old age and death. Bluntschli and Murray have supported the organic theory on the origin of the society. As a criticism of the organismic theory it is said that there are significant differences between society and individual organism and therefore an analogy of organism cannot exactly define the relationship between man and society. In the human society the units are not fixed in their respective positions while in the case of an organism its parts are fixed to the body. Yet another criticism is

that the units of a society are dispersed persons and are not physically contiguous like cells of an individual or organism.

The relationship between the individual and society is a complementary one and one without the other will not survive. Neither the society itself has a value beyond the service, which it renders to its members, nor can the individuals thrive without society. Neither the society is inimical to the development of the human personality nor does it exist in its own right.

Check your progress III

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.
b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) Explain Organismic theory on the relationship between individual and society.

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2.5 SOCIALISATION

When a human child is born it is a biological organism with instincts alone. It practically possesses no abilities that an adult normally possesses. A child knows nothing other than clinging to its mother and sucking milk. The child is therefore, primarily a biological organism than a social being. He gradually learns to live in society by learning the social ways of acting and feeling. With the passage of time, the child learns many things that it otherwise did not know. It learns to identify and to read the face of parents, learns to make sounds, stands up, learns language, receives education and thus the process of learning continues till the death of the individual.

Meaning of Socialisation

Socialisation, as stated above, is the process by which an individual learns to conform to social norms, a process that makes possible an enduring society and the transmission of its culture between generations. Socialisation has been accepted generally as the gradual process by which an individual becomes a functional member of society. It means the process where by an individual become a functioning member of the society. The individual becomes socialized by learning the rules and practices of social group. By this process the

individual develops a personality of his own. Socialization also refers to transmission of culture because man shares it with others a common culture. Culture includes not only its living members but also members of past generations.

Ogburn says, “Socialisation is the process by which the individual learns to conform to the norms of the group”.

Socialisation according to MacIver “is the process by which social beings establish wider and profounder relationships with one another, in which they become more bound up with, and more perceptive of the personality of themselves and of others and build up the complex structure of nearer and wider association”.

As the process of socialisation indicates, it is the gradual change of a biological person to a social person or the process whereby an individual attains the conventional patterns of human behaviour. According to Lundberg, socialisation consists of the “complex processes of interaction through which the individual learns the habits, skills, beliefs and standards of judgment that are necessary for his effective participation in social group and communities.” Socialisation could be conceived as the internalization of social norms. In other words, individual feels the need of conforming to society and he internalizes the social rules, in the sense that these social norms are self-imposed by the individual rather than imposed by means of external regulation. Hence these norms become part of individual’s personality. It is an essential element of social interaction. Every individual wants to live in society and get the social recognition. Therefore, they guide their own actions to accord with the expectations of others.

Socialisation is equally essential for individual and the society in general. On the one hand, socialisation helps the individual to gain social acceptance and status by learning social ways of functioning while on the other, process of socialisation helps the society to ensure its smooth and uniform continuity. Unless the members of the society behave in accordance with the norms of the group, it is likely to disintegrate. Hence, it is essential for the society to socialise its members for ensuring the social order.

Agencies of Socialisation

The process of socialisation begins at birth and continues interminably until the death of the individual. So, the life of an individual is an unceasing learning process. Many agencies become operational in the life of the individual during his life time, and he learns from these agencies chiefly through imitation and from suggestion. A child imitates and learns many activities such as standing, walking and other basic skills. Similarly, it also learns from the instructions communicated to it through language, picture or any such medium. As a child, an individual learns social pattern of behaviour from family, school, playmates etc., while as an adult, the individual learns from religion, state, work group etc. Agencies of socialisation are, therefore, those which help the individual to learn

new social ways of life in one way or the other. Let us briefly discuss the chief agencies of socialisation.

- 1) **Family:** The child is born into the family where it is nurtured and looked after by its parents and immediate relatives. Parents, with whom the child enjoys physical proximity during its childhood, are the ones to socialise the child first. He learns speech and language from his parents. Rightly so, family is called the cradle of social virtues from where the child gets the first lessons of love, affection, cooperation, tolerance and self-sacrifice. Therefore, family works as the foundation for the socialisation process of an individual.
- 2) **Religion:** Religion molds and directs the behaviour of people by laying down behaviour standards for its followers. Religion is a system of beliefs and rituals with reference to the sacred and binds people into social groups. Invariably, all religions cherish a set of values and teach followers to uphold their principles. The religious groups, for example, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, etc, have their own prescribed codes of conduct, which are to be followed by the followers. Thus, religion regulates the behaviour of people.
- 3) **Peer Group and Friends:** The relationship between a child and his friends is that of mutual give and take and it is based on cooperation and understanding. Since friends are mostly of similar age, the relationship is that of equality between them. From his friends, a child acquires cooperative morality and some of the informal aspects of culture like fashion, fad, crazes, modes of gratification and other such information, are necessary from the social point of view.
- 4) **Educational Institutions:** The learning that an individual obtains from schools, colleges and other educational institutions with the help of textbooks, teachers and experiments plays a crucial role in his life. School is the first place where an individual as a child learns discipline and formal ways of adjusting with others since the number of children in school is fairly high. It is the educational institution, which enables the optimum development of one's abilities and skills and, therefore, educational institutions help the individual to develop his personality in accordance with the expectations of society.
- 5) **Profession and Employment:** Work or profession has a major role to play in moulding the behaviour of an individual. Individual brings about changes in his life in accordance with his aspiration for a job. And, once the job is achieved, there are many more changes which follow. Profession socialises the individual by inculcating sense of competition, hard work and cooperation in him.
- 6) **State:** It is an authoritarian agency that formulates laws, which in other words, lays down code of conduct for the people. Laws promulgated by the state, for example, traffic laws, property laws, income tax laws etc. are enforceable and the members of

society should conform to these norms. If there is a violation of these laws, punishment is given to those who disobey these norms. Thus, the state ensures conformity in society by enforcing these laws while members of society conform to these in order to avoid punishment by the state. Thereby, the state promotes consistency in the functioning of society.

Apart from these agencies, neighbourhood, kin-group or relatives, marriage, cultural institutions such as art, literature etc. also play decisive role in the life of an individual.

Types of Socialisation

Socialisation can be categorized into mainly four types. They are:

1. **Primary Socialization:** It is the most essential and basic type of socialization. It takes place in the early years of life of the newborn individual. It focuses on teaching of language, skills, cultural norms and values, establishment of emotional roles etc. e.g.; families, neighbors, peer groups.
2. **Anticipatory Socialization:** Men not only learn the culture of the group of which they are members but also, they learn the culture of group to which they do not belong. Such a process where by men socialize themselves into culture of a group with the anticipation of joining that group. In each developmental stages, society expect certain behavior modification which ever group the individuals belongs. This type of socialization is referred as anticipatory socialization. It takes places at different times and places throughout life.
3. **Developmental Socialization:** This kind of learning is based on the achievement of primary socialization. It builds on already acquired skills and knowledge's as the adult progresses through new situations. These require new expectations, obligations and social roles etc.
4. **Re-socialization:** Not only two individuals change roles within groups but they also change membership in different groups. It's a change from learned patterns and substitution to the new one. It takes place when a social role is radically changed. Eg; after marriage the girl has to adapt with new culture of her spouse and relations.

Functions of Socialisation

As mentioned earlier in the unit, socialization is a necessity not only for the society but for the individual as well. The fact that individual cannot survive in isolation and society cannot sustain itself without its members implies that there has to be a proper mechanism to ensure functional coexistence among the members of society. Socialisation ensures both these purposes. The main objectives of socialisation are as follows:

- 1) Develops the personality of an individual and through the process of socialisation an individual learns to make use of his full mental and physical capacities. Converts biological being into social being.
- 2) Socialisation establishes uniformity in society.
- 3) It helps in transmission of culture and also individuals to internalize the culture.
- 4) Socialisation inculcates basic discipline among the members of society.
- 5) It teaches the members the performance of social roles.
- 6) Contributes the development of personality.
- 7) Helps to become disciplined.
- 8) Helps to enact different roles.
- 9) Provides the knowledge & skills.
- 10) Helps to develop right aspiration in life.
- 11) Stability of the social order.
- 12) Helps to reduce social distance.
- 13) Provides scope for building the bright future.

Learning about life and its countless demands, opportunities, and expectations is a lifelong process. As the discussion above points out, socialisation is a process through which the members of society learn to live as members of groups and to make necessary adjustments to the way our lives change from youth through middle age to old age. Socialisation does not end when one becomes an adult. It is a lifelong process and involves a number of changes and transitions in life, as well as a number of agents of socialisation beyond the family. Peer groups, schools, work groups, and the mass media all represent important forces shaping the way we adapt to changes in life.

Check Your Progress IV

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.
b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

- 1) Explain the meaning of socialization.

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2.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, you have been introduced to various concepts related to society. We have discussed some of the important characteristics of society which will provide basic understanding about the why and how of the society. The various theories of Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer and Thomas Hobbes are discussed in detail.

Some of the theories and principles related to the origin and functioning of society is explained. Another important aspect of society which has been discussed in the unit is socialisation — which is the processes by which society influences its members to follow its values, rules, laws, etc. Socialisation helps the individual to adopt oneself to the society. It is important for social workers to know these concepts as they deal with individuals groups and communities which are part of society. Often a person has to decide between how much he/she should stress his/her own desires and needs and how much he/she should surrender to the larger interests of the community. At times she/he may feel exploited as she/he feels that she/he is losing more than she is gaining. Yet in another situation the society may be making unreasonable demands on the individual which may lead to abnormal behaviour.

2.7 KEY WORDS

- Society** : Complex system of social relationships and not a mere group of individuals.
- Primitive society:** Primordial or ancient society, the members of which were largely involved in food gathering, hunting and very limited agriculture and animal domestication.
- Personality** : All qualities and attributes of an individual. The sum total of an individual including all his faculties, traits, behaviour patterns and other characteristics, which are unique to the individual.

2.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

Devis Kingsley (1981), Human Society, Surjeet Publications, Delhi

Maclver, RM and Charles H Page (1971), *Society-An Introductory Analysis*, The Macmillan Press Ltd, London and Basingstoke.

Timasheff Nicholas S (1967), *Sociological theory: Its Nature and Growth*, Random House, New York.

2.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check your Progress I

- 1) Evolution is a gradual growth or development from simple to complex form of existence. It is the movement from simple societies to various levels of compound societies.
- 2) The Positive or Scientific stage

Check your Progress II

- 1) System of relationships
- 2) Psychical
- 3) Society consists of mutual interactions and mutual interrelations of the individuals and it is a structure formed by social relationships. Relationships between individuals of a society are 'social' since they behave toward one another in ways determined by their recognition of one another. There is a reciprocal awareness among the members of society and, therefore, we can call human relationships as social relationships.

Check your Progress III

- 1) This theory describes society as a biological system, a greater organism, alike in its structure and function, with the same kind of unit as the biological organism and subject to similar laws of development, maturation and decline. Organismic theory considers individuals as the cells of society while associations and institutions are the organs and systems of society. Society has its infancy, maturation, prime and decline as organisms have.

Check Your Progress IV

- 1) Socialisation is the process through which an individual gradually learns to live in society by learning the social ways of acting and feeling. In other words, it is the gradual change of a biological person to a social person or the process whereby an individual attains the conventional patterns of human behaviour. It is the mechanism for making an individual a functional member of society.

UNIT3 SOCIAL PROCESSES

* Renu Sharma

Contents

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Social Interaction
- 3.3 Forms of Social Interaction
- 3.4 Social Control
- 3.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.6 Key words
- 3.7 Suggested Readings
- 3.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

3.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit seeks to help you to understand the nature and meaning of social processes, which are an integral part of our social behaviour. After studying the unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the social processes: conflict, competition and co-operation;
- Know the interrelationship between different types of social processes; and
- Understand the meaning of social control and related ideas.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The term 'social processes' refers to repetitive forms of behaviour, which are commonly found in social life. One of the most extensive treatments of social processes is found in Park and Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* (1921). This highly influential textbook of an earlier period is primarily devoted to the classification and analysis of social processes. In recent decades sociologists have become less interested in social processes themselves and more interested in intensive analysis of behaviour in specific institutional and cultural settings. Yet it remains important for students to be aware of the major social processes found in all groups and societies. The most frequent classification of major social processes is in terms of Cooperation, Competition, Conflict, Accommodation and Assimilation.

3.2 SOCIAL INTERACTION

Much of the thinking about society is in terms of social relationships. One thinks of the relation between father and son, employer and employee, leader and follower, merchant and customer; or, of the relation between friends, between enemies, between children, etc. Such relationships are among the most obvious features of society and consequently it seems an elaboration of the obvious to inquire into their nature. Social relationship represents fundamental ways of organizing social data. In short, a society may be viewed, if one wishes, as a system of relationships.

In analyzing social relationships, one soon finds them more complicated than they first appear. They involve *reciprocal obligations, reciprocal statuses, and reciprocal ends and means* between two or more actors in mutual contact. They refer to form or pattern of interaction between individuals.

Any society contains hundreds and perhaps thousands of socially defined relationships. The immediate family alone may contain as many as fifteen. How many relationships a society utilizes is simply a matter of how many criteria it takes into account in defining behaviour between individuals? The fifteen relationships of the immediate family rest on three criteria — age, sex and generation. Outside the family, an infinite number of criteria may be used, so there is no limit to the number of possible relationships.

It follows that to catalogue all the meaningful relationships in which human beings are involved would be a never-ending task. Instead, they may be classified and dealt with as general types. Any classification, however, must have some point to it. In social sciences, as in all sciences, classification is worthless unless it seizes upon traits that are significant, traits that facilitate causal analysis. For this reason, social relationships have been classified and discussed in terms of the *kind of interaction* they manifest. The most important kinds of interaction singled out for consideration here are conflict, competition and cooperation. Each of these has several sub-types, but mention of the main ones alone is enough to demonstrate that a proper understanding of the forms of interaction is essential to the understanding of society.

Acc to Merrill, social interaction is the general process where by two or more persons are in meaningful contact and communication as a result of which their behavior is modified slightly. There are two kinds of social interaction. They are contact and communication.

Social interaction by definition involves contact, and contact necessarily requires a material or sensory medium. It need not of course require the impingement of one body directly upon another, but it does require the occurrence of direct or indirect sensory stimulation between the interacting parties. The material medium,

however, is only a necessary, not a sufficient basis of contact. Individuals can be in material contact without being in social contact. For example, two tribes living on opposite sides of swamp and having nothing to do with each other may nevertheless be bitten by mosquitoes that continually carry malaria from one tribe to another. It is not merely physical contact that counts, but meaningful or symbolic contact. Good will may be expressed by either handshake or a spoken phrase, a letter or a smile. Added to the sensory stimulus is a meaningful stimulus. The social behaviour of human beings consists of acquired responses to the meaningful responses of others. Human interaction in other words, is communicative interaction. The social behaviour of human beings consists of acquired responses to the meaningful responses of others. Human interaction, in other words, is communicative interaction.

The essential feature of communication is that one person infers from the behaviour of another (whether speech, gesture or posture) what idea or feeling the other person is trying to convey. He then reacts not to the behaviour as such but to the inferred idea or feeling. The other person then reacts to his response in terms of the idea or feeling-the meaning behind it. When a girl receives flowers, she looks at them and smells them, but her main interest is in the person who sent them and why. Were they sent to end a quarrel, to mark an anniversary, to cement a promise, to say farewell, to brighten an illness? Unless she can answer such questions, she will feel a loss, not knowing what to do. It is the meanings behind the behaviour that are involved in the system of mutual expectations previously described as being present in the interacting situation.

Check Your Progress I

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) Comment “social relationships are best described in terms of kinds of interaction” they manifest.

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3.3 FORMS OF SOCIAL INTERACTION

Conflict

The conflict process is little praised but widely practiced. It develops whenever a person or group seeks to gain a reward not by surpassing other competitors, but by preventing them from effectively

competing. It is formally defined as *the process of seeking to obtain rewards by eliminating or weakening the competitors.*

Conflict is an ever-present process in human relations. It may be solved at one level as when there is agreement on ends and break out afresh over the question of means. You may raise a profound question as to why conflict is such a constant feature of human society. The answer lies in the basic nature of human society. Human society is not a tightly compressed affair but instead has a loose integration. The integration is not on a biological level rather its mental level. It must be renewed and maintained constantly through psychological processes such as indoctrination, inspiration and repetition. It must somehow rest on the possession of common and extra-personal ends on the part of its members. These ends cannot come from man's biological but only from communicative contact with his fellows. Accordingly, therefore they differ greatly from one society to another because they are associated with differences of culture. This, then, gives first basis of conflict – ethnocentrism – the dislike of people with different culture and different ultimate ends from one's own. Those with the same set of ultimate ends cling together and identify themselves with one another, while those with a different set of ends also do the same. A social group, furthermore, has a corporate character a name, a common leadership, a determinate structure, a sense of familiarity. Individuals identify themselves with this corporate entity and conceive their ultimate duty as loyalty to it, whether it be a clan, a tribe, a city-state, a religious sect, or a nation.

Types of Conflict

Conflict expresses itself in numerous ways and in various degrees and over every range of human contact. Its modes are always changing with changing social and cultural conditions. "Social Conflict" includes all activity in which men contend *against one another* for any objective. Its two fundamental types are direct and indirect conflict.

- i) **Direct Conflict:** When individuals or groups thwart or impede or restrain or injure or destroy one another in an effort to attain some goal, direct conflict occurs. Milder thwarting or frustration of goal attainment is involved in such forms as litigation, polemic, propagandistic activity and much of the struggle of the organized economic groups for larger stakes.
- ii) **Indirect Conflict:** When individuals or groups do not actually impede the efforts of one another but nevertheless seek to attain their ends in ways which obstruct the attainment of the same ends by others, indirect conflict occurs. Competition is impersonal conflict between individuals for attainment of any objects of desire that are limited in supply, whether income or academic honours or beautiful women for social prestige. The competition does not as such directly interfere with the efforts of another to attain such goals but only indirectly with the other person's success.

In distinguishing these two forms, the reader should note that not all struggles in which man is engaged is social conflict of either type. We are struggling to master difficulties, to overcome obstacles, to achieve ends in ways other than through conflict with our fellow human beings. Man's "battle" with the physical environment is a case in point. Social conflict, man against man or group against group, reveals itself wherever there is society. But unless co-operation penetrates deeper than conflict, society cannot endure.

Mechanisms to Deal with Conflict

There are of course social mechanisms that smoothen conflict. One of these is humour, which removes the tension that might otherwise expend itself in physical violence. Another is social distance or avoidance. A third is sentiment formation, which overcomes the conflict of interests of the antagonistic parties. A fourth is variety and change, which for an existing situation is more tolerable if it is known that it will not last long. A fifth is organized rivalry, which provides an opportunity for simulated battle, for intense group loyalty, for the manifestation of prowess in vanquishing others, and yet because the interaction has a set form and definite conclusion, it allows the energies to be expended either harmlessly or to the advantage of the society.

It is clear however that such mechanisms are not universally successful. Humor, social distance, noble sentiments, social change, organized rivalry – these may on occasion provoke rather than prevent conflict. The truth is that there are elements of conflict in all situations, because the ends of different individuals are always to some extent mutually exclusive. Conflict is a part of human society because of the kind of entity that human society is.

Check Your Progress II

Note: a) Use the Space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with the model answers provide at the end of this unit.

1) Explain meaning of the term 'conflict' in your own words and discuss why it is ever present in human society.

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Competition

In contrast to conflict, which aims to destroy or do away with the opponent, competition simply aims to out-do the competitor in

achieving some mutually desired goal. It is thus a modified form of struggle. It implies that there are rules of the game to which the competitors must conform and that behind these rules, justifying and maintaining them, is a common set of values superior to the competitive interest. It also implies an absence of coercion. The rules are so arranged that the ends must be obtained by other methods than fraud or physical force. Consider an example: if a chain stores take business away from the local merchants by offering goods at cheaper prices that is competition. If on the other hand, the small merchants induce the government to tax the chain stores out of existence, that is not competition because state is then exercising its power of coercion. The rules of competition limit the means that may be used to gain the competitive end; they tend especially to eliminate force and fraud. When competition breaks through the rules it transforms itself into conflict.

Competition is the struggle for possession of rewards, which are in limited supply: money, goods, status, power, and love- anything. It may be formally defined as the process of seeking to obtain a reward by surpassing other rivals. While competition is present to some degree in all the societies, it differs greatly in degree from society to society. The fiercely competitive Kwakiutl and the relatively non-competitive Zuni offer a striking contrast. The Kwakiutl work very hard to accumulate wealth, which is used primarily to establish status rather than to provide material comfort. The competition for status reaches its height at the famous “potlatch,” in which the chiefs and leading families come with each other to see how much they can give away or destroy. A family may spend lifetime accumulating wealth, then bankrupt themselves in a single potlatch, thereby establishing the social status of their children. Members of a family who persisted in keeping their wealth would be criticized for their unwillingness to do “anything” for their children. The Zuni on the other hand, disdain any emphasis on the accumulation of wealth or the demonstration of individual skill. Most wealth is owned by the entire community and it is bad to demonstrate individual superiority of any kind. Thus, the Zuni child does not grow up believing that he should make the most money, get the highest grades or run the fastest race.

Even such strong encouragement of competition as is found among the Kwakiutl does not mean that cooperation is completely absent. As the anthropologist Margaret Mead points out—

Nevertheless, no society is exclusively competitive or exclusively cooperative. The very existence of highly competitive groups implies cooperation within the groups. Both competitive and cooperative habits must exist within the society.

Check Your Progress III

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) What do you understand by term the competition and how it is different from conflict?

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2) Discuss the nature of competition in contemporary society.

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Co-operation

Cooperation is derived from Latin words, *co* meaning **together** and *operari* meaning **to work**. It may be formally defined as joint activity in pursuit of common goals or shared rewards. Cooperation may be found in groups as small as a dyad (group of two persons) and as large as United Nations. Cooperation implies a regard for the wishes of other people and is often regarded as unselfish, but humans may also find that their selfish goals are best served when working together with their fellow human beings.

Men cannot associate without co-operating, or without working together in the pursuit of like or common interests. The modes of cooperation in social life may be divided into two principal types:

i) **Direct Co-operation:** Under this category we include all those activities in which people do like doing things together—play together, worship together, till the fields together, or even labour together in myriad ways. In such activities, there may be minor diversities of task—you wash, I will dry—but their essential character is that people do work in each other's company the things which they can also do separately or in isolation. They do them together, either because the face-to-face situation is itself a stimulus to the performance of the task or because it brings some other social satisfaction. Direct cooperation is exemplified also when people perform together

tasks that would be difficult for one of them to perform alone as when they pull together on a line or together storm a barricade.

- ii) **Indirect Co-operation:** Under this category we include all those activities in which people do unlike tasks but are directed towards a single end. Here the principle of the *division of labour comes into play*, a principle that is embedded in the very nature of social life. The division of labour is revealed in the procreation of life and in the upbringing of a family. It is revealed whenever people pool their differences for common ends. In industry, in government, in scientific research, even in recreational activities, functions tend to become more and more specialized. This process is more manifest in urban than in rural life, but the disappearance of the “husking bees” and “thrashing rings” signal the fact the people have to satisfy in other ways the need for social stimulation formerly satisfied through direct co-operation.

The replacement of direct by indirect cooperation has accompanied our great technological advances, which clearly require specialization of skills and functions. But in terms of human needs, this is not all gain. It is often claimed that the individual of modern industrialized and urbanized society, increasingly separated from face-to-face cooperative modes of activity and more and more, a “specialist” detached from close ties of intimate community life, tends to take on the highly individualized, neurotic characteristics as depicted by a growing number of writers.

There is also Primary co-operation, which is found in primary group such as family, peer group, clubs, etc. Here there is the identities given importance and also each member work for the betterment of all and rewards will be shared among them. Secondary co-operation is characteristic feature of modern society because in the relationship will be highly formalized and specialized. e.g.; in different political parties different NGO’s, trade unions.

Co-operation is commonly believed to be the opposite of competition. This is not true if it means that in a given situation one necessarily excludes the other. A cooperating group is one that is working together to accomplish a goal that all desire. In many case it is realized that competition will aid the attainment of this goal and so a system of competition is allowed or deliberately instituted. The Soviet government learnt early in its history that competition for high pay has a stimulating effect on productivity. Since Russia’s great need was to increase production by leaps and bounds, it developed an ingenious system of “socialist competition”.

Unless competition enhances the overall goal of the society it will find critics aplenty. So long as it is controlled and institutionalized, it is presumably a means by which the cooperation of all is accomplished. In reality it is conflict rather than competition that is the opposite of cooperation. Yet cooperation may occur without

making internal use of competition and between two competitors the overarching elements of cooperation may be lost from sight. In fact, each of two competitors trying to outstrip each other may view his organization as cooperating within itself but not cooperating at all with the other organizations. Often, therefore the ultimate cooperative effect of competition escapes awareness; the closer and more intimate cooperation of the organized group is the center of attention. This is what gives the illusion that competition and cooperation are necessarily opposed.

The Interrelation of the Forms of Interaction

It should be clear that the forms of interaction discussed here—conflict, competition and cooperation—are all interdependent. They are ever-present aspects of human society. Any social system, in fact any concrete situation, will manifest all three in a complex and intertwined manner. There is no cooperating group, no matter how harmonious, which will not contain the seeds of suppressed conflict. There is no conflict, no matter how bitter, which will not have some hidden basis of compromise. There is no competition, no matter how impersonal and ruthless, which cannot claim some contribution to a larger cooperative cause.

It should also be clear that any analysis of social behaviour in terms of the forms of interaction is an indispensable mode of approaching social phenomenon.

Assimilation

Whenever groups meet, some mutual interchange or diffusion of culture takes place. Even groups who seek to prevent such diffusion do not fully succeed in protecting their culture from all cultural interchange. This process of *mutual cultural diffusion through which persons and groups come to share a common culture is called assimilation*. It is always a two-way process with each group contributing varying proportions of the eventual blend, depending upon respective group size, prestige and other factors.

The assimilation process is nicely illustrated in the Americanisation of European immigrants. Arriving in great numbers between 1850 and 1913, many of them settled, in immigrant colonies in the Northern cities. Within these ethnic colonies—Little Italy, Little Poland and so on—they practiced much of their native European culture while absorbing some of the American culture. The immigrant parents often sought to transmit European culture to their children, while the children generally sought to become American as rapidly as possible. This conflict often caused parental anguish, family disorganisation, and loss of parental care, so that many second-generation immigrants became confused, rebellious and delinquent. As the third generation matured, the assimilation difficulties generally subsided; Americanisation became fairly complete, and the ethnic colony disappeared as the descendants scattered over city and suburb (Thomas and Znaniecki, 1927).

Assimilation reduces group conflicts by blending differing groups

into larger, culturally homogenous groups. The bitter riots against the Irish and the discrimination against Scandinavians in the United States have disappeared as assimilation has erased the group differences and blurred the sense of separate group identity. Anything, which binds people into a larger group, will tend to reduce rivalry and conflict between them. This is strikingly illustrated by an experiment, which involved the experimental formation of different groupings at a summer camp (Sherif and Sherif, 1953). The boys were all from the same community and were similar in religion, social class, status, age and national background. For the first experimental period they were treated as single group, and they showed no signs of incipient social conflict. In the second experimental period they were divided into two groups who were housed separately and encouraged to develop separate programmes of activities. The groups took the names of “Red Devils” and “Bull Dogs.” Group antagonism quickly developed and physical violence between the groups reached the point where it had to be suppressed by the adult leaders.

This experiment shows how, even when there are no real differences or issues to fight over, conflict tends to develop wherever separate group identity is recognized. Assimilation removes some, but not all possible pressures towards conflict.

Check Your Progress IV

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) Explain meaning of the term assimilation and how it reduces group conflict in your own words.

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3.4 SOCIAL CONTROL

Social control means the way in which the entire social order coheres and maintains itself—how it operates as a whole, as a changing equilibrium.

The study of social control – the means through which people are led to fill their roles as expected – begins with the study of social order within which people interact. Consider, for example, the orderly

arrangements, which underlie the bustling confusion of a great city. Tens of thousands of people take their places and perform their tasks with no apparent direction. Thousands of vehicles butt their way through clogged lanes, missing by inches, but seldom actually colliding. Thousands of kinds of merchandise arrive at the proper places in the proper amounts at the proper times. Ten thousand people whom an individual never sees will labor on this day so that meals will be ready for him when needed, drinking fountains will flow, drains will carry off the wastes, bulbs will blink and glow, traffic will part to let him pass, and various conveniences, will meet his other needs. A hundred people may serve him within an hour, perhaps without a word from him to any of them.

This is what is meant by social order—a system of people, relationships and customs operating smoothly to accomplish the work of a society. Unless people know what they may expect from one another not much will get done. The orderliness of a society rests upon a network of roles according to which each person accepts certain duties towards others and claims certain rights from others.

How is this network of reciprocal rights and duties kept in force? Sociologists use the term social control to describe *all the means and processes whereby a group or a society secures its members' conformity to its expectations.*

How does a group or a society cause its members to behave in the expected manner which in a number of ways, whose relative importance is difficult to measure? Following are different modes of social control:

1) Social Control Through Socialisation

People are controlled mainly by being socialised so that they fill their roles in expected ways through habit and preference. How do women in our society tend to give greater emphasis on their family? How do men tend to shoulder responsibility of their offspring? Mainly by cultivating within them a set of roles and responsibilities. Socialisation shapes our customs, our wishes and our habits. The members of a society are schooled in the same customs and tend to develop much the same set of habits. Thus habits and customs are great standardisers of behaviour within a group. If all members of society share similar socialization experiences, they will voluntarily and unthinkingly act in very much the same ways. They will conform to the social expectations without any conscious awareness that they are doing so.

2) Social Control Through Group Pressure

Most social scientists see social control as primarily a process of growing out of the individual's need for status within his primary groups. Lapiere (1954) claims that these groups are most influential when they are small and intimate, when the individual expects to remain in the group for a long time, and when he has frequent contacts with them. All the authorities agree that our need for acceptance within the intimate groups is the most powerful lever for

the use of group pressure towards group norms.

Social psychologists (Sherif, 1935; Bovard, 1951) have made a number of experiments, which show how a person tends to bring his expressions in line with those of the group. The method in such experiments usually consists of asking the members for individual estimates, attitudes or observations on a topic, then informing them of the group norm, and finally asking for a new expression from each member. Many of the informants modify their second expression in the direction of the group norm. Schachter (1951) has also shown experimentally how the member who sharply deviates from the group norms in opinion is rejected by the group.

We often notice that a new member of a group is more carefully conformist and more fiercely loyal than the old members. Meticulous conformity is a tool for gaining acceptance and status within a group, while rejection is the price of nonconformity.

Groups are of two kinds, primary and secondary. For our present discussion, it is sufficient to note that primary groups are small, intimate, informal, face-to-face groups like the family, clique or play group, while secondary groups are larger, more impersonal, more formal and more utilitarian like a labour union, trade association, church congregation or student body.

a) *Social control through primary group*

Within primary groups, control is informal, spontaneous and unplanned. The members of the group react to the actions of each member. When a member irritates or annoys the others, they may show their disapproval through ridicule, laughter, criticism or even ostracism. When a member's behaviour is acceptable, a secure and comfortable "belonging" is his usual reward.

Informal modes of Social control —The **folkways and mores** represent the norms or modes of procedure in a society or in a group—they present to us the most frequent or most accepted or most standardized ways of doing this or that. They are regulative, exerting pressure upon individual and group to conform to the norms. Following are the general functions of mores in social life—

- i) The mores determine much of our individual behaviour. They are the compelling and forbidding apparatus of the social world that constantly exerts pressure on every member.
- ii) The mores identify individual within the group. If on the one hand, the mores exert a pressure upon the individual to conform to the ways of his community or social class or sex, the individual, on the other, gains identification with his fellows by conforming. He thus maintains those social bonds that are clearly essential for satisfactory living.

In traditional Indian society, three social institutions that used to exercise great control over conduct of its members are joint family, caste system and panchayat. Earlier on, in all three contexts any

instance of non-conformity used to be a rarity. Now with the advent of industrialization and urbanization these social institutions have started disintegrating and informal social control is gradually replaced by formal social control.

b) Social Control through Secondary Group

As we shift from primary to secondary group situations, we also shift from informal to formal modes of social controls. Secondary groups are generally larger, more impersonal and specialised in purpose. We do not use

them to meet our needs for intimate human response, but to help us to get certain jobs done. If a secondary group does not meet our needs, we can generally withdraw with no greater anguish, for our emotional lives are not deeply involved. To maintain our status in the secondary group is desirable but not a desperate emotional necessity as it is in the primary group. True, it is possible in our society for people to change their primary groups—leave their families, divorce their mates, find new friends—but the process is generally painful. The secondary group is a less compelling control agency than the primary group.

The secondary group is still an effective control. Some of the informal controls still operate in the secondary groups. No normal person wants to appear ridiculous at the union meeting or at the Chamber of Commerce banquet. Such informal controls such as ridicule, laughter, gossip and ostracism operate in secondary group settings but generally with a reduced impact. Meanwhile, other more formal controls are characteristic of secondary groups are parliamentary rules of order, official regulations and standardised procedures, propaganda, promotion and titles, rewards and prizes, formal penalties and punishments etc.

2) Social Control Through Force

Many primitive societies succeeded in controlling the behaviour of individuals through the mores, reinforced by the informal controls of the primary group, so that no formal laws or punishments were necessary. But with larger populations and more complex cultures, formal governments, laws and punishments are developed. Wherever it becomes possible for the individual to get lost in the crowd, informal controls are inadequate and formal controls are necessary. For example, in joint family, it is practical enough to exercise control over conduct of each and every member and punish him/her in case of any misconduct on his/her part. But in a town of thousands of people, it would be impossible to keep tab on each person informally. Some system of assigning work and distributing rewards becomes necessary. Thus, with larger populations and cultural complexity comes a shift to impersonal secondary group controls—laws, regulations and formalised procedures.

When the individual does not wish to follow these regulations, the group tries to compel him to do so. In such larger groups, he is too anonymous for informal group pressures to be brought upon him. Furthermore, in larger groups with complex cultures, some

subcultures that conflict with the culture of the majority are also likely to develop. The individual who rejects the conventional regulations of the society may find emotional support from other persons who think and act as he does. Although he is still subject to group pressure, it now comes from a non-conforming group, which insulates him from the pressures of conventional society. So, conventional society uses force upon him—force in the form of laws and formal punishments—to compel his conformity.

3.5 LET SUM UP

Social processes discussed above are found in all the societies, although there is great variation in emphasis. Cooperation may be personal or impersonal, deliberate or symbiotic in character. Primary groups demand highly personalized cooperation; secondary- group cooperation is found in most organized social groups.

Competition serves the function of allocating scarce rewards among the competitors. It has the additional function of stimulating both individual and group activity in a manner to increase the total productivity, but it also discourages the efforts of those who regularly fail.

Conflict develops when attention shifts from the contest itself to an effort to eliminate rivals. Different mechanisms of eliminating social conflict have been discussed in preceding pages. Assimilation is also one mechanism of reducing conflict between two conflicting groups through fusion of two cultures.

Further, social control has been discussed in great detail as one of the mechanism of maintaining social order — how it operates as a whole, as a changing equilibrium. Further there are different modes of maintaining this social control. Individuals are led to conform to social norms through socialization and also through group pressure. In primary groups, informal modes of social control play prominent role such as ridicule, laughter, folkways and mores etc. As we move on to the secondary groups these informal modes of social control cease to play important role. Here informal modes of social control are replaced by much formal modes such as formalized rules, regulations, laws and punishment etc.

3.6 KEY WORDS

Social Control : Social control may be defined as any social to cultural means by which systematic and relatively consistent restraints are imposed upon individual behaviour and by which human being 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 order : A condition/situation of a society/group characterized by the predominance of harmonious social relationships.

Human behaviour : Any response or reaction of an individual i.e. anything and individual does, says, things or feels.

3.7 SUGGESTED READINGS

Davis K. (1954), *“Human Society”*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York.

MacIver, R.M. and Page (1964), *“Society: An Introductory Analysis”*, Macmillan Press Ltd. London.

3.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

- 1) Any society contains hundreds and perhaps thousands of socially defined relationships. The immediate family alone may contain as many as fifteen. How many relationships a society utilizes is simply a matter of how many criteria it takes into account in defining behaviour between individuals? The fifteen relationships of the immediate family rest on three criteria-age, sex and generation. Outside the family an infinite number of criteria may be used, so there is no limit to the number of possible relationships.

It follows that to catalogue all the meaningful relationships in which human beings are involved would be a never-ending task. Instead, they must be classified and dealt with as general types. Any classification, however must have some point to it. In social sciences, as in all natural and physical sciences, classification is worthless unless it seizes upon traits that are significant traits that facilitate causal analysis. For this reason,

social relationships have been classified and discussed in terms of the **kind of interaction** they manifest.

Check Your Progress II

- 1) Conflict is formally defined as the process of seeking to obtain rewards by eliminating or weakening the competitors.

Conflict is an ever-present process in human relations. It may be solved at one level, as when there is agreement on ends, and break out anew over the question of means. One may raise a profound question as to why conflict is such a constant feature of human society. The answer lies in the basic nature of human society. Human society is not a tightly compressed affair, but instead, has loose integration. The integration is not on a biological, but on a mental level. It must be created anew and constantly maintained through psychic processes such as indoctrination, inspiration and repetition. It must somehow rest on the possession of common and extra-personal ends on the part of its members. These ends cannot come from man's biological, but only from communicative contact with his fellows; they thus differ greatly from one society to another because they are associated with differences of culture. This, then, given first basis of conflict-ethnocentrism- the dislike of people with different culture and different ultimate ends from one's own.

Check Your Progress III

- 1) In contrast to conflict, which aims to destroy or liquidate the opponent, competition simply aims to out-do the competitor in achieving some mutually desired goal. It is thus, a modified form of struggle. It implies that there are rules of game to which the competitors must conform and that behind these rules, justifying and maintaining them, is a common set of values superior to the competitive interest. It also implies an absence of coercion. The rules are so arranged that the ends must be obtained by other methods than fraud or physical force.
- 2) Present day society is characterized by excessive amount of competition. Today man overlooks the institutions and rules, which alone make competition

work- the protection of property, the enforcement of contracts, the prevention of fraud. He overlooks the common ends and values which are not competitive, but which are superior to those that are. He forgets that competition can be vicious as well as beneficent, that it can lead to starvation in the midst of plenty, to fear and insecurity, to instability and panic. Today, we have forgotten that unlimited competition leads inevitably to monopoly, that the very success of strong leads to gigantic power over the weak and creates such inequality that a mockery is made of free contract.

Check Your Progress IV

- 1) Whenever groups meet, some mutual interchange or diffusion of culture takes place. Even groups which seek to prevent such diffusion do not fully succeed in protecting their culture from all cultural interchange. This process of mutual cultural diffusion through which persons and groups come to share common culture is called assimilation.

Assimilation reduces group conflicts by blending differing groups into larger, culturally homogenous groups. The bitter riots against the Irish and the discrimination against Scandinavians in the United States have disappeared as assimilation has erased the group differences and blurred the sense of separate group identity. Anything, which binds people into a larger group, will tend to reduce rivalry and conflict between them.

UNIT 4 SOCIAL CHANGE: CONCEPT AND FACTORS INVOLVED IN SOCIAL CHANGE

*Prof. Manjit Singh

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- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Concept and Definitions of Social Change
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- 4.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.7 Key Words
- 4.8 Suggested Readings
- 4.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

4.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Know the concept of social change, social progress, social development and cultural lag;
- Distinguish between social progress and social development;
- Understand the factors of social change;
- Grasp social change as a universal and continuous phenomena;
- Understand the role of social change in formation of social attitude and social values; and
- Understand the effects of social change on day-to-day human life

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The word 'change' immediately brings to mind something different from yesterday or past. Change is the irrefutable law of nature. It may be or may not be visible but all things are changing at varying paces. There are changes in physical environment, flora and fauna, water table, so on and so forth. Similarly, social environment which has been created by human beings themselves is continuously in the

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process of change. A look into the history of society reveals that all social institutions such as family, religion, marriage, political, economic, social values and social attitudes have undergone a drastic change over a period of time. The social life being lived by human being at present during the dawn of 21st century was not so about hundred or more years back. Permanence of human society is an illusion. Human society is in an ever-changing process, growing, decaying, renewing and adjusting itself to new-found ideas, inventions and ways of living.

4.2 CONCEPT AND DEFINITIONS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

The concept of social change was introduced by August Comte, a Frenchman, known as founding father of Sociology. Later on, the concept of social change was further refined and developed by Herbert Spencer, Karl Marx and a number of other sociologists. No human society is static and at the same time it is difficult to predict the forms and directions of social change. The reason is that the factors which cause social change do not remain uniform always. The population changes, expansion of science and technology, ideologies and social values take on new forms, and as a result of that social structure, social system, and social institutions change their functioning. The process of industrialization and urbanization has changed the whole characteristics of social relationships. The term social change is used to indicate the changes that take place in human interactions and interrelations. Society is a web of relationships, so social change means a change in the system of social relationships.

It is quite visible that the contemporary world is not changing uniformly and is also manifesting complexities in social change. Slow and simple forms of social change may intersect with quick and intricate forms of social change. Migration of illiterate persons from remote rural areas to metropolitan cities affects the institutions of family life in it, adding stress and strain of daily living due to fast pace of city life and new social values required for industrial and urban living.

From the middle of nineteenth century onwards, a large number of sociologists have tried to define social change. Some often quoted definitions of social change are:

August Comte: Societies progress through a series of predictable stages based on the development of human knowledge.

Anderson and Parker: Social Change involves alterations in the structure or functioning of social forms or processes themselves.

Davis: By social change it is meant only such alterations as occur in social organization, that is, structure and functions of society.

Gillin and Gillin: Social changes are variations from the accepted modes of life; whether due to alteration in geographical conditions, in cultural equipment or composition of the population, etc.

Ginsberg, M.: By social change, I understand a change in social structure e.g. the size of society, the composition or balance of its parts or the type of its organization.

Koening, S.: Social change refers to the modifications which occur in the life-patterns of people.

Lundberg and Others: Social change refers to any modifications in established patterns of inter-human relationships and standards of conduct.

MacIver and Page: Our direct concern as sociologist is with social relationships. It is the change in these relationships which alone we shall regard as social change.

Mazumdar, H.T.: Social change may be defined as anew fashion or mode, either modifying or replacing the old, in the life of people, or in the operations of society.

Merrill and Eldredge: Social change means that a large number of persons are engaging in activities that differ from those which they or their immediate forefathers engaged in sometime before.

Smelser, Neil J.: Social change is the alterations of the way societies are organized.

The important features that emerge from the definitions of social change are:

- 1) Social change is the effect of certain causes.
- 2) Social change modifies social structure, social organization and social functioning.
- 3) It modifies the life-pattern of people.
- 4) Technological and cultural changes are different from social change.
- 5) Social change is reflected through social attitudes, social values and ways of living.

Check Your Progress I

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

- 1) Explain social change.

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4.3 CONCEPT OF SOCIAL PROGRESS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Social progress is a relative term in the sense that, to some people, changes in daily living, social functions, social relationships, attitudes and values may mean progress and to others, social change may seem to be an erosion of established social values and social practices. Social progress refers to forces which make human life socially and biologically better. Human beings are continuously making efforts to control the external environment and generate forces which make their life better. Development in knowledge, inventions and use of various technologies and gadgets initiates modified standards of living, social relationships, social functioning, attitudes and values. To start with evolution and social progress were considered synonyms but later on, sociologist made a distinction between evolution, social evolution and social progress. Social evolution is one aspect of evolution and social progress is a further associate of social evolution. Some important definitions of social progress are:

MacIver and Page: By progress we imply not merely direction, but direction towards some final goal, some destination determined ideally not simply by some objective considerations at work.

Burgess: Any change or adaptation to an existent environment that makes it easier for a person or group of persons or other organized form of life to live, may be said to represent progress.

Lumley: Progress is change but it is change in a desired or approved direction, not any direction.

Ogburn: Progress is a movement towards an objective, thought to be desirable by the general group, for the visible future.

Hobhouse: Social progress is the growth of social life in respect of those qualities to which human beings can attach or can rationally attach values.

Mazumdar, H.T.: Social progress is a movement based on following six parameters:

- 1) enhancement of the dignity of man;
- 2) respect for each human personality;
- 3) ever-increasing freedom for spiritual quest and for investigation of truth;
- 4) freedom for creativity and for aesthetic enjoyment of the works of nature as well as of man;

- 5) a social order that promotes the first four values;
- 6) promotes life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness with justice and equity to all.

The above given statements of social progress highlights the following features:

- 1) Social progress is a movement towards ideally determined objectives;
- 2) Social progress is a movement of adaptation for existing environment that makes life easier;
- 3) Social progress is not just a movement in any direction;
- 4) Social progress is a movement that creates a social order based on spirituality, dignity of human beings, liberty, happy life full of moral values;
- 5) Social progress is limitless and social change is inherent in it.

The concept of social development is further improvement of social progress. The concept of social development is based on long history but recent emphasis on it, is mainly due to following three factors:

- 1) Decolonization process which started during twentieth century and got accelerated after the end of Second World War;
- 2) Growing concern with developed countries;
- 3) The desire of people and of newly established governments to achieve the objective of welfare state.

The review of literature on social development reveals two interrelated dimensions. First, the development of capacity of people to work continuously for their own and society's welfare. Secondly, the alteration of institutions so that human needs are met at all levels especially the lowest, through the process of improving the relationships between expression of needs and the means to attain them.

Social development is a comprehensive concept which means structural changes introduced deliberately to transform society. Social change is a value- free, objective description of societal processes, whereas social development is value-laden term which refers to subjective statement of desired direction of social change. Therefore, the goals of social development are:

- 1) To create a society where living conditions of the people are better. They do not suffer from hunger and they are not denied basic necessities of life.
- 2) To remove regional imbalances and rural-urban disparities.

- 3) To create infrastructure where basic needs of the people are met at all levels, including those who constitute the poorest and deprived sections of society.

These views were also endorsed by the General Assembly and the World Summit for Social Development (1995) of United Nations. The important highlights of the Summit were:

- 1) To leave no section of the population outside the scope of social development;
- 2) To effect structural change which favours social development and activate all sectors of the population to participation in the social development process;
- 3) To aim at social equity;
- 4) To give high priority to the development of the human resources, including vocational and technical training.

It may be made clear that in order to achieve social development the economic development is necessary which means increase in production leading to high rate of growth as measured through Gross National Product.

Keeping in view the comprehensiveness of social development M.S. Gore has rightly said that social development means social, cultural, economic, political and environment development.

Check Your Progress II

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

- 1) Explain how social change is inherent in social progress and social development.

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4.4 FACTORS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Physical Environment and Social Change

Physical environment is the most important aspect which influences social life. There are slow as well as fast changes in physical environment. Disasters in the form of storms, floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, fire, seasonal variations etc. determine the form of social life. The prevalence of flora and fauna creates a social order

based on it. Physical environment promotes and limits the growth of civilization. At poles and deserts, there will be a limited social life due to hostile climatic conditions for human living. The forces generated by the physical environment determine the form, growth and change in human society.

Some historians have expressed the view that even great civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia disappeared due to unfavourable physical environmental conditions. Availability of natural resources necessary for human life lead to settlement of human society around them. The depletion of natural resources after their exploitation leads to disintegration and change in human settlements. Misuse of physical environment by human beings resulted in green house effect, pollution, shortage of potable water and non-availability of land for houses in urban areas and so on.

In the present Indian scenario, intensive agriculture operations resulted in green revolution and sufficiency in food production but at the cost of erosion in soil fertility and depletion of water table. Economic and technological developments led to ecological imbalance and damage to it. Physical environmental compulsions such as famines, droughts, floods, earthquakes led to human migration to distant places with a consequence of disruption to settled human life . Physical environmental compulsions affect social life by producing new ways of living and set of social relationships. It is now evident that physical environmental factors induce social change.

Demographic Factors of Social Change

Demography is the study of human population. 'Demos' is a Greek word which means people. Demographic factors that induce social change are fertility, mortality, migration, changing age structure, sex ratio, age at marriage, patterns of marriage, child bearing age, life expectancy, use of contraceptives , levels and types of morbidity. These factors have a far reaching effect on society with the pressure to produce changes in social and political institutions.

In the developed countries of the world, the population growth is negative or stable but in developing countries such as India it is alarmingly high. Both the trends cause social transformation. The countries where fertility and mortality is low, their standard of living is high and in the countries where it is high, their standard of living is low. The societies with high fertility rate are choked with over-population, infant and maternal mortality rate, child labour, unemployment, rural-to urban migration, shortage of services required for the sustainability of social life, family violence, marital breakdown, criminality and slums etc. In order to check high fertility rate, family welfare and planning measures were introduced. To start with, these measures were opposed and considered as irreligious, immoral and acquired social acceptance only with the passage of time. The social acceptance of family planning measures led to change in social attitudes and social values for forming a new society based on small family. Similarly, improvement in health measures,

knowledge and awareness generation resulted in reduced mortality.

Another demographic factor of social change especially with reference to Indian society is the declining sex ratio. In traditional Indian society, female infanticide was a known unhealthy practice due to preference for a male child. The girls were considered a negative property, a burden on the family. The situation has further deteriorated in modern India with the introduction of pre-birth tests. Sex determination tests are being misused to kill the female foetus. The misuse of these tests has spread like wild fire in Indian society despite the ban on it through Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act, 1994 (PNDT, 1994). Declining sex ratio will bring in disastrous demographic, social, economic and even political consequences. There will be more violence against women.

Changing age structure in all societies due to longevity and improved health measures will have its own fall out. In the past, it was young who made bulk of the population and there were relatively few old persons. Increase in the population of old persons will require more social and economic support systems. Failing health, loneliness, isolation and marginalization of old persons are creating new social problems. In nutshell, we can say that the whole social life is operationalized through demographic factors and changes in them will lead to social change.

It is an established fact that social and economic life of human beings is integral part of each other. Economic aspect of social life is a primary feature of society. Human society, starting from hunting and gathering stage has passed through various stages to reach the present stage which is being dominated by industrial production, trade and commerce along with agriculture production and its distribution based on latest scientific techniques. Each successive stage brought with it, its own form of social life, social relationships and social functions.

Engels rightly said that “the ultimate causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought not in the minds of men, in their increasing insight into the external truth and justice, but in changes in the mode of production and exchange.” Elaborating the idea further Marx said, “The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society – the real foundation, on which rise legal and political super structures and to which correspond definite form of social consciousness. It indicates that economic influences are powerful and penetrating on social life.” The prevailing economic system determines the social relationships and social functions. The agriculture system of production had a different type of social life as compared to industrial system of production. It has been found that countries with high per capita income tend to have lower fertility rate than those with lower incomes. Since high income is linked to industrial, technological, and educational development, this fact supports the argument that people tend to have fewer children when they are prosperous. The poor, uneducated, people living in slums and rural areas had high fertility rate resulting in population explosion throughout the world.

In subsistence economies, people produced their own household goods, distributed and consumed them as compared to modern market economy where work is something, people carry out to earn money. It means work is not only social activity but also economic activity. In earlier times, village was considered a self-sufficient unit but in market economy, total village life is dependent on outside market forces resulting in new social attitude, social values and social relationships. In the modern world, economic disruption brings set of social problems along with it.

Technological Factors of Social Change

Technological changes have converted the world into a global village and produced profound social changes. Industry, agriculture, transportation, communication, sources of energy, food processing, housing, and physical environment are influenced by technological changes. Almost all the technological developments brought about changes in social living, interaction-patterns and social life.

Some of the major influences of technological factors on social life are as follows:

1) Changes in the institution of family such as from joint family system to nuclear family system; employment of females outside the household; change in the role and relationship of husband and wife; changes in the patterns of courtship; inter-caste and late marriage; increase in divorce rate; small family size due to the use of technological devices for birth control; reduced role of family in social control and neglect of the elderly due to changes in the social attitudes and social values.

2) Changes in the very basis of social stratification; reduced effect of caste system on employment and day-to-day living; development of individualization and decline in community life; commercialization of recreation; problems related to migration and developments of slums in urban areas; stress and strain as a result of competition and fast-paced life; reduced role of superstitions in day-to-day life; emotional instability and occasional economic disruption and insecurity.

4.5 SOCIAL ATTITUDES, SOCIAL VALUES AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Social attitudes and social values are invisible though they govern the whole gamut of human life in an important manner. In modern day terminology, social values and social attitudes are software for running the affairs of human society. Social relationships, social functioning and social behaviour are the outcome of social attitudes and social values. Acceptance and resistance to social change is actualized through social attitudes and social values.

Social attitude is an orientation towards a person, situation, institution or social process that is held to be indicative of underlying values and beliefs. Social attitude is manifested through social behaviour, social relationships, and social functioning. MacIver and Page explained social attitudes as “subtle, complex and changeable”

modes of consciousness. They are constantly being modified by our training, our reflection, our health, our circumstances of every sort. When we attribute an attitude to a person, we can judge its character only by certain external signs – looks, gestures, words. These signs suggest to us fear, love or pity”. MacIver and Page classified social attitudes in three types which tend to prevent, to limit or to promote social relationships. Accordingly, they named these *attitudes* as *dissociative*, *restrictive* and *associative*. These social attitudes produce a feeling and social interaction reflecting “inferiority, superiority, neutrality, association or dissociation.” The detail of social attitudes as given by MacIver and Page are as follows:-

- 1) Attitudes implying sense of inferiority in the subject with respect to the object of attitude:
 - a) Dissociative: Dread, fear, terror, envy, rashfulness.
 - b) Associative: Gratitude, hero-worship, emulation.
 - c) Restrictive: Awe, veneration, worship, devotion, humility, submissiveness, modesty, snobbishness.
- 2) Attitudes implying sense of superiority in the subject:
 - a) Dissociative: Disgust, Abhorrence, repugnance, scorn, contempt, disclaim, intolerance, arrogance.
 - b) Associative: Pity, protectiveness
 - c) Restrictive: Pride, patronage, tolerance, forbearance.
- 3) Attitudes implying neither sense of inferiority nor superiority but neutrality in the subject:
 - a) Dissociative: Hate, dislike, aversion, distrust, suspicion, spitefulness, malice, cruelty.
 - b) Associative: Sympathy, affection, trust, tenderness, love, friendliness, kindness, courtesy, helpfulness.
 - c) Restrictive: Rivalry, competitiveness, jealousy.

MacIver and Page also expressed the view that the classification of social attitudes is just illustrative not exhaustive. “An attitude is not a static possession of the individual. It is always a change valuation.”

No doubt social attitudes and social values are interlinked but still these differ from each other so far their explanation and application is concerned. Social values are ideas held by the members of society about ethical or appropriate social behaviour. Social values depict what is right or wrong, desirable or undesirable. Smelser defined social values as “shared beliefs about the goals towards which human should strive. They are at the core of moral doctrines.”

The features of social values are:

- 1) These cannot be proved

- 2) These are held to be desirable.
- 3) These are guides to social behaviour.
- 4) These grow out of personal experience.
- 5) These are modified as experiences and accumulate.
- 6) These are evolving in nature.

In present day society the important social values are:

- 1) Achievement and Success.
- 2) Activity and work.
- 3) Moral responsibility.
- 4) Concern for people who are suffering as a result of some disaster.
- 5) Efficiency and pragmatism.
- 6) Progress, material comfort, freedom and independence.
- 7) Nationalism, patriotism, democracy and worth of a person etc.

Acceptance and Resistance to Social Change

Acceptance and resistance to social change are two sides of a coin. By and large there is a criticism of innovation leading to social change. In modern industrial societies, there is a diversity of social norms and social values which permit the new generation to choose different ways of life or to reorganize the existing social practices which in various ways oppose the social and cultural values of older generation. There is always inter-generation gap. There is historical evidence of resistance to social change from time to time either by individual, groups or both. Generally, resistance to change can be expected when persons or groups of people have different perceptions of the outcome. It is easier for people to use old form, than to get adapted to new ones. People resist social change due to desire for stability, illiteracy, ignorance, economic cost, vested interest, inertia, lack of awareness and fear of new things. People resist social change fearing that it may go against time-honoured values and traditions. Inter-racial, inter-country and inter-religious caste marriages are opposed as this goes against established social values and traditions. Some of the important examples of resistance to social changes can be cited from present day developed world: American's slavery system took a long and devastating war to get abolished. Racial equality is being resisted even today. In England, the introduction of woman suffrage was opposed for a very long time. Similarly in England, the locomotive in the early days of rail road was called a "hell on wheels" and the "devil wagon".

In India, *Sati Pratha*, child marriage, preference for female child, women education, human rights and democratic ways of functioning

are being resisted even today. S.C. Dube's study of India's changing villages is a fine example of resistance and acceptance of social change. Dube shows that whereas, technological innovations, such as improved seeds, fertilizers, improved breed of animals and so on, were accepted fairly, readily, especially where the effects became apparent in a short time, as for example higher cash prices for crops. But, the innovations which had, or were likely to have repercussions on the social structure, or the cultural values, met with resistance. Some new agricultural techniques, co-operative methods of farming, measures to improve sanitation and education ventures, aroused much less interest and in some case opposed. Dube observed that people are slow and extremely cautious in accepting innovations, but these innovations had long-lasting effects which ultimately changed the social life. Another classic example of Indians' resistance and acceptance of social change is adoption of small family norms and technology associated to it.

The development of modern capitalist economy based on liberalization, privatization and globalization brought into existence some social waves and social movements which hit the traditional Indian social and cultural life. These social waves and modernization tend to reform and modernize the Indian society. The traditional social institutions such as joint family system and caste system are incompatible with the rationality, mobility and egalitarianism of a democratic society. Acceptance and resistance to social change is a continuous phenomenon and not a one time affair.

Cultural Lag

Cultural lag concept was introduced by American Sociologist William Fielding Ogburn during 1922. Ogburn studied the impact of technological change on culture and found that various parts of culture changed differently.

Ogburn described culture consisting of two parts; one is material and the other non-material. Material culture includes manufactured goods, factories, houses, cars- in short, all material objects, as well as inventions and technological changes. For non-material culture Ogburn used the term adaptive culture. It includes social institutions, such as family, religion, education, economic and political. The non-material culture also includes value systems based on customs, modes and folkways.

Ogburn's basic thesis is that non-material culture tends to change slower than material culture. The reason for the rate of slow change is based on prevailing social practices being supported by religious groups, social values and social attitudes. Ogburn gave an example of family within which some adjustments are made to material change. With the progress of industry certain manufacturing activities such as weaving, soap making and tanning etc. moved out of the household to the factory system. The factory system required more females to work outside the house. At the same time females were expected to continue to fulfil their traditional domestic responsibilities. This resulted in wide gap between the demand for female workers and the

pressure on them to stay back at home. This phenomenon caught the attention of Ogburn to which he coined the term cultural lag, that is the delay between a change in the material culture and response of the adaptive culture.

Ogburn expressed the view that a change in one part of society especially a technological advance requires a corresponding change in other parts. Until such an adjustment is made, the society or at least certain parts of it, will face a number of problems. The reasons for cultural lag are habits and inertia. People would not like to adapt to new changes quickly. Inertia to change also comes from the fact that modern societies consist of different types of pressure groups catering to different interests which resist change. Less rigid immigration laws are desired by people who want to migrate to developed countries but these are being strongly opposed by the people from developed countries who are afraid of losing jobs to new arrivals or being required to provide social support through welfare funds and allowances.

Various technological developments creating cultural lag are latest electronic equipments. These are resulting in a terrible impact on social life. Ogburn concluded that many and frequent technological innovations of our modern age by occurring prior to the social change precipitate the cultural lag. What Ogburn said in the beginning of twentieth century does not merely continue to be applicable instead its relevance has increased even further.

Limitations of Social Change

All available knowledge and information indicates that the material world existed before human beings arrived the scene. Once the human beings came into existence, may be through design or chance or process of evolution, they started manipulating the physical environment for their betterment. In the process, human beings invented the instruments and started developing technology for their material and non-material progress. These developments were out of the compulsions of human beings required for their existence, continuation and making life more comfortable and happy. Human beings manipulated the physical environment for the gratification of their needs. All these actions and interactions constructed and produced a human society which is undergoing changes since its inception. The changes, of which major part is social in nature are not without limitations like any other phenomenon. The major limitations are:

- 1) social change is complex in nature.
- 2) social change is pluralistic.
- 3) social change brings social isolation in certain cases.
- 4) social change brings uncertainties.
- 5) social change in certain situations brings conflict with it.

- 6) sometimes, it may lead to social disintegration, and
- 7) it is difficult to predict the outcome of social change.

4.6 LET US SUM UP

For the last three hundred years or so social change has been a concern of prime importance for social scientists, especially for sociologists from the middle of nineteenth century onwards. No sociological analysis is complete without reference to social change. It is a change in the institutional and normative structure of society. Social evolution, social progress, social development, changes in physical environment, technological developments, innovations, changes in economic and political institutions are all having bearing on social change. Social change is inherent in all the physical and social environmental changes. To sum up social change, MacIver and Page has said rightly that social structure cannot be placed in a museum to save it from the ravages of time.

4.7 KEY WORDS

Adaptive Culture	:	W.F. Ogburn's term for non-material culture, including social institutions, value systems and political institutions.
Fertility	:	A number of children a woman bears during her life time.
Human Society	:	a geographic unit bound together by a legal system and having certain national identity.
Inertia	:	Indisposition to action, motion or change
Migration	:	Movement of persons or groups across symbolic or political boundaries into new residential areas, communities or societies.
Morbidity	:	the rate of disease or proportion of diseased persons in a society or community.

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4.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

Social change is a universal and ever-continuing social phenomenon. Rate of social change may be different in different societies at different times but permanence of human society is an illusion. The historical evidence reveals that all forms of social life, social attitude, and social values have undergone drastic changes over a period of time. Human society is always dynamic, in the changing process, decaying, renewing and adjusting itself to new-found ideas, inventions and ways of living.

Social change is a modification or alteration in social structure, social system and life-patterns of people. Social change is reflected through social attitudes, social values and new ways of living, social relationships and social interactions among the members of society. Social change is complex, limitless and value-neutral.

Check Your Progress II

1) To start with, it was evolution may be biological or social which caught the attention of human being. With the development of knowledge and refinement in thought structure the distinction between the two types of evolution was made. During nineteenth

century, along with social evolution the concept of social progress was added and during twentieth century there was further improvement in understanding through analysis and interpretation of social life and the concept of social development was identified. The concept of social development is more comprehensive than social progress. No doubt, through social progress and social development change in a direction is sought, but the methodology and fallout is different.

Social progress may be natural outcome of social change but social development is an effort to achieve the pre-planned goals. Like social change, social progress can also be value-free whereas social development is value-laden social phenomenon. Social development is a focused activity for bringing deliberate transformation of society. The goal of social development is to ensure that no one in society suffers from hunger and denied basic necessities of life. Social development is required to create an infrastructure where there is no exploitation, injustice, discrimination, social inequality, rural-urban and regional disparities.

Economic development is an integral part of social progress and social development. Economic development is an increase in all sectors of productions leading to high rate of growth. In order to ensure increased production human resources are to be developed through vocational and technical training. All this indicates a highly inter-linked phenomenon. In the words of M.S. Gore, social development is a social, cultural, economic, political and environmental development. Development in all these areas will ensure better quality of life. Therefore, issues of social changes are inherent in it.

Check Your Progress III

- 1) Physical environment, technology, economic development and demographic changes induce social change. There are continuous developments in these areas leading to social change. As it is difficult to predict social change, similarly, it is difficult to say which of these factors is most crucial in social change. All these factors individually as well as collectively influence the social life, social structure, social system, social relations, social attitudes and social values leading to social change.

Physical environment promotes and limits the growth of social life as is clear from the patterns of social life at poles, deserts and mountains covered with snow. There is historical evidence that great civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia disappeared under the unfavorable physical conditions. Physical conditions. Physical environment changes through various forms of disasters, convulsions, eruptions, produces new ways of living, social relationships, social attitudes, social values related to disaster-management sub-culture.

Social and economic lives of human beings are deeply attached to each other. Economic aspect of social life is primary in human society. Development of human society from hunting and gathering stage to latest means of production and distribution brought within, its own forms of social and economic life. This fact has also been highlighted by various social scientists specifically by Engles and Marx. Human being are what they do and accordingly constitute their social and economic life. The world-wide trends show that economically prosperous persons have low fertility rates. Economic affluence ensures from industrial development based on technological and educational advancement. The poor and the uneducated people living in slums and rural areas usually have high fertility rates. Standard of living is dependent on economic factors.

Technological factors which accelerated economic development have converted the world into a global village producing tremendous changes in social life. There is no area which has not been touched by technological developments. Technology has transformed the total human social life. Technological developments led to industrialization and urbanization which resulted in fast changes in all social institutions of social life. Technological factors have also led to cultural lag.

Demographic studies have revealed that factors such a fertility, mortality, sex ratio, changes in age structure, age at marriage, proportions marrying and migrating also induce social change. Development of contraceptive technology and its use have had a far reaching effect on society. The societies with high fertility ratio are choked with population, unemployment, child labour, migration, family violence high marital breakdown along with high infant mortality rate. Increase in the number of old persons requires larger and stronger social and economic support systems to check loneliness, violation and family health of old persons. Small family norm adopted by human beings has changed the demographic and social environment throughout the world.

UNIT 5 SOCIAL CONTROL

*Dr. Raj Kumar Singh

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- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Meaning and Definition of Social Control
- 5.3 Social Control, Self-Control, Socialization, and Maladjustment
- 5.4 Purpose of Social Control
- 5.5 Need and Importance of Social Control
- 5.6 Forms of Social Control
- 5.7 Means of Social Control
- 5.8 Agencies of Social Control
- 5.9 Let Us Sum Up
- 5.10 Key Words
- 5.11 Suggested Readings
- 5.12 Answers to Check Your Progress.

5.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit you should be able to know:

- The meaning and definition of social control, self control, socialization and maladjustment;
- The purpose of social control, need and importance of social control; and
- The forms, means and agencies of social control.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the early prehistoric days, men used to lead an isolated nomadic life in caves, rock-shelters, forests and stations of river banks. They lived in small groups in solitude in the midst of unfriendly

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environment and often indulged in relentless wars against the tyrannies of nature. In their quest to overpower the nature, they wanted to form the human association. The human beings saw the ferocious and gigantic animals as their enemies and constant threat to their safety and security. In Neolithic stage, men could succeed in forming larger human congregations. A sort of stability in socio-economic life could be established with the invention of agriculture and domestication of useful animals. The formation of larger congregations could instill a sense of safety and security in human beings but unforeseen problems did accost the human beings every now and then. Group conflicts and clashes became an everyday affairs. Human beings by their very nature are selfish individualistic, barbarous, hedonistic, power hungry and conflicting. If they are allowed to act freely, no group or society can function. This gives rise to the need on the part of society to frame certain rules and regulations to restrain the undesirable human conduct and promote the desirable ones. By effective enforcement of the societal rules and regulations every society controls its human force.

5.2 MEANING AND DEFINITION OF SOCIAL CONTROL

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). According to E A Ross,” Social control refers to the **system of devices** whereby society brings its members into conformity with the accepted standards of behaviour”. According to G A Lungberg, “social control refers to those social behaviour which influence individuals and groups towards conformity to establish or decide norms”. According to Manheim, “ Social control is the sum of those methods by which a society tries to influence human behaviour to maintain a given order”.

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 individuals influence the responses of other individuals.

5.3 SOCIAL CONTROL, SELF-CONTROL, SOCIALIZATION, AND MALADJUSTMENT

Although social control and, self-control are closely related, yet they differ and can be clearly distinguished. While at the individual level, social control refers to attempts made to influence others according to the established social norms and standards, self-control refers to the individual's attempts to guide and regulate his own behaviour- obviously in the light of some previously established ideal, goal or purpose. Undoubtedly, the goal is determined by the values and folkways of the group of which the individual is a member. The two also differ in their approach. Self-control relates to the individual and, therefore, is individualistic in nature, while social control relates to the whole society and is institutional in nature. Social control and self-control should be treated as complimentary to each other and latter may be treated as a small part of the former because self-control is derived from and originates in social control.

Social control and socialization are closely interrelated. Social control plays a vital role in the socialization process and socialization helps in maintaining social control. In the process of socialization, individuals are motivated to behave in accordance with the social values, ideals and standards and they are prepared in such a way as to be ready to shoulder their responsibilities as per society's expectations. This process continues throughout the life. The socially undesirable human behaviour is discouraged and sometimes also punished. Thus the social control acts during the socialization process itself. Social control is an extension of the socialization process.

Socialization with the accompanying internalization of social norms and values provides an essential sources of social control. Sometimes, both social control and socialization use common techniques to regulate the human behaviour (appreciating and rewarding the socially desirable human behaviour and actions and condemning and punishing the undesirable human behaviour and actions are common to both).

Inspite of the similarities visible in social control and socialization, differences are not missing. Socialization relates to the persons who are made to learn the culture of the group and society. Social control is related to all persons, groups and entire social system, and thus its approach is wider than that of socialization. Primary groups play an important role in shaping the human personality while secondary

groups and state apparatus assume major responsibility in maintaining social control. Socialization is more concerned with the development of 'self' of the human beings while social control is directed to regulate the external behaviour of individuals, even if the individual is internally unwilling. In the process of socialization, a person himself informally and unconsciously learns many things which become a part and parcel of his personality but in the process of social control, persons are forced to behave in accordance with the formally and consciously described norms and values of society. Socialization is always in line with social and cultural values of a particular society but social control quite often may not be akin to the values of the established socio-cultural milieu. Though there is a marked commonality in many of the means and agencies of socialization and social control, yet the provisions for regulating the human conduct of non-followers may vary. In the socialization, maximum punishment for a person may be his social boycott but in the process of social control, a person of deviant behaviour may be given rigorous imprisonment or even may be hanged to death.

Social control and social maladjustment have been closely interrelated. Whenever the agencies of social control are unable to discharge their functions effectively, the behaviour of individuals and their groups change threatening the stability and continuity of the established social order. Since society is dynamic, changes do take place-sometimes planned and sometimes un-planned, as also sometimes these changes are noticed or remain unnoticed in the behaviour of the individuals and their groups.

Maladjustment indicates a condition or process which involves the inability or unwillingness of an individual or group to fall in line with prevailing psychological, social or cultural standards – either their own or those of an external system. Maladjustment of an individual, group or institution is not necessarily an absolute condition. While maladjustment may result in conflict or conditions that are destructive of the cherished feelings and values, it must be accepted that maladjustment is as constant a social phenomenon as adjustment is. Social and psychological life is a process of continual change. Adjustment is an illusory condition following a preceding spell of maladjustment or a threat of maladjustment.

Individuals' failure to cope with the existing social system leads them to maladjustment. Since pressure of societal norms and standards on various groups of society is not uniform, the possibility of individuals'/ groups' unequal response towards existing means of social control increases. Moreover, if the agencies of social control are too harsh in their use of control mechanisms or are supportive of the exploitative nature of the state, the chances of maladjustment in society are probably more. On the contrary, if the agencies of social control are soft towards individual/group behaviour and give reasonable and fair chance to mould their behaviour as per changing norms and standards of society, the chances of inverse relationship between social control and maladjustment are likely to be more perceptible.

5.4 PURPOSE OF SOCIAL CONTROL

Social control aims at bringing about conformity, solidarity and continuity of a particular group or society. Social control attempts to achieve the following purposes.

- To bring the behaviour of individuals and groups in tune with the established norms of society.
- To bring solidarity and uniformity in the social organizations.
- To establish stability in the social relations.
- To exercise control over social tensions and conflicts.
- To provide fair and equal chances for cooperation and competition to all individuals, groups and institutions to realise their goals.
- To facilitate appreciation and rewarding of champions of social cause and take punitive actions against anti-social elements.
- Bringing desired modifications in the social milieu, especially effecting required changes in the means and agencies of social control.
- Establishing primacy of social and humanitarian values over individualistic and separatist list ends.
- Providing for the protection and promotion of the interests of the weak and vulnerable sections of society.
- Forging alliance among the various groups and institutions of society.

5.5 NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL CONTROL

The progress of any society depends upon the effective functioning of its various groups, organizations and institutions, which is often jeopardized by the clash of interests of its members. Individuals as well as groups want to serve their interests without caring for others. The lack of opportunities for all aggravates the problem further and the dominant group members/ groups want to monopolize and maintain their hegemony over limited societal resources. Also, the various types of 'isms' prevailing in society hamper the smooth social system, and therefore, exercise of some sort of control on the part of society to limit the fissiparous and selfish tendencies of human beings become imperative. It will be difficult to maintain social equilibrium without proper adjustment among various social units and therefore, arises the need to control the deviant behaviour of people and promote the socially desirable actions of others. Social control helps us to achieve stability in the social organization, as individuals are not allowed to act contrary to the norms of society.

They are persuaded and motivated to behave in accordance with the established social norms and values. Consequently, the instability and uncertainty make room for the regularity and continuity in the society.

Social control is also necessary to maintain the healthy traditions of our society and to transfer them from one generation to another. Traditions are the safe custodians of our heritage and culture. Through social control people are motivated and compelled to follow the traditions.

The unity in group can only be maintained by the effective system of social control. The group members belong to different socio-cultural backgrounds and want to achieve different personal objectives. To keep all the members united by striving towards group goals is made feasible by social control which does not allow selfish interests of the individuals to come in the way of group goals.

Social control is also required to bring compatibility in thoughts, ideas, behaviour patterns, attitudes and perceptions of the individuals, because devoid of it, society cannot function effectively.

Cooperation is the key of all success. If society is to survive, the desired cooperation of all people is required. In case of lack of this cooperation, no unit or group can function. It is indeed the strength of the human groups. Social control helps us in achieving the cooperation of all.

Social control provides social security to the people. Human beings are so helpless and weak that their existence is not possible without the help of others. Social control keeps a check on the forces endangering the safety and security of the people and prepare them to face the realities of the world. Social control is badly needed to bring the selfish nature of man under control because normally, nobody feels happy being controlled, subordinated and directed by others. Everyone wants to control, exercise authority on the subordinates and direct as many persons as possible, but the fact of the matter is that society is a mix of persons who direct and those who are directed, those who guide and also those who are guided. In fact, social control, by keeping the 'free will' of people under a corrective restraint, facilitates the smooth functioning of society.

It is vividly clear that because of social control society comes into existence, social order is maintained and aspirations of the people are fulfilled.

Check Your Progress I

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) What do you understand by social control?

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2) What is the importance of social control?

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5.6 FORMS OF SOCIAL CONTROL

Every society exercises control over its members in order to maintain the social order. However, forms of social control are not uniform in all the societies due to inherent differences in their cultural background, in the nature of personal relations, social relations and social conditions. As members of society have different objectives, interests and ideology, regulations of their behaviour by one set of means of social control becomes almost impossible. We have urban as well as rural societies; closed and open societies; traditional and modern societies; societies following democratic as also the autocratic norms. Therefore, variations in the types of social control is but natural. Society keeps its grip over the members sometimes by rewarding and sometimes by punishing them, at times society uses its formal and organised means while at times it adopts informal and unorganised means to exercise its power. Based on the classification given by various authors, following forms of social control can be described.

i) Conscious and Unconscious Control

The American sociologists C.H. Cooley and L. L. Bernard have described the forms of social control as *conscious* and *unconscious*. The human behaviour can be mainly categorized as conscious and unconscious. The conscious behaviour of human beings refers to such acts and actions as are done deliberately and in a planned way e.g. a subordinate employee does not sit in the chair of his boss and also, while talking to his boss he remains alert and attentive. On the other hand, some human actions are done unconsciously and the person himself does not know why he is doing so because repeated behaviour pattern becomes a part and parcel of his personality, e.g. while putting on our clothes, we follow a certain pattern (eg. we put on our undergarments first and not after having put on upper garments). In short, in the situation where we behave cautiously and

deliberately, the system is termed as conscious social control, and in the situations we behave spontaneously and unconsciously, the system of control is termed as unconscious social control. In the first type, we can include the prevalent patterns of eating and taking water, untouchability, and marriage within the caste system. In the latter type, we can include the control which is exercised under the influence of traditions, *sanskars* and religious prescriptions.

ii) **Direct and Indirect Control**

Karl Mannheim has discussed the direct and indirect forms of social control. Whenever control on human behaviour is exercised by very close persons such as parents, friends, teachers, neighbours, etc. it is direct type of social control. Indirect social control refers to the control which is done by the social and physical environment, different groups and institutions. The impact of direct type of social control is more and durable while the impact of indirect type of social control is less and short lived.

iii) **Positive and Negative Social Control**

Kimball Young has described positive and negative forms of social control. Positive social control depends on the positive motivation of the individual to conform. Such type of control can be effected through promise of rewards ranging from tangible material benefits to the social approval. A more fundamental form of positive social control depends on the individuals' internalization of social norms, value and role expectations during the process of socialization. The individual's belief in social norms motivates him to conform. Appreciation letters given to the students teams on their success in the examination/games, conferment of gallantry awards to soldiers vigilantly engaged in guarding national boundaries against enemies from across the borders, kissing babies by parents for understanding their signals are, examples of positive social control.

In the process of negative forms of social control, deviant behaviour of individuals is discouraged and punished. Violation of societal rules and regulations often invites the wrath of law protecting agencies and infliction of punishment may range from simple threat to threat of life, imprisonment and fines. At times, negative social control is very useful as persons know that if they are caught, they will be surely punished for their wrong doings. Punishment, ridicule, criticism, excommunication, imprisonment, fine and capital sentence are the examples of negative social control.

iv) **Organised, Unorganised and Automatic Social Control**

Gurvitch and Moore have discussed the forms of social control as *organised*, *unorganised* and *automatic*. Under the process of organised social control human behaviour is influenced by a set of social agencies having clearly defined 'do's and don'ts' for individuals. Educational institutions, family, state, etc. exercise such type of social control. Unorganised social control influences the personality of human beings through the means of rites and rituals,

customs and traditions, folkways and mores, etc. In the automatic social control, individuals are themselves motivated to act in order to meet their felt needs. Persons themselves embrace control over their immediate and long-term needs based on their experiences, values, ideals, thinking and mores. Religious prescriptions are examples of such type of social control which are not imposed upon individuals but are willingly and automatically adopted by them. Such type of control is enduring.

v) **Autocratic and Democratic Social Control**

Lapierre has identified autocratic and democratic forms of social control. Whenever any administrative agency or the authority uses its force to attain the objectives other than those defined and recognized by society, autocratic form of social control comes into picture. Authorities often exploit the material and human resources to serve their vested interests and do not hesitate to indulge in inhuman acts. Military ruled states under despotic leadership are the living examples of autocratic social control wherein people's wishes are crushed. If the control is exercised by the agencies or authorities established by the people themselves and if their wishes are taken into consideration while framing rules and regulations, the democratic social control comes into effect. People are motivated to behave in accordance with the democratic norms. Persuasion, motivation, discussion, consultation and participation are the commonly used techniques in democratic social control as compared to autocratic social control wherein compulsion, intimidation, exploitation, threat and torture are the often used techniques.

vi) **Formal and Informal Social Control**

Some sociologists have categorized the forms of social control as *formal* and *informal*. In fact, the classification of social control-organized and unorganized as given by Gurvitch and Moore can be termed as formal and informal. The formal social control has the sanction of state whose authority is used to regulate the human behaviour. It adopts written and well defined set of rules and regulations, lays down a formal system of punishment for those who do not conform and establish the laws, police, jails and judicial institutions for the trial and punishment. Informal social control influenced by belief, customs, traditions, criticism, public opinion, religion etc. is exercised by society. In the primitive tribal and simple rural societies, informal social control has been more influential while in the modern and complex societies, formal social control is more effective and visible.

Check Your Progress II

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the
of this unit

1) Write in brief about formal and informal forms of social

control.

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5.7 MEANS OF SOCIAL CONTROL

Social control is exercised in a number of ways by the authorities concerned. The ways or methods used by the authorities to implement their rules and regulations are known as the means of social control. Customs, traditions, mores, folkways, ridicules, sarcasm, propaganda, public opinion, law, reward and punishment etc. are the means of social control by which society maintains the social order. An attempt is made here to describe some of the notable means of social control.

1) Belief

Beliefs approved by society play an important role in the control of human behaviour. To abide by social rules is a belief valued by the people because those who abide by the social rules get appreciation and reward while those who do not are punished. It is also believed that some supernatural force keeps an account of the good and bad deeds of human beings, and that soul is immortal and people get pleasure and pains according to their performance (*Karmas*) in the previous birth. That, people are rewarded and punished according to their actions in their present life, is also believed. Likewise, people also believe in heaven and hell. The persons doing good deeds are supposed to join heaven after their death and the persons doing bad deeds are believed to be dumped into the hell. People also undertake good actions as they believe their good actions will bring name and fame to their forefathers. Thus, belief is one of the potent means of social control.

2) Social Suggestions

Society regulates the behaviour of its members by giving many types of suggestions e.g., society publicizes the good deeds of great leaders and wishes its members to follow suit. The statues of great leaders are installed and people are told that they should internalize the values and life philosophy of the great leaders. People are also suggested that they should develop their personality in a healthy way. Social suggestions are also given through verbal means (words) as also through writings (articles and books). Since, people find *social suggestions* worthwhile, they take inspirations from these suggestions to regulate their behaviour.

3) Social Ideals

Social ideals regulate the conduct of human beings. The life stories of great leaders and the paths shown by them become ideal for us. The call given by Mahatma Gandhi, Jawahar Lal Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose aroused a feeling of patriotism in the hearts of the people of India. People accord a great value to social ideals. In fact a country like India inhabited by people who follow different religions, speak different languages have developed and followed the notion of 'unit in diversity' as an ideal.

4) Sanskars that are Ordained by Religion

In the Indian society, particularly Hindu Society, our life is a chain of a number of **sanskars**. Sanskars are the prescribed norms and regulations. And we have to go through many sanskars from womb to tomb. Sanskars motivate people to perform a work in a particular way having acceptance of the concerned society. Since people follow a set pattern of sanskars, it greatly helps to maintain social order. People willingly follow instructions of sanskars because they fear that if they violate, something unnatural and undesirable will happen. The Hindus in our society perform many sanskars relating to birth, family, marriage and death. In a similar fashion, a number of rites or **sanskars** also characterize the life patterns of other communities like Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, etc.

5) Art

Art relates to the feeling of individuals and by giving a direction to the feelings, art maintains social control. In art we can include sculpture, painting, drawing, weaving, architecture, pottery, dress designing, metal work, poetry, literature, music and dance etc. Art motivates people strongly to do socially desirable actions and avoid undesirable ones. National anthem and national song are supposed to be sung by every citizen. Cartoons and caricatures too convey a lot of meaning having everlasting effect. Art thus keeps our heritage alive and human civilization is vividly expressed through it. Human actions are, therefore, encouraged and discouraged through art.

6) Leader

Leaders are an effective means of social control. They help in various ways because through their experiences, understanding, conduct, intelligence and hard work, they can mould groups of people as per their desires and wishes. Leaders become role models for their followers. Our political leaders played an important role by directing the people to make sacrifices for attaining independence. Likewise, social and religious leaders help in maintaining social control by inspiring their followers to conform to social norms and to eradicate the social vices.

7) Humour and Ridicule

Humour and ridicule have been instrumental in maintaining social control from the very beginning of civilization. The humour and ridicule, control human behaviour both indirectly and collectively.

The persons are mocked at and ridiculed for their anti-social actions and appreciated for their socially desirable actions. People are much afraid of social scorn and ridicule. Therefore, they conform. (ex: Satire in theatre works)

8) Fashion

Fashion is an expression of the internal and external desire of the human beings at a particular point of time. Fashion gives an identity to the citizens of a country. It brings freshness and smartness to the people. People get fed up with a particular mode of self- presentation and want to look different and new. Fashion thus helps to maintain social control by changing the old patterns and bringing in the new ones. By representing the emergent human desires, it smoothens the process of social change.

9) Ahimsa

Ahimsa (non-violence) means an attitude of not hurting anybody either by words or deeds even if the person troubles you or is your enemy. This is indeed a negative meaning. Ahimsa positively means affection, kindness, generosity, self sacrifice and simplicity. The father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi, propounded and experimented with the principle of Ahimsa. He says that the person who kill others with sword is undoubtedly brave but one who faces such attack is braver still, especially when he displays no fear of death even in the face of gravest danger. Thus, one who shows love to everyone, wins wickedness by goodness, is courteous to all beings, does not bow his head before cruelty, follows the principles of Ahimsa. It is in this manner that even the attitude or value of Ahimsa acts as a potent mechanism of social control.

10) Language

Language gives medium and meaning to the feelings of people. It is because of language that human beings have advanced on the path of progress. Language keeps a watch on human behaviour. The laws, customs, traditions etc. are all expressed through language. Language helps in social control by socializing individuals, transferring culture, enabling person's adjustment to the society, bringing emotional integration, self controlling and disseminating ideas that express social values, norms and standards.

11) Punishment and Reward

Punishment aims to reform behaviour of individuals for their well-being. Socially unaccepted human actions are discouraged and punished so that persons may not repeat them. Individuals are sometimes punished for not bringing desired improvements in themselves. The severity of punishment depends upon the nature of crime.

Rewards are given to those who imbibe societal norms and values. To desire appreciation and patting for one's good and exemplary

work is human nature. Rewards thus act as effective motivator and inspire the persons to put in their mite in the attainment of societal goals. It also works as a tonic for those who fear to initiate any work just because of the fear of failure. Rewards can be given in many ways starting just from the words of appreciation to cash and conferment of medals and honours.

Thus punishment and reward are important means of social control.

12) Folkways

Folkways play an important role in social control. These are developed by their repeated use. Folkways are indicative of social norms or standards of behaviour that are socially approved but not considered necessarily of moral significance. Folkways provide traditional definitions of proper ways of behaving in a particular society or group. Individuals conform to folkways automatically without rational analysis. They are based primarily upon customs, passed on from generation to generation through the socialization of children. Folkways are not enforced by law but form part and parcel of informal social control. Since the people in society follow them, the children also follow. Thus, folkways help as a means of social control.

13) Mores

When a feeling of group's well-being is attached to folkways, they take the form of mores. Mores refer to those social norms that provide the moral standard of behaviour of a group or society. Conformity to mores is not optional and non-conformity is severely sanctioned. Group members feel an emotional attachment to the mores and their safe preservation is thought to be essential to the group's welfare. In common parlance, the term is confined to those standards of behaviour that depend upon informal sanctions and have not been enacted into law. Mores may be categorized as positive and negative. Under the category of positive mores, people are instructed to follow certain things; for example, "always speak truth, take pity on poor, be honest to the core, obey your parents and teachers, etc." Negative mores check us from doing certain things—e.g. "don't commit theft, don't tell a lie, don't hurt anybody, etc". Mores are the means of informal and unorganized form of social control. Individual cannot dare not to abide by mores as they feel that their group's welfare will be in peril. Mores are more influential and powerful to the formally laid down rules and regulations.

14) Propaganda

Today, propaganda is one of the important and effective means of social control. It controls human beings by providing them useful information about good and bad and helps organisation/institution to get feedback from the social groups. Propaganda is a conscious, systematic and organized effort designated deliberately to manipulate or influence the actions, decisions, thinking patterns or beliefs of the people in a specified direction on an important issue. Generally,

propaganda is thought to be an exercise in manipulating public opinion by presenting false or rosy pictures, trying to hide the underlying facts. Newspapers, magazines, literature, radio, television, cinema, exhibitions, fairs, meetings, fairs, festivals, etc. are the important devices of propaganda. Propaganda can also serve a positive social purpose. For example, by propaganda, we have successfully made the masses aware of the prevalent social evils and contemporary issues. The messages of great leaders are also conveyed to the masses by propaganda. Information about the schemes and projects started by government also reaches the people through propaganda. Human behaviour to a large extent is controlled and regulated by effective use of propaganda.

15) Customs

Custom is a folkway having been in practice for a long time, transferred from one generation to other and well established in human societies. Customs become the habit of people and they spontaneously follow them. Psychologically, customs influence the minds of the people and they unhesitatingly follow them. Customs are often seen as ideal and essential; people perceive a sense of inherent goodness in them and feel morally bound to follow them. Customs constitute a set pattern of group behaviour, practised by a large number of people. Customs are a powerful means of social control. In the informal, unorganised and simple human societies, they have a great bearing on human conduct and behaviour. Anthropologists often give expression to this fact by saying that in simple societies 'custom is the king'.

16) Public Opinion

Public opinion means a conclusion or judgement of the people about a particular event, object or situation. It is a specific manifestation of the people's attitude towards a particular problem. Public opinion can be termed as the most important means of social control. Public opinion has always been a prime concern for the policy makers in all the systems of governance. In fact, the success or failure of any scheme or plan largely depends upon the favorable/ unfavorable public opinion. However, it may be borne in mind that public opinion is not always rational; sometimes it finds expression in opposition to the legal or constitutionally laid down provisions. It may also be mentioned that it is not a conclusive decision of all the people or majority of the people or a single person. But even then, it is important because it affects the collective interests of the group in questions. The press, radio, television, newspapers, magazines, leaders, political parties, religious and educational institutions all play a decisive role in the formation of public opinion. Public opinion by making the wishes of the people known to the policy makers facilitates effective policy making, leading to larger public happiness.

17) Religion and Morality

Religion and morality are closely associated having bearing upon

each other. Religion is a universal and pervasive institution in human society. It is a system of beliefs, emotional attitudes, philosophical values and practices, by means of which a group of people attempts to cope with ultimate problems of human life. Religion is viewed as essentially an institutionalized or traditionally believed path to salvation. All human beings in all societies, at one point of time or the other, must face certain life problems, alone and all by himself, despite all efforts from others to help. Religion is a social phenomenon as well as a psychological one, because it underlines fellowship in the development, teaching and perpetuation of certain religious beliefs, insights and knowledge. It is concerned with the common plight of people at all times, regardless of age, sex, or status within a society. The concept of supernatural or a way to salvation binds men to follow the dictates of limited contemporary social values and social groups. Religion not only relates men to men but also relates men to heaven. Religion includes the gods and goddesses, evil spirits, soul, *pap* (evil deeds) and *punya* (good deeds), heaven and hell, etc. All these concepts are greatly valued by the people and they think that their due attention to religious prescriptions will protect their lives and property. People abide by the religious norms because they are afraid that their wrong doings or violation of religious instructions may land them into hell. The practice and form of religion may vary from society to society but generally speaking, human beings are not in a position to disobey some of the basic dictates of the respective religious systems in which they are located. This is also so because, as believed by the people, salvation from the woes of life is possible only by practising some of the basic religious tenets.

Morality also controls human behaviour by directing their actions on appropriate lines. Morality involves the feeling of just and unjust. It is more akin to human psyche. It is considered that a decision based on the voice from within is always right.

Religion and morality both control human behaviour. Both prescribe 'dos' and don'ts and make people conscious about duties and rights. Both inspire human beings for making efforts to attain ultimate goal and thus contribute to the social control.

18) Law

Law is a formal and systematic means of social control. A law is a general rule of external action enforced by a sovereign authority. It refers to the rules regulating human behaviour. Law is broadly categorised into moral and political laws. If the rules of law relate to motives and the internal acts of the will, they are termed as moral laws. On the other hand, if they relate to external conduct, they are known as social or political rules or laws. Law in its very nature is binding. Laws are backed by the state power and, therefore, individuals and their groups have no option but to abide by them. Even if persons do not repose faith in them or even if the laws are entirely opposed to their interests, they have to follow them. And those who do not, are punished by the laws of the state. Since laws are made keeping in view the welfare of larger sections of the

society, they are liked by the people. Law functions positively as well as negatively. When people are asked to do certain acts within the purview of law and for doing so they are rewarded, honoured, decorated with medals, given status and prestige, it is the positive function and control of law which comes in play. However, when people are asked not to do certain acts, but they still continue to engage in those acts they are punished- jailed, fined and even hanged. This is a negative function of law. But, whether law performs a positive or negative function, it continues to act as an important means of social control because it checks people from behaving against the interests of some people in particular, and society in general.

5.8 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 characterized 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 function 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 person is dead. 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 generation - a 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 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-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.

Besides these public opinion, propaganda, coercion, customs, folkways and mores, religion, morality and sanctions also are agents of social control.

Check Your Progress III

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) List your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) List out the major means of social control.

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5.9 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have given the meaning and definition of social control. The purposes of social control have also been pointed out. Social control viz-a-viz self control, socialization and maladjustment has also been examined. The need and importance of social control i.e. why social control is required have also been discussed. Various forms of social control-conscious and unconscious; direct and indirect; positive and negative; organized, unorganized and automatic; autocratic and democratic; formal and informal have also been described. Lastly, various means and agencies through which social control is exercised and maintained have also been dealt within this Unit.

5.10 KEY WORKKDS

- Social order** : A condition/situation of a society/group characterized by the predominance of harmonious social relationships
- Conformity** : Behaviour that is in accord with the expectations of a social group. It reflects compliance to the rules or social norms and is expressed in responses that are prescribed by group customs or norms.
- Human Behaviour** : Any response or reaction of an individual i.e. anything an

individual does, says, thinks or feels.

5.11 SUGGESTED READINGS

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5.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

- 1) 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 being are persuaded and motivated to behave in accordance with the traditions, patterns and value framework necessary for the smooth functioning of a group or society.
- 2) First of all, social control maintains social equilibrium without which proper adjustment among various social units is not possible. Second, there is a need to control the deviant behaviour of the people on the one hand, and promote the socially desirable actions on the others. Thirdly, social control helps us to achieve the stability in the social organization as individuals are not allowed to

act contrary to the norms of the social system. Fourthly, social control is also necessary to maintain the healthy traditions of our society and to them from one generation to another. Fifthly, unity in group members belonging to different socio-cultural background can only be maintained by the effective system of social control.

Check Your Progress II

- 1) The formal social control has the sanction of state and state authority is used to regulate the human behaviour. It adopts written and well defined set of rules and regulations, lays down a formal system of punishment for those who do not conform. The state also, establishes the laws down a formal system of punishment for those who do not conform. The state also, establishes the laws, police, jails and judicial institutions for the trial and punishment. Informal social control influenced by belief, customs, traditions, criticism, public opinion, religion etc., is exercised by the society. In the primitive tribal and simple rural societies, informal social control has been more influential while in the modern and complex societies, formal social control is more effective and visible.

Check Your Progress III

- 1) Social control is exercised in a number of ways by authorities concerned. Some of these are: belief, social suggestions, social ideals, art, leader, humour and ridicule, fashion, language, punishment, rewards folkways mores, propaganda, custom, public opinion, religion and morality, law.