UG SO S1 01
(DSC/DSE)

FOUR YEAR BACHELOR'S DEGREE COURSE

(CBCS in Accordance with NEP 2020)

SEMESTER- I

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

SOCIOLOGY



Surya Kumar Bhuyan School of Social Sciences

KRISHNA KANTA HANDIQUI STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY

Subject Experts

Professor Jyoti Prasad Saikia, Dibrugarh University.
Dr. Nirmali Goswami, Tezpur Central University.

Course Co-ordinator :

Dola Borkataki, KKHSOU
Wasim Rahman Saikia,KKHSOU

SLM Preparation Team

UNITS	CONTRIBUTORS
1 , 3	Santana Dutta, Jhanji Hemnath Sharmah College
2 ,14	Dola Borkataki, KKHSOU
4, 5,9,12,13	Dr. Shabina Yasmin Saikia; Gauhati University
6, 7	Dr. Upala Barua, Cotton College
8	Gargi Gyan,KKHSOU
10,11	Annanya Gogoi,Dibrugarh University

Editorial Team

Content : Dr. Sumesh, S.S, Tezpur University
Dr. Nirmali Goswami, Tezpur University

Language : Professor Robin Goswami, Cotton College (Retd.)
Dr. Abhigyan Prasad, B.Barooah College, Guwahati

Structure, Format & Graphics : Dola Borkataki, KKHSOU

July, 2023

This Self Learning Material (SLM) of the Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University is made available under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-Share Alike 4.0 License (international):

http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

Printed and published by Registrar on behalf of the Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University.

The University acknowledges with thanks the financial support provided by the **Distance Education Bureau**, **UGC** for the preparation of this study material.

COURSE INTRODUCTION

The course 'Introduction to Sociology' tries to introduce the discipline of Sociology to the learners It intends to familiarize the learners with some of the basic concepts and areas of interest in Sociology.

The course comprises of 14 units. **Unit 1** describes the origin of sociology and also explains the meaning, nature and scope of sociology. **Unit 2** discusses the relationship and difference between Sociology and other social sciences like Anthropology, History, Economics, Political Science, and Social Psychology. **Unit 3** discusses the meaning and characteristics of the concepts like society, community, institution and association. **Unit 4** discusses concepts like status, role, social norms, values, folkways, customs, mores and social sanction. **Unit 5** explains the meaning, types and characteristics of culture and civilization. **Unit 6** discuses the meaning and types of social groups like primary group, secondary group, reference group, in group and out group. **Unit 7** explains the meaning, characteristics types and functions of three important institutions of society namely: marriage, family and kinship. **Unit 8** explains the meaning of social structure, social system and social organization. **Unit 9** explains the meaning, forms, stages and the agencies of socialization process. **Unit 10** discuses the meaning, characteristics and function of the concept called social stratification. **Unit 11** tries to discuss about some of the basis of stratification in society like race, caste, class, estate and gender. **Unit 12** discusses the meaning, characteristics, process and nature of social change. **Unit 13** explains the meaning of social control and also describes different types of social control like norms, values and sanctions. **Unit 14** explains the meaning of social mobility. It further describes the different types of social mobility and also discusses the factors which affect social mobility.

CONTENTS

Pages

Unit 1: Sociology- Origin, Nature and Scope of Sociology **7-20**

Meaning of Sociology; Origin and Development of Sociology; Nature and Scope of Sociology, Methods in Sociology, Subject Matter and Scope, Sociological Perspective.

Unit 2: Sociology and other Social Sciences: **21-32**

Relation between Sociology and History; Sociology and Political Science; Sociology and Economics; Sociology and Anthropology; Sociology and Social Psychology.

Unit 3: Basic Concepts in Sociology I: **33- 48**

Meaning and Definition of Society; Characteristics of Society, Differences between Human Society and Non-Human Society, Concept of Community; Meaning and Definition, Elements of Community, Difference between Society and Community, Concept of Institution; Meaning and Definition, Characteristics and Types of Institution, Concept of Association, Meaning, Definition and Characteristics.

Unit 4: Basic Concepts in Sociology II: **49-60**

Norms:Meaning, Definition, Characteristics and Types, Relation between Norms and Values, Social Sanction, Status:Meaning, Definition, Types, Role: Meaning, Definition, and Rewards and Punishments associated with Role and Satus.

Unit 5: Culture **61-74**

Concept of Culture, Nature of Culture, types of Culture, Culture and Personality, Culture and Civilisation.

Unit 6: Social Groups: **75- 88**

Meaning; Characteristics, Differences of Social Group with Aggregate and Category,Types- Primary and Secondary Group; Difference between Primary and Secondary Group, In group; Out group; Reference Group; Voulntary and Involuntary Group, Quasi Group.

Unit7: Marriage, Family and Kinship: **89 - 104**

Meaning; Types; Characteristics and Functions of Family, Marraige: Meaning, Characteristics, Functions and Forms, Kinship: Meaning, Degree of Kinship, Kinship System.

Pages

Unit 8: Social Structure; Social System; Social Organisation: **105 - 118**

Concept : Meaning and Definition, Elements of Social Structure, Meaning and Definition of Social System : Talcott Parsons Analysis of Social System, Features of Social System, Social Organisation: Features, Types, Characteristics of Formal and Informal Organisation

Unit 9: Socialisation: **119 - 132**

· Meaning and Definition of Socialisation, Aims and Objectives of Socialisation, Forms of Socialisation: Process of Socialisation; Importance of Socialisation; Agencies of Socialisation.

Unit 10: Social Stratification: Conceptual Discussion: **133 - 145**

· Meaning and Concept of Social Stratification; Characteristics and Functions of Social Stratification, Social Stratification and Social Inequality; Hierarchy and Difference.

Unit 11: Bases of Social Stratification: **146-164**

Race, Race and Racism, Colonialism and Racism, Continuity of Racism; Caste : Varna and Jati, Ritual and Secular dimension of Caste; Class : Theories on Class, Types of Classes, Classes in Agrarian Society and Industrial Society; Estate : Hierarch In estate, Sociological Interpretation Of Estate; Gender : Feminism, Gender and Stratification, Sexism and Work.

Unit 12: Social Change: **165-180**

Concept of Social Change; Characteristics, Process and Types; Forms of Social Change: Evolution, Progress and Development; Factors of Social Change.

Unit 13: Social Control: **181-190**

Meaning and Definition of Social Control; Norms, Values, Sanctions and Mechanisms

Unit 14: Social Mobility: **191-205**

Meaning and Definition; Types of Social Mobility, Open and Closed Systems of Mobility, Difference between Open and Closed System, Factors affecting Mobility

UNIT 1: ORIGIN, NATURE AND SCOPE OF SOCIOLOGY

UNIT STRUCTURE:

1.1 Learning Objectives

1.2 Introduction

1.3 Meaning of Sociology

1.4 Origin and Development of Sociology

1.5 Nature of Sociology

1.5.1 Methods in Sociology

1.6 Subject matter and Scope of Sociology

1.7 The Sociological Perspective

1.8 Let Us Sum Up

1.9 Further Reading

1.10 Answers to Check your progress

1.11 Model Questions

1.1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to -

- understand how sociology emerged as a discipline
- explain the nature of sociology
- identify the different methods in sociology
- discuss the subject matter and scope of sociology.

1.2. INTRODUCTION

Centuries ago Aristotle said, '*Man is a social animal*'. Human Being is born in society and bred up in society, nourished and nurtured in Society. Society makes our life liveable. Since the dawn of civilization, **society** has been a subject for speculation and inquiry. Social phenomena have continued to awe the restless and inquisitive mind of man. Much later it was St. Simon who started the scientific study of society. After him, Auguste Comte

carried his legacy and coined the term **sociology** for a new science of studying society. In this unit, we will discuss the meaning, origin and subject matter of Sociology as a discipline.

1.3. MEANING OF SOCIOLOGY

For thousands of years, men have reflected upon societies in which they live. In the writings of philosophers, thinkers, law givers of various countries and of various epochs we find ideas regarding society. In the writings of Plato, Aristotle, Manu, Confucius and others, we find major attempts to deal systematically with the nature of society. However, it was only in the 19th century that scientific attempts were made by Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber and others to study society and to establish an academic discipline, namely Sociology.

Sociology is one of the youngest members in the family of social sciences. As a young discipline in social science, it has acquired a distinct status for itself. Its importance and practical usefulness are widely recognized today. Auguste Comte, the French Philosopher, is regarded as the **Father of Sociology**. Comte coined the term **Sociology** in 1839. He was the first person to distinguish the subject-matter of Sociology from all the other sciences. The main idea of Sociology is to study human society. Its emphasis is on the social aspect of human relationships. The purpose of sociological study is not, however, simply to describe social relationships, but also to analyze them. Sociology has been defined in a number of ways by different sociologists. A few of such definitions may be cited here. Sociology is the -

- Science of Social System. (Auguste Comte)
- Science of Social Institutions. (Emile Durkheim)
- Science which attempts the interpretative understanding of social action. (Max Weber)
- Science that deals with social groups. (H.M. Johnson)
- Study of human interactions and inter relations, their conditions and consequences. (Morris Ginsberg)

From the above definitions, we may conclude that the common idea underlying all of them is that sociology is concerned with man, his social relations and his society.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1. Fill in the blanks:

a) The term sociology was coined in the year .....

b) Sociology is a science which attempts at the ..... understanding of social action.

1.4 ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Sociology came to be established as an independent and a separate social science in the middle of the 19th century. Various factors paved the way for its emergence. There are three main factors that hastened the process of the establishment of sociology as a separate science. They are briefly mentioned below -

- Industrial Revolution of England and the Social and the Political revolution of France
- Inspiration from the growth of Natural Sciences.
- Inspiration provided by the radically diverse societies and cultures of the colonial empires.

During the second half of the 18th century, some far reaching changes had occurred in Western Europe. These changes agitated the minds of some people and made them very conscious of what had happened around them. To begin with, the Industrial Revolution which emerged in England during the late 18th century was one such event of tremendous social significance. Never before in history did social changes take place on such a massive scale. Industrial Revolution not only revolutionized the method of production, but also brought about far reaching social changes. The simple rural life and small-scale home industries were replaced by complex urban life and mass production of goods. Industrialization changed the

direction of civilization. Social problems became rampant in the fast developing cities. All of a sudden, the people were brought face to face with problems, which they or their forefathers had never experienced before. These challenges stirred deeply the minds of men. And they began to ponder over the ways of combating social evils which emerged as an off-shot of Industrial Revolution. Social thinkers like Comte, Spencer and others argued that there was an urgent need to establish a separate science of society. They believed that such a science would be of great help in understanding the nature and problems of society and to find solutions for the same.

19th century was a period in which natural sciences had made great progress. The success attained by the natural scientists inspired and even tempted a good number of social thinkers to emulate them. A question arose in the mind of people that if the methods used by natural science could be successful in the physical world to understand physical or natural phenomena, could they not be applied successfully to the social world to understand social phenomena. As an answer to this question, Comte and others successfully demonstrated that these (scientific) methods could be used to study the social world also. Along with these, the colonial powers of Europe were exposed to different types of societies and cultures in the colonial empires. Their exposure to such diversities in societies and cultures provided an intellectual challenge for the social scientist of the day. So, the conditions which gave rise to sociology as an independent discipline were both intellectual and social.

LET US KNOW



Auguste Comte (Isidore Auguste Marie Francois Xavier Comte – 1798-1857) introduced the word 'Sociology' for the first time in his famous work *'Positive Philosophy'* in about 1839. The term **Sociology** is derived from the Latin word **Socius**, meaning companion or associate, and the Greek word **Logos** meaning study or science. Thus, the etymological meaning of sociology is the science of society.

1.5 NATURE OF SOCIOLOGY

Sociology is scientific in nature. In other words, sociology tries to make a scientific study regarding the *social actions* or the *social events.* This statement might have raised a question that what is a scientific study.

When one tries to understand a phenomenon systematically and logically then it can be called a scientific study. In other words, scientific study must be based on facts and the subjective feelings of a researcher must not influence the study. Secondly, the study must employ appropriate methods to unravel facts and analyse them for logical conclusions. Such conclusions or generalisations must be empirically verifiable, reliable and valid with respect to the phenomena under investigation.

Now, since sociology deals with human beings and the values that people in societies hold, the methods used in sociology is slightly different from methods used by natural sciences. The subject matter of natural sciences, for example that of Physics or Chemistry, is non-living particles. These particles do not have any consciousness of their own. However as already mentioned, the subject matter of sociology is human being who has a consciousness of his/her own and tends to behave differently when he/she comes to know that his/her behaviour is being observed. Moreover, human beings cannot be studied in a laboratory and to understand their real nature, sociologists have to study them in a natural setting. But one thing is common about all the sciences (including sociology) that observation must be done in a scientific way. This means an observer must be able to note down accurately whatever he or she is observing. Thus, a sociologist must be able to keep away his/her pre-conceived notions while researching. For example a researcher might have some earlier notion about a particular society which he or she is trying to study, but while studying, he or she must note whatever he/she has observed and not what he/she 'feels' about that society.

1.6.1 Methods in Sociology

In order to unravel truth regarding social world, sociologists employ different methods. Some of those methods are discussed briefly:

- **Survey method**: This method involves systematic collection of facts regarding a group of people residing in a particular geographical, cultural or administrative area, for example census survey. Social surveys are usually conducted to elicit social facts regarding different aspects (attitudes, opinions or behaviour pattern) of a particular society. This method usually covers a wider area. Therefore, a researcher generally makes use of a questionnaire to elicit data which is relevant for his/her study. A questionnaire consists of a set of questions which are relevant for a researcher's study. A questionnaire is sent to the respondents either through mail or is given directly by hand. The respondents are supposed to answer the questions and send it back. By analysing the responses, the research comes to a conclusion.
- **Historical method**: This method assumes that the contemporary social condition of a particular society has its roots in its past social life. Therefore, a researcher begins to study the events, processes and institutions which a particular society had earlier. For example : Karl Marx analysed the problems in modern capitalist society by analysing the earlier stages of a modern society.
- **Comparative method**: In this type of research, a researcher tries to compare different societies or different groups within the same societies to understand man's social behaviour in different contexts. For example : Max Weber compared eastern religions with western religions in order to understand why capitalism emerged in western societies.
- **Case study method**: In this method a particular phenomenon is analysed through intensive analysis of an individual, group or community. This method involves study of every minute detail of the unit (individual, group or community) under study.

- **Statistical method:** This method tries to understand a social phenomenon by the use of mathematical calculations. Studies involving migration, standard of living, divorce, marriage, crime, suicide, etc. extensively make use of this method.
- **Content analysis**: In this method, the researcher tries to understand a particular phenomenon by analysing a text available in the published works including newspapers and magazines. For example : if a researcher tries to study how the mainstream media represents north-east India, then a researcher may start looking for the number of times the national dailies have reported about the events in the north east. A researcher may also start analysing the words which came to be associated with the region. If more positive words are used then it would indicate a positive representation of the north east. But if negative words are used more, then it would indicate a negative representation of the region.
- **Ethnography:** This method tries to describe the social life of a particular group rather than explaining it. In other words, a researcher tries to note what the people whom he/she is trying to study understands about their social world and the meanings that they attach to their practices in daily life.

1.6 SUBJECT MATTER AND SCOPE OF SOCIOLOGY

Ever since the beginning of Sociology, Sociologists have shown a great concern in man and in the dynamics of Society. Therefore, the subject matter of sociology, which it covers to study, became very wide. Here, a general outline of the subject matter of sociology is given :

The major concern of sociology is sociological analysis. It means that sociologists seeks to provide an analysis of human society and culture with a sociological perspective.

Sociology has given sufficient attention to the study of primary units of social life. In this area, it is concerned with social acts and social

relationships, groups of all varieties, communities (urban, rural and tribal), associations, organizations and populations.

- Sociology has been concerned with the development, structure and function of a wide variety of basic social institutions such as the family and kinship, religion economy, polity, legal and educational institutions.
- The social processes such as co-operation, competition, accommodation and assimilation, social conflict, social change, social differentiation and stratification, socialization, social control and deviance assume prominence in sociological studies.
- Sociology has placed high premium on the method of research also. Sociology has tended to become more and more rational and empirical rather than philosophical and idealistic.
- Sociologists are concerned with the task of "formulating concepts, propositions and theories."
- In the present era of explosion of knowledge, sociologists have ventured to make specializations also. Thus, today a good number of specialized fields of inquiry are emerging out. Sociology of knowledge, sociology of history, sociology of medicine, sociology of culture, sociology of religion, sociology of education etc., represent such specialized fields.

The field of sociological inquiry is so vast that any student of sociology equipped with intellectual ingenuity and rich sociological imagination can add new dimensions to the discipline of sociology as a whole.

There are two schools of thought with different viewpoints regarding scope and subject matter of sociology- **formal school** and **synthetic school**. According to the formal school, sociology was conceived to be a social science with a specifically defined field. This school had George Simmel, Ferdinand Tonnies, Alfred Vierkandt and Leopord Von Wiese as its main advocates. On the other hand, the synthetic school with Emile Durkheim,L.T Hobhouse and Pitirim Sorokin advocated a synthesis in the form of coordination among all social sciences.

- **Formal School of Sociology:** The formal school of Sociology argued

in favour of giving sociology a definite subject matter to make it a distinct discipline. It emphasized, the study of forms of social relationships and regarded sociology as an independent discipline. According to Simmel, sociology is a specific social science which describes, classifies, analyses and delineates the forms of social relationships or, in other words, social interactions should be classified into various forms or types and analysed. Simmel argued that social interactions have various forms. He carried out studies of such formal relationships as cooperation, competition, sub and super- ordinate relationships and so forth. Vierkandt maintained that sociology should be concerned with the ultimate forms of mental or psychic relationship which knit the people together in a society. According to Max Weber, the aim of sociology is to interpret or understand social behaviour. But social behaviour does not cover the whole field of human relations. Indeed, not all human interactions are social. Sociology is concerned with the analysis and classification of types of social relationships.

- **Synthetic School of Sociology:** The Synthetic school of Sociology wanted sociology to be a synthesis of the social sciences and thus, wanted to widen its scope. According to Durkheim, sociology has three principal divisions, namely-*Social morphology*, *Social Physiology* and *General Sociology*. Social morphology is concerned with the geographical or territorial basis of the life of the people such as population, its size, density and distribution etc. Social physiology deals with the genesis and nature of various social institutions, namely religion, morals, law and economic institutions etc. In general sociology, the main aim is to formulate general social laws. Hobhouse perceived sociology as a science which has the whole social life of man as its sphere. Its relations with the other social sciences are considered to be one of mutual exchange and mutual stimulation. Karl Mannheim divides sociology into two main sections-*Systematic and General sociology* and *Historical Sociology*. Systematic sociology describes one by one the main factors of living

together as far as they may be found in every kind of society. Historical sociology deals with the historical variety and actuality of the general forms of society. Ginsberg has summed up the chief functions of sociology as it seeks to provide a classification of types and forms of social relationships especially of those, which have come to be defined as institutions and associations. It tries to determine the relation between different parts of the factors of social life; for example, the economic and political, the moral and the legal, the intellectual and the social elements. It endeavours to disentangle the fundamental conditions of social change and persistence and to discover sociological principles governing social life.

From the above discussion, we may conclude that the subject matter of sociology is social life as a whole and it deals with the more general principles underlying all social phenomena. Thus, the scope of sociology is very wide. It is a general science but it is also a special science.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

Q2: Where did the industrial revolution begin?

.....

Q3: Name some of the advocates of the synthetic school.

.....

.....

1.7 THE SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Sociology provides unique perspectives regarding the world around us. Sociological perspective is a way of looking at events, forms, and processes through the trained eyes of a scientist. The sociological perspective enables us to look critically at commonly held assumptions about ourselves and our society. It also tells us that we are all products of our culture. The major goal of sociological perspective is to identify and interpret the patterns underlying the recurrent regular aspects of social life and also to investigate the influences on social behaviour.

Now, we will attempt to highlight the main focus of sociological perspective in brief as given below -

- Sociology is a scientific endeavour with a strong humanistic bent. The old notion that whether sociology is scientific or humanistic has been replaced by the modern view that it is both scientific and humanistic. As a scientific discipline, it aims at value- free and objective causal analysis of social phenomena.
- Sociology views society or social relations as structured, constituting a reality that transcends individuals. Like psychology, sociology is not interested in behaviour of an individual but in the patterns of behaviour or behaviour of groups of persons. Sociology is concerned with how the structure of society is created, maintained and changed.
- Sociology tries to investigate the processes through which society shapes the individual and how in turn individuals create the structure of society.
- Sociology studies social phenomena from both holistic and relational points of view. These perspectives enable sociologists to identify the underlying recurrent patterns of and influences on social behaviour.
- Sociology studies human behaviour in group context. For a sociologist, man/woman and his/her particular act or activity is nor important, but his/her status and role in which the activity is performed is important.
- Sociological perspective is neither utopian nor fatalistic but scientific. But at times, it sometimes goes beyond the questions of what, how, why and where and assumes the role of an applied science. Thus, sociological perspective is both neutralistic and interventionistic. Early sociologists were positivists; they emphasized its neutralistic character, but modern sociologists argue that sociologists should adopt the role of an interventionist along with his traditional role of a scientist.
- Sociological perspective involves the investigation of the problem on both micro and macro levels. At micro level, sociology studies how individuals behave in social situations – at work, at play, at home, or in school, or in small and large groups. It deals with people's

everyday interactions. At macro level, sociology focuses on patterns of behaviour and forms of organization that characterize entire societies. At this level, sociology deals with large-scale structures, broad social categories, institutions, social systems and social problems such as war, unemployment, poverty, corruption and solutions to these problems are sought at the structural or organizational level.



1.8 LETS US SUM UP

- **Society** has been a subject for speculation and inquiry.
- During 1839, August Comte coined the term sociology for a discipline which would study society scientifically.
- Sociology is a science which attempts the interpretative understanding of social action.
- There are three main factors that hastened the process of the establishment of sociology as a separate science.
  - Industrial Revolution of England and the Social and the Political revolution of French.
  - Inspiration from the growth of Natural Sciences.
  - Inspiration provided by the radically diverse societies and cultures of the colonial empires.
- Sociology is scientific in nature.
- Survey method involves systematic collection of facts regarding a group of people residing in a particular geographical, cultural or administrative area.
- In historical method, a researcher begins to study the events, processes and institutions a society had earlier.
- In comparative method, a researcher tries to compare different societies or different groups within the same societies to understand man's social behaviour.
- In Case study method, a particular phenomenon is analysed through intensive analysis of an individual, group or community.
- Statistical method tries to understand a social phenomenon by the use of mathematical calculations.

- In content analysis, a researcher tries to understand a particular phenomenon by analysing newspapers and magazines
- All the aspects of a society- economic, political, and social -form the subject matter of sociology.
- There are two schools of thought with different viewpoints regarding scope and subject matter of sociology- **formal school** and **synthetic school**.
- According to formal school, sociology was conceived to be a social science with a specifically defined field.
- According to the formal school, not all human interactions are social. Sociology is concerned with the analysis and classification of types of social relationships.
- The formal school had George Simmel, Ferdinand Tonnies, Alfred Vierkandt and Leopord Von Wiese as its main advocates.
- The synthetic school with Durkheim, Hobhouse and Sorokin advocated a synthesis in the form of coordination among all social sciences.
- According to the synthetic school, sociology is a science which has the whole social life of man as its sphere.
- The relation of sociology with the other social sciences is considered to be one of mutual exchange and mutual stimulation.
- Sociology views society or social relations as structured, constituting a reality that transcends individuals.
- Sociology is concerned with how the structure of society is created, maintained and changed.
- Sociology studies social phenomena from both holistic and relational points of view.
- Sociology studies human behaviour in group context.
- Sociological perspective is neither utopian, nor fatalistic, but scientific.
- Sociological perspective involves the investigation of the problem on both micro and macro levels.



1.9 FURTHER READING

1) Earl Babbie, (2004). *The practice of Social Research.* Wadsworth Publication, U.S.A.

2) H.M. Johnson, (1960). *Sociology, A Systematic Introduction*, Allied publication, New Delhi

3) R.M MacIver and C.H Page, (1965). *Society: An Introductory Analysis*, Macmillan India Ltd, New Delhi

4) H.K. Rawat, (2007). *Sociology: Basic Concepts*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur



1.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q1 : **(a)** The term sociology was coined in the year 183

(b) Sociology is a science which attempts the interpretative understanding of social action.

Ans to Q2 : Industrial revolution emerged in Europe during the later half of 18th century.

Ans to Q3 : Some of the advocates of the synthetic school are Emile Durkheim, L.T Hobhouse and Pitirim Sorokin.



1.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q1: What led to the birth of sociology?

Q2: What do you understand by scientific method?

B. Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q1: What do you understand by the term sociology? Briefly write down the scope and subject matter of sociology.

Q2: Discuss the different methods used in sociology.

** *** **

UNIT 2: SOCIOLOGY AND OTHER SOCIAL SCIENCES

UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1 Learning Objectives
2.2 Introduction
2.3 Sociology and History
2.4 Sociology and Political Science
2.5 Sociology and Economics
2.6 Sociology and Anthropology
2.7 Sociology and Social Psychology
2.8 Let Us Sum Up
2.9 Further Reading
2.10 Answers To Check Your Progress
2.11 Model Questions

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to—

- understand the relationship between Sociology and History
- explain the relationship between Sociology and Political Science
- discuss the relationship between Sociology and Economics
- discuss the relationship between Sociology and Anthropology
- understand the Relationship between Sociology and Social Psychology.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

Sociology, as we know, is the science of society but since human society is a complex one, it is not possible for Sociology to solely encompass every aspect of the society within its scope. To have a complete understanding of society, Sociology has to depend upon other disciplines such as Economics, Political Science, History, Anthropology so on and so forth. Therefore to study society in its entirety, Sociology depends on other subjects and disciplines which take up specific aspects of society as their sub

ject matter. For example, Political Science studies the polity and matters related to politics and political systems. Now, Sociologists cannot have a complete understanding of the society without having knowledge and understanding of Polity and its functions. Thus, he has to depend upon Political science which specifically deals with polity. Same is the case with other disciplines also. Hence, we can say that while other subjects or disciplines are one dimensional; Sociology is multi dimensional in nature. Again any particular social problem can be understood and analysed from different angles. For example : drug abuse or child trafficking is understood and analysed by a physician, an economist, a historian, a political scientist in different ways according to their training in their respective subjects or disciplines. A Sociologist would try to understand any problem by analysing the social structure. He/she would analyse its implications on social relationship. In the previous unit, we have learned about the origin, nature and scope of Sociology. In this unit, we shall discuss about the relationship of Sociology with other Social Sciences.

2.3 SOCIOLOGY AND HISTORY

Sociology shares a close relationship with History. History, as we know, is documentation or a depiction of the past. It is a record of the ways in which human societies have evolved over time and how man and his actions and his society have changed at different points of time. Thus, History particularly deals with the past and narrates the different activities, events and phenomenon which took place in the earlier periods. Sociology is interested in the historical development of society and why and how human societies and social relationships have emerged and changed over time. For this, Sociology has to depend on History. Thus, History provides us with facts and details which we analyse and interpret. Again, Sociology also helps history by providing the social context in which history should be studied and understood. Without the social context, it is almost meaningless to study any historical fact/phenomenon. Thus, History and Sociology both help each other and are therefore mutually dependent. But even though both the disciplines.

are intimately related there are distinctions between the two. History views human events from their correlation in time but Sociology tries to understand the social relationships involved. Thus, if a historian narrates about a war, he/she would give detailed description of the different circumstances and situations that took place during the war but a Sociologist would analyse and understand the implication of war on social relationship, social institutions and the changes it brought to the larger social context. Thus, Sociologists interpret war as social phenomena. Again, History deals with particular events and occurrences, while Sociology is concerned with general laws. But despite differences, one cannot deny that both history and sociology are interdependent and need each other for the growth of the respective disciplines. Hence, G.E. Howard has rightly said that History is past sociology and Sociology is present history.

2.4 SOCIOLOGY AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

Sociology shares a close relationship with Political Science as well. The distinction between Sociology and Political Science is only a recent one. Political Science has its own exclusive domain of study such as the nature and systems of law, the methods of Political representation etc.. But there are certain aspects of Polity which cannot be isolated from the larger social context. Since, we cannot understand polity in isolation from the social background and also cannot understand society in its totality leaving aside polity, both Sociology and Political Science have to be mutually dependent.

Sociology depends on political science because almost every social problem has a Political Cause and to understand that Sociology takes help from Political Science. It cannot leave aside Polity if it has to understand any social problem in its totality. Again, it is not possible for a Sociologist to understand any Political Event without taking help from Political Science. Further to understand the changes brought into the society by the change in Polity, a Sociologist must understand the Political System and the change it is going through. To understand any event, any problem, any change so

on and so forth, a Sociologist should try to understand the politics behind it; he/she should try to analyse its link with Polity.

In the words of Morris Ginsberg, "Historically Sociology has its main roots in politics and philosophy of history." The books written by political scientists like Plato, Aristotle and Kautilya such as The Republic, The Politics and Arthasastra respectively have been of great help to students of Sociology.

Political Science also has to depend upon Sociology as every Political problem or event takes place in a political context which needs to be examined and understood. Polity is a part of Society; and to understand that part we have to understand it in relation to the whole. Almost all political problems have a social cause and for the solution of these political problems political science takes the help of sociology.

State frames its rules, regulations and laws on the basis of social customs, tradition and values. Without Sociological background, the study of political science will be incomplete. Political Scientists largely benefited from the researches and research methods of the Sociologist. Some consider political science as a branch of Sociology.

Thus, the subject matter of Sociology and Political Science are common to a large extent but the perspectives and approaches they use to understand any particular aspect is different. For example, a Sociologist would understand State as a Social Institution, whereas a Political Scientist would look at it as the Supreme regulating power of the community and the source of Political law.

- **Differences between Sociology and Political Science:**
  - Sociology is a science of society and social relationship, whereas political science is a science of state and government.
  - Sociology is a general science but political science is a special science.
  - Sociology studies organised, unorganized and disorganized society, whereas political science studies only politically organised society.
  - Sociology studies the social activities of man, whereas political science studies political activities of man.

- Sociology is a new or young science but political science is an older science.
- Sociology studies both formal and informal relations, whereas political science studies only formal relations.
- Sociology analyses both conscious and unconscious activities of man, whereas political science analyses only conscious activities of man.
- Sociology deals with all forms of association, whereas political science deals with only one form of association named state.

2.5 SOCIOLOGY AND ECONOMICS

Sociology, as we have discussed above, is the science of Society. Understanding Social Relationships is its major thrust. It shares a very close relationship with economics because economic relationships bear a close relation to social activities and relationships. Likewise, social relationships are also affected by economic relationships. As the economic process develops in society, it influences and is influenced by the Social life of man. Economists like Max Weber, Pareto, and Schumpeter who understood economic change as a result of Social change are of the view that the study of economics in isolation from the Social background would be inadequate and ambiguous. The same is the case with Sociology as well. Since economic institution is very much a part of the Society, almost all social phenomena has an economic dimension to it. Therefore, the study of Society and Social Relationships would be incomplete and vague if its economic dimension is overlooked and ignored. MacIver, therefore, writes that, “Thus economic phenomena is constantly determined by all kinds of social need and activity and in turn they are constantly redetermining, creating, shaping and transforming social need and activity of every kind”.

Marx opines that economic relations constitute the foundation of Society. He calls it the infrastructure; the main base on which the other things in society rest or depend upon. Economic factors play a very important role in every aspect of our social life and that is why, Sociologists are concerned

with economic institutions. For this reason, Sociologists like Spencer, Weber, Durkheim and others have taken the help of economics in their analysis of social relationships.

Thus both the subjects are interdependent, inter-related and take help from each other. But despite their close proximity to each other, they also differ in many cases. Let us now try to understand the points of difference between Sociology and Economics:

- Sociology is defined as the science of society and it studies social relationships, whereas economics is a science of wealth and choice.
- Sociology is again a much younger science in comparison to economics. It is of much recent origin and therefore, called the Youngest Social Science, whereas the origin of Economics goes far back in history.
- Sociology is an abstract science, whereas economics is concrete in nature.
- Sociology is a general social science, whereas economics is a special social science.
- Sociology is concerned with the social activities of man, whereas economics is concerned with the economic activities of man.
- Society is studied as a unit of study in Sociology, whereas man is taken as a unit of study in economics.
- Both Sociology and economics differ from each other in respect of the methods and techniques they use for their study.

2.6 SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

Sociology and Anthropology share such a close relationships that they are often understood as synonymous; and appear as two names for the same field of enquiry.

Anthropology is derived from two Greek words ‘Anthropos’ meaning ‘man’ and ‘Logos’ meaning ‘study’. Thus, according to its etymological meaning, Anthropology is the study of man which studied of the development

of human race. Anthropology has, thus, a very wide field of study. It is concerned with both the physical as well as social aspect of man.

Anthropology concentrates entirely on the study of man and his culture as they developed in the past. Sociology, on the other hand, studies the same phenomena as they exist at present. Sociology depends very much on the material supplied by Anthropology. In fact, the historical part of Sociology is identical with Cultural Anthropology. Anthropology has contributed substantially to the study of Sociology.

2.7 SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Social Psychology deals with mental processes of man considered as a social being. Its prime focus is on the mental condition and of man. It tries to analyse the influence of social groups and social life on the mental development of man. Thus, 'mind' or the mental state of individuals, as well as groups is the central theme of investigation of Social Psychology. To understand the mental state of man and its development, Social Psychologists require help from Sociologists because Man lives in Society and his/her mentality is shaped and developed in a social context. His behaviour, his attitudes and activities are also shaped by the Society and its culture through the process of Socialisation and hence, in order to have a correct or proper understanding of human nature and behaviour, a Social Psychologists needs to understand the social structure, organisation and culture of the particular societies to which the individuals belong. Thus, a Social Psychologist needs help from a Sociologist in order to have an idea about the Social backdrop and how it influences human mind. He /She cannot afford to leave aside the Social backdrop because it will lead to an inadequate and ambiguous understanding. Kimball Young, therefore, states that, "We might say that while our major emphasis is on the individual in interaction with others, such interaction can only be understood within the social life and cultural matrix in which it occurs."

However, it is not that only Social Psychologists have to depend on Sociologists for their analysis. The sociologists also have to dwell upon

Social Psychology. It is not possible to deny the importance of psychological factors among other factors in understanding the changes in social structure. Lapiere and Farnsworth write that "Social Psychology is to sociology and psychology as Bio-chemistry is to Biology and Chemistry". According to Motwani, "Social Psychology is a link between psychology and sociology." Thus, it is clear that both the disciplines share a close relationship and are mutually interdependent.

The relationship between the two is so close and they are so intimately connected that Karl Pearson has not accepted the two as separate sciences. In the words of MacIver, "Sociology in special gives aid to psychology, just as psychology gives special aid to sociology."

It is now generally assumed that a scientific study of social phenomenoa must have a psychological basis; and the psychological facts regarding human nature should not be assumed but should be explored by direct observation as well as by experimentation. The improved understanding of human behaviour will make the science of sociology more objective and realistic.

According to Mc Dougall and Freud, the whole of social life could be reduced finally to psychological forces. But if that happens, Sociology would be reduced to a mere branch of Psychology. It would no longer remain an independent discipline. However, their opinion cannot be accepted because the social behaviour of man are influenced, governed and shaped not only or solely by psychological factors. The Economic, Geographical, Political etc. factors too play a great role in the social behaviour of man. These factors also significantly govern man's social behaviour and influence their social relationships. Therefore, it would be wrong or inadequate to understand human behaviour as being shaped by psychological factors alone. Thus, it is not possible to study and analyse Social life exclusively with the methods of the Psychologists. The fact of mutual dependence of Social Psychology and Sociology should not be interpreted to mean that one is either identical with or the branch of the other.

From the above discussion, we have learned that Sociology and Social Psychology share a very close relationship. But despite their commonalities,

there are points of difference as well. Let us now try to understand the distinction between the two.

- Firstly, Sociology is a study of the society as a whole while Social Psychology is merely the study of individuals in interaction as members of groups and of the effect of that interaction on them. Social Psychology mainly focuses on the mental set up of men and influence of group life on it. Bogardus writes, "As psychology analyses mental processes, so Sociology analyses social processes."
- Sociology studies the organisation of social groups, their central values and the various forms of institutional behaviour arising on account of them and Social Psychology is concerned with the individuals as members of the group.
- The individual is the unit of analysis in Social Psychology but for Sociologists, Social groups and social relationships are the prime area of focus. As remarked by Klineberg, "The primary concern of the sociologist is group behaviour, and that of the social psychologists is the behaviour of the individual in the group situation."
- Further, social life is dealt with from different angles by Sociologists and Social Psychologists. The former studies society from the viewpoint of the community, while the latter from the viewpoint of psychological factors involved.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1: Distinguish between Sociology and History.

.....

.....

.....

.....

Q2: From which word is the term Anthropology derived?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Q3: What is the Subject Matter of Social Psychology?

.....

.....

.....

Q4: Do Psychological factors alone govern human behaviour?

.....

.....

.....



2.8 LET US SUM UP

- Sociology, as we know, is the science of society but since human society is a complex one, it is not possible for Sociology to solely encompass every aspect of the society within its scope
- To have a complete understanding of the society, Sociology has to depend upon other disciplines such as Economics, Political Science, History, Anthropology so on and so forth.
- History, as we know, is documentation or a depiction of the past.
- History particularly deals with the past and narrates the different activities, events, phenomenona which took place in the earlier periods
- Sociology is interested in the historical development of society and why and how human societies and social relationships have emerged and changed over time.
- History views human events from their correlation in time but Sociology tries to understand the social relationships involved.
- Sociology shares a close relationship with Political Science as well.
- We cannot understand polity in isolation from the social background and also cannot understand society in its totality leaving aside polity; both Sociology and Political Science have to be mutually dependent.
- The subject matter of Sociology and Political Science are common to a large extent but the perspectives and approaches they use to understand any particular aspect is different.

- It shares a very close relationship with economics because economic relationships bear a close relation to social activities and relationships. Likewise, social relationships are also affected by economic relationships.
- Anthropology concentrates entirely on the study of man and his culture as they developed in times long past. Sociology, on the other hand, studies the same phenomena as they exist at present.
- Social Psychology deals with mental processes of man considered as a social being. Its prime focus is on the mental condition of man.
- To understand the mental state of man and its development, Social Psychologist requires help from Sociologists because man lives in Society and his/her mentality is shaped and developed in a Social context.
- Sociologists also have dwell upon Social Psychology. It is not possible to deny the importance of psychological factors among other factors in understanding the changes in social structure.



2.9 FURTHER READINGS

1) Gisbert. P (2010) “Fundamentals of Sociology”; Orient Black Swan; New Delhi
2) Kumar. A (2003) “Sociology Basic Concepts”; Swarup and Sons; New Delhi



2.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q1: History views human events from their correlation in time but Sociology tries to understand the social relationships involved. Further, History deals with particular events and occurrences while Sociology is concerned with general laws.

Ans to Q2: Anthropology is derived from two Greek words ‘Anthropos’ meaning ‘man’ and ‘Logos’ meaning ‘study’.

Ans to Q3: Social Psychology deals with mental processes of man considered as a social being. It studies particularly the influence of group life on the mental development of individual, the effect of the individual mind on the group, and the development of the mental life of the groups within themselves and in their relations with one' another.

Ans to Q4: No, the social behaviour of man is influenced, governed and shaped not by Psychological factors alone. The Economic, Geographical, Political etc. factors too play a great role in the social behaviour of man.



2.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q1: What is the subject matter of Sociology?

Q2: What does the Anthropologist Study?

Q3: What is the difference between Political Science and Sociology?

Q4: Distinguish between Sociology and Economics.

B) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q1: Discuss the relationship between Sociology and History.

Q2: Discuss the relationship between Sociology and Social Psychology.

Q3: "Sociology shares an interdependent relation with the other social sciences" Elaborate the Statement.

** *** **

UNIT 3: BASIC CONCEPTS- I

UNIT STRUCTURE

3.1 Learning Objectives

3.2 Introduction

3.3 SOCIETY: MEANING AND DEFINITION

- 3.3.1 Characteristics of Society
- 3.3.2 Differences between Human Society and Non-Human Society

3.4. CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY

- 3.4.1 Meaning and Definition:
- 3.4.2. Elements of Community
- 3.4.3. Difference between Society and Community

3.5. CONCEPT OF INSTITUTION

- 3.5.1. Meaning and Definition
- 3.5.2 Characteristics
- 3.5.3 Types of Institution

3.6. CONCEPT OF ASSOCIATION

- 3.6.1. Meaning and Definition
- 3.6.2. Characteristics

3.7. Let Us Sum Up

3.8. Further Reading

3.9. Answers to Check Your Progress

3.10. Model Questions

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to -

- understand the meaning and characteristics of Society
- explain the concept of Community
- dentify the differences between Society and Community
- understand the meaning and characteristics of Institution
- explain the concept of Institution.

3.2 INTRODUCTION

Sociology focuses on the study of man within a social environment. Society provides a social environment. It shall be sufficient here to say that society provides a social environment with some definite boundaries. Man is a social animal. He/she lives with many other people in a society and becomes member of different community and associations. Thus, the study of Society is of utmost importance in Society. In the previous unit, we have learnt about the relationship between Sociology and other Social Sciences. In this unit, we shall discuss the basic concepts in Sociology such as Society, Community, Institution, Association, so on and so forth.

3.3. SOCIETY: MEANING AND DEFINITION

The concept of society has been defined in several ways by various sociologists. Let us read some of these definitions:

"A society is a collection of individuals united by certain relations and modes of behaviour which mark them off from others who do not enter into these relations or who differ from them in behaviour" – Ginsberg.

"Society is a "web of social relations which is always changing."- MacIver.

To understand these definitions, let us now read the following:

The term 'society' has been derived from the Latin word *'Socius'* meaning companionship or friendship. Friends have a relationship between them. Similarly, there is some relationship between parents and children, between teacher and students, between the shopkeeper and the customer, between the government and the governed, the State and the citizens, etc. These are some of the different types of relationships. You have many people around you with whom you talk, act and do many other things. You have friends, parents, siblings, relatives, etc. You buy things from shopkeeper, eat in a hotel etc. Thus, you too have many and different types of relationship with people around you. These are the people whom you might meet, see, and talk to everyday or sometimes. You may even have relationship with people whom you might never meet or talk to. The common feature in all these

relations is that you are 'behaving' with them and they too are 'behaving' with you. In order to ***behave*** with others, it is important to follow some common rules of behaviour. Then only will you know how to behave with others and others will know how to behave back. And, thus, you all will be able to understand each other. It is these common rules of behaviour and the behaviour of the people that make social relationship possible.



Behave means to act or conduct oneself.

When there are social relations of various kinds between two or among many people, all the people together become a group. They are members of a social group. There are many groups, which also have relationship between them just as individuals have between them. All these individuals and groups have social relationships among them. They all follow some common rules of behaviour or conduct. And they form a bigger group. They consider those following these rules and behaving accordingly as members of this big group. This big group is called a society. In a society, there are many smaller groups as well.

In a society, the relationships are long lasting and enduring. Thus, a society is a long lasting social group.



ACTIVITY 3.1

Do you think yourself as member of your society? Give a reason.

……

……

……

Explain briefly about society in your own words.

……

……

……

By now we have come to know of the following:

- A society is, thus, a big group having many individuals and smaller groups.
- The individuals and groups interact among themselves.

- They follow some common rules of behaviour.
- They have social relations among them all.
- All the individuals and groups consider themselves as members of the society.
- The society is long lasting.

3.3.1 Characteristics of Society

So far we have discussed the basic meaning of the term society and also some of its basic characteristics or features. There are some more important characteristics of the society. Let us discuss them briefly —

- **Society consists of people and groups:** Society is a large group. Its smallest unit is the individual. Individuals in turn are organized in groups. A society comprises individuals and various groups.
- **Social relation:** We have already discussed social relation and the way social relationship lead to the formation of a society. Now, we shall learn that the individuals are organized in a web of social relationship. Likewise, the groups also are organized in a web of relationship. Web means a network. A spider builds a cobweb where every point or part is linked to every other part directly or indirectly. A cobweb is like a network. Similarly in a society, every individual and every group is linked and related to every other part of the society.
- **Social interaction:** In social relation, there also is social interaction. Social interaction means that one person acts and the other person reacts or acts back. When you buy things in a shop, you perform the act of paying the shopkeeper for the items you want to buy. The shopkeeper in return performs the act of selling you the items you paid for. This is interaction and is based on the common rules of the society. These are common rules because both of you alongwith others in the society, have

accepted and accordingly, are behaving. These lead to social interaction and Social reletion among people. In the example above, there are social relations between you as a customer and the other person as the shop keeper. Social interaction and Social relation are therefore a two-way traffic.

- **Mutual awareness:** It means that a person needs to be aware that there are other persons besides him/her and that his/her actions affect others. Similarly, the actions of others also affect him/her. Hence, they need to behave in ways that are understood by others. This is mutual awareness. It is because of this awareness that people develop social relations.

- **Society fulfils social needs:** Every person has some individual needs like the need for food, shelter, clothing, need for affection, friendship, etc. Many of our needs are better fulfilled when people live together and work together with each other. For example : to build a house, it is convenient when many people do it together. This makes us all dependent on each other. Thus, we all are interdependent in many ways. This is our social need. Society, thus, fulfils our social needs. It also becomes important that we can maintain this interdependence. Otherwise, society will cease to exist.

LET US KNOW



In modern times, we find that the farmer grows crops, sells the grains in the market by which he earns his livelihood. The crop in the market is bought by the wholesaler who in turn sells them to the retailer. He gets a profit, which is his income. The retailer then sells it to us and we buy the grains from them for our food. The retailer also earns some income and we get our food. Here, we see a long chain of relationship among various people and that, everyone in the line is dependent on each other. If the farmer does not grow crop we do not get food. If the

wholesaler and the retailer do not buy and sell the grains, we will not get our food either. On the other hand, the farmer, the wholesaler and retailer also do not earn money if they do not buy and sell. Thus, we all are interdependent with some, we are directly dependent and with some others, we are indirectly dependent.

- **Cooperation among individuals and groups:** The above characteristics tell us that in the society, individuals and groups cooperate with one other. Without this cooperation, there will be no relation among the different parts of a society. Therefore, cooperation is one aspect of social relation.
- **Disagreement and conflict in society:** In every society, there is some degree of conflict. Even in your family, you may sometimes have some disagreement with your parents or even your siblings. Similarly, in our interactions outside the family, we may have conflict and disagreement with others, such as between employer and employee, customers and shopkeepers, etc. But despite such conflicts and disagreements, the relationship continues. Conflict is normal in a society. But only when the conflict becomes too serious that the relation may fail and break. Therefore, we can call "society is cooperation crossed by conflict." Conflict also is one form of social relation.
- **Social differentiation:** In your family, you find that the rights and duties of your parents are different from those of yours and your siblings. This means that you all have different positions in the family. The positions of parents are different from those of the children and also the father's position differs from that of the mother. You may also find that your position is different from that of your brothers and sisters. Likewise, the position of a doctor is different from that of a patient. In Sociology, position is termed as status of which we shall learn more about a little later in this unit. It shows that in society there are different statuses. This is termed as social differentiation.
- **Social control:** For a society to continue, it is important that there is less of disagreement and conflict within it. As such, there need to be

rules of behaviour and the people need to behave according to the rules they lay down. But sometimes, people violate (disobey) the rules and this leads to problems and disagreement in the society. In order that this does not happen, the society also lays down different means of controlling social behaviour. This is termed as social control. When someone does something wrong, there are always people as parents, friends, siblings, elders and others to correct the behaviour of the person. Society even has police to check deviant behaviour. These are some of the means of social control.

- **Society is dynamic:** This means that the society is ever changing. Have you noticed, how your society has changed in the last ten years? There is no society that does not change. No society is static. Ever since humans emerged on earth they have been living in societies and societies have been changing.
- **Culture:** Culture is the way of life of a society. The rules that people make and follow, the means of social control, language, the way people eat, dress, talk, and think, the type of houses people make are parts of culture. Culture is thus, everything that people learn in society and do in society. Every society thus has its own culture.

These are some of the important characteristics of society. There are still other characteristics of society, but these are some of the basic ones.



ACTIVITY 3.2

Do you observe any of these characteristics in your society? Mention one or two of them.

……

……

……

Have you noticed any change in your society in the last ten years? Mention two.

……

……

……



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1: Name the word from which the term society is derived?

.....

.....

Q2: Is Society Static?

.....

.....

3.3.2 Differences between Human Society and Non-Human Society

Many non-human beings such as ants, baboons, apes, elephants, etc. live together in groups and have specific patterns of behaviour. Each member of the group behaves in some specific manner and there is co-ordination and co-operation in their behaviour. In this regard, they also have society. But their society is different from the human society. Let us now understand these differences—

Unlike the human society, the society of non-human is static, i.e. its way of life does not change. The way the elephants behave or act today is same as they behaved or acted thousands of years ago. But in these several thousands of years, human society has changed from simple hunting gathering life style to that of modern society and man has even reached the outer space.

Man has culture. We learn social behaviour and our social rules from our parents, friends, from school and people around us. We also pass it on to our younger ones and others around us. But animals behave by ***instinct***. Even if some animals such as dogs learn new behaviour from us yet, they cannot pass it on to others. This ability to pass on learned behaviour and culture is unique to human beings only. Human society has culture and non-human society does not. Thus, after having studied about society we have learnt that:

- Man is a social animal and need to live in groups. Society fulfils human needs.



Instinct
means an inborn tendency to behave in a certain way .
We come to know that social relations are long lasting.

- It makes way for organized life.
- It is within society and with culture that men have developed from a simple life style to a modern complex life style.
- It helps us to understand how people behave in society.
- It helps us to know how people are arranged in different statuses in the society.
- That every society is dynamic.
- That culture is unique to human society.

3.4 CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY

The term community is used to refer to a wide variety of specific social units. In common parlance, the word, 'community' is used for a collection of people who do related kinds of work, such as the teachers' community' or the doctors' community. It is also used to denote a collection of people who share something in common as the 'Hindu community' or the 'Christian community' etc.

3.4.1 Meaning and Definition:

In Sociological literature, the word 'Community' refers directly to types of population settlements, such as rural community or urban community, to supposedly ideal typical ways of life in such places, and to social networks whose members share common characteristics apart from or in addition to common location. According to sociologists Mac Iver and Page, "*Whenever the members of any group, small or large, live together in such a way that they share not this or that particular interest, but the basic condition of a common life, we called that group a community*." For Bogardus, "*a community is a social group with some degree of the feeling and living in a given area*."

Community is, therefore, a geographical area having common centres of interests and activities. A community is essentially an area of social living. It is marked by some degree of social coherence.

Thus, community is a circle in which common life is living. It includes in itself all our social relationships. It includes a variety of associations and institutions. Within the range of a community, the members may carry on their economic, religious, political, educational and other activities. Hence, community is the total organization of social life within limited space. Examples: village, town, tribe, city and district.

3.4.2 Elements of Community

Community has some basic elements or characteristics as those given below –

- **Group or persons:** A community consists of a group of individuals. They live in a particular geographical area with 'we feeling' relations.
- **Locality:** A community always occupies a territorial area. The strong bond of solidarity that we find among the members of a community is derived from the conditions of locality living in a definite geographical area. Living together facilitates people to develop social contacts, gives protection, safety and security. It helps the members to promote and fulfil their common interests. Locality continues to be a basic factor of community life. However, in modern times the local bond of community is weakened by the development of the means of transport and communication. In fact, the extension of communication is itself the condition of a larger but still territorial community.
- **Community sentiment:** Locality is not enough to create a community. There must be the common living with its awareness of sharing a common way of life. The members develop a sense of 'we feeling'. It means a kind of identification, a sense of awareness, a sense of living and sharing some common interests in life. Without these there cannot be any community.
- **Stability:** A community has not only locality and community sentiment, but also has stability. It is not a temporary group like a

crowd or a mob. It is relatively stable. It includes a permanent group life in a definite place.

- **Natural and Normal:** A community cannot be made or created. By birth individuals become its members. Communities are spontaneous in their origin and development.
- **Size of community:** There is no any bar about the size of community. It may be big or small in size. A city or village or a district may be the size of community. There are communities within a community. Hence, there may be some small and some big communities.
- **Regulation of relations:** In every community, there are some systems which are known as customs, traditions, morals etc. This helps to regulate the relations of its members.

In modern times, the community sentiment of the members is gradually changing because the interests of people are diverse and complex. It is due to industrialization, urbanization, advancement of science and technology and the development of means of transport and communication.

3.4.3 Difference between Society and Community

Society and Community both are related to each other. Both society and community are considered on the basis of human relations, yet there are some differences between the two. Some of the differences of both the term society and community are given below:

Society: Society is a web of social relationship. A definite geographical area is not an essential aspect of society. Society is abstract. Community sentiment or 'we-feeling' may not be present in a society. In a society, there may be several communities. It involves both likenesses and differences. Common and diverse interests are present in society.

Community: Community consists of a group of individuals living

in a particular geographical area with we feeling relations. It is concrete and community sentiment is an essential feature of community. Interests and objectives are not more extensive and varied. Likeness is essential and more important. Common agreement of interests and objectives are the part of community.



ACTIVITY 3.3

'Man is a Social animal' – Write the meaning of this statement in your own words.

.....

.....

3.5 CONCEPT OF INSTITUTION

Institution is an established way of behaving or an established form of procedure. It consists of all the structural components of a society through which the main concerns and activities are organized and social needs are fulfilled.

3.5.1 Meaning and Definition

The term 'institution' has been given various interpretations. According to Mac Iver and Page, institutions may be defined as the "*established forms or conditions of procedure characteristic of group activity*". Arnold Green has defined institution as the "*organization of several folkways and mores into a unit which serves a number of social functions*".

From the above definitions, it is seen that an institution means some rules, regulations, folkways and mores which are gradually developed and obeyed by the society.

3.5.2 Characteristics

The main characteristics of institution are –

- Institutions come into being due to the collective activities of the people. They are essentially social in nature.

- Institutions exist in all the societies and have existed at all the stages of social development.
- Institutions are considered as sanctioning norms. It prescribes the way of doing things.
- Institutions are not external, visible or tangible things. They are abstract.
- Institutions help to satisfy some basic and vital needs of man.
- Institutions control the behaviour of individuals.
- Institutions are mostly permanent in nature.

3.5.3 Types of Institution

Institutions are often classified into **Primary institutions** and **Secondary institutions**. The most basic institutions which are found even in primitive societies like religion, family, marriage etc. are primary in character. As societies grew in size and complexity, institutions became progressive and more differentiated. Accordingly, a large number of institutions are evolved to cater to the secondary need of people. They may be called secondary institutions, such as education, law, constitution, parliamentary procedure, business etc.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q3: Is Community temporary in nature?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Q4: What are institutions?

.....

.....

.....

.....

3.6. CONCEPT OF ASSOCIATION

Man as a social being has so many interests, needs, wants and problems. To fulfil the desires of the individuals in a society, sometimes individual efforts are sufficient for them and sometimes they have to cooperate with others. Co-operation and mutual assistance are essential in an association.

3.6.1. Meaning and Definition

Association is an arrangement for working together by a group to achieve some specified purpose or purposes. The emphasis is on organization and its aims. It differs from community in several ways. Its membership is limited by the nature of its aim. An association is an arrangement which may be temporary or permanent. MacIver and Page defined Association as "*an organization deliberately formed for the collective pursuit of some interest or a set of interests, which its members share*." According to Morris Ginsberg, "*An association is a group of social beings related to one another by the fact that they possess or have instituted in common an organization with a view to securing a specific end or specific ends*."

Men have several interests. Hence, they establish different associations to fulfil them. They have a number of associations of different kinds, such as, Political association (The Bharatiya Janata Party, The congress Party etc.) Socio-Religious association (The Ramkrishna Mission, the Arya Samaj etc.) and so on.

3.6.2. Characteristics

The main characteristics of Association are –

- Formal membership.
- Fixed rules and procedures to follow.
- Definite goals and deliberate interests.
- The duties are legally bound.

- It is voluntary in service and also in membership.
- Rights and duties for the members.



3.7. LET US SUM UP

- A society is a collection of individuals united by certain relations and modes of behaviour which mark them off from others who do not enter into these relations or who differ from them in behaviour
- The term 'society' has been derived from the Latin word *'Socius'* meaning companionship or friendship
- In a society, the relationships are long lasting and enduring. Thus, a society is a long lasting social group
- 'Community' is used for a collection of people who do related kinds of work, such as the teachers'
- Community is, therefore, a geographical area having common centres of interests and activities
- Institution is an established way of behaving or an established form of procedure
- Institution means some rules, regulations, folkways and mores which are gradually developed and obeyed by the society.
- Institutions are often classified into **Primary institutions** and **Secondary institutions**
- An association is an arrangement which may be temporary or permanent
- Association is an arrangement for working together by a group to achieve some specified purpose or purposes



3.8 FURTHER READING

1) Abraham Francis. (2006). *Contemporary Sociology – An Introduction to Concepts and Theories* (Chapter – 1&7). Oxford University Press.

2) Bhushan B.2006. *Dictionary of Sociology*.New Delhi: Anmol Publications Pvt. Ltd.

3) Rawat H.K. (2007). *Sociology-Basic Concepts*. Jaipur: Rawat Publications.

4) R. M. Mac Iver and Charles H. Page. (2001). Society – An Introductory Analysis (Chapter – 1&10). New Delhi: Macmillan India Ltd.

5) Vidya Bhushan and D.R. Sachdeva. (2005). Text Book of Sociology (Chapter – 1, 3, 4, 12, 14, 22).New Delhi: Kitab Mahal.



3.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q1: The term 'society' has been derived from the Latin word *'Socius'* meaning companionship or friendship.

Ans to Q2: No Society is dynamic. It keeps on evolving and changing with time.

Ans to Q3: A Community is not a temporary group. It is relatively stable and permanent in nature.

Ans to Q4: In Simple words, Institution means some rules, regulations, folkways and mores which are gradually developed and obeyed by the society.



3.10: MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q1: What is Society? How is human society different from an non-human society?

Q2: Distinguish between Society and Community.

Q3: Define Institution. State the differences between Institution and Association.

B) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q1: Define Community. Explain its characteristics.

Q2: Discuss the characteristic features of Society.

** *** **

UNIT 4: BASIC CONCEPTS- II

UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1 Learning objectives
4.2 Introduction
4.3 Norms : Meaning and Definition
    4.3.1. Characteristics of Norms
    4.3.2 Types of Norms
    4.3.3 Relation between Norms and Values
4.4 Social Sanction
4.5 Status: Meaning and definition
    4.5.1 Characteristic of Status
    4.5.2 Types of Status
4.6 Role : Meaning and Definition
4.7 Rewards and punishments associated with role and status
4.8 Let us sum up
4.9 Further reading
4.10 Answers to check your progress
4.11 Model questions

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to-

- Understand the concept of norms and its type
- Understand the meaning of value
- Distinguish between norms and values
- Understand the concept status and its types
- Understand the concept of role and its types
- know the meaning of role conflict

4.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, we have discussed about the basic concepts like Society, Community, Institution, and Association. In this unit, we shall discuss about some other important concepts like norms values, role and status.

There are different types of norms like folkways, mores, customs, social sanction, taboo law; which we shall be studying in this unit.

4.3 NORMS : MEANING AND DEFINITION

We have learnt that society is a web of social relations. To maintain relations, it is important that people follow some commonly accepted ways of behaviour. Therefore, every society has certain standard forms of behaviour. Social **norms** or simply norms are some guidelines which implicitly or explicitly govern our action. They influence what we believe, how behave and interact with others. Every society designs its own set of norms or guidelines to direct individual action. However, some norms are more rigid than others. According to Emile Durkheim, norms are social facts because they have an independent existence. Individuals cannot change them at their will. Most importantly, they have a coercive force over the individuals in a society. According to sociologists, since human beings do not possess instincts their actions must be guided by norms and values. In order to maintain coordination between the actions of different individuals living in a society, the norms and values are shared by all.

4.3.1 Characteristics of Norms

- Norms serve as guidelines of behaviour. It states what is expected and what is not expected in the different social situations.
- Norms play an important role in shaping and maintaining order in society. However, a society tends to become unstable at some point because socialization is not identical throughout the society.
- Norms are passed from one generation to another.
- From birth till death, a person keeps learning these standard forms of behaviour, i.e. the norms. By learning these norms, a person learns about the appropriate behaviour in different situations.

4.3.2 Types of Norms:

- **Folkways :** According to sociologist William Graham Sumner, folkways are those norms that emerge out of casual interaction of

people and gradually become a routine practise. However over a period of time, they exert a social pressure to conform to those norms. Therefore, they are literally the "ways of the folks". These include rules of eating, forms of salutation, dress pattern, expected conduct in a family, etc. Mostly these are unwritten. The folkways are maintained because they are old, familiar, and easy and that these have "always been there". But they do not have moral significance and rarely, people are 'stringently' punished for violating folkways.

- **Mores :** The folkways that are associated with an idea of morality are termed as mores. Mores determine what is considered as ethical in a particular society. Individuals are socialised to follow the guidelines of moores without failure. Any violation of those norms may lead to ostracizing the individual. Religious principles are an example of mores which guides our social conduct. For example : some religions restrict cohabitation before marriage. Therefore many a times, it is seen that when young adults belonging to conservative families start developing romantic relationship they are banished from the society and sometimes even their survival is threatened.
- **Taboo:** A taboo is a form of norm which strongly prohibits certain kind of actions. Certain things/actions are considered intolerable at any cost by society. Therefore, society imposes strict sanction against them. Violation of these norms leads to extreme form expulsion. For example : incest (having sex with close blood relatives) is a taboo in almost all society. Again, cannibalism is also a taboo in most societies.
- **Custom :** According to the Oxford dictionary of sociology, customs are the established ways of thinking and acting in a society. Again Lundberg pointed that, customs are those "*folkways that persist over relatively long periods of time so as to attain a degree of formal recognition and so as to be passed down from one generation to another*." These are long established usages and practices of the people. Most of our laws are based on customs.

- **Laws :** Laws are those norms which formally inscribed by a legal authority of a society. Law exists in order to maintain order in society. One's conduct can infringe other's freedom; the law looks after to prohibit such infringement. For example : the Indian Parliament and State Legislatures are the legal authorities to pass and enforce laws to maintain order in society. The protection and proper implementation of laws are ensured by the formal mechanism of a nation such as the police system and the judicial system. Violations of laws are met with specific punishments.
- **Values:** A value is belief regarding what is good and desirable. Values in a society indicate what it considers important or worthwhile. For example : in western countries individual achievement and materialism is considered to be valuable. Therefore, individual prosperity is measured by the quantity and quality of materials possessed by them. However among Sioux Indians, generosity is considered to be more valuable. The norms in a society are the refection of its values. In other words, norms are the guidelines to achieve the valuable.

4.3.3 Relation between Norms and Values

In general, values are considered to be standards of good, desirable and worthwhile. Values are considered as different from norms. Yet, they are closely related. While norms provide specific guidelines for conduct, values provide general guidelines around which specific modes of behaviour i.e. norms develop. In other words, these are considered as valuable for the society. In Indian culture, honesty is an age-old value; democracy and respect of human rights are modern values. Around the value of honesty, we have several laws against fraud and cheating. Based on the value of democracy, we have norms like, universal voting rights of Indian citizens of and above 18 years of age, right to education, right to practice any occupation not harmful for the self and society, etc.

4.4 SOCIAL SANCTION

Social sanction is a means through which society ensures conformity to socially approved forms of behaviour. Sanctions can be positive when individuals are rewarded for behaving in accordance with the social expectations. Social sanctions can be negative when people deviate from the approved forms of behaviour. For example, legal restraints are formal social sanctions which restrict deviant behaviour. But verbal abuse is a form of informal sanction which restrict deviance to some extent. Thus, social sanctions are means to socially control individual behaviour. But sanctioning requires prior defining of what is considered as positive and what is considered as negative.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1: What do you understand by folkways?

.....

.....

.....

Q.2: Name a sociologist who worked on the concept of folkways?

.....

.....

.....

Q.3: What do you understand by taboo?

.....

.....

.....

4.5 STATUS: MEANING AND DEFINITION

Society lays down different social positions and with each position some defined rights and duties are assigned. We occupy these positions and act accordingly. Such social positions with defined rights and duties associated with it are called Status. Your mother occupies the status of a mother in

reference to you and to your siblings. In reference to your father, she occupies the status of a wife. When you go shopping with your friend, you occupy the status of a friend in relation to your friend, but when you reach the shop and get to shopping, you occupy the status of customer in relation to the shop keeper. Each status has some expected modes of behaviour associated with it. These behaviours include rights and responsibilities. A particular status also provides the required resources needed to perform the responsibilities. For example : in order to effectively perform the role of a parent, one needs certain resources in the form of command over the time of child. These differences of behaviour differentiate the statuses into various kinds. Statuses are institutionalized social positions.

According to Kingsley Davis, *"status is a position in the general institutional system, recognized and supported by the entire society."*

Duncan Mitchell defines status as "*the position occupied by a person, family, or kinship group in a social system relative to others. This determines rights, duties and other behaviours, including the nature and extent of the relationships with persons of other statuses."*

4.5.1 Characteristics of Status

- Status is a position in the society.
- Each status has defined modes of behaviour having rights and duties assigned to it.
- A status is in reference to other status. Statuses interact in the society.
- A person may hold various statuses at the same time or at different times.
- Society lays down statuses. Social statuses are governed by norms.
- Individuals in society occupy these statuses.

As statuses are laid down by society and individuals occupy them, Society enables every one to know what is expected of him or her in the society. This enables some degree of understanding and interaction in the society. Statuses, thus, provide some degree of social stability and social order.

4.5.2 Types of Status

Ralph Linton has divided statuses into two types based on the nature of how an individual can come to occupy a status in society. These are '**ascribed**' and '**achieved**'.

- **Ascribed Status :** These statuses are based on characteristics that persons are born with or born into and have no choice or control over it. Age and sex are two such characteristics a person is born with. Also being born into a family or a kinship group, an ethnic group, gender immediately ascribes one's status. The moment you are born into a family, you occupy the status of a child to the parents you are born to and you have no choice over it. If you are born a male, you will occupy the status of a son or if a girl then the status of a daughter. Taste Status is also Ascribed. Caste system is one of the general forms of social organisation which ascribes different status to people by birth. Once you are born into a caste, you cannot change the caste in the Hindu Social Organisation
- **Achieved Status :** This status is based on characteristics which an individual come to achieve in life and thus has some control and choice over it. For example, choosing to study a particular subjects by an individual will make him/her a student. It is a status that a person comes to attain in some ways through his/her own efforts and choice. For example, Lawyer, Teacher, Doctor etc.
- **Status Set :** It is another concept that means the sum total of all the statuses that a person occupies. You must be occupying a number of statuses at this time, like that of a student, friend, son or daughter, a sibling, cousin, citizen of India etc. All these together comprise your status set.



ACTIVITY 4.1

Make a list of 10 of all the statuses that you are occupying these days. Try to include both ascribed and achieved statuses

.....

.....

.....

.....

4.6 ROLE : MEANING AND DEFINITION

The concept of Role is related to the concept of status. While status is a position in the society, role is the dynamic or the behavioural aspect of status. While status is occupied, the role is played. A status, thus, serves as the means of identifying a role. In other words, the status enables one to identify the behaviour expected of a person in a particular situation and to act accordingly. Ralph Linton, a sociologist who contributed to the theory of Role has perceived role as the expression of the prescribed and static behavioural expectations of a status. Role is viewed as a manifestation of normative behaviour contained in the status. Status provides guidelines to behaviour.

Robert Bierstedt defines role as the "*dynamic and behavioural aspect of status…A role is what an individual does in the status he occupies."*

According to Ogburn and Nimkoff, role is a *"set of socially expected and approved behaviour patterns consisting of both duties and privileges, associated with a particular position in a group."*

Kingsley Davis states that a role is "*the manner in which a person actually carries out the requirements of his position."*

R. K. Merton added a new dimension to the concept of role. The prevailing view was that one status carried only one role. But Merton stated that a person occupying a status interacts with not only one category of person but several different categories. A person in a status, thus, has relations with several role partners. "*A complement of role relationships in which persons*

are involved by virtue of occupying a particular social status" is defined by Merton as 'role set'. For example, a person in the status of a school teacher has to play different roles in reference to his pupils, his colleagues, parents of the pupils, the school board members etc.

Role set: From the concept, statuses set we came to know that a single person can have different statuses in different context. In each context along with the statuses, an individual will be allotted some roles. Thus, role set refers to the sum total of all roles which an individual occupying different statuses play.

Role conflict: One individual may be a member of different groups and sub-groups. In each group, the individual is given some status and accordingly, he or she is expected to play some role for the effective functioning of the group. Now role conflict occurs when the individual's role in one group is incompatible with the roles, he or she is supposed in play in the other groups. For example : A and B are brothers (belonging to one group/family). But they are also members of other groups like A is a police office and therefore his role is to punish criminals. Now B, for some reason got engaged into criminal activity. In such a situation, A might experience a role conflict. If A protects B then it goes against the role of a police officer and if A punishes B, his role as a brother/family member might come under scrutiny sometimes.

4.7 REWARDS AND PUNISHMENT ASSOCIATED WITH ROLE AND STATUS

In every society, one is ranked according to the kind of role he or she is playing and how they are performing their role. For example : the role of a student is to study regularly and complete the assignments given to them in proper time. If the students perform these roles effectively, they are awarded with good marks. Again in every society, some 'roles' are considered more difficult and important. Therefore, they get a higher status in society. People having higher status are generally rewarded more in society. However, it is the society which defines which task is more important. For example : ancient tribal societies had to continuously fight with others in order to protect their

tribe from enemies as well animals. Therefore, the warriors who were able to kill more enemies were given a higher status in society. They were also given rewards in the form of land, valuable items of daily use etc. Similarly, when one does not perform the role assigned to him or her efficiently, then the society has provisions to punish the person.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

Q.4: What do you understand by role?

.....

.....

Q.5: What do you understand by status?

.....

.....



4.8 LET US SUM UP

- Norms are guidelines towards the accepted pattern of behaviour in society.
- Since guidelines are important enough for the smooth functioning of society, we find that norms have some force behind them like rewards and punishments.
- The force may be strong in the case of laws where the violation leads to punishment, while in some cases the force may vary from mild approval, praise to a hard stare.
- From birth till death, a person keeps learning these standard forms of behaviour, i.e. the norms. By learning these norms, a person learns about the appropriate behaviour in different situations.
- Folkways are those norms develop through social interaction.
- Folkway's include rules of eating, forms of salutation, dress pattern, expected conduct in a family, etc.
- Folkways are mostly these are unwritten.
- Those folkways that continue over longer periods of time gradually attain a degree of formal acknowledgment.

- The customs are passed down from one generation to another.
- Laws are formal rules developed by a legal authority.
- The laws are protected by a formal mechanism such as the police system and the judicial system.
- Norms provide specific guidelines for conduct, values provide general guidelines around which specific modes of behaviour i.e. norms develop.
- Status is a position in the society.
- Each status has defined modes of behaviour having rights and duties assigned to it.
- A status is in reference to other status. Statuses interact in the society.
- A person may hold various statuses at the same time or at different times.
- Society lays down statuses. Social statuses are governed by norms. Those statuses which are based on traits which a person is born with or born with is called ascribed status.
- Individuals do not have much control over the ascribed status.
- Those statuses which the individuals earn by their hard work and dedication is called achieved status.
- Role consists of the socially expected and approved behaviour pattern to be performed by an individual.
- Role set refers to the sum total of all roles which an individual occupying different statuses play.
- Role conflict occurs when a person's one role contradicts with others role/roles.
- Every role and status is associated with some kind of award and punishment.

4.9 FURTHER READING

1) Johnson, Harry M. (2011). Sociology: A systematic introduction. Allied publishers. New York.
2) Marshall, Gordon. (2006). The Oxford Dictionary of Sociology. OUP: New Delhi.

4.10 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q1: Folkways are those norms that emerge out of casual interaction of people and gradually become a routine practise. However over a period of time, they exert a social pressure to conform to those norms.

Ans to Q2: William Graham Sumner is a sociologist who had worked on the concept of folkways.

Ans to Q3: A taboo is a form of norm which strongly prohibits certain kind of actions.

Ans to Q4: According to Ogburn and Nimkoff, role means a set of socially expected and approved behaviour patterns consisting of both duties and privileges, associated with a particular position in a group..

Ans to Q5: According to Kingsley Davis, status is a position in the general institutional system, recognized and supported by the entire society.



4.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Question

Q1: Is caste an ascribed status or achieved status?

B) Short Question (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q1: What do you understand by role? What is the relation between roles and rewards?

Q2: What is the difference between norms and values?

C) Long Question (Answer each question in about 150-300 word).

Q1: What is the significance of norms in a society? What are the different types of norms? Discuss briefly.

** *** **

UNIT : 5 CULTURE

UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 Learning Objectives

5.2 Introduction

5.3 Concept of Culture

5.4 Nature of Culture

- 5.4.1 Characteristics of Culture
- 5.4.2 Paradoxes of Culture
- 5.4.3 Functions of Culture
- 5.4.4 Universals of Culture

5.5 Types of Culture

5.6 Culture and Personality

5.7 Culture and Civilisation

5.8 Let Us Sum Up

5.9 Further Reading

5.10 Answers to Check Your Progress

5.11 Model Questions

5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to —

- explain the concept of culture
- discuss the nature of culture
- identify the types of culture
- explain the relation of culture with personality
- identify the relationship between culture and civilisation.

5.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous units, we have already learnt the concept of society and other basic concepts. Like the term, society there is another term, culture, which is often used in our day do day discussions. Both society and culture are interrelated concepts. Every society has its culture. Culture includes all

the rules, ideas, norms, social behaviour and the material objects made and used by members of the society. In this unit, we will discuss about the concept of culture, its characteristics and types. We will also briefly discuss, in this unit, the relationship between culture and personality and culture and civilisation.

5.3 CONCEPT OF CULTURE

By now, we have come to know that we all live in a society and we are all social beings. Whatever we do in society, right from waking up in the morning to the way we sleep at night are all the various aspects of culture. What we eat, the way we eat, we dress, talk, believe, write, and the ways we think are some examples of the different aspects of culture. Although there are individual differences in these ways, yet these differences are culturally defined. This leads us to the question, 'what is culture?'

In 1871, E. B. Tylor had given a broad definition of culture which is widely used even today. *"Culture…..is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, arts, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."*



Cumulative means getting added and increasing.

Coon defines culture as "*the sum total of the ways in which human beings live, transmitted from generation to generation by learning."*

Malinowski defined culture as the "***cumulative*** *creation of man."*

Culture, thus, means everything that human beings learn and act as a member of society. We all are members of a society. As a member of society, we need to formulate rules that are more or less accepted for shared social life and accordingly, we need to behave. We also identify and define ways of making and using material things in society. All these together constitute culture. Culture is the sum total of the learnt ways of living, and of doing of the entire society. It is also viewed as an instrument or tool that people use for social survival.



Mundane means ordinary or routine

Most of these rules, behaviours, and the material things have *mundane* applicability and are ***mundane*** occurrences of our day to day life such as the way we walk, talk, eat, and dress etc. Some have occasional applicability as the Presidential speech on India's Republic day, the Bihu festivals, etc.

All these are components of culture. We find that people in different parts of Assam speak Assamese in different ways. These local variations of speech are called as ***pidgin*** and are informal patterns. Again, the Assamese language has special literal form, style and structure. All these variations, the informal and ***formal*** together, are aspects of culture. Culture does not mean only refinement or elite culture but also the popular culture about which we shall learn more in this Unit. In brief, culture is the "entire way of life of an entire society".



Pidgin means simplified form of local language.

Formal means having a specific form and structure

5.4 NATURE OF CULTURE

Now, let us learn about the nature of culture. In discussing the nature of culture, we shall deal with the characteristics, paradoxes, functions and universals of culture. This will make the concept of culture clearer to us.

5.4.1 Characteristics

Culture has many characteristics of which we shall discuss the few basic ones —

- **Learnt.** Culture is not biologically inherited. The natural hair colour is a biologically given fact, while hair dying is a learnt practice. Culture is, therefore, based on learnt practice. The process of learning one's culture is called **enculturation**. It is because of this feature that a person born and brought up in India and later on settled, for example, in England, learns and acquires the ways of the English culture. Culture is acquired. We are not born with a culture but born into and grow within a culture. Right from the moment of our birth, we get into the process of learning and acquiring culture.
- **Shared.** Culture is shared by the members of a society. It means that it is constructed and accepted by the members of the society. It is not "culture of one". It is mutually constructed through a constant process of social interaction. Culture is constructed only when members of the society accept it. As culture is shared, the

members of the society are more or less able to understand each other and interact with each other in the society. This makes Culture social.

- **Symbolic.** Human beings can think symbolically and assign meanings to events. We see and interpret the world around us in symbolic terms. The sign of a 'namaskar' in Indian culture and that of a hand- shake in Western culture are different symbols of greetings and showing respect. Here, we find different symbols conveying the same meaning. In western culture, the showing of the thumb means wishing the best, while in others, it may mean an insult. Here, the same symbols have different meanings. We use language which is symbolic. Even the material objects have symbolic meaning. The chair in our culture is meant for sitting. Likewise, every aspect of culture is symbolic. And within a society we construct, learn and transmit the common meanings of these symbols through our behaviour, actions, language etc. and interact with each other. These common meanings are developed by people in society. Culture is, therefore, a construct developed by human interactions. Since culture is symbolic, it can be transmitted and learnt.
- **Integrated.** The various aspects of culture are interrelated with each other. For example, the economic aspects are related to the political aspects of culture. In India, the government which includes the political elements of our culture, decides and influences the economy of the country. In a similar way, education is related to the economy. With everything within a culture being interrelated, culture becomes a 'complex whole'. It is more or less an integrated whole. By integration, we mean some degree of smooth interrelation between the various aspects which make these different parts come together to form one big unit. There may not be complete smooth interrelation between its parts. There occurs some conflict between the parts of culture. Yet, some degree of integration is necessary for a culture to survive.



ACTIVITY 5.1

Make a list of five things that you consider are aspects of your culture ……

……

……

……

5.4.2 Paradoxes of Culture



Paradox means contradictory

Culture is both organic and super-organic. Culture, as we have said, is manmade. In this sense only, it is organic. Yet, it is considered to be external to human beings. We do not inherit culture biologically. The French sociologist, Emile Durkheim stressed that culture is outside us and exerts a strong force upon us. Culture influences our activities, moulds our ideas, thoughts and even our personality. The strength of culture becomes evident when we try to oppose it. In this regard, culture is super organic.

- Culture is stable, yet always changing. Within a culture, the parts have some degree of integration which gives the culture some degree of stability. Yet, this stability does not make culture static; it keeps on changing.
- It is universal in terms of human experience, yet it has local and regional manifestations. Every society has a culture. Yet, no two cultures are completely alike.

5.4.3 Functions of Culture

- Culture enables people to interpret and understand the world in which they live.
- It gives to people some common meanings and enables them to understand and interact with one other.



Melanesian Islanders are a diverse group of people who live in the region called Oceania of the WestPacificIslands north and north east of Australia. They are the earliest inhabitants of the region. They comprise the indigenous culture of the region.

- It enables a person to interact and adapt with the environment.
- It shapes the personality of the members of the society.

Every culture performs these functions. From cultures as simple as that of the ***Melanesian Islanders*** of the Pacific Ocean and tribes of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to complex societies such as the European culture, perform the above mentioned functions. Therefore, no culture can be considered as either superior or inferior to another one. Rather, culture is differentiated in accordance with the degree and nature of its complexity and other criteria. An understanding of the concept of culture equips a person to appreciate all the cultures and to understand culture in the context in which it occurs. This is called **cultural relativism**. In other words, it enables us not to evaluate other's cultures with the values, beliefs, practices and ideas of one's own culture. It enables us to perceive the different ways in which the different cultures cope with human problems. The knowledge of culture also enables us to overcome the attitude of **'ethnocentrism'**. Ethnocentrism implies the attitude of considering one's own culture as superior and that of others as inferior.

5.4.4 Universals of Culture

Culture is universal in human experience i.e. every human society has culture. In all the cultures, certain universal phenomena can be found which are called 'universals of culture' or 'culture universals'. Clark Wissler in 1923, presented nine cultural facts or cultural aspects as found universally in all human societies.

- Speech including language and writing systems
- Material traits
- Mythology and scientific knowledge
- Art
- Religious beliefs and practices including treatment of the sick and dead
- Family and social control
- Property, trade and exchange system

- Government and political forms
- War

5.5 TYPES OF CULTURE

According to Osgood, a culture has three basic components or aspects, viz, mental, social and material. The mental and social are together termed as the non-material culture.

- **Mental culture :** This comprises the shared ideas, beliefs, values, norms, and goals of a culture. In other words, this component includes the codes for behaviour in a society. In our culture, respecting elders and being loyal to family are some of our values; the various legislations on marriage and child-care are some of our norms. These are parts of our mental culture.
- **Social culture :** The members of a society behave in the society on the basis of shared ideas, values, beliefs, norms, etc,. The behavioural aspects of culture is the social culture. It is intrinsically related to the mental aspect. People follow the norms and accordingly, behave in society. The values and norms of the society allow space for creativity and diversity. Therefore, various patterns of behaviour emerge within the wide net of values and norms. Again, these norms are not always followed as they are. Occasionally, there occur some ***deviations*** from the norms. In Hindu culture as in most other cultures, polygyny is prohibited by norms. It is also prohibited by the Hindu Marriage Act. Yet, we find occasional instances of polygyny occurring and some sections of our society tolerating such behaviour. Among the Muslims, alcohol consumption is prohibited by religious norms, yet it is not always followed. Violation of norm is called *deviation*. Also, in due course of time, deviations and new patterns may become accepted by the society and become norms and values of the society. For example, caste ***endogamy*** in India has been the traditional norm for centuries. During the 19th century, with the social reformation movement in India, inter castes marriages occurred and now such marriages are facilitated



Deviation means Departing from the standard



Endogamy ismarrying within one's own group like caste and class

and protected by the Constitution of India by many legislations such as the Special Marriage Act, 1954. Thus, the behavioural or social realm of culture is related to the mental realm. The mental realm influences and guides social behaviour and also gets influenced by it.



Artifacts are the material objects made and used by man as pen, house, phone, satellite, etc.

- **Material culture :** These include all the material objects, those that are only used and those that are both made and used *(**artifacts***) by people in society. The material aspects include among other things the food we eat, both the raw apple and also the apple jam. It includes the clothes, houses, vehicles, etc. Material objects are either used directly from nature or it is further processed from nature to render it fit for human use. It is through material culture that society directly interacts with the environment and fulfills individual and social needs. In the making and using of items of material culture, certain rules and norms are followed and people interact with each other in this process. For example, in making a hand axe, a person follows an accepted design which he retains in his mind. In making the axe, he may buy from someone in the market the iron to make the blade and wood to make the handle of the axe. Here, the person is behaviourally interacting with many other persons in the process of making the hand axe following the norms. Here, we find that both mental and the social culture interact with the material culture.



LET US KNOW

The modern means of transport and mobile phones are examples of material culture. The uses of these have changed the nature of social relations. People can now communicate more easily than before. People from villages can work in the cities and towns on a daily basis and return home. This has brought changes in the social life in the villages. The use of mobile phone and internet has enabled people to communicate almost at anytime and anywhere and plan, arrange and rearrange different activities and avail various opportunities. A great variety and intensity

of work has become possible because of these modern means of communication. New patterns of behaviour and norms have consequently developed.

The above categorization of culture reveals the interrelationship among the three aspects or components of culture. In fact, we can repeat that culture is a "complex whole". Again, any part of culture, be it the economy, political, educational, religion, or family could be analysed using this model of categorization. For example, in India the political sphere has the ideological aspect in the form of values and rules enshrined in the Constitution of India. That India is a 'Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic' is our Constitutional value and goal. Based on these, we as the citizens of India, are, accordingly, required to behave. One example of our political behaviour is that we vote our representatives to the Legislature to form our government. The material culture includes the voting machines, the paper, stamp etc.

The above explanation also points out the relation between society and culture. While society is the group of individuals and groups who are interacting and behaving with each other, culture is the complex whole that includes the entire way of life of the entire group and society. For a society to perpetuate, it needs culture, i.e. a commonly shared way of life. For a culture to survive, it needs a society. Without society, there can be no culture. Thus, society and culture are the two sides of the same coin.



ACTIVITY 5.2

Your family is a part of the wider culture you belong to. Taking your family as an example, find out the mental, social and material aspects of it.

.....

.....

.....

There are some other categorizations of culture that try to focus on other dimensions of culture. Let us discuss some of these.

- **Subculture :** A society is composed of a varied number of social

groups having specific patterns of social and cultural life. They form sub-cultures within broad cultures. The Indian society has a broad and composite culture which we call the Indian culture. Within it, there are many religious groups, sects, castes, class and many linguistic, ethnic, regional groups, etc. Each of these groups comprises a sub-culture in relation to the broader Indian culture. With so many sub-cultures within a broader culture, there exists interrelation between them. All these groups together have some common broad cultural patterns which keep these subcultures more or less integrated to form a wider complex whole. One example of the common cultural patterns in an ethnically, linguistically and religiously diverse India, is the principles of Indian Constitution.

Simple societies, i.e. societies having a simple technological and social system usually have a single integrated culture shared by everyone. Complex societies have many sub-cultures within it which make the society complex. Indian society is a complex society.

- **High Culture or Elitist Culture :** There are certain aspects of culture which are held in high esteem and are exclusive to a few sections in the society, as the culture of the ruling class, art and literature. Although highly regarded, they are not accessible to all in the society, as literature is accessed only by the educated, and the ruling class is a small, more or less exclusive group. Entry into this group is difficult for many.
- **Popular culture or pop culture :** It is referred to as those that are popularly represented in a culture. Culture by definition is commonly shared ways of life and this would mean that all aspects of culture are popular. But when we analyse the complex societies, we can find that there exists the high or elitist culture. On the other hand, there are cultural elements that are widespread in the sense that most of the people participate in these patterns of cultural life. It includes the day-to-day interactions, needs, etc. that constitute the everyday life of the mainstream (ordinary majority). Cooking, clothing, folklore, mass-media, etc. are elements of popular culture. These are transmitted

through the vernacular language or the common lingua franca and hence, have widespread appeal and accessibility.

- **Mass Culture :** There is an approach that equates pop culture with Mass Culture. This is seen as a commercial culture, mass produced for mass consumption. When popular culture is shaped by the mass media, distributed and marketed, it is mass culture. Mass culture becomes possible only with modern communication and electronic media. The mass media may pick up elements of the prevalent high culture and the popular culture and bring it to the wider public. It is said that mass media entertainment industry that includes fashion, advertisements, television soaps, sports, etc have an appeal to the general public and are widely consumed by the public. As such, these go on to produce a culture which is called mass culture.

5.6 CULTURE AND PERSONALITY

The relation between culture and personality has been viewed as interdependent and interactive. Personality is made up of the characteristic patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that make a person unique. In addition to this, personality remains fairly consistent throughout life.

Every society has a culture. Through the process of socialisation (or enculturation), the culture of the society is internalised by the members of the society. The individual from her/his childhood onward learns the values, beliefs, norms, and the social and cultural practices of the society. In this process, culture moulds the personality of its members. Kardiner and Linton are of the view that culture frames the 'basic personality types' shared by most of the members of the society.

At the same time, culture is man-made and culture keeps changing. It is the members of the society who brings change into the culture. Culture always provides space for creativity and in the personalities of the members such characteristics and capabilities are nurtured. Also, in a culture there exist some conflicts and tensions which find reflections in the personality of its members. These characteristics also bring changes in culture through

the agency of people. Through these, people bring changes in their cultures. Again, the continuities of the culture are also due to the personalities that the culture shapes. People maintain the culture they have learnt.

5.7 CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION

Since the emergence of man, human society has passed through three stages - savagery, barbarism and civilization. Civilization is a more developed stage of society which is correlated with the growth of cities, the emergence of writing, science and so on. Thus, civilization represents a particular type of culture.

However, there are some differences between culture and civilization. Culture is regarded as the moral, spiritual and intellectual attainments of man. On the other hand, civilization refers to the whole machinery and complex of devices developed by man.

Civilization is external. It caters to the external needs of man and consists of technology, material culture and social institutions. It is the sum total of the instruments of cultural life. Culture is something internal. It is the expression of our modes of living and thinking. MacIver and Page have said, "*Civilization is what we have, culture is what we are*."



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1: Fill in the blanks with appropriate words.

(a) The process of learning one's culture is called _____

(b) _____ implies the attitude of considering one's own culture as superior and that of others as inferior.

Q.2: What is Mass Culture?

.....

.....

.....

.....



5.8 LET US SUM UP

- Culture means everything that human beings learn and act as a member of society.
- Society and culture are like two sides of the same coin.
- Society is the social relations of the groups and individuals. Culture is the total way of life of man in society and social groups.
- Culture comprises the mental, social and material aspects.
- Culture shapes individual and group personality, yet it provides scope for individual variations and creativity.
- Culture is not biologically inherited.



5.9 FURTHER READING

1) H.M.Johnson, Sociology- A Systematic Introduction. Allied Publishers Pvt. Ltd.New Delhi
2) H.K Rawat, Sociology: Basic Concepts, Rawat Publications, Jaipur.
3) R.K.Sharma, Social Change and Social Control, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors (P) Ltd. New Delhi.
4) W.E. Ogburn and M.F.Nimkoff, Sociology, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston.



5.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q1: a) enculturation b) ethnocentrism

Answer to Q2: When popular culture is shaped by the mass media, distributed and marketed, it is mass culture. Mass culture becomes possible only with modern communication and electronic media.



5.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q1. Define culture. Describe its nature. (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q2. What are the various types of culture?

B) Long Question (Answer each question in about 300-350 words)

Q1. "Culture is a complex whole." Discuss.

Q2. "The relation between culture and personality is one of interaction and interdependence." Explain.

** *** **

UNIT 6: SOCIAL GROUPS

UNIT STRUCTURE

6.1 Learning Objectives

6.2 Introduction

6.3 Meaning of Social Group

- 6.3.1 Characteristics of Social Group
- 6.3.2 Differences of a Social Group with an Aggregate and Category

6.4 Types of Social Group

- 6.4.1 Primary Social Group
- 6.4.2 Secondary Social Group
- 6.4.3 Differences between Primary and Secondary Social Group
- 6.4.4 In-Group and Out-Group
- 6.4.5 Reference Group
- 6.4.6 Organised Group and Unorganized Group
- 6.4.7 Voluntary and Involuntary Group
- 6.4.8 Quasi Group

6.5 Let Us Sum Up

6.6 Further Reading

6.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

6.8 Model Questions

6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to —

- explain how Social groups are formed and the importance of Social groups in Society
- explain the structure of different Social groups
- discuss the objectives behind formation of different social groups.

6.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Unit, we have learnt about the meaning, characteristics and types of culture. We have also learnt that both society and culture are interrelated concepts. People in a society behave according to social norms

and through the statuses they occupy. While behaving in society, people form groups. If you observe your own society, you will find the existence of a wide variety of social groups. People behave as members of various groups. **Social groups** have some socially defined purposes and relatively stable patterns of social relation. In the process, social groups enable the varied interests of society to be met. In this Unit, we will learn about social group: its various types, purposes, significance in the society and about group behaviour.

6.3 SOCIAL GROUP: MEANING AND DEFINITION

A social group is a collection of individuals who interact with one another and who recognise themselves as a distinct social unit. Sociologist Marshall Jones defines social group as the unit of "*two or more people between whom there is an established pattern of interaction*." The above two definitions of social group present several inherent characteristics of the social group.

6.3.1 Characteristics of Social Group

- A social group is an aggregate of individuals.
- Members of a group share some common goals or purposes.
- Among the members of a social group, frequent interactions take place.
- These interactions assume some stable patterns.
- Such interaction leads to sharing of values and of beliefs among the members.
- This makes them identify themselves with one another.
- Such common identification leads to attachments and group solidarity.
- These give an "objective" existence to the groups. The group becomes a definite entity with a distinct subculture.

Social groups are important both to their members and to the society at large. Some of them are the most stable and enduring of social units and form the foundation of a society. In that sense, a family, a village, a political party, a trade union are all social groups.

6.3.2 Differences of a Social Group with an Aggregate and Category

A **social group** is distinct from an aggregate. An **aggregate** is simply a collection of anonymous people who happen to be at the same place at the same time such as the viewers at a cinema hall, shoppers at a market, a crowd, etc. They are gathered there either for individual and separate purposes or for a very limited common purpose as watching a movie or cricket match, all of which are of very short term nature. Hence, the interaction of the people in an aggregate is very temporary. As such, no definite and enduring pattern of behaviour or relation develops among the people in an aggregate. The people walk in and out of the aggregate. It is a short term phenomenon. Thus, an aggregate is not a social group. A social group has an enduring social existence with set goals, set patterns of behaviour and a feeling of group solidarity. An aggregate is sociologically significant because the aggregate has the potentiality to conduct such collective behaviour that may have an impact in the institutionalised behaviour of the society. As for example, the rioting and lootings committed by an aggregate like a crowd, the spreading of rumour within an aggregate, panic and hysteria occurring within an aggregate etc. can all have important social consequences.

A **category** is a collection of people sharing characteristics like education, social status, physical characteristics, etc. Common categories include subdivisions of gender, age, race, occupation, education, people below poverty line etc. Even victims of violence, people with tall stature, etc. constitute a category. Categories are so broad that enduring social relations based on specified common goals usually does not occur. This is the difference between categories and social groups. But the commonalities of the people in a category may provide sections of them the necessary base to constitute social groups. The section has to limit the scope of its expanse to form a group. As for example, the doctors of a specific region may form a doctors' association to work on their interests.

LET US KNOW

- A society is a system of social relationship and not simply a collection of human beings. People living in a society are members of that society i.e., membership is compulsory.
- Social groups are different from social classes, or status groups or crowds, which do not have the structure. They are categories and aggregates.

6.4 TYPES OF SOCIAL GROUP

In society, we find that various types of social groups are formed with a view to realising certain goals. Depending on their size and structure, purpose of formation, strength of relationship between the members, etc, social groups have been classified in various ways by various social scientists. Some of such important classifications are discussed below.

6.4.1 Primary Social Group

According to the degree of closeness of the members, social groups are often classified into two broad categories—namely primary and secondary.

In Sociology, the **Primary Group** refers to a social group that shares close and personal relations among the members. For example, our family, neighbourhood, etc. A Primary group is a typically small social group. The members of such groups share concern for one another; they share activities and culture pattern, and spend long periods of time together.

Family is the basic primary group that is almost universal in all societies

The following are the basic characteristics of a primary group:

- Primary groups are mainly informal and members freely interact face to face with each other spontaneously without observing any formalities.

- Primary groups are smaller in size and, therefore, effective relationship between the members is possible.
- Primary groups are stable in nature and, therefore, relatively permanent.
- In a primary group, self-interest of the members is secondary; common interest comes first.

In primary groups the relations among the members are personal. It means that almost all the aspects of the personal life of its members are a concern to the other. This nature of intimate social involvement among the members make the relation informal and relatively long term. Since it involves all the person, the withdrawal of one person changes the composition of the group. As for example, in a group comprising of spouses, if one withdraws the group ceases to exist.

6.4.2 Secondary Social Group

Now, since we know what a primary group is, it would not be difficult for us to define a secondary group. We have already stated that members of a primary group are closely related. In a **secondary group,** however, members have a lesser level of personal relations than a primary group. People in a Secondary group interact on a less personal level than in a primary group, and their relationships are temporary rather than long lasting. Since secondary groups are established to perform functions, roles of the members are more interchangeable. In a society, every person is performing roles.

From this definition, it follows that:

- Secondary groups are usually larger in size e.g. political parties, trade unions and corporations, international associations, etc.
- Membership in the case of secondary groups is mainly voluntary. Individuals are at liberty to join or to go away from the groups. However, there are some secondary groups like the State whose membership is almost involuntary.
- Physical proximity is not a character of the Secondary group. There

are secondary groups, which are not limited to any definite area like Rotary International and Lions Club, etc. The members of such groups are scattered over a vast area.

- Secondary groups are constituted to realize some specific interests or ends. Because of this, they are also sometimes called special interest groups. Members of the group are united because they have specific ends to aim at.
- Sometimes these specific aims and interests may be achieved within a short span of time. Once these are fulfilled, the group dissolves or may transform into some other groups with newer aims, goals and rules. For example, an enquiry committee set by a government to probe into a matter is a temporary social group. Once the enquiry is complete and the final report submitted to the government, the committee gets dissolved. Some groups as Rotary International, BCCI, etc. have long lasting interest and aims and these continue for a much longer time.
- Contacts and communications in the case of secondary groups are mostly indirect. Mass media of communication such as radio, telephone, television, newspaper, movies, magazines and post and telegraph are resorted to by the members to have communication.
- As secondary groups are bigger in size, the members of the group usually do not stay together and, therefore, the relations among the members are indirect, impersonal and non inclusive.
- Since the group is status and role specific, and the occupants of the status are of instrumental significance, the group is not dependent upon a person but rather on status. When an occupant of the status leaves, it may be occupied by another one and the group continues. Secondary groups are structure based and a change in occupants does not change its structure.

6.4.3 Differences between Primary and Secondary Social Group

From what we have discussed above, it is clear that both primary and secondary groups have some differences. In the following table, some of the differences between the primary and secondary groups have been serialised.

Primary group

- The sizes of the groups are usually small.
- They originate naturally and spontaneously.
- Face to face intimate relationship between the members.
- Communication between the members is direct and quick.
- Members are united for common interest and common welfare. Individual interest is secondary.
- Membership in a primary group is mandatory.
- Members cooperate with each other directly and work together in critical situations.
- As these groups are spontaneous, the status, powers and functions of the members are not regulated by any formal rules or procedure.
- The group has effective control over their members, although, means of control is informal.

Secondary group

- Sizes are big.
- They are created purposefully with certain aims.
- Formal and less-intimate relationship between the members.
- Communication between the members is not always direct as they spread over a large area.
- Members join secondary groups to realize their own interest. That is why secondary groups are also called 'special interest groups.'
- Membership is voluntary.
- Cooperation is mostly indirect and even in critical situations cooperation is not spontaneous.

- The status, powers and functions of each member are formally laid down in rules and regulations.
- The group has only limited control, although, they have laid down rules and regulations.

Despite these differences, we find that primary groups develop within the secondary groups and they influence the dynamics and functioning of a secondary group. Within a trade union and political party, groups of friends develop. Primary groups serve as buffer between the individual and the larger society and secondary groups. We find the way our family and friends enable and support our interaction with the larger society. They facilitate our participation in secondary groups as schools, colleges, etc.



ACTIVITY 6.1

Make a list of three secondary groups of which you are a member.

.....

.....

Note four differences you observe between your primary groups and your secondary groups.

.....

.....



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1: Is Social Group an aggregate?

.....

.....

.....

Q.2: What is a Category?

.....

.....

.....

Q.3: Give an example of Primary group.

.....

.....

.....

Q.4: What is the nature of relation in a Secondary group?

.....

.....

.....

6.4.4 In-Group and Out-Group

In sociology, we find another set of groups known as **in- group** and **out- group**. Both these groups exist with reference to the opposite group. If an in-group exists, then there must be an out-group. In other words, there cannot be an in-group if there is no out-group or vice versa.

The term in-group in Sociology refers to a group of people who are united by common beliefs, attitudes, or interests by which they identify themselves. The attachment of the members of the in-group is the outcome of their hatred for or opposition towards another group known as out-group.

For example, for a group of cricket lovers, all others who love cricket constitute an in-group, while members of hockey or football lovers constitute their out-groups. This concept of in-group and out-group can further be simplified with the help of Sociologist Horton and Hunt's definition. The groups to which a person can say "my group" are his/or her in-groups e.g. my family, my clan, my religion, my state etc. The person belongs to all these groups which he refers as 'my group', while the other's family, other's clan, other's religion etc. to which he or she does not belong are out-group for him or her.

Sometimes, in-group out-group relationship may overlap. For example, members belonging to a town, irrespective of their caste, creed, religion, etc constitute an in-group and other town dwellers constitute their out-groups. But when the same town dwellers consider

their caste group, all the persons belonging to their caste spread over several towns constitute their caste in-group. This happens because the same person may be members of various groups.

Members of an in-group are loyal to the group members. They help each others in times of need and do everything to achieve superiority over their out-group.

The in-group members always believe that their group is the best and most dependable. An excommunication of a member from the group, therefore, affects the member badly.

6.4.5 Reference Group

Reference group is another type of social group which as the name suggests, acts as a frame of reference to which people always refer to evaluate their achievements, their role performance, aspirations and ambitions. Acording to the sociologists Ogburn and Nimkoff, "*groups which serve as points of comparison are known as reference groups.*" Eminent sociologist, Merton defined reference groups as *"those groups which are the referring points of the individuals, towards which he is oriented and which influences his opinion, tendency and behaviour"*.

The individual is surrounded by countless reference groups. In some situations, an individual despite belonging to his own group likes to be identified as members of another group. For him or her, this second group is ideal and acts as a reference group. In a society, we find various classes of people. People always try to achieve the rank and characteristics of a higher class. Economically weaker sections always attempt to become economically stronger, that is to say, that they aspire to be identified as persons belonging to elite sections of the society. In this context, elite group may be considered as a reference group for the person belonging to the economically weaker group.

6.4.6 Organised Group and Unorganized Group

Depending on the degree of organisation, groups may be classified into organised group and unorganised group. An organised group is

one which comes into being through some systematically formulated norms to realise some definite objectives. Such groups are sometimes called associational groups. Organised groups are of various sizes, it may be as small as a family and also as big as political party or trade unions.

Unorganised groups come into existence suddenly without any careful planning. They are unorganised because they do not follow any specific norms or have any specific objectives to realise. The group members in an unorganised group are not loyal or sympathetic to each other. In most cases, they do not know each other. Such unorganised groups are temporary in nature. Crowds watching a football match or cricket match or cultural night, mobs engaged in vandalism or demonstrating physical power, etc are examples of unorganised group. Some sociologists would prefer to term such groups as aggregates rather than social groups. Regulatory norms are absent in the case of this groups.

6.4.7 Voluntary and Involuntary Group

Depending on the nature of joining a group by its members, groups can be divided into voluntary groups and involuntary groups. Voluntary groups are those whose membership is not mandatory – one may join it or may not join it. A person may join an art group to pursue his/ her interest. Such groups are voluntary groups. But there are groups, the membership of which is mandatory. A person is a member of his/her own clan. A student is a member of his school / college students' union. These groups are termed an involuntary group.

6.4.8 Quasi Group

A quasi group is not organised or structured. It is a collection of members who do not actually know or feel that they have some common purposes. Bottomore defines Quasi group as *"an aggregate which lacks structure or organisation and whose members may be*

unaware or less aware of the existence of grouping." In that sense, each age and sex group of a population constitutes a quasi group. Similarly, classes or status group in a society also is an example of quasi group.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS



Q.5: Are Unorganised groups permanent in nature?

.....

.....

.....

Q6: Distinguish between Voluntary and Involuntary Group.

.....

.....

.....



6.5 LET US SUM UP

- A social group is a collection of individuals who interact with one another and who recognise themselves as a distinct social unit.
- Among the members of a social group, frequent interactions take place.
- A social group is distinct from an aggregate
- In society, we find that various types of social groups are formed with a view to realising certain goals
- According to the degree of closeness of the members, social groups are often classified into two broad categories—namely primary and secondary.
- Primary Group refers to a social group that shares close and personal relations among the members. For example, our family, neighbourhood, etc.
- Members of a Secondary group have a lesser level of personal relations than a primary group. People in a Secondary group interact on a less personal level than in a primary group, and their relationships are temporary rather than long lasting.

- The term in-group in Sociology refers to a group of people who are united by common beliefs, attitudes, or interests by which they identify themselves
- Reference group is another type of social group which name suggests acts as a frame of reference to which people always refer to evaluate their achievements, their role performance, aspirations and ambitions
- An organised group is one which comes into being through some systematically formulated norms to realise some definite objectives.
- Unorganised groups come into existence suddenly without any careful planning. They are unorganised because they do not follow any specific norms or have any specific objectives to realise.
- Depending on the nature of joining a group by its members, groups can be divided into voluntary groups and involuntary groups
- Voluntary groups are those whose membership is not mandatory – one may join it or may not join it.
- But there are groups the membership of which is mandatory.
- A quasi group is not organised or structured. It is a collection of members who do not actually know or feel that they have some common purposes.



6.6 FURTHER READING

1) Abraham Francis. (2006). *Contemporary Sociology – An Introduction to Concepts and Theories* (Chapter – 1&7). Oxford University Press.
2) Bhushan B.(2006). *Dictionary of Sociology*.New Delhi: Anmol Publications Pvt. Ltd.
3) Rawat H.K. (2007). *Sociology-Basic Concepts*. Jaipur: Rawat Publications.
4) R. M. Mac Iver and Charles H. Page. (2001). Society – An Introductory Analysis (Chapter – 1&10). New Delhi: Macmillan India Ltd.
5) Vidya Bhushan and D.R. Sachdeva. (2005). Text Book of Sociology (Chapter – 1, 3, 4, 12, 14, 22).New Delhi: Kitab Mahal.



6.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q1: A social group is distinct from an aggregate. An aggregate is simply a collection of anonymous people who happen to be at the same place at the same time such as the viewers at a cinema hall, shoppers at a market, a crowd, etc. But a social group has an enduring social existence with set goals, set patterns of behaviour and a feeling of group solidarity.

Ans to Q2: A category is a collection of people sharing characteristics like education, social status, physical characteristics, etc.

Ans to Q3: Family is an example of Primary group.

Ans to Q4: Relationships among the members in a Secondary group are indirect, impersonal and non inclusive. It is temporary rather than long lasting.

Ans to Q5: Unorganised groups are not permanent but temporary in nature.

Ans to Q6: Voluntary groups are those whose membership is not mandatory – one may join it or may not join it but Involuntary groups are those whose membership is compulsory.



6.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q1: What are the characteristics of a Social Group.

Q2: Distinguish between In-group and Out-group.

Q3: What is Reference group?

B) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q1: Explain the characteristics of Primary Group.

Q2: Distinguish between Primary and Secondary Group.

** *** **

UNIT 7: FAMILY; MARRAIGE AND KINSHIP

UNIT STRUCTURE

7.1 Learning Objectives

7.2 Introduction

7.3 Family: Meaning and Definitions

- 7.3.1 Characteristics
- 7.3.2 Types
- 7.3.3 Functions

7.4 Marriage: Meaning and Definitions

- 7.4.1 Characteristics
- 7.4.2 Functions
- 7.4.3 Forms

7.5 Kinship: Meaning and Definitions

- 7.5.1 Degree of Kinship
- 7.5.2 Kinship System

7.6 Let Us Sum Up

7.7 Further Reading

7.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

7.9 Model Questions

7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to—

- explain the concepts of family, marriage and kinship
- discuss the characteristics, functions and types of family
- explain the different features and forms of marriage
- describe the significance of kinship system.

7.2 INTRODUCTION

In every society, there are economic institutions, political institutions, religious institutions and Social Institutions the family, marriage, kinship etc,. The more complex and differentiated a society becomes, the more varied

its institutions become. Each of these institutions comprises certain sets of norms and values that guide the behaviour of the people. The institutions are also interrelated. In the previous unit, we have learnt about Social Groups. In this unit, we will learn about some important social institutions such as family, kinship, marriage.

7.3 FAMILY: MEANING AND DEFINITION

Family is the basic social institution. Families vary from society to society. Relationship between the members of the family is considered as the oldest social institution of mankind. It has the capability to absorb changes in the society.

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

G.P. Murdock defines family as *"a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two of them maintain a socially approved sexual relation and one or more children, own or adopted of the sexually cohabiting adults."*

7.3.1 Characteristics

The distinctive features of family as an institution are as follows.

- **It is universal:** Family is present in all human societies at all time.
- **Emotional basis:** It is based on the most profound impulses of our organic nature like mating, procreation, maternal devotion and parental care. The secondary emotions include romantic love, affection, desire for economic security, yearning for perpetuity.
- **Formative influence:** Family moulds the personality of the individual. It is the basic agent of socialization.

- **Limited size:** The size of the family is limited.
- **Nuclear position in the social structure:** In simpler societies, the whole society is built upon family. In complex societies also, it continues to be the most essential institution.
- **Responsibility of the members:** It is the most demanding of all social institutions as far as obligation and responsibilities of the individual members are concerned.
- **Social regulation:** Family regulates the behaviour of its members in accordance with social norms and values.
- **Temporary and unchanging nature of family:** The institution of family is permanent and universal but the family as an association changes its structure due to death, new birth, migration and divorce.
- **It is bilateral in nature:** It means the relatives of both the father's and mother's side are given equal importance. In other kin groups like clan or *gotra*, and caste in Hindu society only the father's side is included. In matrilineal societies like the Khasi and the Garo, clan members belong to mother's side only. But in all societies, families include members from both the side as the spouses belong to different clans.

7.3.2 Types

Family may be viewed from different viewpoints. From the point of family structure we may divide family into two broad categories.

- **Nuclear Family** (also known as simple, primary, elementary family) **:** Ist is composed of a man, his wife and their unmarried children, own or adopted. It is most common in contemporary Western and Indian societies as well as among some tribal communities.
- **Joint family**: If two or more nuclear families live together with a common hearth (kitchen) and a common purse (income), then this type of family is known as joint family. Hindu joint family is the

best example of such family where several brothers and their parents live together.

- From the point of view of an individual (ego), the family may be classified into two types:
- **Family of orientation**: It is the family in which one is born. One's identity in this family is as son or daughter of the parents.
- **Family of procreation**: It is the family which one sets up after one's marriage. One's identity in this family will be as father or mother of the children.

  While, for the parents it is family of procreation, for the children the same family is family of orientation.
- On the basis of residence, families may be divided into the following categories:
- **Patrilocal family**: If after marriage, the bride goes to reside in the residence of the groom's parents then it is known as patrilocal family.
- **Matrilocal family**: In this type of family, the groom after marriage goes to reside in the residence of the bride's Parents. Among the Khasi, Garos and Jaintias of Meghalaya such types of families can be observed

7.3.3 Functions

According to Kingsley Davis, the major social functions of the family are:

- Reproduction,
- Maintenance,
- Social replacement of the young and
- Socialisation.

We may explain the functions of the family in another way too.

- **Biological Function :** The basic function of the family is the bearing of the children. This function is most important since the very continuance of the species depends upon it. In this process, the

family regulates and regularize the incorporation of members into the society.

- **Socialising function :** The second function is rearing children to the stage that the society considers to be normal adulthood. The task of the family is to channelise the drives, urges and impulses of the individual in ways approved by the society. The family does it by the use of parental authority and affection.
- **Sustenance Function:** The third function that societies expect the family to perform is to provide sustenance to family members. Thus, the family sustains its members by providing the day to day needs of food, shelter, clothing, care and personal protection. By performing these vital functions the family plays a very significant role in society.
- **Property Transmission :** A fourth function given to this institution is the holding and transmission of property. The rules vary from society to society but in general, property is held and transmitted through the family.
- **Transmission of culture:** The family also functions as a transmitter of cultural heritage from one generation to the next.

ACTIVITY 7.1



- Think of some other functions which are performed by the family.

  .....

  .....

  .....

- Are some of the functions of family transferable to other institutions? Make a list of some that are transferrable and some that are not.

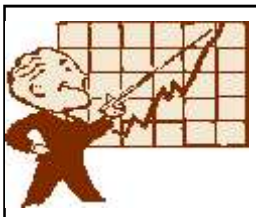
  .....

  .....

  .....

The family is a unit having primary relations among the members. It is a primary social group. The members can get involved with the total social personality of all its members. We have already mentioned that family provide sustenance to its members and socializes its members. As part of these, the family provides basic health care, education, entertainment to its members and it is within a family that children generally come to acquire their religious identity and learn of the religious practices, and develop and share political views.

In a modern complex society as that of ours, there are many secondary groups and institutions performing some specialised functions for the society, like the medical, entertainment, educational, economic etc. Some of the functions of family like health, education, economic and entertainment are shared between the family and these institutions. Still, there are some functions of the family like the legitimate sexual relation between some of the members, birth of legitimate members in society, ascribing identity and status to the members of the society that are possible only within a family. Again, in regard to most of the functions that the other institutions perform in society, the functions of family overlaps, influences and responds to these. Because of these functions and role that family performs in society, it has been universal in society. It is so even in modern times, despite the prevalence of certain social arrangements alternate to marriage as co-habiting adults, gay relations, etc. As a corollary, the institution of marriage is universal.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1: Give a definition of family.

.....

.....

Q2: What is the difference between a family of orientation and family of procreation?

.....

.....

.....

Q3: Give an example of patrilocal family?

.....

.....

.....

7.4. MARRAIGE: MEANING AND DEFINITION

Marriage is one of the universal social institutions. It is through marriage that human societies control and regulate the sex life of man. It is closely related to the institution of family. As Gillin and Gillin have said, "*Marriage is a socially approved way of establishing a family of procreation*". Malinowski says that marriage is a *"contract for the production and maintenance of children".* Duncan Mitchell's "A Dictionary of Sociology" defines marriage as *"a socially sanctioned sex relationship involving two or more people of the opposite sex, whose relationship is expected to endure beyond the time required for gestation and birth of children."*

Marriage has different implications in different cultures. Its purposes, functions and forms may differ from society to society, but it is present everywhere as an institution.

7.4.1 Characteristics

- **Universality:** Marriage is universal. Its purposes, functions and forms may differ from society to society, but it is present everywhere as an institution.
- **Marital bond is enduring.** Marriage paves the way for a long term relation between marital partners.
- **It is a relationship at least between two persons:** The institution of marriage is prevalent in all societies. In most societies, marriage permits sexual relationship between the partners and legitimises the birth of children. It thus involves at least two persons.
- **Marriage requires social approval.** Marriage is not merely an approval between the partners concerned. The relation needs to be acknowledged by the society. Usually, marriage is solemnised

through a ritual, which may be religious or secular. Through this ritual the marital relation between the spouses are accepted by the society.

- **Marriage creates mutual obligations.** Marriage involves a set of relations between the spouses. Mutual obligation and rights mark this special relation.



LET US KNOW

Among the Nuers of Africa, certain special forms of marriage are permitted. In one such form known as 'woman marriage', marriage takes place between two women, one of whom plays the role of a husband and the other of a wife. The woman-husband permits sexual relation to the wife with some of her male kinsmen. The wife, otherwise, must not maintain physical relation with any other man. Children born out of such approved relations are considered as children of the woman-husband. The Nuers also have Ghost marriage. One of the social responsibilities of all Nuer man is to give birth to a male child. If a married man dies before fulfilling this obligation, it then becomes the responsibility of the deceased man's kinsmen to fulfill the duty on behalf of the deceased. One of the kinsmen assumes the responsibility, socially accepts the bride on behalf of the deceased. Thus, the child born of this union is recognized as the child of the deceased rather than of the biological father. This is called as Ghost marriage.

7.4.2 Functions

Marriage performs various functions vital to the society.

- In the first place, marriage provides stability to the sex relationship between man and woman and thereby gives stability to a family. A stable marriage is essential for the continuity of the family.
- Secondly, it provides a recognised and socially accepted setup for procreation of children. It is one of the basic needs of every

human being to be born in a socially accepted manner and to have a social identity.

- Thirdly, marriages involve economic cooperation between the partners.

7.4.3 Forms

The sex-ratio in society normally does not deviate from the natural 1:1 and as its logical consequence monogamy should be the rule.

- **Monogamy** refers to marriage between one man and one woman. But, in some societies, for various reasons, there are deviations from monogamy. These forms are described below:
- **Polygamy** refers to marriage between one individual with more than one partner. There are two broad categories of polygamy.
- In **Polygyny,** a man takes more than one wife. Very often chieftain of tribes such as Nishi, Wanchoo of North-East India take many wives not because of their sex need but because it adds to their prestige or helps widen their relationships, or to enlarge their family so as to get more labour force.
- **Polyandry,** is another type of polygamous marriage. In this case, one woman takes more than one male as her husbands. If those are brothers, and they generally are, the marriage is *fraternal polyandry*. Todas, a tribal people of the Nilgiri hills of Southern India practice this form of marriage. It prevails in Tibet also. In these societies, social fatherhood is more important than biological ones.

Several husbands sharing several wives on equal terms would constitute group marriage. Such marriages are very rare.

Marriage can be distinguished on the basis of restrictions imposed by the society on the choice of partner. Society everywhere limits the choice of partners. Marriage between close blood relatives is known as incest. Marriage within the nuclear family is almost universally prohibited. It is called **incest taboo.**

When marriage is prescribed within one's own group then it is termed as **endogamy** as for example, marriage within one's caste

group**.** On the other hand, the rule that insists on marriage outside one's own group is called **exogamy,** like marriage outside one's family, and clan (gotra)**.** Caste is an endogamous group. It is because, according to Hindu rules, one must marry within one's own caste group. Similarly, tribe, community, religious groups encourage endogamy. Endogamy at family level was known to exist in some rare instances, in certain royal groups. In Hawaii, Peru and Ancient Egypt, a ruler, being scion of divine lineage, could properly mate only with his own sister. But such instances are only rare exceptions to the universal incest taboo (marital unions among brothers and sisters and parents and offspring). Cousin marriages are fairly widespread.

One must bear in mind that every pattern of marriage has distinctive functions and are result of some causes. In societies where a woman is considered as an economic asset, the man seeking the hand of that woman for marriage has to pay some bride price to the parents in cash or kind. In societies where a woman is considered more of a liability, it is the family of the woman who pay in cash or kind to the bridegroom's family as compensation for undertaking the liability.

7.5 KINSHIP: MEANING AND DEFINITIONS

Kinship is the most important social bond. It represents one of the basic social institutions. Kinship refers to the culturally distinct relationships between individuals who are most likely thought of having family ties. In many societies, kinship provides a way for transmitting status and property from one generation to the next. Kinship includes relationships through marriage and relationships through blood. The first type of bond is created by social and legal definition of marriage in a society and is called **affinal kinship** and the individuals connected through it are affinal kin to each other(usually) without having any blood relation among them. Husband and wife, father-in-law and daughter-in-law are some examples of affinal kin. The second kind of bond is that of the so-called blood relatives, and is referred to as **consanguineal kins.** Some examples of consanguineal

kinship relations are those between parents and children, brothers and sisters, grand-parents and grand children and such others. Consanguineal kin or relatives are related through birth or adoption. These are called blood relatives in common parlance. *Consanguineal kins are socially accepted blood relations.* It is not important whether there is a biological relation or not, but the social acceptance that such a relation exists is important.

According to Prof. D. N. Majumdar and T.N.Madan, kinship is the most universal and basic bond based on the drive for reproduction. Kinship is a system of relationship (social bond) among consanguine kins and among affinal kins. As these are relationships, each is related to status and role.

Since kinship involves relationship between consanguines and affines, it includes relations that are both **horizontal and vertical**. Among the consanguines, for example, the relationship may be between cousins, i.e. same generation, who are horizontally related, and between parent-child, uncle/aunt "nephew/niece, grandparent" grandchild, i.e. across generation(s) .i.e. vertically related. The latter one is termed as **descent**. Among affinal kins also, father-in-law and daughter-in-law will be vertical relations.

7.5.1 Degree of Kinship

Relatives can be categorized on the basis of degree of relatedness to each other:

- **Primary relatives or kins** are related to each other directly. There are no intermediate persons between them. While husband and wife are primary affinal kins, the relationships between parents and children, and between siblings are instances of primary consanguineal relatives**.**
- **Secondary relatives or kins** include those kins who are related to the primary kin of an individual, such as daughter-in-law, father-in law, sisters-in- law, step-father and such others. These relatives are related to an individual (termed as ego) through one of his/her primary relative. For example, one's daughter-in-law is the primary affinal kin of one's son (i.e. wife).
- **Tertiary Kin:** The tertiary kins refer to the primary kin of the

secondary relative or kin. For example, one's son's father-in-law (son's wife's father) is one's tertiary kin.

The degree of kinship can thus be calculated, at least theoretically, to the 9th degree.

7.5.2 Kinship System

A kinship system includes all relationships based on blood and marriage that link people in a web of rights and obligations, the kind of groups that may be formed in a society on the basis of kinship and the system of terms used to classify different kin. The system of kinship involves the following basic aspects:

- Kinship system is an important sub-system of the total social structure.
- It is a network of one to one (dyadic) social relations between person to person in a community.
- It involves relationship with consanguine and affine.
- The relationships define myriad aspects important for the society such as marriage, succession, inheritance, role expectations, economic role, political role, religious role, etc.
- These are regulated by social rules and norms.

Radcliffe-Brown, an eminent social scientist, calls kinship system a system of **kinship and affinity**. The term 'affinity' means relation through marriage while 'kinship' here refers to consanguineal or blood relatives i.e. relation through descent. According to him, a kinship system is in the first place a system of *dyadic* relations between person to person in a community, the behaviour of any two persons in any of these relations being regulated in some way, and to a greater or less extent by social usage. It is a network of one to one (dyadic) social relations between person to person in a community.

We have noted that each person has two sets of relative or kins —consanguineal (related through blood or descent) and affinal (related through marriage). In a society, the mutual rights and duties of relatives to one another are defined by social norms and usages. All these

networks, groups and social practices regarding kinship are part of kinship system.

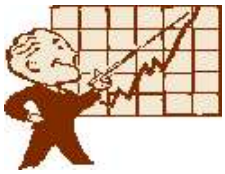


LET US KNOW

Clan and lineage are kin groups, i.e. groups based on consanguine kinship, where the members trace their descent from a common ancestor/ancestress either along the male or female line, but not both. Clan and lineage are unilineal groups, may be partrilineal when descent is traced along the male line and matrilineal when descent is traced along the female. All the members of the clan and lineage consider themselves as consanguine kins, i.e. socially recognized blood relatives. Clans extend to include several generations and the *apical* ancestor/ancestress may be real or fictive as a tree, animal etc. The relation between the clan members are considered to exist but cannot be traced exactly. While lineages extend to not more than 5 -7 generations, the apical ancestor/ancestress is real and relationship between members can be exactly traced.

Since, clan and lineage members are considered as consanguine kins, marriage usually is not allowed within a clan and lineage, these are exogamous groups. Thus, in a patrilineal clan, for the ego the members of the mother's clan are different from the ego's clan. Likewise, with a matrilineal clan the father's clan is different from that of the ego's clan.

In some societies, marriage is allowed between the cousins who do not belong to the ego's clan. Thus, a Karbi man can marry his mother's brother's daughter. Among them, this marriage is highly preferred, although, nowadays, it seldom takes place.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4: Fill in the blanks with appropriate words

a) Your father's brother is your …..…… kin. (affinal / consanguineal)

b) Your father's brother is your ……..kin. (primary / secondary)

c) Your father's brother's son is your .....kin. (secondary/ tertiary) kins.

Q.5: State whether the following is true or false

a) A man and his wife's brother-in-law are affinal kins.

.....

b) Cousins are consanguineal kins.

.....

c) Consanguineal relation means social acceptance of a supposed biological relation.

.....



7.6 LET US SUM UP

- In every society, some institutions like family, marriage, kinship, are universally prevalent and they are interrelated.
- Family is the basic social institution and the relationship between the members of the family is considered to be the oldest social institution of mankind.
- Marriage is a socially acknowledged and approved sexual union between two or more people.
- Family and marriage performs the function of regulation of sex, maintenance of stable units ensuring continued births and care of dependent children.
- Marriage has different implications in different cultures. Its purposes, functions and forms may differ from society to society, but it is present everywhere as an institution.
- In all societies, people are bound together in groups by various kinds of bonds. The most universal and the most basic of these bonds is that which is based on reproduction and it is called kinship.
- Kinship includes relationships through blood (consanguineal) and relationships through marriage (affinal).



7.7 FURTHER READING

1) T.B. Bottomore. *Sociology: A guide to Problems and Literature*. Mumbai: Blackie and Son (India) Ltd.

2) Madan, T.N. and D.N. Majumdar.(1987). *An Introduction to Social Anthropology*.New Delhi: National Publishing House.



7.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Family is a kin based social group comprising of at least two adults, usually of the opposite sexes, and their children, own or adopted, the members cohabiting and having mutual rights and responsibilities towards each other.

Ans to Q No 2: The family in which one is born is family of orientation while the family that a person sets up upon his/her marriage is family of procreation.

Ans to Q No 3: The Hindu caste society. (Even the Karbi, Bodo tribes of Assam) are Patrilocal

Ans to Q No 4: (a) Consanguineal (b) Secondary (c) Tertiary

Ans to Q No 5: (a) True (b) True (c) True



7.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q.1: Define family. What are its characteristics?

Q.2: Define marriage and describe its characteristics.

Q.3: What function does marriage play in a society?

Q.4: What are the meanings of affinal and consanguineal kins? Explain with examples.

Q.5: Write a brief note on the degree of kins.

B) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q.1: Describe the various types of families.

Q.2: Discuss the functions of family.

Q.3: What are the various types of marriages? Discuss

** *** **