

Fundamentals of Sociology

Vidya Bhushan 🌸 D. R. Sachdeva



ALWAYS LEARNING

PEARSON

Fundamentals of Sociology

Vidya Bhushan

D. R. Sachdeva

PEARSON

Delhi • Chennai • Chandigarh

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Preface

Sociology has been called the ‘mother of all social sciences’. It is the only science which studies social life as a whole. With the growing complexities of social life, its study is becoming more and more important for all those who deal with social problems. Why do men behave in such and such way is a baffling question for the social reformer, legal practitioner, political leader and administrator alike.

The topics included in this book, form the syllabus of Sociology laid down by the UGC. Part one deals with the General Principles of Sociology and part two includes the topics related to Sociology of India. Though there is no dearth of books in Sociology, a common difficulty for professional students is to find out a book which may be helpful from the examination point of view and equip them with adequate knowledge of the basic concepts. This book will serve the above purpose. It is written in simple language and lucid style. Headings, and sub-headings are given at proper places to enable the students to grasp the subject-matter without any difficulty. At the end of each chapter, important questions asked in the examinations are given.

Valuable suggestions for improvement of the book will be gratefully acknowledged.

*Vidya Bhushan
D. R. Sachdeva*

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Part 1

General Principles of Sociology

Unit 1: Fundamental of Sociology

Unit 2: Sociological Theories

Unit 3: Social Institutions

Unit 4: Social Stratification

Unit 5: Law and Society

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Unit 1 Fundamentals of Sociology

1

Sociology: Definition, Scope, Nature and Significance

The term *sociology* was coined by Auguste Comte, a French philosopher, in 1839. The teaching of sociology as a separate discipline started in 1876 in the United States, in 1889 in France, in 1907 in Great Britain, after World War I in Poland and India, in 1925 in Egypt and Mexico and in 1947 in Sweden.

Sociology is the youngest of all the social sciences. The word ‘sociology’ is derived from the Latin word *societus* meaning ‘society’ and the Greek word *logos* meaning ‘study or science’. The etymological meaning of ‘sociology’ is thus the ‘science of society’. Professor Ginsberg accordingly defines it as ‘the study of society, that is, of the web or tissue of human interactions and interrelations’. In other words, sociology is the study of man’s behaviour in groups or of interactions among human beings, of social relationships and of the processes by which human group activities take place.

NEED FOR A SCIENCE OF SOCIOLOGY

The most distinctive feature of human life is its social character. All human beings interact with one another in order to survive. Aristotle, the great Greek philosopher, remarked that ‘man is a social animal’. Both nature and necessity impel man to live in society. Man’s behaviour in society is determined mainly by two forces—physical and social—which he has been trying to understand and control from time immemorial. His attempts to comprehend and control the natural phenomena had started earlier and were more successful than his attempts to understand the social phenomena. This is because it was easier for him to understand the physical phenomena by virtue of the fact that they were more concrete and hence more observable with a greater degree of detachment.

Nevertheless, man has been trying to take stock of his social environment and to understand the problems created by it since ancient times. But in these early stages man carried on the study of the different aspects of society, giving rise to different social sciences such as history, economics, political science, anthropology and psychology. Although, broadly speaking, all these social sciences deal with social phenomena and are, therefore, interrelated and interdependent, each concentrates on a particular phase of human conduct and specializes in studying it. History is the record of unique events relating to man; economics is concerned with the activities relating to production and consumption of wealth; political science deals with political activities and institutions; anthropology is the study of activities and institutions as they existed in times long past; psychology is interested in the springs of human action, the impulses and motives that sustain mental and bodily activity and regulate human conduct. These social sciences may give a snapshot view of society from various angles of vision, but never a view of society in its comprehensive totality and utility. The need was, therefore, felt for a general science that should study society as a whole, and to achieve this 'sociology' was designed. Thus, the need of sociology was felt when other fields of human knowledge did not fully explain man's social behaviour. *Sociology is, on the one hand, a synthetic discipline, trying to unify the results of separate disciplines from a central point of view, and on the other hand, an analytic and specialized science with its own field of research.* Sociology, essentially and fundamentally, deals with the network of social relationships known as society. No other science takes that subject for its central concern. As sociologists, we are interested in social relationships not because they are economic, political or religious, but because they are *social*. The focus of sociology is on *socialness*. At the same time, we should recognize that studying society does not mean studying everything that happens in society or under social conditions, because that includes the knowledge of all human activities. We shall not, for example, study religion as religion, art as art or government as government, but as forces that control social relations. Sociology is primarily interested in man's behaviour in relation to other men. That is, it focuses on relationships which are definitely 'social', making it a distinctive field, however closely allied to others it may be. The study of social relationships themselves is the main interest of sociology.

DEFINITION OF SOCIOLOGY

To understand sociology in detail, it shall be in the fitness of things to study some of the definitions given by some important sociologists, and then conclude about the subject matter of this science, as agreed upon by most of them.

Some of the definitions of sociology are as follows:

- (a) 'Sociology is the science of society or of social phenomena'. —*L.F. Ward*
- (b) 'The subject matter of sociology is the interaction of human minds'. —*L.T. Hobhouse*
- (c) 'Sociology is the study of human interactions and interrelations, their conditions and consequences'. —*M. Ginsberg.*
- (d) 'Sociology is the study of the relationships between man and his human environment'. —*H.P. Fairchild*
- (e) 'Sociology is a body of learning about society. It is a description of ways to make society better. It is social ethics, a social philosophy. Generally, however, it is defined as a science of society'. —*W.F. Ogburn*
- (f) 'Sociology in its broadest sense may be said to be the study of interactions arising from the association of living beings.' —*Gillin and Gillin*

- (g) 'Sociology is the science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action'.
—*Max Weber*
- (h) 'Sociology is the scientific study of the structure of social life'.
—*Young and Mack*
- (i) 'Sociology is a science for scientific social development'.
—*G. Duncan Mitchell*
- (j) 'Sociology is the science of the structure and functions of social life'.
—*John W. Bennet*

A perusal of the above definitions shows that sociologists differ in their opinions about the subject matter of sociology. On the basis of all the definitions mentioned above, we conclude the following points about sociology:

Sociology is (a) a science of society, (b) a science of social relationships, (c) the study of social life, (d) the study of human behaviour in groups, (e) the study of social action, (f) the study of forms of social relationships, (g) the study of social groups or social systems.

However, the common idea underlying all the views is that sociology is concerned with human relationships. Its emphasis is on the 'social' aspect of these relationships. MacIver has clarified that whatever topic may be included in the subject matter of sociology, its real subject matter is social relationships. The basis of social interactions or social processes is social relationships. It is on account of such relationships that there is human interaction. Therefore, if we include social processes or any other matter within the subject matter of sociology, their study can be carried only in the context of social relationships. Man becomes a social animal only when he enters into social relationships. The different aspects of social life —political or economic—are but the expressions of social relationships. Therefore, sociology is in fact the study of social relationships in one form or the other. Its subject matter is society rather than the individual, though the individual cannot be left utterly out of account.

While studying social relationships, sociologists attempt to discover the evolution of society; its systems and structures; the development of social institutions and their functions; the customs and rules regulating social relationships; the groups and communities formed by man throughout history; the nature and interdependence of these groups such as family, caste, government, economic groups, religious groups and the phenomenon of social change.

SOCIOLOGY—A SCIENCE WITH ITS OWN SUBJECT MATTER

Sociology is not only a science with its own subject matter but also the mother of all social sciences. Surprisingly enough, some critics state that sociology does not have a subject matter of its own and that it is a hotchpotch of different social sciences. It is argued that social sciences such as economics, history and political science are specializations and that sociology is a mere collection of the observations and hypotheses from these fields. It may be stated that this view is 'totally incorrect', and today sociology is not only a separate science with a subject matter of its own but it has also acquired the high status that entitles it to be called the mother of all social sciences. While discussing the position of sociology among other social sciences, MacIver has rightly remarked that the social sciences have their sphere within sociology, just as associations have their sphere within community.

Criticism Against Sociology Having a Subject Matter of Its Own

The place of sociology as a science with its own subject matter has been criticized on three grounds.

- (a) **Sociology is merely an assemblage of miscellaneous studies having social content.:**
The answer to this criticism is that if the miscellaneous studies that sociology is supposed to

comprise have not been considered or treated by any other social science, sociology is certainly performing a useful function in sailing unchartered seas. It is impossible to deny that sociology has produced a great deal of valuable information about social institutions such as family, property, church and state; about social traditions; about social processes; about social classes and national and racial groups; about migration and population changes; about changes in social habits, customs and fashions; about factors of social control and about poverty, crime and suicide. None of these topics is adequately treated elsewhere. The claim of sociology to be a science with its own subject matter is further strengthened by the fact that it studies man's history and attainments as well as his biology, not themselves but only as phenomena that affect human interrelations or are affected by human interactions.

(b) The subject of sociology is parcelled out to a number of social sciences. Critics state that there is no special field of sociology, since its subject matter has been parcelled out to a number of social sciences such as economics, political science, psychology, anthropology, history and jurisprudence. This criticism is not quite justified as far as the above-mentioned subjects are concerned. But even if it were justified, the existence of such separate sciences does not preclude the existence of a more general science whose task is to relate the separate conclusions of different social sciences and deal with the more general conditions of social life. Just as the existence of botany, physiology, biochemistry, has not nullified the utility of biology, similarly the existence of separate social sciences does not preclude the existence of sociology, which aims to develop a body of knowledge about human relationship to social life as a whole. As a matter of fact, social sciences are so numerous and detailed today that the need for a general science is not superficial, it is increasingly urgent.

(c) *Sociology borrows from other social sciences:* Sociology is said to be a labour-saving device for knowing everything without learning anything. But this criticism is also not valid. The essential nature of science is that it can grow only by borrowing. Biology develops by utilizing the conclusions of chemistry and physics, similarly sociology develops by borrowing from social sciences. But in borrowing, biology and sociology return far more to the sciences from which they borrow, enriching them with concepts and ideas that make the accumulation of facts meaningful.

Sociology, no doubt, borrows its subject matter from other social sciences, but it gives this subject matter a completely new form. To construct a building we collect materials such as cement, bricks, lime, iron, steel, sand and wood at a particular place, but the mere collection of material does not make a building. A technique is applied and the material is given a definite and fixed form. It is only after the application of the technique that a building is erected and it no longer remains a heap of wood, bricks and cement. Similarly, sociology borrows raw materials, applies a technique and creates what is called 'society', and a separate discipline to study its structure and processes.

Again, the reason why sociology is so much more dependent on other social sciences than any other science lies in its magnitude and complexity. The field of study of sociology—the totality of human relations—is so vast that no single person could cultivate all of it by himself. He must draw help from others. For example, to understand a particular society, a sociologist must know something of its people and their innate and acquired characters, its geographical environment, social institutions, languages, religions, moral laws, economic structure and, finally, its relations to other people and its interaction with the rest of the world. To do this satisfactorily, sociology must co-operate with a number of other sciences, which are as dependent upon the data and conclusions of sociology as sociology is upon them.

(d) *The subject matter of sociology is social life as a whole:* It is thus proved beyond any shadow of doubt that sociology is a science with its own subject matter, *social life as a whole*; and it deals with the more general principles underlying all social phenomena. In studying social life, it studies interactions not just as psychological behaviour but as social organization. The topic of social life is so complex that division of labour is needed to study it. So, we have economics, political science, law, that study social life from different points of view. Sociology studies the same phenomena from sociological point of view. It studies every phenomenon with reference to its sociables. The sociological point of view is empirical and objective. Even at the risk of repetition it may be stressed again that sociology is not a mere synthesis of the studies undertaken by economics, history, political science, but is a complete discipline in itself as remarked by Sproul.

(e) It is the very discipline that attempts to consider societies as organic unities and to understand the relations between the various institutional complexes (economic, political and ideological) which pervade them.

(f) It is the very science that deals with human social groups as such, classifying them and analysing the nature of their structure.

(g) There are topics such as social stratification (class, caste, etc.), changes in population rates and changes in the functions of the family that are not the subject matter of any other science. Sociology is a general science and studies many widely different social institutions. As a general science, it is especially fitted to deal with characteristics that are common to all groups and all societies. Its object is not so much to describe as to search for causes and explanations. Why do people behave in a particular manner is a common question in sociology.

SCOPE OF SOCIOLOGY

There is no one opinion about the scope of sociology. It is maintained by some that *sociology studies everything and anything under the sun*. This is rather too vague a view about the scope of sociology. As a matter of fact, sociology has a limited field of enquiry and deals with those problems that are not dealt with by other social sciences.

In the broadest sense, sociology is the study of human interactions and interrelations, their conditions and consequences. Thus, ideally, sociology has for its field the whole life of man in society, all the activities whereby men maintained themselves in the struggle for existence, the rules and regulations that define their relations with each other, the systems of knowledge and belief, art and morals and any other capacities and habits acquired and developed in the course of their activities as members of society. But this is too wide a scope for any science to deal with properly. An attempt has therefore, been made to limit and demarcate the field of sociology. There are two main schools of thought among sociologists on this issue.

One group of writers headed by German sociologist, Simmel, demarcates sociology clearly from the other branches of social studies and confines it to the enquiry into certain defined aspects of human relationship. They regard sociology as pure and independent. The other group maintains that the field of social investigation is too wide for any one science and that if any progress is to be made there must be specialization and division. This group insists that in addition to special social sciences such as economics, anthropology and history there is also a need of general social science, that is, sociology, whose function would be to interrelate the results of the special social sciences

and to deal with the general conditions of social life. In the opinion of this group, sociology is a general science.

SPECIALISTIC OR FORMALISTIC SCHOOL

(a) Simmel's view: According to Simmel, the distinction between sociology and other special sciences is that it deals with the same topics as they, but from a different angle—from the angle of different modes of social relationships. The social relationships, such as competition, subordination and division of labour, are exemplified in different spheres of social life such as economic, political and even religious, moral or artistic, but the business of sociology is to disentangle these forms of social relationships and to study them in abstraction. Thus, according to Simmel, sociology is a specific social science that describes, classifies, analyses and delineates the forms of social relationships.

(b) Small's view: According to Small, sociology does not undertake to study all the activities of society. Every science has a delimited scope. The scope of sociology is 'the study of the generic forms of social relationships, behaviours and activities'.

(c) Vierkandt's view: Vierkandt, another leading sociologist, maintains that sociology is a special branch of knowledge concerned with the ultimate forms of mental or psychic relationships that link men to one another in society.

(d) Max Weber's view: Max Weber also makes out a definite field for sociology. According to him, 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. For instance, a collision between two cyclists is in itself merely a natural phenomenon, but their efforts to avoid each other or the language they use after the event constitutes true social behaviour. Sociology is thus, according to him, concerned with the analysis and classification of the types of social relationships.

Thus, according to the formalistic school, sociology studies one specific aspect of social relationships, that is, their forms in their abstract nature and not in any concrete situation. A comparison is drawn between the forms of social relationships and a bottle. A bottle may be either of plastic or any other material. It may contain milk, water, but the contents of the bottle do not change the form of the bottle. Similarly, the forms of social relationships do not change with the change in the content of social relationships; for example, the study of competition—a form of social relationship—will not make any difference whether we study it in the political field or economic field. The formalistic school has limited the scope of sociology to the abstract study of the forms of social relationships.

Criticism of Formalistic School

The formalistic school can be criticized on the following grounds:

(a) It has narrowed the scope of sociology: Sociology besides studying the general forms of social relationships should also study the concrete contents of social life.

(b) Abstract forms separate from concrete relations cannot be studied: Ginsberg maintains that a study of social relationships will remain barren if it is conducted in the abstract. The study of competition, for example, will be hardly of any use unless it is studied in concrete form in economic life or in the world of art and knowledge. Actually, social forms cannot be abstracted from the content at all, since social forms keep on changing as the content changes. In the words

of Sorokin, 'We may fill a glass with wine, water or sugar without changing its form, but I cannot conceive of a social institution whose form would not change when its members change'.

(c) The conception of pure sociology is impractical: None of the sociologists have so far been able to construct a pure sociology. As a matter of fact, no social science can be studied in isolation from other social sciences.

(d) Sociology alone does not study social relationships: Sociology is not the only science that studies social relationships; political science, economics and international law also study social relationships.

Thus, the formalistic school has extremely narrowed and confined the fields of sociology.

SYNTHETIC SCHOOL

The synthetic school wants to make sociology a synthesis of the social sciences or a general science; Durkheim, Hobhouse and Sorokin subscribe to this view.

(a) Durkheim's view: According to Durkheim, sociology has three principal divisions:

- (i) Social morphology
- (ii) Social physiology
- (iii) General sociology.

Social morphology is concerned with geographical or territorial basis of the life of people and its relation to types of social organizations. It also deals with the problems of populations such as its volume and density, local distribution and the like.

Social physiology is divided into a number of branches such as sociology of religion, morals, laws, economic life and languages. Each branch of sociology deals with a set of social facts, that is, activities related to the various social groups.

The function of general sociology is to discover the general characteristics of these social facts and to determine whether there are any general social laws of which the different laws established by the special social sciences are particular expressions.

(b) Hobhouse's view: Hobhouse also holds a view similar to that of Durkheim regarding the functions of sociology. Ideally, for him, sociology is a synthesis of numerous social studies, but the immediate task of a sociologist is threefold. First, as a sociologist, he must pursue his studies in a particular part of the social field. Then, bearing in mind the interconnections of social relations, he should try to interconnect the results arrived at by the different social sciences and, finally, he should interpret social life as a whole.

(c) Sorokin's view: According to Sorokin, the subject matter of sociology includes the following:

- (i) The study of relationships between different aspects of social phenomena.
- (ii) The study of relationship between the social and non-social.
- (iii) The study of general features of social phenomena.

(d) Ginsberg's view: Ginsberg has summed up the chief functions of sociology as follows:

First, sociology seeks to provide a classification of types and forms of social relationships especially of those that have come to be defined as institutions and associations. Second, it tries to determine the

relation between different parts of factors of social life; for example, the economic and the political, the moral and the religious, the moral and the legal, the intellectual and the social elements. Third it endeavours to disentangle the fundamental conditions of social change and persistence and to discover sociological principles governing social life.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the scope of sociology is very wide. It is a general science, but it is also a special science. As a matter of fact, the subject matter of all social sciences is society. What distinguishes them from one another is their viewpoint. Thus, economics studies society from an economic viewpoint, political science studies it from political viewpoint, whereas history studies society from a historical viewpoint. Sociology alone studies social relationships and society itself. MacIver correctly remarks, 'What distinguishes each from each is the selective interest'. Green also remarks, 'The focus of attention upon relationships makes sociology a distinctive field, however closely allied to certain others it may be'. Sociology studies all the various aspects of society such as social traditions, social processes, social morphology, social control, social pathology and effect of extrasocial elements on social relationships. Actually, it is neither possible nor essential to delimit the scope of sociology.

THE FIELDS OF SOCIOLOGY

The scope of sociology being wide, an effort has been made to divide its study into different fields. The main fields of sociology are as follows:

- (a) **Sociological theory:** This includes the study of sociological concepts, principles and generalizations.
- (b) **Historical sociology:** This includes the past social institutions and the origin of the present ones.
- (c) **Sociology of family:** It studies the origin, growth, functions, kinds, nature of family and its problems like those of divorce, etc.
- (d) **Human ecology and demography:** It studies the influence of population and geographical factors on society.
- (e) **Sociology of community:** It is a study of community. It is divided into two parts:
 - (i) Rural sociology
 - (ii) Urban sociology
- (f) **Special sociologies:** Recently, special sociologies have been developed to study the different aspects of social relationships. Thus, we have the following branches of sociology:
 - (i) Educational sociology
 - (ii) Sociology of religion
 - (iii) Economic sociology
 - (iv) Political sociology
 - (v) Sociology of law
 - (vi) Social disorganization

- (vii) Criminology
- (viii) Social psychology
- (ix) Cultural sociology
- (x) Social psychiatry
- (xi) Folk sociology
- (xii) Industrial sociology
- (xiii) Sociology of art
- (xiv) Military sociology
- (xv) Medical sociology
- (xvi) Sociology of sickness
- (xvii) Sociology of recreation
- (xviii) Sociology of small groups
- (xix) Sociology of bureaucracy
- (xx) Sociology of social stratification
- (xxi) Sociology of sex

In future we may have some new special sociologies.

SOCIOLOGY AS A SCIENCE

There is a controversy about the nature of sociology as a science. There are some critics who deny sociology the claim to be regarded as a science. But there are others who assert that sociology is as much a science as other social sciences such as political science, history and economics.

The Meaning of Science

A science is 'a branch of knowledge or a study dealing with a body of facts or truths systematically arranged and showing the operation of general laws'. It gathers facts and links them together in their causal sequence, with a view to draw valid inferences. Scientific knowledge is based on reasons and evidences. It is therefore variable and communicable. The chief characteristics of a science are (i) the possibility of a concise, consistent and concrete formulation, (ii) the capacity to form generalizations and make predictions and (iii) the possibility of verification of the data as well as of the generalizations. The various steps used in the scientific method are observation, recording, classification, hypothesis, verification and prediction.

According to William Esslinger, however, what distinguishes a science is that 'it is exclusively and methodically based on reason'. Experimentation and prediction are not its requirements. It only signifies the existence of systematic methods of enquiry. According to Huxley also, science is a systematic body of knowledge based on reason and evidence.

Sociology Cannot Be Regarded as a Science

Those who deny the claim of sociology to be designated as a science advance the following objections:

- (a) **Lack of experimentation:** If science is used in the same sense in which it is used for physical sciences, then sociology cannot claim to be a science. The term science as used for physical sciences

includes the twin processes of experimentation and prediction. Sociology in this sense is not a science because its subject matter, the human relationships, can neither be held, seen, weighed nor analysed in a test tube of any laboratory. There are no instruments such as microscopes or thermometers to measure human behaviour. Spratt has remarked, 'If you cannot experiment, if you cannot measure, if you cannot establish broad unifying hypotheses and if you cannot be confident in your social engineering, you cannot be said to be engaged in scientific study at all'.

There is no denying the fact that sociology cannot experiment and predict in the same way as physical sciences do, because the materials with which sociology deals – human behaviour and relationships – are so complex and variable that it is not possible to separate and analyse the different elements as can be done in physical sciences. We can analyse the composition of water as two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen and illustrate by means of experiment in any laboratory of the world. But such experimentations in sociology are often difficult and impossible.

(b) Lack of objectivity: The second difficulty of a sociologist in employing the scientific method is that he cannot maintain complete objectivity with the objects of his experiment, as does a physicist. Man has his own prejudice and bias. It is, therefore, not possible for him to observe his subject with complete detachment. Social relationships cannot be studied through physical senses. What we see in social relationships is only an outward expression of our inner life. A sociologist has, therefore, to concern himself with the working of the inner mind of his subject in order to understand his external actions properly. A physicist is not confronted with such a complex phenomenon.

(c) Lack of exactivity: Another characteristic of science is that it should be able to frame certain laws on the basis of observation and hypothesis and such laws should also enable us to predict accurately. From this point of view also, sociology cannot be called a real science because firstly its laws and conclusions cannot be expressed in precise terms and secondly its prediction might not come true. Others believe that dispassionate study of social phenomena is not possible, the investigator cannot be neutral, and he must take sides. Without neutral analysis science is impossible.

(d) Terminological inefficiency: It has also been argued that sociology suffers from inexact and clear terminology. Same words convey different meaning to different persons; for example, the terms 'caste' and 'class' have not yet acquired exact meaning. The recent judgement of the Supreme Court in the Mandal Case has held that the concept of class cannot be separated from caste. Is caste a class? Sociology has not yet developed an adequate set of scientific terms. Our terminological inefficiency will remain an obstacle in the way of sociology developing into a science.

Sociology is a Science

The critics in favour of sociology being a science assume that exactness of conclusions and capacity to predict alone make a study scientific. Meteorology fails to make accurate prediction. Shall we deny it the designation of science? In other words, universal validity of conclusions and a complete accuracy of prediction are not the criteria of science, what determines that the scientific character of a discipline is its methodology. If the methods of study are scientific, the subject deserves the rank of a science. Sociology does make use of scientific methods in the study of its subject matter and it is therefore entitled to be called a science. Following are the points supporting sociology to be designated as a science:

First, although sociology cannot experiment with men directly in a laboratory, their social behaviour is amenable to scientific investigation as any other natural phenomenon. Sociology does employ

scientific methods as scales of sociometry, schedule, questionnaire, interview and case history, which apply quantitative measurements to social phenomenon and which are, therefore, comparable to the method of experimentation.

Second, two other basic methods of scientific investigation, observation and comparison, are readily available to the sociologist and he uses them all the time.

Third, all the physical sciences do not employ laboratory experimentation. Astronomy, for example, cannot experiment with its materials. The heavenly bodies cannot be induced to put in an appearance in the laboratory. If astronomy, in spite of its inability to experiment with its material in laboratory can be termed as science, there is no justification to deny the title of science to sociology. Moreover, Newton and Archimedes did not invent their laws in the laboratory.

Fourth, sociology does frame laws and attempts to predict. It endeavours to discover laws that are generally applicable, regardless of variations in culture; for example, people always regulate marriage in such a manner as to prevent incest. There are principles of sociology whose validity can be examined by anyone. They are universal. Moreover, no science can boast of making infallible predictions. Many of the theories established by other sciences had to be modified with change of time. As remarked by Spratt, 'The changes in theory which have followed one another so swiftly have made us less certain that what "science teaches" today will be what science will teach tomorrow'. In some areas of social life, prediction to a limited extent has been possible. According to Cuvier, the predictive value of sociology is being improved. As sociology matures and comes to understand more fully the principles underlying human behaviour, it will be in a better position to make accurate prediction.

Fifth, sociology delineates the cause-and-effect relationships. In its study of family it has traced the relationship between family disorganization and divorce, between urbanization and family disorganization as one of the causes of divorce. Thus, sociology traces the cause-and-effect relationship in social disorganization. It tries to find an answer to 'how' as well as 'why' of social processes and relationships.

Sociology studies its subject matter scientifically. It tries to classify types and forms of social relationships. It tries to determine the relations between different parts or factors of social life. It tries to deduce general laws from a systematic study of its material, and the conclusions drawn from the study of sociological principles are applied to the solution of social problems. Sociology is thus as much a science as other sciences concerning man.

Can Sociology Be a Value-Free Science?

In the above discussion we mentioned that sociology is a science. An important controversy that has developed in this connection is that, 'Can sociology be a value-free science?' By 'value-free' science we mean that sociology as a science should keep itself away from the question of social values and study social behaviour in its empirical sense. It is none of the tasks of sociology to point out the goodness or badness of social values and determine which values are ultimately good. Polygamy is good or bad, love marriage is desirable or undesirable, joint family system is useful or not, caste system is harmful or advantageous; sociology is not concerned with such issues. Its purpose is to make an empirical analysis of social institutions and not to lay down the norms regarding them. Different societies in different ages have believed in different types of institutions. Sociology should isolate and test the empirical aspect of social behaviour without going into the value-laden question of whether the empirical propositions are true or false. The question of 'what ought to be' is beyond the scope of sociology. A correct decision on what is empirically true is not the same as a correct decision on what ought to be. While social facts can be subjected 'to empirical tests', values cannot. Values and facts are two separate things, and should be kept analytically distinct. Scientific enquiry should be value free.

Auguste Comte, to whom the credit of inventing the term 'sociology' is given, was primarily concerned with developing an empirical science of society. He tried to apply scientific method of social phenomena along with a theory of scientific and social process. Emile Durkheim was one of the founders 'of structural functionalism'. He analysed society from its structural-functional viewpoint. Herbert Spencer took an organic view of society, and he too was not concerned with the valuation aspect of society. But it was Max Weber (1864–1920), the German sociologist, who brought out the importance of keeping social analysis 'ethically neutral' or 'value free'. According to him, only a 'value-free' approach can facilitate scientific development. He tried to fence off social science from various irrational influences. The value bias of a scholar should not influence his analysis of social phenomena. According to Weber, science by its very nature cannot make a rationally justified choice between value systems. Preferences in regard to values were largely based on one's beliefs and emotions and were not formed on the basis of facts or reasons. In other words, the social scientist as an objective investigator must remain neutral about value systems. It is not the task of a social scientist 'to offer binding norms and ideals or to provide recipes for practice'.

Weber's 'value-free approach' was continued and developed in contemporary neo-positivism. The neo-positivist methodology ruled out all restrictions, and 'value-free' principle did not mean simply 'free from politics', but also 'free from moral problems' and 'free from philosophy'. Hortwitz underlines the fact that the course of events identified social science not only with neutrality but also with scholarly aloofness from moral issues.

To cut short, the value-free principle treats natural sciences as a model or pattern for social knowledge, which implies that the exact methods of natural sciences should be transferred to sociology in order to really make it a scientific discipline. The principle holds that sociology should be free of any value orientation. A sociologist should not make any value judgement. Moreover, the value-free principle looks upon sociology as a neutral discipline, which is not expected to draw any ideological or moral conclusion. It stands above ideology.

There is a certain amount of confusion regarding what Max Weber actually meant by 'value-free science'. He did not reject 'value relatedness' of all sciences, as is usually made out. He made it clear that by the term value-free science he did not mean that all value judgments were to be withdrawn from scientific discussion in general, but that science holds only a limited role in the matter of value judgments. The utmost that the scientific treatment of value judgment could do was to bring them to the level of explicitness. Weber had clearly written that the making of the decision itself is not the task which science can undertake; it is rather the task of the acting, willing person; he weighs and chooses from among the values of the world. As to whether the person expressing these value judgements ought to adhere to those ultimate standards, is his personal affair, it involves will and conscience, not empirical knowledge. An empirical science cannot tell anyone what he ought to do, but rather what he can do, and under certain circumstances what he wishes to do. With all his insistence on the limitations of science, Arnold Brecht writes, 'Max Weber never ceased personally to believe in ultimate values, nor did he ever underrate the importance of such belief for human personality and human dignity'.

SIGNIFICANCE OF SOCIOLOGY

It is quite natural to ask about the value of sociology, the purpose that it serves and the gain that is derived by studying it. There are some critics like Pareto who assert that sociology is hardly of any value because it does not deal with realities of life and it is only concerned with ideas that, devoid of scientific discoveries, are of very little importance in social life. But it is not a correct view about the

value of sociology. A study of the important concepts of sociology will convince us that this science is of immense value.

(a) Sociology makes a scientific study of society: Prior to the emergence of sociology, the story of society was carried on in an unscientific manner and society had never been the central concern of any science. It is through the study of sociology that the true scientific study of the society has been made possible.

(b) Sociology studies the role of the institutions in the development of the individual: Again, it is through sociology that scientific study of the great social institutions and the relation of the individual to each is being made. The home and family, the school and education, the church and religion, the state and government, the industry and work, the community and association, all are the great institutions through which society functions. Sociology studies these institutions and their roles in the development of the individual and suggests suitable measures for restrengthening them with a view to enable them to serve the individual better.

(c) The study of sociology is indispensable for understanding and planning of society: Society is a complex phenomenon with a multitude of intricacies. It is impossible to understand it and to solve its various problems without the study of sociology. It is rightly said that we cannot understand and mend society without any knowledge of its mechanism and construction, just as no man in his senses will dream of trying to mend a motor car without knowing anything about its machinery and the way the different parts fit in with one another. Sociology bears the same relation to the solution of social problems as biology and bacteriology bear to medicine or mathematics and physics to engineering. Without the research done in the theoretical and experimental sciences, modern techniques for curing a disease or those for building a bridge will be impossible. Similarly, without the investigation carried on by sociology, no real effective social planning will be possible. It helps us to determine the most efficient means for reaching the goals agreed upon. A certain amount of knowledge about the society is necessary before any social policies can be carried out. Suppose, for example, that a policy of decreasing the birth rate is considered desirable; the best means for achieving this goal cannot be determined in exclusively economic terms because matters of family organization, customs and traditional values must be taken into account and these require a sociological type of analysis.

(d) Sociology is of great importance in the solution of social problems: The present world suffers from many social problems that can be solved only through scientific study of the society. It is obvious that social evils do not just happen and everything has its due cause. It is the task of sociology to study the social problems through the methods of scientific research and to find out solutions for them. The scientific study of human affairs will ultimately provide the body of knowledge and principles that will enable us to control the conditions of social life and improve them.

In order to have insight into and appreciate the motives by which others live and the conditions under which they exist, knowledge of sociology is essential. Now, we have begun to realize the intrinsic worth of man as man and the futility and hollowness of the differences of caste, colour, creed and other such factors. The racial or social differences that once separated man from man are now, with the study of sociology, losing their significance and we are gradually moving towards the ideal concept of common brotherhood of man.

(e) Sociology has changed our outlook with regard to the problems of crime: Again, it is through the study of sociology that our whole outlook on various aspects of crime has changed.

The criminals are no longer treated as degenerated beasts. On the contrary, they are regarded as human beings suffering from mental deficiencies, and efforts are accordingly made to rehabilitate them as useful members of the society.

(f) Sociology has made great contribution to enrich human culture: Human culture has been made richer by the contribution of sociology. Sociology has given us training to have rational approach to questions concerning oneself, one's religion, customs, morals and institutions. It has further taught us to be objective, critical and dispassionate. It enables man to have a better understanding both of himself and of others. Sociology also impresses upon us the necessity of overcoming narrow personal prejudices, egoistic ambitions and class hatred. In short, its findings stimulate every person to render a full measure of service to every other person and to the common good.

(g) Sociology is of great importance in the solution of international problems: The question facing the world today is what will be the use of all the technological developments and scientific progress if men continue to be blood thirsty of each other. The study of sociology of war will help in understanding the underlying causes of war and remove all such causes that promote tensions between nations and ultimately lead to war.

(h) Sociology is useful as a teaching subject: In view of its importance, sociology is becoming popular as a teaching subject also. It is being accorded an important place in the curriculum of colleges and universities. It is also developing belatedly in professional colleges. By diffusing knowledge about society, socialized thinking will emerge, socialized behaviour will develop, social planning will be furthered and a new social order will be evolved.

The importance of sociology is further proved by the fact that it is also included in the subjects to be offered by candidates competing for the higher examinations such as Indian Administrative Service and the like. It is rightly felt that without the study of sociology, the training and knowledge of the candidates aspiring to hold a high post in the administrative set-up of their countries will be incomplete and imperfect.

(i) **Sociology as a profession:** The students of sociology have good career opportunities.

(ii) In factories and government—as labour welfare officer, human relations officer, personnel officer.

(iii) In employment exchange, unemployment insurance scheme, social security schemes.

(iv) In the field of reformation of criminals—as probation officer, superintendents of juvenile homes, reformatory schools, etc.

(v) In the field of social welfare—as social welfare officer, youth welfare officer, rural welfare officer, child welfare officer, Harijan welfare officer, tribal welfare officer.

(vi) In the field of social education and adult education—as social education officer or adult education officer.

(vii) In the fields concerning widow welfare—as superintendents of Nari Niketan.

(viii) In the homes for 'the welfare of the old, disabled and destitute' as their superintendents.

(ix) In the fields of family planning—as social worker or researcher.

To sum up, the value of sociology lies in the fact that it keeps us up to date on modern situations, it contributes to making good citizens, it contributes to the solution of community problems, it adds

to the knowledge of the society, it helps the individual find his relation to society and so on. Professor Beach says 'Sociology has a strong appeal to all types of minds through its direct bearing upon many of the initial problems of the present world'.

In India, the importance of the study of sociology is still greater. The Indian society is undergoing a rapid transformation. Under the impact of the West, its mores are changing. Joint families are disintegrating. The strength of the bond of marriage is waning. The number of broken homes is increasing. There is greater feeling of independence among women and children. The necessity for family planning is being experienced. The movies have vastly affected the mode of thinking and living. Linguism, regionalism and casteism are raising their ugly heads. The lust for power is strong enough among the political parties. There is wide corruption at every level of governmental machinery. The problem of unemployment is very serious. Increasing urbanization has brought in its wake the problems such as homicide, slums, epidemics, crime, juvenile delinquency, group conflicts, pollution, etc. The 'mandalization' of society has led to acute intercaste war. The people are adopting more and more to agitational methods. There is a major confusion in the system of education and a crisis of character everywhere.

The first step towards a solution of the various problems besetting the Indian society is to understand the social background of these problems. Sociology will assist in understanding this background.

METHODS OF SOCIOLOGY

The term 'method' means an apt way of doing something. Every science has to use an appropriate way or a suitable method of investigating into its field of study. Sociology, as we have discussed earlier, is also a science. It would also, therefore, use certain methods by which sociological facts could be collected, analysed and put into proper form and certain conclusions drawn phenomenon and its use of methods, employed by other social sciences is quite proper. As the social phenomenon is very complex and the data to be collected are very large, it is difficult to suggest which particular method should be employed by sociology. Sociologists have, therefore, been employing various methods for investigating social phenomena.

The most common methods of sociology are discussed below.

The Scientific or Experimental Method

The scientific or experimental method consists of observation, recording, classification, hypothesis, verification and prediction. Observation means 'looking at' things. It is of two kinds: (a) spontaneous and (b) controlled. The former is conducted when the phenomenon in question is spontaneously happening; for example, when an astronomer is observing the course of star or a sociologist is witnessing a riot. Controlled observation, which is also called experimentation, takes place when the phenomenon can be observed in the circumstances devised by the observer himself. Experimentation can be defined as investigation in which the situation or the subjects are systematically manipulated by the investigator and controlled observation is made so that a definite hypothesis about the relation of variables can be tested.

Experimentation is possible only in natural sciences such as physics and chemistry, but it is not possible in social sciences such as sociology. In sociology, it is not possible to have the laboratory method because the raw material of sociological investigation is human being for whom it is not possible to live within certain fixed conditions.

The second stage in the scientific method is *recording* of all the data obtained in the observation. Recording must be accurate and objective.

The third stage in the scientific method is the classification. Once the facts are observed and recorded, we must classify them in a certain order. By classification, we arrange our material in such a way that those facts that possess common characteristics are grouped together.

Next comes the stage of *hypothesis*, which means giving some sort of possible explanation for the correlation between the facts classified. The correlation found between certain events and the study of their nature and mutual interaction lead us to formulate a provisional explanation of the fact. But it is not necessary that our hypothesis should be correct. It has to be purified, tested on similar facts and if found to be incorrect, has to be discarded and a new one has to be formulated in its place. This process goes on till its truth is verified.

Then comes the last stage of *prediction*, which means that the generalization established on the basis of observation of facts will be valid in future also if the conditions specified in our principle will prevail. The physical science can make true prediction, but sociology can give only rough prediction, as its subject matter is so varied and complex.

Sociology, thus, cannot make direct use of *experimental method*, as the human behaviour is too complex and difficult to be brought under controlled condition for observation, comparison and experimentation. However, experiments are being made by observing the facts as they actually exist, by classifying them, establishing correlation between them, giving provisional explanations, formulating general sociological principles and trying to make prediction as their basis. As a matter of fact, the use of scientific method differs from discipline to discipline according to the nature of its subject matter. Due to the peculiarities of human behaviour, scientific method cannot be used to the same extent and in the same sense in sociology as it can be used in physiological sciences.

The Historical Method

The historical method consists of a study of events, processes and institutions of past civilizations for the purpose of finding the origins, or antecedents of contemporary social life, and thus of understanding its nature and working. History and sociology are so much interrelated that some of the sociologists such as G.E. Howard regard history to be past sociology, and sociology to be present history. It is evident that our present forms of social life and our customs or ways of living have their roots in the past and they can, therefore, be best explained when they are traced back to their sources. This can be possible only with the help of history.

But this method cannot help us in studying all the problems of sociology. The scope of sociology cannot be limited to the study of facts provided by history. The historical facts, as contained in life histories, diaries, etc., may be revealing, but they have little use for scientific investigation; they may not be able to answer all the questions that may be raised by a sociologist. Further, the historical facts also run the risk of not being studied objectively by the interpreters. Recently, such a question has been raised about the Indian history books published by NCERT for the social science classes.

The Comparative or Anthropological Method

The main task of sociology is to ascertain relations and interrelations between different aspects of social life. Sociology cannot make proper use of the experimental method and all its various stages of observation, classification hypothesis, generalization, etc. with regard to a particular social phenomenon in a laboratory as the physical sciences can do. But a sociologist can surely experiment in the

laboratory of the world by employing the comparative method. This method involves comparisons of various kinds or groups of people in order to find out the differences as well as similarities in their ways of life. Thus, this method tries to find out the clues to man's social behaviour. This method has been used by many sociologists to find out the elements in social life that are functionally correlated. Taylor used this method in the study of the institutions connected with the family among the primitive people. He was able to show that in all those families where the husband goes to live with his wife's people, the practice of the mother-in-law avoiding her son-in-law is found.

But the application of this method is not as simple as it may appear. The first difficulty in the application of this method is that social units have different meanings in different countries. The institution of marriage, for instance, has different meanings for the people of India and for the Westerners. Indians consider marriage as an indissoluble sacred bond of union between husband and wife, whereas the Western people take it 'as a union of loose type, breakable at the will of either party'.

The Statistical Method

The statistical method is used to measure social phenomenon mathematically, that is, with the help of figures. According to Bogardus, 'Social statistics is mathematics applied to human facts'. Odum writes, 'Statistics which is the science of numbering and measuring phenomena objectively is an essential core of research'. It is obvious that statistics can be used with advantage where the problem can be expressed in quantitative terms as in measuring the growth of population, the increase of birth and death rates, the rise and fall in income, etc. Prof. Giddings was the first great sociologist to emphasize the importance of statistics for sociological researches. Much of the research work in sociology is currently being carried on with the help of the data collected through statistics; for example, in studying population, migration, economic conditions, human ecology, etc.

But the great difficulty in adopting the statistical method is that mostly the social problems are qualitative and not quantitative. This method can therefore be used in a limited sphere only.

The Social Survey Method

The social survey method consists of the collection of data concerning the living and working conditions of people in a given area with a view to formulating practical social measures for their betterment and welfare.

Some of the definitions of social survey are as follows:

- (a) **Mark Abrams:** 'A social survey is a process by which quantitative facts are collected about the social aspect of a community's composition and activities'.
- (b) **A.F. Wells:** 'Social survey is a fact-finding study dealing chiefly with working-class poverty and with the nature and problems of a community'.
- (c) **E.W. Burgess:** 'A social survey of a community is the scientific study of its conditions and needs for the purpose of presenting a constructive programme of social advance'."
- (d) **Bogardus:** 'A social survey is the collection of data concerning the living and working conditions; broadly speaking of the people in a given community'.

Thus, social survey is concerned with collection of data relating to some problems of social importance with a view to formulating a constructive programme for their solution. It is conducted within a fixed geographical limit. Social surveys are of various types, which not only provide detailed accounts

of the social and economic facts but also bring home various social evils prevalent among the people of the area concerned, and thereby draw the attention of the government to eradicate these evils by passing appropriate legislation. America and England have been making use of social surveys since long on a very large scale to solve some of their social problems. India and other underdeveloped countries are also now benefiting from social surveys both in the urban and rural areas.

The Case Study Method

The case study method is employed in studying an individual case or that of a group, a community or an institution. The contention underlying it is that any case being studied is a representative of many, if not all, similar cases, and hence will make generalizations possible.

Some of the techniques used in the method are interviews, questionnaires, life histories, documents of all kinds having a bearing on the subject and all such materials that may enable a sociologist to have a deep insight into the problem.

Case work is based on the principles of acceptance, self-determination and confidentiality. The principle of acceptance refers to the attitude of the worker, his respect for the client as an individual that gives him a sense of security and encourages him to speak about his problem frankly. The principle of self-determination allows the client to decide for himself rather than deciding for him. The principle of confidentiality implies that the relationship between the case worker and the client is one of trust and whatever is revealed to the worker is to be kept confidential and is not to be shared with anyone except in the interest of the client with his permission.

Case work is used in a variety of settings such as child care and child guidance institutions, schools, colleges, medical and psychiatric settings, family welfare, marriage counselling centres, institutions for the old and infirm as well as handicapped and also with people who suffer from addiction, character disorders, emotional disturbances and the like.

Questionnaire and Interview Method

Questionnaires and interviews are very common and popular research tools of the sociologists. A questionnaire is a list of important and pertinent questions concerning a problem. It is sent to persons and associations concerned, requesting them to answer the questions to the best of their knowledge and ability. From the answers received to certain questions, predictions are made about the social behaviour. It is necessary that proper care should be taken in formulating questions; they should not be ambiguous, too many or too personal, nor too difficult to be answered by a man of average intelligence and common understanding.

The questionnaire technique is being used all over the world to collect necessary data about a particular situation or problem. The Kothari Commission, 1964 had circulated a questionnaire regarding reforms in the educational system of the country and other matters connected with it. It was on the basis of the facts thus collected that the Commission had made its recommendations to the Government.

In the interview method direct personal contact is made with persons or groups concerned who are in any way connected with the problem under study. Discussion of the problem with the person interviewed at personal level goes a long way out in clearly understanding his/her problems and remedying them accordingly. Thus, information can be obtained either by interview or by questionnaire. The questionnaire has the great advantage of anonymity, making for more truthful answers. It also serves to cut out uncontrolled personal influences; and there is less likelihood of bias in the coding of

replies. The interview is in general more flexible. Since the same question can have different meanings to different people, the interviewer can remove such misunderstanding. He can probe for true replies and make ratings based on the whole of the subjects' behaviour. He can change the order of questions and prevent the subject looking over the whole list before answering. Thus, the choice of method should be made very carefully.

The Public Opinion Poll Method

The public opinion poll method is used to seek and gauge the beliefs, sentiments and attitudes of the public on any given proposition. Public poll is very popular in the West where data regarding public opinion about various social, economic and political situations are collected through this instrument very frequently. The public gives its views by answering 'yes', 'no' or 'do not know' to the proposition. The results of the 'public poll' help the authorities concerned in modifying their policies accordingly.

Functionalism or Structural Functional Method

The approach of functionalism is being given great importance in the study of social phenomena by some sociologists. By this method, we try to interpret any part of society in terms of its functions and not in terms of its utility and origin. Functionalism, in other words, refers to the study of social phenomena from the point of view of the functions that particular institutions such as family, class, religion and political institutions serve in a society. It is a functional analysis of the different parts of society. According to R.K. Merton, it depends upon a triple alliance between theory, method and data. Function is the contribution that a partial activity makes to the total activity, of which it is a part. The functional method assumes that the total social system of the society is made up of parts which are interrelated and interdependent, each performing a function necessary to the life of the group. These parts can best be understood in terms of the functions that they perform or in terms of the needs they meet. And since they are interdependent we can understand them only by investigating their relationship to other parts as well as to the whole social system.

Merton has mentioned the following major procedures of functional analysis:

- (a) Establishment of functional requirements.
- (b) Explanation of structure and process.
- (c) Search of compensating mechanisms.
- (d) Detailed description of the structure.
- (e) Detailed description of the functional systems.

According to Merton, the following points should be carefully studied in the functional analysis of social phenomena:

- (a) Location of statuses of participants in the social structure
- (b) Alternative modes of behaviour.
- (c) Description of the attitude towards the pattern.
- (d) Motivation for participating in the pattern.
- (e) Associated unrecognized regularities of behaviour.

The functional approach was employed by sociologists such as Comte, Spencer and others and anthropologists such as Malinowski and Radcliffe Brown. The American sociologists such as Parsons and Merton have elaborated this method and named it the *structural functional method* because of the emphasis that it lays on social structures or institutions in studying the phenomena. Structures refer to those arrangements within the system that perform the functions, whereas functions deal with the consequences involving objectives as well as processes of patterns of action.

But this approach is not without defects. It is not proper to lay all the stress on the functional aspect of the society. Each social institution has uniqueness of the origin, utility, etc. Moreover, the society is dynamic and this static approach is not going to take us very far.

BRANCHES OF SOCIOLOGY

Sociology is broadly defined as the study of human society. Society is vast and complex phenomenon and, therefore, it is generally debatable that which part of society should be studied by sociology. Accordingly, the sociologists have divided the study into different branches.

According to Durkheim, sociology has broadly three principal divisions

- (a) Social morphology
- (b) Social physiology
- (c) General sociology

Social morphology covers the geographical settings, the density of population and other preliminary data that are likely to influence the social aspects. Social physiology is concerned with dynamic processes such as religion, morals, laws, economic and political aspects, etc., each of which may be the subject matter of a special discipline. General sociology is an attempt to discover the general social laws that may be derived from the specialized social processes. This is considered by Durkheim as the philosophical part of sociology.

Max Weber combines two schools of thought, that is, historical and systematic and he adds something more. His analysis with regard to relations between economics and religion enables him to use both historical and systematic methods. The sociologies of law, economics and religion are the special sociologies that are the part of both systematic and historical methods of study.

According to Sorokin, sociology can be divided into two branches: (a) general sociology and (b) special sociology. General sociology studies (i) properties and uniformities common to all social and cultural phenomena in their structural and dynamic aspects and (ii) the interrelationships between the sociocultural and biological phenomena. In the structural aspects, sociology studies various types of groups and institutions as well as their interrelations to one another. In the dynamic aspect, sociology studies various social processes such as social contact, interaction, socialization, conflict, domination and subordination. The special sociologies study a specific sociocultural phenomenon that is selected for detailed study. According to Sorokin, some of the most developed sociologies are sociology of population, rural sociology, urban sociology, sociology of family, sociology of law, sociology of religion, sociology of knowledge, sociology of war, sociology of revolution, sociology of disorganization, sociology of fine arts, sociology of economic phenomena and many others.

Ginsberg has listed the problems of sociology under four aspects:

- (a) Social morphology
- (b) Social control

- (c) Social processes
- (d) Social pathology

Social morphology includes investigation of the quantity and quality of population, the study of social structure or the description and classification of the principal types of social groups and institutions. Social control includes the study of law, morals, religions, conventions, fashions and other sustaining and regulating agencies. Social processes refer to the study of various modes of interactions between individuals or groups including co-operation and conflict, social differentiation and integration, development and decay. Social pathology refers to the study of social maladjustments and disturbances.

Samuel Koenig has also referred to the major fields of sociology. These are as follows: Sociological theory analyses principles, concepts and generalization of sciences. Historical sociology studies societies of remote as well as of recent past to discover origins of, and find explanations for, our present ways of life. Sociology of family considers the origin, evolution and function of this institution, the forms it has assumed in various periods of history and in different societies as well as the contemporary problems connected with it. Human ecology and demography investigates the spatial distribution of human groupings (primarily communities and neighbourhoods), their relationship to one another and the forces determining their distribution and relationship, and also analyses population changes and movements. The community (a field closely allied with and dependent upon ecology and demography) analyses the organization and problems of both rural and urban types of communities. Since the problems of city and country are in many respects quite distinct, this field of study is subdivided into rural and urban sociology. Sociology of religion studies the church as a social institution enquiring into its origin, development and forms as well as into changes in its structure and function. Education sociology studies the objectives of the school as a social institution, its curricular and extracurricular activities and its relationship with the community and other institutions. Political sociology studies the social implications of various types of political movements and ideologies and the origin, development and functions of the government and the state. Sociology of law concerns itself with formalized social control, or with the processes whereby members of a group achieve uniformity in their behaviour through the rules and regulations imposed upon them by society. It inquires into the factors that bring about the formation of regulatory systems, as well as into the reasons for their adequacies and inadequacies as a means of control. Social psychology seeks to understand human motivation and behaviour, as they are determined by society and its values. It studies the socialization process of individuals, that is, how they become members of society; it also studies the public, the crowd, the mob and various other social groupings and movements. Analysis of mass persuasion, or propaganda, and of public opinion has been one of its major interests. Social psychiatry deals with the relationships between social and personal disorganization, its general hypothesis being that society, through its excessive and conflicting demands upon the individual, is to a large extent responsible for personal maladjustments, such as various types of mental disorders and antisocial behaviour. In its applied aspects, it is concerned with remedying this situation. Social disorganization deals with the problems of maladjustment and malfunctioning, including problems of crime and delinquency, poverty and dependency, population movements, physical and mental disease and vice and prostitution. Of these subdivisions, crime and delinquency have received perhaps the greatest attention and have developed into the distinct fields of criminology. Group relations is concerned with studying the problems arising out of the coexistence in a community of diverse racial and ethnic groups.

Although the foregoing are the main divisions of sociology, new areas and subareas are evolved as the problems coming within the scope of this science are explored more thoroughly and systematically, and as new techniques are devised and developed for dealing with them. Thus, in addition to the areas listed above, there are a number of others such as cultural sociology, folk sociology, sociology of arts, industrial sociology, medical sociology, military sociology and sociology of small groups and special topics such as social stratification, mass media of communication, public opinion and bureaucracy.

RELATION OF SOCIOLOGY WITH OTHER SOCIAL SCIENCES

Sociology has been defined as a science of society. It endeavours to study the social life as a whole. But the social life is so complex that it is impossible to isolate social problems from the whole range of human experience. The life of man is many-sided. There is an economic aspect, a legal aspect, an aesthetic aspect, a religious aspect, a political aspect and so forth. Sociology, therefore, can understand social life as a whole by taking help from other social sciences that study exclusively one or the other aspects of human activity.

Sociology and History

Sociology and history are so intimately related that writers like Von-Bulow have refused to acknowledge sociology as a science distinct from history. History is the record of the life of societies of men, of the changes that the societies have gone through, of the ideas that have determined the actions of these societies and of the material conditions that have helped or hindered their development. Sociology is concerned with the study of the historical development of the societies. It studies the various stages of life, modes of living customs, manners and their expression in the form of social institutions. Sociology, thus, has to depend upon history for its material. Arnold Toynbee's book, *A Study of History* has proved to be very valuable in sociology. History supplies facts that are interpreted and co-ordinated by the sociologists. In the same way, sociology gives the social background for the study of history. History is now being studied from the sociological point of view. It is rightly said that the *study of history would be meaningless without the appreciation of social significance*. If history is to be useful to understand the present and to serve as a guide for the future, sociological interpretation of facts is absolutely essential. It is because of their mutual dependence upon each other that has led G.E. Howard to remark that history is past sociology, and sociology is present history.

But in spite of their close relationship the two subjects are distinct.

(a) History is concrete and sociology is abstract: There is much in history that has no direct relation to sociology, whereas there is much in sociology that is not in history. According to Park, 'History is the concrete, whereas sociology is the abstract science of human experience and human nature'.

(b) Sociology and history have different attitudes: History deals with events in all their aspects, whereas sociology studies them from the viewpoint of social relationship involved. For example, the historians will describe a war and all the circumstances accompanied with it, whereas sociologists will try to understand a war as a social phenomenon. They will study its impact on the lives of the people, their social institutions, etc.

Sociology and Political Science

Sociology and political science have been very closely related to each other till recently. According to Morris Ginsberg, 'Historically, sociology has its main roots in politics and philosophy of history'.

The significant works on social subjects such as *Plato's Republic*, *Politics of Aristotle* and other classical works were meant to be complete treatise on political science. The two subjects have, even now, much in common. Political science is a branch of social science dealing with the principles of organization and government of human society. In other words, political science deals with the social groups organized under the sovereign of the state. It is rightly said that without the sociological background the study of political science will be incomplete. The forms of government, the nature of governmental organs, the laws and sphere of the state activity are determined by the social process. Barnes has written, 'The most significant thing about sociology and modern political theory is that most of the changes which have taken place in the political theory in the last 30 years have been along the line of development suggested and marked out by sociology'.

In the same way, sociology also depends on political science for its conclusions. The special study of the political life of society is indispensable for the complete study of society as a whole. According to Comte and Spencer, there is no difference whatsoever between the two. G.E.G. Catlin has remarked that political science and sociology are two facets or aspects of the same figure. In the opinion of F.G. Wilson, 'It must be admitted of course, that it is often difficult to determine, whether a particular writer should be considered as sociologist, political theorist or philosopher'. Eminent sociologists like Durkheim, Malinowski, Parsons, Spencer, Merton, Max Weber and Leryhaix made important contributions to the field of political science. Political sociology is an interdisciplinary science that seeks to combine sociological and political approaches.

The two subjects are, however, different from each other.

(a) Sociology is the science of society, whereas political science is the science of state: Gilchrist says, 'Sociology studies man as a social being and as political organization, it is a special kind of social organization; political science is a more specialized science than sociology'.

(b) The scope of sociology is wider than that of political science: Political science studies the state and government only, whereas sociology studies all the social institutions.

(c) Sociology deals with social man, whereas political science deals with political man: Sociology being the science of society deals with man and all his associated processes, whereas political science being the science of the political society is concerned with only one form of human association.

(d) Sociology is a general science, whereas political science is a special science: Political organization is a special kind of social organization and that is why political science is a special science while sociology is a general science.

(e) Sociology is the study of both organized and unorganized communities. Political science deals with organized communities only: Sociology deals with both organized and unorganized communities, whereas political science is concerned only with organized communities. As such sociology is prior to political science.

(f) Sociology deals with unconscious activities also: Unlike political science, which treats only conscious activities of man, sociology treats unconscious activities of man also.

(g) Difference in approach: Political science starts with the assumption that man is a political being, sociology goes behind this assumption and tries to explain how and why man became a political being.

Sociology and Economics

The society is influenced by economic factors, whereas economic processes are largely determined by the social environments. This fact clearly proves that the relation between sociology and economics is very intimate. Economics is defined as a study of mankind in ordinary business of life or to be precise, it is the science of wealth in its three phases of production, distribution and consumption. It is thus concerned with that part of individual and social action that is most closely connected with the attainment and with use of material requisites of well-being. Economics, in other words, is concerned with material welfare of the human beings. But economic welfare is only a part of human welfare and it can be sought only with the proper knowledge of social laws. Economics cannot go far ahead without the help of sociology and other social sciences. For instance, in order to solve economic problems of unemployment, poverty, business cycle or inflation, an economist has to take into consideration the social phenomena existing at a particular time. Sociology is, thus, of considerable help to economics in providing specific data into which economic generalizations may be fitted. Economic and social order is inextricably interwoven. Many of the problems of sociology and economics are common. The problems of population growth, environmental pollution, slum clearance, child and family welfare and urbanization are as much economic as sociological, which cannot be solved unless and until the social attitudes of the people are given due consideration. The theories of socialism, communism, democracy and welfare state are nothing but the theories of social reorganization. According to Thomas, 'Economics is, in fact, but one branch of the comprehensive science of sociology'.

In the same way, sociology is influenced by economics. Economic forces play a very important role in every aspect of our social life. It is for this reason that sociologists have been concerned with economic institutions. The earliest sociologists like Spencer have included the economic activity of man in their analysis of social relationships. Sumner, Durkheim and Weber also approached the study of society through its economic institutions. Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels had gone to the extent of asserting that economic factor was the sole motive force of the society. Since their times, economic determination (economic conditions have a determining influence over the social) has found a significant place in the theories of many social scientists seeking to explain this vital phenomenon.

In spite of interdependence of these two sciences, as explained above, they are quite distinct from each other.

(a) The field of sociology is wider: The field of economics is restricted only to the economic activities of man, whereas sociology is concerned with all the relationships that are not simply economic but social. The scope of sociology is thus much wider than that of economics.

(b) Sociology has a comprehensive viewpoint: An economist's primary concern is with all that is directly or indirectly related to the increase of material happiness of man, with the methods and techniques of production, distribution and consumption. But sociologist, on the other hand, is primarily interested in the social aspects of economic activities rather than in the mechanism of production and distribution.

(c) Economics is much older than sociology: Although economics is much older than sociology, philosophers like Comte would subordinate economics to, and include it in, sociology. Sociology is a science of only recent growth, whereas economics has attained an advanced degree of maturity.

Sociology and Ethics

Ethics is the science of morality. It is concerned with the moral rightness and wrongness of human action. Ethics and sociology are intimately related to each other. Man is a social being. He acquires moral standards notions of right and wrong as a member of a social group. In other words, it is the society that influences the mental and moral development of the individual and it is the individual who in return seeks to conform to his actions to the moral standards of his social group. Thus, the real significance of moral life lies amidst a social group or in society.

Sociology is primarily concerned with the study of the social groups and it investigates into all aspects of human life—economic, political, religious, moral and cultural. Ethics throws light on the moral life of the primitive individuals and institutions. This provides a background of human conduct and may thus serve a good purpose for contrasting and comparing the moral conduct of the modern life with that of the primitive man. Further, the personal good of the individual must at the same time be in harmony with the general good of the society as a whole. It is here that both sociology and ethics come close to each other. This close relationship between the two has induced some ethical thinkers to regard ethics as a branch of sociology.

But the two sciences also differ in some essential aspects. First, sociology is a positive science, whereas ethics is a normative science. Sociology studies institutions, customs and manners as they are or have been, whereas ethics looks upon them as they ought to be. Second, sociology studies men and their social relations collectively, whereas ethics studies men individually as moral agents of the society. Third, sociology is merely speculative and has no practical bearing on any field of social life. Ethics, on the other hand, has some practical bearing on our conduct. It seeks to formulate the rules of conduct, which all people should observe. Fourth, sociology employs mainly historical methods in the investigation of its problems. Ethics, on the other hand, seeks to explain human conduct with reference to an end or ideal. Finally, while sociology is concerned with the study of progress of social groups from the point of view of time, ethics is concerned with the progress of society from the point of view of morality.

Sociology and Social Psychology

Social psychology deals with the mental processes of man considered as a social being. It studies particularly the influence of group life on the mental development of an 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. Sociology, on the other hand, studies the various kinds of groups that compose the society.

Social psychology has to depend on sociology to properly understand human nature and behaviour, as it is sociology that provides the necessary material regarding the structure, organization and culture of the societies to which individuals belong. The sociologists in turn also have to draw up social psychology. They recognize the importance of psychological factors, among other things, in understanding the changes in social structure. Lapiere and Fransworth write that 'social psychology is to sociology and psychology as biochemistry is to biology and chemistry'. According to Motwani, 'Social psychology is a link between psychology and sociology'. As a result of the close relation between the two, Karl Pearson has not accepted the two as separate sciences. In other words, according to 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 phenomenon 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 experimentation.

McDougall and Freud were of the view that whole of the social life could be reduced finally to psychological forces. In that case, sociology would be reduced to a mere branch of psychology. But this view cannot be accepted, as the causes affecting social behaviour are other than psychological, such as the economic, geographical and political. Social life, therefore, cannot be studied 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. As a matter of fact, there are important points of distinction between these two related fields of investigation.

(a) Difference of subject matter: Sociology is a study of the society as a whole, whereas social psychology is merely the study of individuals in interaction as the members of groups and of the effect of that interaction on them.

(b) Difference of attitudes: Sociology and social psychology deal with social life from different angles. The former studies society from the viewpoint of the community element, whereas the latter from the viewpoint of psychological factors involved.

Sociology and Jurisprudence

Jurisprudence is the science of law. It is concerned with the study of the entire body of legal principles. Jurisprudence and sociology are intimately related to each other. Sociology is the study of man in society. Law controls and regulates the actions of human beings in society and it is, therefore, a subject of great importance for the sociologists. There is, however, a difference in the approach of a sociologist and that of a lawyer to the subject of law. A lawyer is concerned with the rules that men ought to obey; he is not interested in knowing how and to what extent these rules govern the behaviour of ordinary citizens. A sociologist, on the other hand, is interested in law as a social phenomenon. His chief concern is not with the rules themselves, but with whether they are observed or not and in what way. A sociologist's study of law from this angle has been given the title of Sociology of Law or Sociological Jurisprudence. Criminology and penology are its important branches. Criminology is concerned with the systematic study of crime and criminal behaviour from the social point of view. Penology studies the effects of various penal systems of punishment and the efficacy of reform and rehabilitation schemes in changing criminal behaviour. These branches of legal sociology have rendered great service to the lawmakers and law executors by adding to their knowledge how the laws actually work and how the crime can be effectively dealt with. Sociology has thus shed considerable light and understanding on the various problems that the society has to solve, particularly, from the point of view of criminal jurisprudence. Consequently, jurisprudence has assumed a new meaning that laws are to be made for the men, and the lawmakers and its executors are to take into consideration the human and the social aspect while making or executing it.

QUESTIONS

1. How will you define sociology?
2. Define sociology and discuss its importance as a course of study.
3. 'Sociology is the science of society.' Discuss.
4. Describe the scope of sociology as a specialized social science.

5. Describe the importance of the study of sociology in the modern world.
6. How is sociology a science?
7. What will you regard as the main aim of sociology?
8. Discuss the nature and scope of sociology.
9. Is sociology a science with its own subject matter? Discuss in detail.
10. Explain the scientific or experimental method of enquiry. How far is sociology capable of using this method?
11. Describe briefly the various methods that sociology employs in the investigation of social facts.
12. Describe the role of statistical method and sociometry in investigating the social phenomena. What are its limitations?
13. What is the importance of the historical, comparative and other methods used in the study of sociology?
14. 'Participant observation in many situations is nothing more than a case study'. Discuss.
15. What do you understand by functionalism? Discuss Merton's views in this connection or write a note on structural functional method.
16. Define sociology and discuss the relation of sociology with ethics and social psychology.
17. How is sociology related to history?
18. 'Sociology is the mother of all social sciences'. Justify this statement and show how it is related to political science and economics.
19. Discuss the relation of sociology with ethics and jurisprudence.
20. 'History is past sociology and sociology is present history'. Discuss.

Basic Concepts

2

In the previous chapter, we studied the meaning, nature, scope, and importance of sociology. Therein we had the occasion to remark that sociology is the science of society. In the present chapter, we shall try to explain the meaning of society and other fundamental concepts used in sociology.

SOCIETY

In common parlance, the word 'society' is usually used to designate the members of specific in-group rather than the social relationships of those persons; for example, a Harijan society. Sometimes the word is used to designate institutions; for example, Arya Samaj (society) or Brahma Samaj. In sociology, the term 'society' refers not to a group of people, but to the complex pattern of the norms of *interaction that arises among them*. An important aspect of the society is the system of relationships, the pattern of norms of interaction by which the members of a society maintain themselves.

Some sociologists say that society exists only when the members know each other and possess common interests or objects. Thus, if two persons are travelling in a train, their relationship of coexistence in the same compartment, of being at the same time in the same place, does not constitute society. But as soon as they come to know each other, the element of society is created. This idea of reciprocal awareness is implied in Giddings' definition of society as 'a number of like-minded individuals, who know and enjoy their like-mindedness, and are, therefore, able to work together for common ends'. But this restriction of reciprocal awareness appears to be inconvenient, since indirect and unconscious relations are of very great importance in social life.

Some Definitions of Society

1. 'A society is a collection of individuals united by certain relations or modes of behaviour which mark them off from others who do not enter into these relations or who differ from them in behaviour'.
—Ginsberg
2. 'Society is not a group of people; it is the system of relationships that exists between the individuals of the group'.
—Prof Wright
3. 'A society is the larger group to which any individual belongs'.
—Green

Society Is a Web of Social Relationships

According to MacIver, society is 'a web of social relationships', which may be of hundreds or thousands of types. To formulate a catalogue of social relationships will be an uphill task. The family alone is said to have as many as fifteen relationships based on age, sex, and generation. Outside the family, there is no limit to the number of possible relationships. Wright says, 'Society in essence means a state or condition, a relationship, and is, therefore, necessarily an abstraction'. In the words of Reuter, 'Just as life is not a thing but a process of living so society is not a thing but a process of associating'.

Elements of Society

- (a) **Likeness:** It is an essential prerequisite of a society, as MacIver says, 'Society means likeness'. The sense of likeness was focussed in early society on kinship. In modern societies, the conditions of social likeness have broadened out in the principle of nationality or 'one world'.
- (b) **Interdependence:** In addition to likeness interdependence is another essential element to constitute society. This fact of interdependence is very much visible in the present world. Today, not only countries but also continents depend on one another. The world has shrunk to such an extent that if communications are interrupted at one end, it makes all ends suffer. With the growth of the area of interdependence, its forms also multiply manifold. The NATO, SAARC, and UNESCO testify to the growing interdependence of the people of the world.
- (c) **Co-operation:** Lastly, co-operation is also essential to constitute a society. Without co-operation no society can exist. Unless people co-operate with each other, they cannot live happily. For want of co-operation, the entire fabric of society may collapse.

Thus, likeness, interdependence, and co-operation are the essential elements to constitute a society. Besides these elements, MacIver has also mentioned some other elements of society when he defines it as a system of usages and procedures, authority, and mutual aid, of many groupings and divisions, of controls of human behaviour, and of liberties. This definition contains seven elements of society. First, in every society there are some usages concerned with marriage, education, religion, food, and speech, etc. that differ from society to society. Second, there are procedures, that is, the modes of action in every society that maintain its unity and organization. Third, the presence of an authority is necessary to maintain order in a society. Fourth, no society can be stable unless there is a feeling of mutual aid among its members. Fifth, in a society there are several groupings and divisions such as family, village, and city. Sixth, controls are necessary for the organization of society. Seventh, liberty and control go together in a society. Without liberty man cannot develop his personality. Control on an individual's behaviour is not meant to destroy his liberty, but to promote and protect it.

It may, however, be noted that society involves more a state or quality of mind than a mere structure. The beings who constitute a society must realize their likeness and their interdependence. They must have a community of feeling. Society is not a mere agency for the comfort of the beings, but it is the whole system of social relationships.

It may also be mentioned that society is a permanent institution. Its origin goes back to the dawn of history and stretches to those remote corners of the planet where people are living together. It is a kind of natural organization that has emerged out of the natural instincts of man. That is why Aristotle said that 'man by nature is a social animal'. So long as man possesses instinct of sociability, society will continue to exist.

COMMUNITY

MacIver defines community as 'an area of social living marked by some degree of social coherence'. He further says, '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 conditions of a common life, we call that group a community'. We know that a person rarely exists alone. He is linked in many ways to his fellows who form a group. We cannot, however, expect a man to become the member of all the groups existing in the world. He can establish his relations only with the people who reside near him in a definite part of the territory. It is inevitable that people, who over any length of time, reside in a particular locality should develop social likeness, should have common social ideas, common traditions, and the sense of belonging together. This fact of social living and common specific area give birth to community.

Some Definitions of Community

- (a) 'Community is a human population living within a limited geographic area and carrying on a common interdependent life'.
—Lundberg
- (b) 'Community is a social group with some degree of "we feeling" and "living in a given area".'
—Bogardus
- (c) 'Community is a group of people living in a contiguous geographic area, having common centres of interests and activities, and functioning together in the chief concerns of life'.
—Osborne and Neumejer
- (d) 'Community is the total organisation of social life with a limited area'.
—Ogburn and Nimkoff
- (e) 'Community is the smallest territorial group that can embrace all aspects of social life'.
—Kingsley Davis
- (f) 'Community is a cluster of people, living within a contiguous small area, who share a common way of life'.
—Green, Arnold

Elements of a Community

The following are the elements on the basis of which we can decide whether a particular group is a community or not:

- (a) **Group of people:** Community is a group of people. Whenever the individuals live together in such a way that they share the basic conditions of a common life, we call them forming a community.

(b) Locality: The group of people forms a community when it begins to reside in a definite locality. A community always occupies a territorial area. The area need not be fixed for ever. The people may change their area of habitation from time to time just as nomadic community does. However, most communities are now well settled and derive a strong bond of solidarity from the conditions of their locality. Among the village people there is unity because they reside in a definite locality. Although due to the extending facilities of communication in the modern world the territorial bond has been weakened, yet the character of locality as a social classifier has never been transcended.

(c) Community sentiment: Community sentiment means a feeling of belonging together. It is 'we feeling' among the members. In modern times, this sentiment very much lacks among the people occupying a specific local area. For example, in big cities, a man does not know even his next-door neighbour. Mere neighbourhood does not create a community if community sentiment is lacking. Therefore, to create a community the sentiment of common living must be present among the residents of a locality.

(d) Permanency: A community is not transitory like a crowd. It essentially includes a permanent life in a definite place.

(e) Naturality: Communities are not made or created by an act of will, but are natural. An individual is born in a community.

(f) Likeness: In a community, there is a likeness in language, customs, mores, etc. According to Green, 'A community is a cluster of people living within a narrow territorial radius, who share a common way of life'.

(g) Wider ends: In communities, the people associate not for the fulfilment of a particular end. The ends of a community are wider. These are natural and not artificial.

(h) A particular name: Every community has a particular name. In the words of Lumley, 'It points identity, it indicates reality; it points out individuality; it often describes personality and each community is something of a personality'. For example, people living in Punjab are called Punjabis, whereas those living in Kashmir are called Kashmiris.

(i) No legal status: A community does not have a legal status. It cannot sue, nor can it be sued. In the eyes of law, it has no rights and duties.

Size of Community

A community may be big or small. A big community such as a nation contains a number of small communities and groups with closer bonds of unity and numerous common qualities. Today, efforts are being made to extend the limits of community so as to include the whole earth and create a one world community.

Difference Between a Community and a Society

The following are the points of difference between a society and a community:

(a) Community sentiment: A community, as discussed above, is a group of people who live together in particular locality and share the basic conditions of a common life. To constitute a community the presence of common sentiment is necessary. On the other hand, there is an

element of likeness in society, but it is not necessary that likeness should include the people in oneness; enemies can also be included in society.

(b) Definite locality: Society has no definite boundary or assignable limits. It is universal and pervasive. Society is the name of our social relationships. Community, on the other hand, is a group of people living together in a particular locality.

(c) Community a species of society: Community is the species of society. It exists within a society and possesses its distinguishable structure that distinguishes it from other communities. Small communities exist within greater communities; the village within a town, the town within a region, the region within a nation.

(d) Community is concrete, whereas society is abstract: Society is a network of social relationships that cannot be seen or touched. It is an abstract concept. On the other hand, community is a concrete concept. It is a group of people living in a particular locality and having a feeling of oneness. We can see this group and locate its existence.

ASSOCIATION

An association is a group of people organized for a particular purpose or a limited number of purposes. According to MacIver, 'an association is an organisation deliberately formed for the collective pursuit of some interest or set of interests, which its members share'. According to 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 organisation with a view to securing a specific end or specific ends'. G. D. H. Cole writes, 'By an association I mean any group of persons pursuing a common purpose by a course of cooperative action extending beyond a single act, and, for this purpose, agreeing together upon certain methods of procedure and laying down, in however rudimentary a form, rules of common action'. According to Bogardus, 'Association is usually a working together of people to achieve some purposes'. To constitute an association, there must be (a) a group of people, (b) these people must be organized, that is, there must be certain rules for their conduct in the group, and (c) they must have a common purpose of specific nature to pursue.

Thus, family, church, trade union, music club all are the instances of association. Associations may be formed on several bases.

(a) On the basis of duration, that is, temporary or permanent. For example, Flood Relief Association, which is temporary and state, which is permanent.

(b) On the basis of power, that is, sovereign (state), semi-sovereign (university), and non-sovereign (clubs).

(c) On the basis of function, that is, biological (family), vocational (Trade Union or Teachers' association), recreational (tennis club or music club), and philanthropic (charitable societies).

Difference Between Society and Association

The following are the points of difference between society and association:

(a) Society is older than association: Society is older than association, and is in existence since man appeared on the earth, whereas association arose at a later stage when man learnt to organize himself for the pursuit of some particular purpose.

(b) The aim of society is general: The aim of society is general, whereas that of association is particular. Society comes into existence for the general well-being of the individuals. An association is formed for the pursuit of some particular purpose or purposes.

(c) Society may be organized or unorganized: Society may be organized or unorganized, but association must be organized.

(d) Membership of society is compulsory: The membership of a society is rather compulsory, as no man, unless he is either a beast or a God, can live without it. On the other hand, man may live without being a member of any association at all. Society will exist as long as man exists, but association may be transitory.

(e) Society is marked by both co-operation and conflict, whereas association is based on cooperation alone: An association marked by intra-conflict will not survive.

(f) Society is a system of social relationships, whereas association is a group of people: Society lays emphasis on relationships, association lays emphasis on groupness.

(g) Society is natural, whereas association is artificial: Association is formed by the people for a particular purpose or purposes.

Difference Between Association and Community

An association is not a community, but a group within a community. The following are the points of difference between the two:

(a) An association is partial, whereas a community is a whole: An association is formed for the achievement of some specific purpose which does not include the whole purposes of life. It pursues, in a definite way, a definite number of purposes. However important these purposes may be, they do not embrace the totality of ends or purposes. A community, on the other hand, includes the whole circle of common life. It does not exist for the pursuit of special interests. It is not deliberately created. It has no beginning, no hour of birth. It is simply the whole circle of common life, more comprehensive, more spontaneous than any association.

(b) Association exists within community: Association is formed by the individuals for the pursuit of the individual interest. There are a number of associations within a community. Association is not a community, but it is an organization within the community.

(c) Association is an artificial creation, whereas community is a natural growth: An association is deliberately created by some individuals for realising a specific purpose. Community is not created, but it grows out of community sentiment. It has no burning, no hour of birth. It is spontaneous.

(d) Membership of an association has limited significance, whereas the membership of a community has wider connotation: An association is a transitory group of people who unite together to pursue a common purpose. It has significance for a member as long only as it serves his purpose. He is free to disown it any time. The political leaders change their party as soon as it ceases to serve their interest. There are no natural bonds between them and their political organizations. Community, on the other hand, embraces the whole purpose of life. It does not exist for the pursuit of some specific purpose. It is more comprehensive, more significant than any association.

(e) The membership of an association is voluntary, but the membership of a community is compulsory: We are born into communities, but we choose our associations.

(f) **Community sentiment is an essential feature of community, but not of association:** There can be no community without 'we feeling'.

(g) **Associations have offices:** An association has got its office bearers who manage its affairs, but an office is not necessary to constitute a community.

(h) **A community works through customs and traditions, whereas an association works mostly through written laws and rules:** The constitution of an association is generally written. It has a legal status.

It may, however, be remembered that association may become communities by serving plurality of ends, though that may never be reached. Thus, the so-called communities, which give rise to the problem of communalism, may not be called communities in the sociological sense. They are rather racial or religious groups.

CULTURE

Culture has been defined in a number of ways; some thinkers include in culture all the major social components that bind men together in a society. Others take a narrow view and include in culture only the non-material parts. Some of the definitions are as follows:

(a) 'Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society'.
—*Tylor*

(b) 'Culture is the handiwork of man and the medium through which he achieves his ends'.
—*Malinowski*

(c) 'Culture is an organised body of conventional understanding manifest in art and artifact, which, persisting through tradition, characterises a human group'.
—*Redfield*

(d) 'Culture is an accumulation of thoughts, values, and objects; it is the social heritage acquired by us from preceding generations through learning, as distinguished from the biological heritage which is passed on to us automatically through the genes'.
—*Graham Wallas*

(e) 'Culture is the socially transmitted system of idealised ways in knowledge, practice, and belief, along with the artifacts that knowledge and practice produce and maintain as they change in time'.
—*Arnold W. Green*

(f) 'Culture is the embodiment in customs, tradition, etc., of the learning of a social group over the generation'.
—*Lapierre*

(g) 'Culture is the expression of our nature in our modes of living and thinking our everyday intercourse, in art, in literature, in religion, in recreation and enjoyment'.
—*MacIver*

(h) 'Culture refers to the social mechanisms of behaviour and to the physical and symbolic products of these behaviours'.
—*Lundberg*

(i) 'Culture is the sum total of integrated learned behaviour patterns which are characteristics of the members of a society and which are, therefore, not the result of biological inheritance'.
—*E. A. Hoebel*

(j) 'Culture is the sum total of human achievements, material as well as non-material, capable of transmission, sociologically, that is, by tradition and communication, vertically as well as horizontally'.
—*H. T. Mazumdar*

From the above definitions it is clear that in sociology, culture is used in a specific sense that is different from the one we have in common parlance. People often call an educated person a cultured man and regard an uneducated person as uncultured. In sociology, we use the word to denote acquired behaviours, which are shared by and transmitted among the members of the society. It is an accumulation that a new generation inherits. It is a heritage into which a child is born. Thus, to a student of sociology, a person lacking in culture is an impossibility because individuals share the culture of their group. The essential point in regard to culture is that it is acquired by man as a member of society and persists through tradition. These points of acquisition and tradition have been emphasized by Tylor and Redfield in their definitions. The essential factor in this acquisition through tradition is the ability to learn from the group. Man learns his behaviour, and behaviour which is learnt denotes his culture. Singing, talking, dancing, and eating belong to the category of culture. Moreover, the behaviours are not one's own, but are shared by others. Behaviours are transmitted to a person by someone; be it his school teacher, his parents, or friends. It is the product of human experience, that is, it is man-made. It is the sum of what the group has learnt about living together under particular circumstances, physical and biological, in which it has found itself. Thus, *culture is a system of learnt behaviour, shared by and transmitted among the members of a group*. Man begins to learn it since his birth. By picking up the culture and by tapping the heritage of his past, man becomes distinctively human. Man has, therefore, been called the culture-bearing animal.

Now, we may point out to the following characteristics of culture:

- (a) **Culture is an acquired quality:** Culture is not innate. Traits learnt through socialization, habits, and thoughts are called culture. Culture is learnt. Any behaviour which is socially acquired is called learnt behaviour.
- (b) **Culture is social, not individual heritage of man:** Culture is inclusive of the expectations of the members of the group. It is a social product which is shared by most members of the group.
- (c) **Culture is idealistic:** Culture embodies the ideas and norms of a group. It is a sum total of the ideal patterns and norms of behaviour of a group. It is the manifestation of human mind in the course of history.
- (d) **Culture is the total social heritage:** Culture is linked with the past. The past endures because it lives in culture. It is passed from one generation to another through traditions and customs.
- (e) **Culture fulfils some needs:** Culture fulfils those ethical and social needs of the groups that are ends in themselves.
- (f) **Culture is an integrated system:** Culture possesses an order and system. Its various parts are integrated with each other and any new element that is introduced is also integrated.
- (g) **Language is the chief vehicle of culture:** Man lives not only in the present but also in the past and future. This is made possible because of language that transmits to him what was learnt in the past and enables him to transmit the accumulated wisdom to future.
- (h) **Culture evolves into more complex forms through division of labour:** which develops special skills and increases the interdependence of society's members.

Functions of Culture

We may consider the functions of culture under two categories:

- (a) For an individual
- (b) For a group

Importance for an Individual

Culture has got a great value for an individual. It forms an important element of his social life. The following advantages of culture for an individual may be pointed out.

(a) **Culture makes man a human being:** It is culture that makes the human animal a man, regulates his conduct, and prepares him for group life. It provides to him a complete design for living. It teaches him what type of food he should take and in what manner, how he should cover himself and behave with his fellow beings, how he should speak with the people, and how he should co-operate or compete with others. An individual abstracted from culture is less than human; he is what we call a feral man. The individual, to be truly human, must participate in the cultural stream. Just as it is necessary for fish to live in water, it is necessary and natural for man to live within a cultural framework. In short, the qualities required to live a social life are acquired by man from his culture. Without it he would have been forced to find his own way, which would have meant a loss of energy in satisfying his elementary needs.

(b) **Culture provides solutions for complicated situations:** Culture has so thoroughly influenced man that often no external force is needed to keep him in conformity with the social requirements. Actions in certain situations become automatic; for example, forming a queue when there is rush at a booking window or driving left in busy streets. In the absence of culture, there would have been confusions even in the simplest of situations; for example, there would have been numerous problems even in deciding what food to eat. Today, there is no need to go through a trial and error process to learn everything. A readymade set of patterns is known for all the matters, which only needs to be learnt and followed. Horton and Hunt write, 'From before he is born until after he is dead, man is a prisoner of his culture. His culture directs and confines his behaviour, limits his goals, and measures his rewards. His culture gets into his mind and shuts his vision so that he sees what he is supposed to see, dreams what he is expected to dream, and hungers for what he is trained to hunger. He may imagine that he is making choices, or that he rules his destiny, but the choices of the normal person always fall within a series of possibilities which the culture tolerates'.

(c) **Culture provides traditional interpretations to certain situations:** Through culture, man gets traditional interpretations of many situations according to which he determines his behaviour. If a cat crosses his way he postpones the journey. If an owl is seen at the top of the house, it is regarded inauspicious. It may, however, be noted that these traditional interpretations differ from culture to culture. Among some culture, the owl is regarded a symbol of wisdom and not a symbol of idiocy.

Importance for a Group

(a) **Culture keeps social relationships intact:** Culture has importance not only for man but also for the group. Had there been no culture there would have been no group life. Culture is the

design and the prescription, the composite of guiding values and ideals. By regulating the behaviour of the people and satisfying their primary drives pertaining to hunger, shelter, and sex, it has been able to maintain group life. Indeed, life would have been poor, nasty, brutish, and short if there had been no cultural regulations. People behave the way in society because their behaviour does not meet with social disapproval. Culture has provided a number of checks on irrational conduct and suggestibility. Cultural aids such as schooling or scientific training lessen the chances that a man will behave irrationally or irresponsibly. The members of the group characterized though they be by a consciousness of kind, are at once competing with one another for the good things of this life and for status. They are held in line by constraints prescribed by culture. So, it is culture that has kept social relationships intact. Group solidarity rests on the foundation of culture.

(b) Culture broadens the vision of the individual: Culture has given a new vision to man by providing him a set of rules for the co-operation of the individuals. He thinks not only for his own self but also for others. Culture teaches him to think of himself as a part of the larger whole. It provides him with the concepts of family, state, nation, and class and makes possible the co-ordination and division of labour. Culture creates *esprit de corps* in man.

(c) Culture creates new needs: Culture also creates new needs and new drives; for example, it leads to a thirst for knowledge. It satisfies the aesthetic, moral, and religious interests of the members of the group. In this way, groups also owe much to culture. Any change in cultural valuations will have wide repercussions on the personality of the individual and structure of the group.

To conclude, the Indian culture is composite in character that exhibits a synthesis of Hindu and Islamic traditions. India has witnessed one of the most extensive experiments in cultural cross-fertilization spanning over five millennia. The Hindus visit Muslim shrines and likewise the Hindu places of pilgrimage are visited by Muslims. The Sufis drew Muslims and Hindus to their fold with their message of love, compassion, and brotherhood. The Indian culture transcends narrow religious and sectarian attitudes as is evident in music, literature, and art. Despite increased communal polarization, India's composite culture has not lost its vitality.

SOCIALIZATION

Meaning of Socialization

According to Kimball Young, 'Socialisation means the process of inducting the individual into the social and cultural world; of making him a particular member in society and its various groups and inducting him to accept the norms and values of that society'.

Socialization is definitely a matter of learning and not of biological inheritance. It is through the process of socialization that a newborn is moulded into a social being and finds fulfilment within the society. Man becomes what he is by socialization. According to Ogburn, 'Socialisation is the process by which the individual learns to conform to the norms of the group'.

According to Lundberg, 'socialisation consists of the complex processes of interaction through which the individual learns the habits, skills, beliefs and standards of judgement that are necessary for his effective participation in social group and communities'. 'Socialisation is a learning that enables the learner to perform social roles'. According to Green, 'Socialisation is the process by which the child acquires a cultural content, along with selfhood and personality'. Socialization transforms an individual into a person. It is a process of adjustment to social norms and modes of living.

Agencies of Socialization

The process of socialization is operative not only in childhood but throughout life. It is a process that begins at birth and continues unceasingly until the death of the individual. It is an incessant process.

The chief agencies of socialization are the following:

(a) The family: The parents and family are the first agency of socialization for the child. The child learns speech and language from parents. In the family, he learns a number of civic virtues. The family is rightly called the ‘cradle of social virtues’. The child gets his first lessons in co-operation, tolerance, self-sacrifice, love, and affection in the family. The environment of a family influences the growth of a child. The psychologists have shown that a person is what he becomes in a family. In a bad family, the child learns bad habits, whereas in a good family he acquires good habits.

(b) The school: The school is the second agency of socialization. In the school, the child gets his education which moulds his ideas and attitudes. Education is of great importance in socialization. A well-planned system of education can produce socialized persons.

(c) Playmates or friends: Playmates and friends are also an important agency of socialization. The relation between the child and his playmates is one of equality. From them he acquires co-operative morality and some of the informal aspects of culture such as fashions, fads, crazes, modes of gratification, and forbidden knowledge.

(d) The church: Religion has been an important factor in society. In every family, religious practices are observed on different occasions. The child observes his parents going to the temple and performing religious ceremonies. He listens to religious sermons, which may determine his course of life and shape his ideas.

(e) The State: The state is an authoritarian agency. It makes laws for the people and lays down the modes of conduct expected of them. If they fail to adjust their behaviour in accordance with the laws of the state, they may be punished. Thus, the state also moulds our behaviour.

One of the reasons for the increasing crime in society is the failure of the socializing agencies to properly and adequately socialize the child. Today, modern families face a crisis and suffer from parental maladjustment, which adversely affects the process of socialization. The educational system is full of drawbacks. The school is no longer a temple of education. It is a place where boys and girls learn more about drugs and alcohol and less about cultural heritage. The onslaught of urbanization has abolished the neighbourhood system and snatched playmates from the child, who now plays with electronic games than with the neighbourhood children. Similarly, religion has a lesser hold in an urban society and state authority is more disobeyed than obeyed.

It need not be said that in order to have socialized beings these agencies should function in an efficient manner. The modern society has to solve several problems of socialization, and for that purpose it has to make these agencies more active and effective.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION

‘Social structure’ is a basic concept in sociology. Since long, several efforts have been made to define social structure; still there is no unanimity of opinion on its definition. Herbert Spencer was the first thinker to throw light on the structure of society, but he could not give a clear-cut

definition. Durkheim also made a futile effort to define it. Some definitions of social structure are as follows:

(a) ‘Social structure is the term applied to the particular arrangement of the interrelated institutions, agencies and social patterns, as well as the statuses and roles which each person assumes in the groups’.
—*Talcott Parsons*

(b) ‘Social structure is concerned with the principal forms of social organisation, that is, types of groups, associations and institutions, and the complex of these which constitute societies’.
—*Ginsberg*

(c) ‘The various modes of grouping together comprise the complex pattern of social structure. In the analysis of the social structure the role of diverse attitudes and interests of social beings is revealed’.
—*MacIver*

On the basis of the above definitions it may be said that social structure is an abstract phenomenon. It refers to the external aspects of a society. Its units are groups, institutions, associations, and organizations. As we know, man is a social animal & lives in society. Each society has a pattern of organization composed of the structures resulting from the associations of men with each other. When men relate themselves to each other they establish a structural form. It may be a group, an association, or an organization. The social structure is made up of these structural forms that are arranged in an interrelated way to enable the society to function in a harmonious manner.

The meaning of social structure can be easily understood if we take the example of organic structure. The human body is an arrangement of different parts such as hands, legs, mouth, nose, ears, etc. These parts are arranged in a particular and systematic way so as to create a pattern. The body works through these parts that are interdependent and interrelated. Although the different parts of the organic structure are the same in every case, yet the form of organic structure of the people differs. Some are longer, some are short, some are fat, and some are lean and thin. Similar is the case with social structure. The parts of all the social structures are the same, that is, every social structure has a family, religion, political organization, economic institutions, land area, etc. But the forms of social structure differ; for example, the form of family is not similar in all the social structures. Some families have one husband, one wife, and their children. Others families have several wives, one husband, and their children. Thus, the parts of social structures being the same, their specific forms vary. It may, therefore, be concluded that social structure is a patterned arrangement of human relationships. These structures are (a) ecological entities, (b) human groups, (c) institutional agencies (d) organizations, and (e) collectivities.

SOCIAL SYSTEM

The concept of social system like social structure has got an important place. Every society or group has a system. Without a system no unit can function properly.

Meaning of System

In simple words, system is an orderly arrangement. We can find an example of a system in the human body. There are various parts of a human body such as ears, eyes, nose, legs, hands, lungs, stomach, heart, brain, etc. These parts have their own fixed places and are arranged in a particular manner which is known as ‘organic structure’. Each part of the structure has a particular function to perform.

On the basis of these functions, they are interrelated with each other and interact with one another. This aspect of organic structure is known as 'organic system'. Thus, the word 'system' signifies patterned relationship among the constituent parts of the structure which makes these parts active and binds them together.

In brief, the main features of a system are as follows:

- (a) A system is made of different parts which together constitute a system.
- (b) A mere collection of parts does not make a system. These parts must be arranged in a systematic manner.
- (c) The arrangement of these parts should create a pattern.

The parts of a watch should be so arranged that they may create a specific pattern called a watch. It is this pattern that distinguishes a watch from a bicycle, although in both there is an arrangement of parts.

- (d) There is functional relationship among the parts of a system. Each part has got a function to perform. The system is related with every part and every part is related to the system; for example, the cycle wheel in order to move must be related to the free wheel, chain, etc.
- (e) The plurality of parts creates unity. Although the parts perform different functions, yet they are functionally related in such a way as to create a new entity. In a fountain pen, there is a nib, tube, body, clip, etc. The assembly of these parts in a systematic way makes a fountain pen. In a system the parts do 'not lose their existence'. They continue to exist and perform their specific functions. It may also be noted that a defect in any part may affect the working of the system.

Meaning of Social System

A social system is an orderly and systematic arrangement of social interactions. It may be defined as a 'plurality of individuals interacting with each other according to shared cultural norms and meanings'. The parts of a social system are individuals. Each individual has a role to play. He participates in interactive relationship. He influences the behaviour of other individuals and is influenced by their behaviour. The behaviour of individuals and groups in a society is controlled by social institutions. They act in accordance with social norms. On the basis of their interactions and interrelationship they create a pattern which is called social system.

Characteristics of a Social System

- (a) Social system is based on social interaction: Social system is based on the interaction of plurality of individuals. When a number of individuals act and interact, their interactions produce a system which is called social system.
- (b) The human interactions create social relationships: The social relationships find expression in traditions, customs, mores, laws, procedures, institutions, etc. Social system is the orderly arrangement of the various expressions of social relationships.
- (c) The parts of social system are related on the basis of functional relationship: In a social system each part has an assigned role and performs it in accordance with the established procedures and norms. The different parts are united to each other on the basis of functional relationship.

(d) Social system is related with cultural system: Social system is closely related with cultural system. Culture determines the nature and scope of interrelations and interactions of the members of society. It not only determines their interrelations and interactions but also maintains a balance and harmonious relationship among the different parts.

(e) Social system has an environmental aspect: A social system is related to a particular age, a definite territory and a particular society. It means that social system is not the same in all age groups, territories, and societies. There are different social systems for different ages and territories. In other words, social system changes with the change in times. It is dynamic not static. In some societies, social system changes more rapidly than in other societies. But this change does not mean that social equilibrium is lost. It may, of course, be disturbed for sometime. In spite of social changes, social system continues to exist. There have been several changes in the roles of husband and wife, norms have changed, yet family system has not come to an end. Social system has the quality of self-adjustment.

Relationship Between Social Structure and Social System

The two concepts of social structure and social system are closely related to each other. Social system relates to the functional aspect of social structure. Both social structure and social system go together. Social structure is the means through which social system functions. The value of any structure depends on the manner in which it accomplishes its functions. When a social structure does not function properly, we try to modify it; for example, if the family does not accomplish its purpose, we modify it. In place of polygamous family, we may have monogamous family. The educational system may be modified if it fails to accomplish the purpose of education. Structure is useless without function, and function is only accomplished through structure. In short, social structure and social system go together.

There is another aspect of the relationship between social structure and social system. The nature of functions to be carried out influences the form of structure. And the form of structure will influence the functions it can perform. Thus, if we want our social system to function in a democratic way, the parts of social structure will have to be organized on a democratic basis. The state cannot function democratically unless its structure is democratic, or to put it in other words, if our state is dictatorial in its structure, it will function in a dictatorial manner. The traditional family is unsuited to modern needs. Hence, there is a change in the structure of family in modern times. A rigid social structure may fail to meet the needs of a changing society.

NORMS AND VALUES

Meaning of Values

In sociology, our concern is with social values. Social values are cultural standards that indicate the general good deemed desirable for organized social life. These are assumptions of what is right and important for a society. A social value differs from an individual value. An individual value is enjoyed or sought by the individual that he seeks for himself. As distinct from individual values, a social value contains a concern for others' welfare. Social values regulate the thoughts and behaviour of the people. The process of socialization aims to include these values in an individual's personality; the ethos or fundamental characteristics of any culture are a reflection of its basic values. Thus, if

the American culture is dominated by a belief in material progress, the Indian culture is marked by spiritualism, abandonment of personal desire, and elimination of the ambition. The 'Indian way' is different from the 'American way'.

The differences in social values result in divergent social structures and patterns of expected behaviour.

Meaning of Norms

(a) Norms are standards of group behaviour: An essential characteristic of group life is that it possesses a set of values that regulates the behaviour of individual members. These standards of group behaviour are called social norms. That brothers and sisters should not have sexual relations and a child should defer to his parents are the illustrations of norms which govern the relationships among kinsmen.

(b) Norms incorporate value judgements: Secord and Bukman say, 'A norm is a standard of behaviour expectation shared by group members against which the validity of perceptions is judged and the appropriateness of feeling and behaviour is evaluated'. Members of a group exhibit certain regularities in their behaviour. This behaviour is considered desirable by the group. Such regularities in behaviour have been explained in terms of social norms. Norm, in popular usage, means a standard. In sociology, our concern is with social norms, that is, norms accepted in a group. Thus, it may be said that norms are based on social values that are justified by moral standards or aesthetic judgement. A norm is a pattern, setting limits on individual behaviour. As defined by Broom and Selznick, 'The norms are blue prints for behaviour setting limits within which individuals may seek alternate way and to achieve their goals'. Norms do not refer to an average or central tendency of human beings. They denote expected behaviour, or even ideal behaviour. Moral values are attached to them. They are model practices. They set out the normative order of the group.

Importance of Norms

(a) A normless society is an impossibility: Norms are of great importance to the society. It is impossible to imagine a normless society, because without norms behaviour would be unpredictable. The standards of behaviour contained in the norms give order to social relations. Interaction goes smoothly if the individuals follow the group norms.

(b) Norms give cohesion to society: We can hardly think of a human group without norms. A group without norms would be—using the words of Hobbes—'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short'. Human being, in order to maintain itself, must live in a normatively regulated social system.

(c) Norms influence individual's attitudes: Norms influence an individual's attitudes and his motives. An individual becomes a good member if he abides by the norms.

Conformity of Norms

Norms are not formed by all groups in relation to every kind of behaviour and every possible situation. The scope of behaviour regulated by norms varies considerably in different groups. For example, the norms of some groups may pertain chiefly to ethical matters, whereas the norms of other groups may cover a broader area of life including dress, forms of entertainment, education, and so on.

Furthermore, a social norm operative in one social system may not be operative in another. Thus, Mohammedan societies permit polygyny, but Christian ones do not.

A norm by definition implies a sense of obligation. It lays down a standard of behaviour which one ought to follow. Conformity to norms is normal. The individual having internalized the norms, feels a need to conform to the norms. His conscience would bother him if he did not. Furthermore, people will disapprove his action if he violates the norms. Thus, both internalized need and external sanctions play an effective role in bringing about conformity to norms.

Conflict in Norms

Since there are different norms for different groups, a conflict among them is inevitable.

(a) Some norms are perceived less important than others, and so the less important ones are violated when one has to make a choice between the two norms. In this case, it may be said that strictly speaking there is conflict because the relative importance of the norms is clear.

(b) Norms may so conflict with each other that an individual must disobey one if he is to conform to the other. A student who sees a friend cheating in an examination must choose between conflicting norms. One norm instructs him to be loyal to his friend, whereas another instructs him to see that honesty is upheld.

(c) An individual may deviate from a norm because he knows it is weakly enforced. Using college stationery for personal use is rarely punished.

(d) Some norms are not learnt by all persons even in the same society. For example, there are wide differences in lifestyles, food habits, and etiquettes of the people within the same society.

It may not, however, be supposed that individual resistance to norms necessarily threatens them or shakes the solidarity of the group. But when large numbers of people resist the norms and evade them over long periods, they are weakened and group is shaken. However, some norms may be so important that they persist in spite of deviations. We know that the norms regarding sex behaviour are often evaded, but it is unlikely that these deviations will change the sex norms. In spite of the fact that there are conflicts between norms and there are deviations from norms, they have, nevertheless, evolved as part of human society because they helped to satisfy the fundamental, social, and individual needs, thus, enabling societies and the human species to survive.

DEVIANCE

Meaning of Deviance

An essential feature of social life is that it possesses a set of norms that regulates the behaviour of the individual members. All societies provide for certain standards of human behaviour. These standards of behaviour are called norms. But no society completely succeeds in getting all its members to behave in accordance with the social norms. Some of them fail to conform to these norms. Failure to conform to the customary norms of society is deviant behaviour or deviance. Thus, deviant behaviour is any behaviour that fails to conform to some specified standard. Deviant behaviour disturbs the social equilibrium. It is contravention of the social norms. It is a departure from the usual modes of behaviour. It consists of disapproved activities. Cheating, unfairness, malingering, delinquency, immorality, dishonesty, betrayal, corruption, wickedness, and sin are examples of deviant behaviour.

The delinquent, the saint, the ascetic, the hippie, the leader, the miser all have deviated from conventional social norms.

Anomie: Anomie is a condition of normlessness. By normlessness we do not mean that modern societies have no norms; instead it means that they have many sets of norms with none of them clearly binding upon everybody. The individual does not know which norm to follow, whether to follow the norms of the family or of the school. Anomie thus arises from the confusion and conflict of norms. People in the modern society move about too rapidly to be bound to the norms of any particular group. In traditional societies, people were guided by coherent set of traditions, which they followed with little deviation. But the modern society lacks coherent traditions; different groupings having different norms. The society provides man with no guide. Consequently, his behaviour lacks consistency and conforms to no dependable norm. According to Durkheim, 'When there is a sudden change, the normative structure of the regulating norms of society is slackened, hence, man does not know what is wrong or what is right, his impulses are excessive; to satisfy them, he seeks anomie'. In the words of Merton, 'Anomie may be conceived as breakdown in the cultural structure occurring particularly when there is an acute distinction between cultural norms and goals and the socially structured capacities of members of the group to act in accord with them'. According to him, there is in our social structure 'a strain towards anomie'. The degree of anomie may range from slight contradiction and confusion to serious deterioration and disintegration.

SOCIAL GROUPS

Meaning of Group

Social group is a collection of human beings. Some of its definitions are as follows:

- (a) 'A social group may be thought of as a number of persons, two or more, who have some common objects of attention, who are stimulating to each other, who have common loyalty, and participate in similar activities'.—*Bogardus*
- (b) 'Whenever two or more individuals come together and influence one another, they may be said to constitute a social group'.—*Ogburn and Nimkoff*
- (c) 'A social group may be defined as two or more persons who are in communication over an appreciable period of time and who act in accordance with a contact, function or purpose'.—*Eldredge and Merrill*

As discussed, social relationships involve some degree of reciprocity between the related and some degree of mutual awareness. A social group is an organized group, that is, certain rules and statues control social relationships within it; some of its members lead, whereas others follow. The members of a social group need not have close physical or social contact, but the awareness of common membership is absolutely necessary for a group to exist.

Characteristics of Social Group

From the definitions of social group given above the following characteristics may be pointed out:

- (a) **Reciprocal relations:** The members of a group are interrelated to each other.
- (b) **Sense of unity:** The members of a group are united by a sense of unity and a feeling of sympathy.

- (c) **We-feeling:** The members of a group help each other and defend their interests collectively.
- (d) **Common interests:** The interests and ideals of a group are common. It is for the realization of common interests that they meet together.
- (e) **Similar behaviour:** The members of a group behave in a similar way for the pursuit of common interests.
- (f) **Group Norms:** Every group has its own rules or norms, which the members are supposed to follow.

Classification of Groups

Social groups have been classified in various ways. While some thinkers have given a simple classification, others have given an elaborate classificatory scheme.

(a) The German sociologist Simmel considered size as a criterion for classifying groups. Since a person, that is, an individual with his societal conditionings is the most elementary unit of sociology, so he began with the 'nomad'—the single person—as a focus of group relationships and pursued his analysis through the 'dyad', the 'triad', and the other smaller collectivities on the one hand and the large scale groups on the other'.

(b) Dwight Sanderson suggested a three-fold classification of social groups by structure. He classified them into involuntary, voluntary, and delegate groups. An involuntary group is based on kinship such as the family. A man has no choice to which family he will belong. A voluntary group is one which a man joins of his own volition. He agrees to be a member of it and is free to withdraw at any time from its membership. A delegate group is one that a man joins as a representative of a number of people, either elected by them or nominated by some power. Parliament is a delegate group.

(c) Sumner made distinction between an in-group and an out-group. The groups with which the individual identifies himself are his in-groups. Thus, his family, tribe, sex, college, occupation, religion by virtue of his awareness of likeness or consciousness of kind are his in-groups. They embody the collective pronoun 'we'. The in-group attitudes contain some elements of sympathy and a sense of attachment to the other members of the group. An out-group is defined by the individual with relation to the in-group, usually expressed in the contrast between 'they' and 'we'. Every group is conscious that other groups are not with 'us'. We are democrats, they are communists; we are Hindus, they are Muslims; we are Brahmins, they are Harijans. Attitudes such as 'these are my people' and 'those others are not my people' produce a sense of attachment to the other members of the in-group, with a sense of indifference and even antagonism to the members of the out-group.

Ethnocentrism: A Characteristic of the In-group

Sumner said that ethnocentrism is a characteristic of the in-groups. Ethnocentrism, according to him, is an assumption that the values, the ways of life and the attitudes of one's own group are superior to those of others. They are the only right ones, whereas those of the others are inferior and wrong. The culture of the out-group is looked upon with hatred and even contempt. Sumner was of the opinion that every group, past or present, small or large, is ethnocentric. Each group thinks

of itself as the best, possessing the highest values and as having accomplished the most. This attitude of superiority is universal, existing in all the times and in all the societies. Ethnocentrism, it may be noted, is a great barrier in the way of inter-group co-operation and mutual understanding.

Cooley's Classification

Cooley classified groups on the basis of kind of contacts into primary and secondary groups. In a primary group, there is face-to-face and intimate relationship such as in the family. In a secondary group, such as the state or political party, the relationships are indirect, secondary, or impersonal.

Characteristics of a Primary Group

The essential characteristics of a primary group are intimate feelings and close identification. Intimacy of relationship depends upon the following factors:

- (a) Physical proximity
- (b) Small size
- (c) Stability
- (d) Similarity of background
- (e) Limited self-interest
- (f) Intensity of shared interests

Secondary Group

A secondary group is one that is large in size such as a city, nation, political party, corporation, international cartel, and labour union. Here, human contacts become superficial and undefined. The relations of the members are limited in scope. A member exerts only indirect influence over the other. He knows personally only a very few of the other members and functions as one among almost countless members. His co-operation with his fellow workers is indirect and very seldom comes face-to-face with them.

Difference Between Primary Group and Secondary Group

The following are the chief points of difference between the primary group and the secondary group:

- (a) **Size:** A primary group is small in size as well as area.
- (b) **Kind of co-operation:** In a secondary group, the co-operation with the fellow members is indirect. In a primary group, on the other hand, the members directly co-operate with each other.
- (c) **Types of Structure:** Every secondary group is regulated by a set of formal rules.
- (d) **Relationship:** The relationship of the members with each other in a primary group is direct, intimate and personal. The relations in the secondary group are of 'touch and go' type.

The main difference between the primary and secondary groups is not one of size or structure, but of relationship. If a nation is called a secondary group, it is so called because its members do not have

close, personal and warm relations. It is devoid of personal interaction; its members express the body of oneness through impersonal and indirect methods.

Main Characteristics of Secondary Group

The main characteristics of the secondary group are as follows:

- (a) Formal and impersonal relations
- (b) Large in size
- (c) Option of membership
- (d) Active and inactive members
- (e) Formal rules
- (f) Status of individual depends on his role
- (g) Goal oriented

Spatial Groups

The spatial groups are those which are constituted because of spatial continuity of their members. Such groups are the clan or sib, tribe, and band.

Clan or Sib

A clan is the group of individuals who consider themselves the common descendants of a real or mythical ancestor. Mazumdar writes, 'A sib or clan is often the combination of few lineages and descent who may be ultimately traced to a mythical ancestor, who may be human, human-like, animal, plant, or even inanimate'. A clan is constituted of all the relatives of either the mother's or the father's lineage and all the offspring of one ancestor, in a lineage. The clan emanates from some major biblical or imagined ancestor of the family. The ancestor is considered to be the founder of the family. All the descendants of the family are known by his name. A clan never consists of the lineages of both the father and mother. Its descendants are either matrilineal or patrilineal. Thus, a clan is invariably unilateral. It is an exogamous combination of unilateral families. Thus, we may point out the following characteristics of a clan:

- (a) It is an exogamous group. The members of a clan do not marry any member of their clan.
- (b) The members of a clan believe in one common ancestor—real or mythical.
- (c) It is a unilateral group. It consists of all the families either on the mother's side or the father's side.

Clans are known by different names.

- (a) After the names of seers; for example, Bharadwaj.
- (b) After the names of the totem; for example, Kunjama.
- (c) After substitute names; for example, Kamar.
- (d) After topography; for example, Jaunpuria.

Distinction Between Clan and Caste

The clan and caste differ in the following respects:

- (a) Caste is a real organized group, whereas clan is based on a mythical ancestor.
- (b) Caste is an endogamous group, whereas clan is an exogamous group. Members of a caste marry within the caste, but members of a clan do not marry among themselves.
- (c) In the clan, the members have the same status, but in the caste, they possess higher and lower status.

Functions of Clan

The clan is an important group. Its members possess a 'we feeling' because they consider themselves the descendants from a common ancestor. They not only help each other in times of need but are also prepared to sacrifice their lives for each other. The clan exercises great control over its members. It thereby saves its members from doing unsocial acts. It also helps in maintaining peace and order within the clan. The disputes among the members of a clan are settled by the head of the clan.

Likewise, in case of conflicts between different clans, their heads meet together and mediate in the conflicts. The clan also caters to the religious needs of its members. Usually, the head of the clan is also its priest.

Tribe

According to George Peter Murdock, tribe is a social group in which there are many clans, nomadic bands, villages or other subgroups that usually have a definite geographical area, a separate language, a singular and distinct culture, and a common political organization or at least a feeling of common determination against the strangers. As defined in the *Imperial Gazette of India*, 'A tribe is a collection of families bearing a common name, speaking a common dialect, occupying or professing to occupy a common territory and is not usually endogamous, though originally it might have been so.'

Characteristics of Tribe

The characteristics of a tribe may be summarized as follows:

- (a) **Common Territory:** The tribe lives on a common territory.
- (b) **Sense of Unity:** The members of a tribe are possessed by a sense of unity.
- (c) **Common Language:** The members of a tribe speak a common language.
- (d) **Endogamous:** A tribe is an endogamous group.
- (e) **Blood Relationships:** The members of a tribe are related by blood.
- (f) **Political Organisation:** Each tribe has its own political organization. There is a chief of the tribe who exercises authority over all the members of the tribe. The tribal chief occupies an eminent place in the tribal organization.
- (g) **Importance of religion:** Religion plays an important part in a tribal organization. The members of a tribe worship a common ancestor.
- (h) **Common name:** The tribe has a common name.

Distinction Between Tribe and Clan

- (a) Tribe lives on a definite common territory, whereas clan has no definite territory.
- (b) Clan has no common language, whereas tribe has a common language.
- (c) Clan is an exogamous group, whereas tribe is an endogamous group.

Distinction Between Tribe and Caste

- (a) Tribe is a territorial group, whereas caste is a social group.
- (b) Caste originated on the basis of division of labour, whereas tribe came about because of the evolution of community feeling in a group inhabiting a definite geographical area.
- (c) Tribe has got a political organization, whereas caste is never a political association.
- (d) The members of a caste follow their own definite occupations that are marked out for them in the society. In a tribe, the individuals can take up any profession they like.

Band

Band is the original form of local the group that stands at the lowest level of social organization—that of migratory hunters. It is a small group of people that possesses a strong community feeling. It is generally nomadic and does not have a definite place of settlement. The difference between a tribe and a band is that the latter inhabits a definite place and is larger in size. Although in modern society big and complex units have evolved, yet band has not entirely disappeared as an aggregation of families who live together.

STATUS AND ROLE

The element of status is an important feature of social stratification. Inequality of status is a marked feature of every society.

Nature of Role

The social system is based on division of labour in which every person is assigned a specific task to perform. The task performed by an individual makes up the role he is expected to play in the life of his community. 'A social role', as defined by Lundberg, 'is a pattern of behaviour expected of an individual in a certain group or situation. It specifies the part a person is supposed to play in the activities of his group or community'. According to Ginsberg, status is a position and a role is the manner in which that position is supposed to be filled. In other words, role is the functional aspect of a status. According to Davis, role is 'the manner in which a person actually carries out the requirements of his position'. Originally, the word 'role' meant the 'roll' on which an actor's part was written. Just as the successful enactment of a drama depends upon how successfully the different actors play their roles, the smooth running of social life depends on how efficiently and consistently each member of different groups performs his/her role in the social system. Thus, it may be said that role consists of behaviour expected of an individual in community.

An individual has to play different roles in different groups. His role as the head of the family may come into conflict with his role as a doctor. He may at times be asked to sacrifice his obligations towards the family in the interests of his profession. In addition, there are role conflicts involving two or more individuals who are authorized to perform the same or highly similar functions in the same situation, as when the State Government and Central Government authorities disagree on who has the jurisdiction to maintain peace in a particular case. The roles of two or more individuals may be in conflict because their functions are not consistent with their status. The cook in a restaurant, who has a higher status, receives orders from the waiter who has a low status. Finally, people may differ in the behaviour they expect of a person who has an assigned role. Employers and union leaders, for example, may not agree on the behaviour they expect from employees.

We may conclude that roles in the modern society are numerous, complex, highly diversified, and sometimes in conflict. In periods of rapid social change, the nervous strain of conflicting roles is greater because the requirements of each role and the expectations of the community regarding them are uncertain.

Nature of Status

Status is a term used to designate the 'comparative amounts of prestige, difference, or respect accorded to persons who have been assigned different roles in a group or community'. The status of a person is high if the role, he is playing, is considered important by the group. If the role is regarded less important, its performer may be accorded lower status. Thus, the status of a person is based on social evaluations. 'Status is the worth of a person as estimated by a group or a class of persons'. Individuals in a society play different roles and societies evaluate these roles differently. Some roles are regarded more valuable and the persons who perform these roles are given higher status. Status is thus created by the opinion of others. Thus, an individual with high status is greeted with respect and enjoys great prestige in society. An individual wins respect by virtue of his social status. An increase in the individual's social status entitles him to more respect than before.

It may also be emphasized that status and role are closely related. Each position has both a status that is socially given and a role or pattern of behaviour connected with this status that is socially expected. Status and role are two sides of a single coin, namely, a social position, a complex of rights and duties, and the actual behaviour expressing them.

Determinants of Status

Status, which a social class or an individual enjoys, depends on the social evaluations whereby the community regards certain attributes or characteristics more or less valuable than the other ones. Which attributes contribute to a higher status depends on the persons making the status evaluation. These attributes may relate to values and needs shared by only a small group or by a whole society. Furthermore, the contribution of attributes to the status may differ from 'group to group'. Thus, for example, among physicians, being a surgeon carries high status; among professors, the publication of a significant research work contributes to status. Likewise, the bases of social evaluations may vary from society to society and from time to time within the same society. Today, nobility of blood, once considered esteemed in Western Europe, has little appeal, unless associated with other qualities. In feudal age, possession of land brought greater status, but it is not so now. In our society, possession of wealth or political power is considered an important attribute for a high status.

Secord and Bukman have mentioned the following three bases for status:

(a) Reward value of high-status persons: Persons are awarded a high status if their attributes are rewarding to each member of the group. The attribute, which gives the greatest reward to the greatest number, gets the maximum approval, and thus the maximum status. But these attributes should be in rare supply. Some activities may be highly important, but if all the members are engaged in these activities, then no member will be gaining an advantage in status over the others. So, only the attributes in rare supply contribute status. In a scientist group the man with deep insight and brilliance is likely to have a high status because other members of the group do not possess that insight and brilliance.

(b) Rewards received and costs incurred: A person is evaluated to be of high status if he/she receives rewards that others have not. A recipient of 'Vir Chakra' is likely to be accorded a high status.

Similarly, a soldier who sacrifices his own life for the safety of the country is likely to get high distinction.

(c) Investment: Investments include features such as race, ethnic background, family, age, sex, and seniority. These features confer upon a person a right to be accorded a certain status.

Ascription and Achievement of Status

There are two processes by which the status of a person in society is formed. These are the process of ascription and the process of achievement.

Ascribed Status

The status that a child receives at the time he is ushered into the process of socializations is his ascribed status, since he has not achieved it. It is determined by the following factors:

(a) Sex: All societies ascribe different attitudes and roles to men and women.

(b) Age: Age is an important factor used by all the societies for role assignments.

(c) Kinship: The ascription of citizenship, religious affiliation, and community membership is in most cases a matter of identification with parents.

(d) Social factors: Sex, age, and kinship do not exhaust all the bases for the ascription of status. Sometimes, purely social factors are used as the basis for ascription. Societies classify their members into a number of groups or categories and ascribe differing degrees of status to such categories.

Achieved Status

Generally, in primitive societies, greater emphasis is laid on ascribed status. In civilized societies, there is an emphasis on achieved status. The urban conditions of life, the extreme division of labour, and the rapid social change have made it possible for individuals to achieve status on the basis of the accomplishments.

The emphasis on ascription or achievement criteria depends very much on the whole package of social values. Whether a society tends to stress the concept of ascription or of achievement is finally

determined within a social matrix. In the modern society, the emphasis is on achievement. The shift to achievement criteria followed the complex changes associated with the rise of industrialism and all that went with it. In the developing nations of Asia and Africa, this shift is taking place. They are moving away from the traditional descriptive forms of stratification towards achievement. It may be said that the shift to achievement is an unavoidable prerequisite for the transition to modernity.

The factors such as sex, age, and social affiliations limit the achievement of some statuses. But society also places some limitations. A naturalized citizen cannot become the President of the United States. In India, on account of rigid caste structure, social status is fixed.

QUESTIONS

1. Define society. What are its essential elements?
2. "Society is a web of social relationships". Discuss.
3. What is a community? Distinguish it from a society.
4. What do you mean by association? Distinguish it from community with suitable examples.
5. Define socialization and discuss the agencies of socialization.
6. What do you mean by social structure? How does it differ from organic structure?
7. Define social system. What are its characteristics? How does it differ from social structure?
8. Discuss the meaning of norms and their importance.
9. Define social values and discuss their importance in society.
10. Write notes on
 - (a) Conformity of norms (b) Deviance
 - (c) Anomie
11. Define social group and discuss its main characteristics.
12. Attempt a classification of social groups.
13. Define a primary group. Discuss its main characteristics and importance.
14. Define a secondary group. What are its characteristics and what is its importance in the society?
15. Distinguish between primary and secondary groups with suitable examples.
16. Distinguish between clan and tribe and discuss their characteristics.
17. Differentiate between role and status.
18. Define status and discuss how it is determined in a society.
19. Clearly distinguish between ascribed and achieved status with examples.
20. Explain the meaning of culture. Describe its importance for an individual and a group.

Institutions

3

MEANING OF INSTITUTION

In ordinary speech or writing, people often use the word institution to mean an organization with some specific purpose, as a public or charitable institution. Sometimes it is used to denote any set of people in organized interaction; for example, family or club or government. For the purpose of sociology a more precise definition is required.

Institutions have been defined by McIver as the 'established forms or conditions of procedure characteristic of a group activity'.

According to Horton and Hunt, 'An institution is an organised system of relationships which embodies certain common rules and procedures and meets certain basic needs of the society'.

According to Bogardus, 'A social institution is a structure of society that is organised to meet the needs of people chiefly through well-established procedures'.

According to Cooley, 'An institution is a complete organisation of collective behaviour established in the social heritage and meeting some persistent need or want'.

H. E. Barnes holds that 'Social institutions are the social structures and machinery through which human society organises, directs and executes the multifarious activities required for human need'.

Institutions are forms of procedure. Every organization is dependent upon certain recognized and established set of rules, traditions, and usages. These usages and rules may be given the name of institutions. They are the forms of procedures that are recognized and accepted by the society and govern the relations between individuals and groups. Thus, marriage, education, property, and religion are the main institutions.

The following characteristics may be noted in the concept of an institution.

- (i) Institutions are the means of controlling individuals.
- (ii) Institutions depend on the collective activities of men.
- (iii) The institution has some proceedings that are formed on the basis of customs and dogmas.
- (iv) Institution is more stable than other means of social control.
- (v) Every institution has some rules that must be compulsorily obeyed by the individuals.
- (vi) Institutions are formed to satisfy the primary needs of men. It has social recognition behind it.

Difference Between Institution and Association

(i) Association represents human aspect. If institutions, as discussed above, are the rules of procedure, it obviously follows that they cannot be identified with associations. Association is a group of persons organized for the pursuit of a specific purpose. A family is an association which is organized for the purpose of propagation of mankind, whereas marriage is its main institution. Likewise, the party system is an institution, but the state is an association; baptism is an institution, but the church is an association. An association represents human aspect, whereas an institution is a social condition of conduct and behaviour. Institutions are the way of attaining the object or objects for which the association exists. A college is an association with the specific purpose of imparting education; lectures and examination system are institutions.

- (ii) Associations have form and are concrete, whereas institutions have no form and are abstract.
- (iii) Associations are things, whereas institutions are modes. The distinction between associations and institutions is of great importance in sociology because it is mainly concerned with institutions rather than with associations. Institutions give life and activity to association, communities, or any other types of societies. We are born and live in associations.

It may be noted that while association and institution are different concepts, no institution can function without an association.

A case of both an association and institution: Sometimes the same thing is termed as both the institution and association; for example, a hospital or a college. But as Maclver observes, 'If we *are considering something as an organised group, it is an association*; if as a form of procedure, it is an institution. Association denotes membership, institution denotes a mode or means of service. When we regard a college as a body of teachers and students, we are selecting its associational aspect, but when we regard it as an educational system, we are selecting its institutional features'.

Difference Between Institution and Society

The following points of difference between institution and society may be noted:

- (i) Society is a system of social relationships, whereas institution is the organization of rules, traditions, and usages.
- (ii) Institutions are the forms of procedure that are recognized and accepted by the society.
- (iii) Institutions exist for the society and govern the relations between members of the society.

(iv) Society represents human aspects, whereas an institution is a social condition of conduct and behaviour.

Difference Between Institution and Community

The points of difference between an institution and a community are as follows:

- (i) Institution is an organization of rules, traditions, and usages, whereas community is a group of people.
- (ii) Institution is a structure of society to fulfil some specific needs, whereas community is a group of people living in a particular locality and possessing community sentiment.
- (iii) Institution is abstract, whereas community is concrete.
- (iv) Individuals are the members of community and not of the institution.
- (v) Every institution is concerned with one particular aspect of life, whereas community is concerned with the social life as a whole.
- (vi) Institution is based on the collective activities of human beings, whereas community is based on mutual relationships.
- (vii) Institutions are born in a community, whereas a community grows itself.

IMPORTANCE OF INSTITUTION

Professor Bronislaw Malinowski has described the importance of institutions in these words, 'Every institution centres around a fundamental need, permanently unites a group of people in a co-operational task and has its particular body of doctrines and its technique or craft. Institutions are not correlated simply and directly to new functions, one need does not receive one's satisfaction in one institution'. Societies must reproduce new members, socialize them, give them a sense of purpose, and provide for the maintenance of order and the production and distribution of goods and services. Each of these functions is performed through some social structure such as family, school, state, church, or business enterprise. Institutions, as defined earlier, are the sanctioned rules and procedures to control the activities of social structures. Thus, marriage controls the family, education controls the school, political system controls the state, baptism controls the church, and the economic system controls the business enterprise. Institution is a social condition of conduct and behaviour.

Writing about the importance of institutions, MacIver says, 'It transfers cultural elements from one generation to another, introduces unity in human behaviour, controls their conduct and guides man according to circumstances'. Institutions simplify the group or social acts of an individual. They provide a definite role and status to the individual. The parents learn their place and a child learns his duties towards the parents or elders in the society through institutions. As a matter of fact, institutions maintain unity and harmony in the society. They provide a unified pattern of diverse ways of human behaviour and action.

It may not, however, be construed that institutions do not create some evils. They generally create hurdles in the smooth growth of society; for example, caste system has created unbreakable social divisions. Religion has led to communalism. Marx called it 'the opium of the masses' which keeps them in an abject degradation. India was partitioned in the name of religion. However, it is difficult to see how any society can keep united without the aid of institutions.

KINDS OF INSTITUTIONS

There are five kinds of institutions.

- (i) Family
- (ii) Economics
- (iii) Religion
- (iv) Education
- (v) State

There are a number of secondary institutions derived from each of the five primary institutions. Thus, the secondary institutions derived from family would be the marriage, divorce, monogamy, polygamy, etc. The secondary institutions of economics are property, trading, credit, banking, etc. The secondary institutions of religion are church, temple, mosque, totem, taboo, etc. The secondary institutions of education are school, college, university, etc. The secondary institutions of state are interest groups, party system, democracy, etc. Institutions may grow as do the folkways and mores or they may be created just as laws are enacted; for instance, monogamy or polyandry grew in response to the needs of the people. Banks grew as the need for borrowing and lending money was felt. Schools and colleges are created by deliberate choice and action. An important feature that we find in the growth of institutions is the extension of the power of the state over the other four primary institutions. The state now exercises more authority by laws and regulations. Sometimes, folkways and mores are incorporated into laws; for example, monogamy. Sometimes, new laws may be enacted; for example, Hindu Code Bill. Today, the family is being regulated and controlled by the state in scores of ways. A number of traditional functions of family have been taken over by the state. The state has enacted laws regulating marriage, divorce, adoption, and inheritance. The authority of state has similarly been extended to economics, to education, and to religion.

An institution never dies. New institutional norms may replace the old norms, but the institution goes on. For example, the modern family has replaced the norms of patriarchal family, yet family as an institution continues. When feudalism died, government did not end. The governmental and economic functions continued to be fulfilled, although according to the changed norms. All the primary institutions are thousands of years old, only the institutional norms are new.

FUNCTIONS OF INSTITUTIONS

The functions of institutions are of two kinds:

- (i) Manifest
- (ii) Latent

Manifest functions are those functions that are intended and main functions, that is, those functions for which the institution primarily exists. Latent functions are unintended functions. They are not primary functions, but only the by-products. Thus, the manifest functions of education are the development of literacy, training for occupational roles, and the inculcation of basic social values. But its latent functions would be keeping youth off the labour market, weakening the control of parents or development of friendship. The manifest functions of religion are worship of God

and instruction in religious ideology. Its latent functions would be to develop attachment to one's religious community, to alter family life and to create religious hatred. The manifest function of economic institutions is to produce and distribute goods, whereas its latent functions may be to promote urbanization, promote the growth of labour unions, and redirect education. The latent functions of an institution may support the intended objectives, or may damage the norms of the institution.

INTERRELATIONS OF INSTITUTIONS

A social structure owes its stability to a proper adjustment of relationships among the different institutions. No institution works in a vacuum. Religion, education, family, government, and business all interact with one another. Thus, education creates attitudes which influence the acceptance or rejection of religious dogmas. Religion may exalt education because it enables one to know the truths of God or denounce it because it threatens the faith. Business conditions may influence the family life. Unemployment may determine the number of people who feel unable to marry. An unemployed person may postpone his marriage till he gets employed in a suitable job. Postponement of marriage may affect the birth rates. The state influences the functions of institutions. It may take over some of the functions and determine their institutional norms. The businessmen, educators, clergymen, and the functionaries of all other institutions also seek to influence acts of state, since any state action may obstruct or help the realization of their institutional objectives. Thus, social institutions are closely related with one another.

The interrelationships of the various institutions can be likened to a wheel. The family is the hub, whereas education, religion, government, and economics are the spokes of the wheel. The rim would be the community within which the various institutions operate.

All institutions face the problem of continuously adjusting themselves to a changing society. Changes in the social environment may bring changes in all the institutions. Inflation may have a great influence on marriage, death, crime, and education. Breakdown of economic institutions may have radical effects on political institutions. Any change in an institution may lead to a change in the other institutions. There may also take place a shifting of functions from one institution to another. Child care, formerly a function of family, has now shifted to the state. When one institution fails to meet a human need, another institution will often assume the function. No institution can avoid affecting other institutions or avoid being affected by others.

QUESTIONS

1. Define institution and discuss its characteristics.
2. Discuss the importance of institutions in a society.
3. Distinguish between
 - (a) Institution and association
 - (b) Institution and society
 - (c) Institution and community
4. Discuss the different kinds of institutions and their interrelations.
5. Write a note on 'The functions of institutions'.

Social Processes

4

THE MEANING OF SOCIAL INTERACTION

Man is a social and cultural being, and society is both natural and necessary for man. It is difficult for man to live in isolation. Man has always lived in various groups and associations. All the members of these groups act and behave in a certain manner. The behaviour of each individual is affected by the behaviour of others. This interaction is the essence of social life. Behaviour systems grow out of interaction. Without interaction there would be no social or group life. Mere physical proximity of individuals does not unite them into a group or social unit. An associative life exists only when they mix with one another—play or talk together to realize a common end, or even compete or conflict with one another. Thus, interaction is the basic ingredient of social relationships. Society is rooted in interaction. Green defines social interaction as ‘the mutual influences that individuals and groups have on one another in their attempts to solve problems and in their striving towards goals’. According to Dawson and Gettys, ‘Social interaction is the process whereby men interpenetrate the minds of each other’. In the words of Gist, ‘Social interaction is the reciprocal influence human beings exert on each other through interstimulation and response’. According to Eldredge and Merrill, ‘Social interaction is the general process whereby two or more persons are in meaningful contact as a result of which their behaviour is modified, however slightly’.

Thus, social interaction refers to the entire range of social relationships, wherein there is reciprocal stimulation and response between individuals. An aggregate of individuals becomes a society not because each individual possesses ‘its content’ which actuates him, but because there is a reciprocal influence—direct or indirect. Social interaction produces some definite influence upon social relations that exist among human beings. It establishes mental relations among persons. It is

the reciprocal influence mutually exerted by human beings through their stimulation and mutual response. According to Park and Burgess, social interaction is of a dual nature, of persons with persons and of groups with groups. The two essential conditions of social interaction are (1) social contact and (2) communication. Social contact differs from physical or bodily contact. Social contact can be established through the medium of radio, letters, telephones, and other media of communication even between people thousands of miles apart. Of course, social contact is strengthened by physical contact. According to Gillin and Gillin, 'Social contact is the first phase of interaction'.

Social contacts can be positive as well as negative. They are positive when they lead to benevolence, co-operation, mutual understanding, and assimilation. They are negative if they create hatred, jealousy, and conflict.

Social contacts are established through various mediums of communications. Hence, the means of communication are essential adjuncts of social contact. Such means are language, script, gestures, symbols, radio, telephone, post and telegraph services, newspapers, etc. Human interaction is essentially communicative interaction.

SOCIO-CULTURAL PROCESSES

Social interaction usually takes place in the form of co-operation, competition, conflict, accommodation, and assimilation. These forms of social interactions are also designated as social processes. These social processes may, therefore, be described as the fundamental ways in which men interact and establish relationships. MacIver observes, 'Social process is the manner in which the relations of the members of a group, once brought together, acquire a certain distinctive character'. He further explains that it also implies changes from one state of relationship to another, directed up and down, forward and backward, and hence leading towards integration or disintegration. According to Ginsberg, 'Social processes mean the various modes of interaction between individuals or groups including cooperation and conflict, social differentiation and integration, development, arrest and decay'. Social interaction and social process are interrelated. The one cannot be understood without the other. Interaction refers to an action done in response to another action, but when this interaction through repetition leads to a result, it is called a social process. Thus, when husband and wife help each other out of sympathy or love and this mutual help assumes the form of co-operation, it becomes a social process.

Social processes are so fundamental to the life of a community that understanding of human society is not possible without their study. Indeed, some sociologists conceive of society as the expression of different social processes or forms of interactions and hold that sociology should concern itself almost exclusively with study of these forms. Simmel, for instance, remarks that society exists wherever several individuals are in reciprocal relationships and that which constitutes an aggregation of individuals into a society is not their life-content, but their reciprocal influence. Simmel consequently devoted most of his researches to the analysis of those relationships. Other sociologists who analysed society mainly in terms of social processes were Ratzel, Tonnies, Vikrant, and Von Wiese in Germany and Park, Burgess, and Ross in America. Ratzel had maintained that society should be viewed as a social process, that is, in terms of totality of social relationships. Society, in his view, exists in the form of reciprocal human relationships within a group. Similarly, Simmel viewed society as essentially a social process and sociology as the discipline concerned with the study of that process. It is thus obvious that it is essential for a student of sociology that he should study the various forms of social processes and their nature in order to understand social phenomena.

Co-operation

Definition of Co-operation

Co-operation is the most pervasive and continuous of the social processes. It is an integrating activity and is believed to be the opposite of competition. In reality, however, it is conflict rather than competition which is the opposite of co-operation. Co-operation generally means working together in the pursuit of like or common interest. Green defines co-operation as 'the continuous and common endeavour of two or more persons to perform a task or to reach a goal that is commonly cherished'. In the words of Merrill and Eldredge, 'Cooperation is a form of social interaction wherein two or more persons work together to gain a common end'. Fairchild writes, 'Cooperation is the process by which individuals or groups combine their effort, in a more or less organised way for the attainment of common objective'. The word 'co-operation' is derived from two Latin words, 'co' meaning together and 'operating' meaning to work. It is thus joint activity in pursuit of common goals or shared rewards. It is goal oriented and a conscious form of social interaction. It involves two elements (i) common end and (ii) organized effort:

Cooley says, 'Co-operation arises when men see that they have a common interest and have, at the same time, sufficient intelligence and self-control to seek this interest through united action: perceived unity of interest and faculty of organisation are the essential facts in intelligent combination'.

Co-operation, it may be noted, imposes restraints on the participant. A person cannot have his/her way entirely if working co-operatively with another person. Co-operation always implies inhibition of certain ego-centred drives. From the restraint so imposed, there arises a moral control that is lacking in uninhibited conflict.

Co-operation is brought about by several circumstances such as (i) desire for individual benefits, (ii) desire to give, (iii) devotion to common purposes, (iv) situational necessity, and (v) desire to achieve larger goals.

Types of Co-operation

There are many modes of co-operation in social life, but its principal types are the following:

- (i) **Direct co-operation:** In this type of co-operation, individuals do like things together, that is, perform identical functions; for example moving a pile of stones or pushing a motor car out of the mud. Playing together, worshipping together, tilling the fields together are other instances of direct co-operation.
- (ii) **Indirect co-operation:** It is the co-operation in which people do unlike tasks towards a similar end. In other words, in this type of co-operation, individuals work towards a common end, but each has his own specialized function; for example, when carpenters, plumbers, and masons co-operate to build a house. This co-operation is based on the famous principle of the division of labour.
- (iii) **Primary co-operation:** It is the co-operation which is found in primary groups such as the family. In this form of co-operation, there is an identity of interests between the individual and the group. The achievement of the interest of the group includes the realization of the individual's interests.
- (iv) **Secondary co-operation:** This type of co-operation is found in the secondary groups such as government, industry, church, and trade union.

(v) **Tertiary co-operation:** This co-operation is found in the interaction between the various big and small groups to meet a particular situation. Thus, when a National Front is formed by different political parties to win the poll against the Congress party it is tertiary co-operation. In such a type of co-operation, the attitudes of the co-operating parties are purely opportunistic; the organization of their co-operation is both loose and fragile.

Role of Co-operation

Co-operation is a universal phenomenon. It is so important in the life of an individual that according to Kropotkin, it is difficult to survive without it. People learn their first lessons in co-operation as members of their families. Most of the individual and collective goals cannot be achieved without co-operation. It is needed at every step in our lives. The physical, mental, and even the spiritual needs of the individual remain unsatisfied if he does not agree to co-operate with his fellow members.

All the progress that mankind has made in the various fields is attributed to the co-operating spirit of the people. The astounding achievements of science and technology, the initial success of man in his flight to the moon, the attempt to bridge the gulf between the standards of living of the highly developed and the most undeveloped countries, all are the results of human co-operation. So great is the realization of the necessity of co-operation on the part of every nation, for the solution of international problems, that they are sparing no pains to secure it even at the risk of sacrificing some of their cherished convictions.

Competition

Definition of Competition

According to Bogardus, 'Competition is a contest to obtain something that does not exist in a quantity sufficient to meet the demand'. According to Anderson and Parker, 'Competition is that form of social action in which we strive against each other for the possession of or use of limited material or non-material good'. There is no competition for sunshine and air which are unlimited. There is competition not only for bread but also for luxuries, power, social position, mates, fame, and all other things not available for one's asking. Competition often leads to new achievements in different fields. It is an effort to outdo the competitor in achieving some mutually desired goal. Since scarcity of resources is, in a sense, an inevitable condition of social life, consequently, competition of some sort or the other is found in all societies.

Characteristics of Competition

The following characteristics determine the nature of competition:

(i) **Competition is impersonal struggle:** Park and Burgess have defined competition as 'interaction without social contact'. It is usually not directed against any individual or group in particular; the competitors are not in contact and do not know one another. Competition is, generally, not personalized. When the individuals compete with one another, not on personal level, but as members of groups, such as business, social or cultural organizations, tribes, nations, and political parties, the competition is called impersonal.

(ii) **Competition is an unconscious activity:** Competition takes place on the unconscious level. Students, for example, do not conceive of their classmates as competitors, even though there are only a limited honours available, and if certain members of the class get them, the honours

are automatically denied to the others. Students may be conscious of the competition and much concerned about marks. It remains a competition just so long as their attention is focused on the reward or desired goal for which they are striving rather than on the competitors. When there is a shift in interest from the objects of competition to the competitors themselves, it becomes rivalry or *personal competition*.

(iii) Competition is universal: Competition is found in every society and in every age. As the things people wish to secure are limited in supply, there is competition all round to secure them.

Value of Competition

Competition, like co-operation, is indispensable in social life. It arises from the fact that individuals are capable of independent locomotion and have the capacity for gaining experience as a result of independent action. Some sociologists are of the view that it is even a more basic process than co-operation. Hobbes had remarked that the struggle is the basic law of life and that earliest man lived in a continual state of warfare. Hume, Hegel, Rousseau, and Bagehot also corroborated the views of Hobbes. Later on, the theory of the survival of the fittest which developed as a result of Darwin's theory of evolution also stressed the importance of competition in society.

Competition performs many useful functions in society. According to H. T. Mazumdar, it performs five positive functions. First, it helps determine the status and location of individual members in a system of hierarchy; second, it tends to stimulate economy, efficiency, and investiveness; third, it tends to enhance one's ego; fourth, it prevents undue concentration of power in an individual or group of individuals; and fifth, it creates respect for the rules of the game.

The functions of competition are briefly summarized as follows:

(i) Assignment of individuals to proper places: It assigns individuals a place in the social system. Competition determines who is to perform what function. The division of labour and the entire complex economic organization in modern life are, thus, the products of competition. In the words of E. A. Ross, 'Competition is a progressive force which fulfils and does not necessarily destroy'. The stimulus of competition has played a considerable role in the technological and organizational innovation.

(ii) Source of motivation: Competition furnishes motivation in the desire to excel or to obtain recognition or to win an award. It stimulates achievement by lifting the levels of aspiration; the individuals work harder if competing than if working on their own with no thought of rivalry.

(iii) Conducive to progress: Fair competition is conducive to economic as well as social progress and even to general welfare because it spurs individuals and groups to exert their best efforts. Its obvious connection with what is called progress has led some thinkers to regard it as the essential feature of modern civilization.

It may not, however, be presumed that competition is a prerequisite to social progress. Mazumdar has mentioned its three negative functions. First, it may lead to neurosis through frustration; second, it may lead to monopoly; and third, it may lead to conflicts. Competition can be vicious both for individuals and groups. It may create emotional disturbances. It may develop unfriendly and unfavourable attitudes among the persons or groups towards one another. Unfair competition has the most disintegrating effects. If uncontrolled, it becomes a conflict involving unethical and, sometimes, violent practices. In the economic sphere, competition results in waste and lack of consideration for the real needs of the people. It can lead to starvation in the midst of plenty, to fear and insecurity,

to instability and panic. Unlimited competition leads to monopoly. In the economic field, businessmen seek to protect themselves against competition; for example, by erecting tariff barriers against foreign competition, by agreeing upon prices. Labour unites for protecting its wages, excluding foreign labour, and for a number of other purposes. Bureaucrats protect themselves through their association. Races protect their interests by excluding others from entering within their fold.

However, no society is exclusively competitive or exclusively co-operative. The social system is a balance between competitive and co-operative forces. But competition should always be healthy and fair. Only then can it be advantageous both for the individual progress and welfare of the group.

Conflict

Definition of Conflict

Conflict is an ever present process in human relations. It has been defined by A. W. Green as 'the deliberate attempt to oppose, resist or coerce the will of another or others'. According to Gillin and Gillin, 'Conflict is the social process in which individuals or groups seek their ends by directly challenging the antagonist by violence or threat of violence'. As a process, it is the antithesis of co-operation. Almost any human action is likely to thwart the hopes or interfere with the plans of someone else. Such action becomes conflict, however, only if the deliberate attempt is to oppose. When a candidate secures a job, it implies that the job is denied to others. But the successful candidate has no deliberate intent to oppose, resist, or coerce and it cannot, therefore, be called a conflict situation. Conflict is, in other words, a competition in its more occasional, personal, and hostile forms. It is a process of seeking rewards by eliminating or weakening the competitors. In a conflict, one party attempts to destroy or annihilate the other party or at least tries to reduce it to a subordinate position. Although, normally, violence is associated with conflict, it can occur without it. Gandhiji's policy of civil disobedience and non-violence as practised under satyagraha to fight against the British imperialism is the best example of conflict without violence.

Causes of Conflict

Conflict is universal. It occurs in all times and places. There has never been a time or a society in which some individuals or groups did not come into conflict. According to Malthus, reduced supply of the means of subsistence is the cause of conflict. According to Darwin, the principles of struggle for existence and survival of the fittest are the main causes of conflict. According to Freud and some other psychologists the innate instinct for aggression in man is the main cause of conflicts. Conflicts also ensue as a result of the difference between the rate of change in the moral norms of a society and men's desire, hopes, dissatisfactions, and demands. The moral norm that children should obey their parents has persisted in our country since times immemorial, but now the younger generation wants to go its own way. In consequence, there is more parent–youth conflict than ever before. Briefly stated, the causes of conflicts are as follows:

(i) **Individual differences:** No two men are alike in their nature, attitudes, ideals, and interest. On account of these differences, they fail to accommodate themselves, which may lead to conflicts among them.

(ii) **Cultural differences:** Culture is the way of life of a group. The culture of one group differs from the culture of the other group. The cultural differences among the groups sometimes cause tension and lead to conflict. The religious differences have occasionally *led* to wars and persecution in history. India was partitioned in the name of religious differences.

(iii) **Clash of interest:** Sometimes, there is a clash of interests among different people or groups. For example, the interests of the workers clash with those of the employers, which leads to conflict between them.

(iv) **Social change:** Social change becomes a cause of conflict when a part of society does not change along with the changes in the other parts. Social change causes cultural lag, which leads to conflict. The parent–youth conflict is the result of social change. In short, conflict is an expression of social disequilibrium.

Types of Conflict

Simmel distinguished four types of conflicts: (i) war, (ii) feud or factional strife, (iii) litigation, and (iv) conflict of impersonal ideals. War is the kind of group conflict we are most familiar with. Prior to the development of interterritorial trade, war provided the only means of contact between alien groups. In this case, war, although dissociative in character, had a definitely associative effect. Simmel attributed war to a deep-seated antagonistic impulse in man. But to bring this antagonistic impulse to action, some definite objective is needed which may be the desire to gain material interest. It may be said that antagonistic impulse provides a foundation for conflict.

Feud is an intra-group form of war that may arise because of injustice alleged to have been done by one group to the other.

Litigation is a judicial form of conflict when an individual or group asserts its claims to certain rights on the basis of objective factors; subjective factors being excluded.

Conflict of impersonal ideals is a conflict carried on by the individuals not for themselves, but for an ideal. In such a conflict, each party attempts to justify truthfulness of its own ideals; for example, the conflict carried on by the communists and capitalists to prove that their own system can bring in a better world order.

Gillin and Gillin have mentioned five types of conflicts: (i) personal conflict, (ii) racial conflict, (iii) class conflict, (iv) political conflict, and (v) International conflict. Personal conflict is a conflict between two persons within the same group; a conflict between two students is a personal conflict. The racial conflict between the Whites and Negroes in the USA is an example of racial conflict. Class conflict is a conflict between two classes. According to Karl Marx, Society has always been divided between two economic classes—the exploiters and the exploited, which have always been at conflict with each other. Political conflict is a conflict between the parties for political power. Thus, the conflict between the Congress party and opposition parties is a political conflict. International conflict is a conflict between two nations. The conflict between India and Pakistan over the Kashmir issue is an international conflict.

Conflict can also be of the following types:

(i) **Latent and overt conflict:** Latent conflict may exist as social tension and dissatisfaction for very long periods before it erupts in hostile action. Latent conflict becomes overt conflict when an issue is declared and when hostile action is taken. Sometimes actual conflict may exist in latent form for years before there is a formulation of issue or a crisis. The latent conflict between China and India over the boundary issue may become overt in the form of outbreak of war.

(ii) **Corporate and personal conflict:** Corporate conflict occurs among the groups within a society or between two societies. Race riots, communal upheavals, religious persecution, labour–management conflict, and war between nations are the examples of corporate conflict. Personal conflict, on the other hand, occurs within a group.

Personal conflicts arise on account of various motives; envy, hostility, and betrayal of trust being the most predominant.

Role of Conflict

As discussed above, conflict is a fundamental human and societal trait. H. T. Majumdar has mentioned the following positive functions of conflict.

- (i) Conflict tends to stiffen the morale and promote the solidarity of the in-group.
- (ii) Conflict, concluded with victory, leads to the enlargement of the victorious group.
- (iii) Conflict leads to redefinition of value systems.
- (iv) Conflict may leave to the working out of non-violent techniques for resolving crises.
- (v) Conflict may lead to change in the relative status of the conflicting parties.
- (vi) Conflict may lead to a new consensus.

Horton and Hunt have classified the effects of conflict, as given in the following table.

Integrative Effects	Disintegrative Effects
Define issues	Increase bitterness
Lead to resolution of issues	Lead to destruction and bloodshed
Increase group cohesion	Lead to intergroup tension
Lead to alliances with other groups	Disrupts normal channels of co-operation
Keep groups alert to members' interests	Diverts members' attention from group objectives

Difference Between Conflict and Competition

Conflict and competition are not identical terms. They should not, therefore, be confused. Conflict differs from competition in many ways. For example, conflict takes place on a conscious level, it is personal, it involves violence or at least the threat of violence. Conflict always includes awareness of an adversary and overt conflict always includes harming an adversary in some way. Competition may, however, occur without the actual knowledge of the other's existence; for example, in case of civil service examination the competitors are not aware of one another. They are primarily concerned with the achievement of goal, but they do not strive for the purposes of denying or opposing others—else the action would become overt. Again, competition is always governed by moral norms, whereas many conflicts are not, as is proved by the maxim 'everything is fair in war'.

Lastly, whereas competition is a continuous process, conflict is intermittent. Conflict has the tendency to recur, as the differences are seldom resolved permanently. It is this start and stop character of conflict that helps to distinguish it from competition.

To clarify the distinction between conflict and competition the following points may be noted.

- (i) Conflict involves contact, competition does not.
- (ii) Conflict takes place on a conscious level, competition is an unconscious activity.
- (iii) Conflict is an intermittent process, competition is a continuous process.

- (iv) Competition is non-violent, conflict may involve violence.
- (v) Conflict disregards social norms, competition does care for these norms.
- (vi) Competition is impersonal, conflict becomes personalized.

Co-operation and Conflict Go Together

There is a combination of co-operation and conflict revealed in the relation of men and of groups. They together exist in the human society just like the linked emotions of love and hate. The psychologists have shown how these two emotions may exist in the same individual. A child may love his mother for the satisfaction and pleasures she provides yet dislike her for the discipline she imposes. In the same way, co-operation and conflict often go together.

According to Cooley, conflict and co-operation are not separable things, but phases of one process which always involves something of both. Even in the friendliest relations and in the most intimate associations, there is some point where interests diverge or where attitudes are not in accord. They cannot, therefore, co-operate beyond that point and conflict is inevitable. The closest co-operation, for instance, within the family does not prevent the occurrence of quarrels. Cooley writes, 'Conflict of some sort is the life of society, and progress emerges from a struggle in which each individual, class, or institution seeks to realise its own ideals of good. The intensity of this struggle varies with the vigour of the people, and its cessation, if conceivable, would be death'.

According to MacIver, 'Cooperation crossed by conflict marks society wherever it is revealed'.

Accommodation

Definition of Accommodation

As discussed above, conflict is a continuous though intermittent social process, but life cannot go long if groups are engaged in conflicts. Conflicts are exhausting if not annihilating. These must, therefore, be resolved for making social life peaceful. Accommodation is resolution of conflicts, which generally means adjusting oneself to the new environment. Adjustment may be to the physical or social environment. Adjustment to the former takes place through organic or structural modification transmitted by heredity and is termed *adaptation*, whereas adjustment to the latter is achieved by an individual through the acquisition of behaviour patterns transmitted to him socially and through the adoption of new ways of behaving, and is termed accommodation. Thus, animals lower than man, adjust themselves most frequently through adaptation; man does so chiefly through accommodation as he lives in a truly social environment. Accommodation is a social process, adaptation is a biological process. According to J. M. Baldwin, accommodation denotes acquired changes in the behaviour of individuals that enables them to adjust to their environment. Some of the definitions of accommodation are as follows:

- (i) **Reuter and Hart:** 'As a process, accommodation is the sequence of steps by which persons are reconciled to changed conditions of life through the formation of habits and attitudes made necessary by the changed conditions themselves'.
- (ii) **MacIver:** 'The term accommodation refers particularly to the process in which man attains a sense of harmony with his environment'.
- (iii) **Ogburn and Nimkoff:** 'Accommodation is a term used by the sociologists to describe the adjustment of hostile individuals or groups'.

(iv) **Lundberg:** ‘The word accommodation has been used to designate the adjustments which people in groups make to relieve the fatigue and tensions of competition and conflict’.

(v) **Gillin and Gillin:** ‘Accommodation is the process by which competing and conflicting individuals and groups adjust their relationship to each other in order to overcome the difficulties which arise in competition, contravention or conflict’.

(vi) **Anderson and Parker:** ‘Accommodation is the achievement of adjustment between people that permits harmonious acting together in social situations’.

Forms or Methods of Accommodation

Accommodation is social adaptation that involves the invention or borrowing of devices whereby the one ethnic group develops models of life, economic and otherwise, that complement or supplement those of the others. It is primarily concerned with the adjustment issuing from the conflict between individuals and groups. In society, individuals have to resolve their conflicts sooner or later. This compromise reached by conflicting parties has been termed ‘accommodation’ by the sociologists. As Park and Burgess stated, in accommodation the antagonism between conflicting elements is temporarily regulated. This is why Sumner referred to accommodation as ‘antagonistic co-operation’. Accommodation or resolution of conflicts may be brought about in many different ways and, accordingly, may assume various forms, the most important of them being the following:

1. **Yielding to coercion or admitting one’s defeat:** Coercion means the use of force or the threat of force to terminate a conflict. It usually involves parties of unequal strength, the weaker party yields because it has been over-powered or because of the fear of being over-powered. An armistice or peace treaty following a war is an example of this form of accommodation. In the case of actual outbreak of hostilities and use of force, conflict comes to a close when one of the antagonists achieves a clear-cut victory over the other. The loser has to choose between submitting to the terms of peace imposed by the victor and continuing the conflict with the risk of being eliminated altogether.
2. **Compromise:** When the combatants are of equal strength, neither may be able to prevail over the other, they attain accommodation by agreeing to a compromise. In compromise, each party to the dispute makes some concessions and yields to some demands of the other. The settlement of the parliament disputes involves accommodation of this kind.
3. **Arbitration and Conciliation:** Accommodation is also achieved by means of arbitration and conciliation, which involves attempts on the part of the third party to bring about an end of the conflict between the contending parties. The labour management conflicts, the conflict between husband and wife, and sometimes even the political conflicts are resolved through the intervention of an *arbitrator* or a *mediator*, in whom both the parties have full confidence. In International law, mediation or arbitration is a recognized mode of settling international disputes.

Difference should, however, be noted between mediation and arbitration. Mediation is the technique of bringing estranged individuals together and creating in the ill the willingness to consider the possible settlement of their difficulty. The mediators may even suggest a basis for settlement in case the contestants themselves seem to have no common meeting ground. The suggestions made by the mediators have, however, no binding force. Arbitration differs from mediation in that a definite decision on the issue is handed down by the individuals who serve as arbitrators, and the decision is regarded as binding on the contestants.

4. Toleration: Toleration is the form of accommodation in which there is no settlement of difference, but there is only the avoidance of overt conflict. The differences in such cases cannot be resolved as they involve irreconcilable ideologies. Toleration is best exemplified in the field of religion where the different religious groups exist side by side.

5. Conversion: Conversion involves conviction on the part of one of the contending parties that it has been wrong and its opponent right. This process, thus, consists of repudiation of the beliefs of one party or allegiance and adoption of the other party. Ordinarily, conversion is thought of only in connection with religion, but it may also occur in politics, economics, and other fields.

6. Rationalization: Accommodation through rationalization involves plausible excuses or explanations for one's behaviours instead of acknowledging the real defect in one's own self. Not only individuals but also groups try to justify their action on purely imaginary grounds. Nazi Germany, for example, had advanced the reason for starting Second World War that the Allies were planning to destroy Germany. Similarly, Americans had justified their participation in it by announcing that they wanted to free the world from fascism.

7. Superordination and Subordination: The most common accommodation is the establishment and recognition of the order of superordination and subordination. The organization of any society is essentially the result of such a type of accommodation. In the family, the relationships among parents and children are based in terms of superordination and subordination. In larger groupings, whether social or economic, the relationships are fixed on the same basis. Even under a democratic order, there are leaders and followers who give order and those who obey. When individuals ordinarily accept their relative positions as a matter of fact, accommodation is said to have reached a state of perfection.

Assimilation

Definition of Assimilation

Assimilation is the process whereby persons and groups acquire the culture of the other group in which they come to live, by adopting its attitudes and values, its patterns of thinking and behaving—in short, its way of life. Some of the definitions of assimilation are as follows:

(i) 'Assimilation is a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, attitudes of other persons or groups and by sharing their experiences and history are incorporated with them in a cultural life'.
—*Park and Burgess*

(ii) 'Assimilation is the social process whereby individuals or groups come to share the same sentiments and goals'.
—*Biesanz*

(iii) 'Assimilation is the process whereby individuals or groups once dissimilar become similar, and identified in their interest and outlook'.
—*Nimkoff*

(iv) 'Assimilation is a word used to designate a process of mutual adjustment through which culturally different groups gradually obliterate their differences to the point where they are no longer regarded as socially significant or observable'.
—*Lundberg*

(v) 'The process of mutual cultural diffusion through which persons and groups come to share a common culture is called assimilation'.
—*Horton and Hunt*

Assimilation is not limited to single held only. The best example of assimilation is that of the foreigners being assimilated in the host culture, that is, their abandoning their own culture and taking on that of the host country. But it would be wrong to limit the process of assimilation to this single field. Assimilation takes place in other cases also. For instance, children are gradually assimilated into adult society as they grow up and learn how to behave. Fostered children take in the new ways of their foster parents sometimes so completely that the traces of their earlier home-influence are effaced. Husbands and wives, starting marriage with dissimilar backgrounds often develop a surprising unity of interest and purpose. In the religious field, members of one faith may be brought into the field of other by conversion.

Hindrances and Aids to Assimilation

Assimilation is not a simple process, but it is complex and multi-faceted. There are certain factors that facilitate assimilation and others that hinder or retard it. The rate of assimilation of a cultural minority depends on whether the facilitating or retarding factors predominate. According to Gillin and Gillin, 'factors favouring assimilation are toleration, equal economic opportunity, sympathetic attitude on the part of the dominating group towards the minority group, exposure to the dominant culture, similarity between the cultures of the minority and dominant groups and amalgamation or intermarriage. On the other hand, factors hindering or retarding assimilation are isolating conditions of life, attitudes of superiority on the part of the dominant group, excessive physiological, cultural and social differences between the groups and persecution of the minority groups by the majority groups'.

MacIver lists the following factors which may account for the ready acceptance of some groups and relative antagonism towards others:

- 1. The state of the development of the society entered:** The nature of the immigrant's reception in the new land is dependent to a very large extent on the conditions existing at the time he enters. For instance, immigrants were most acceptable in America before 1880 when strength and skill of every kind were needed in the development of new lands and growing industries, but those coming in the years after 1880 have not been accepted with the same advantages—those entering after 1933 have been rather viewed as a threat to the economic well-being of the native workers.
- 2. Background occupational skills:** The immigrant has a great advantage when he already possesses the skill and training in the work for which there is a need in the new country. For instance, the immigrants skilled in industries have better chances of being readily accepted in industrially undeveloped countries, and so have the people of rural background in countries of agrarian economy.
- 3. The numbers involved:** It has been observed that the attitude of a group towards the outsiders tends to be tolerant until the latter's numbers reach large proportion. The larger the proportion of newcomers, the greater is the resistance of the established group to their integration.
- 4. Physical differences:** Differences in features, complexion of skin, and other physical traits may also help or hinder in assimilation. Racial barrier hinders assimilation because while one can set aside one's culture, one cannot set aside one's skin. We can see discrimination between the White and the Negro races almost everywhere in the world. Generally, the adjustment problems are the easiest for those immigrants who in appearance are supposedly most like the people of the new land.
- 5. Cultural differences:** Language and religion are usually considered to be the main constituents of culture. Immigrants having same the religion and language as the people of the country of their adoption can easily adjust themselves there. In America, for example, English speaking Protestants are assimilated with the greatest speed and ease, whereas non-Christians who do not

speak English, have the greatest difficulty in being assimilated there. Customs and beliefs are other cultural characteristics that can aid or hinder assimilation.

6. The role of semi-community: Sometimes immigrants who come in large numbers settle in compact colonies where they continue to practise their native folkways instead of participating in the life around them. Such semi-communities play an important double role in the assimilation process. On the one hand, such a community, by retaining many features of the traditional way of life, enables the new comers to identify themselves with their fellowmen and adjust to the new conditions easily. On the other hand, the existence of such communities is viewed as alien and distasteful by the majority.

Assimilation, it may be noted, is a matter of degree. In a large society, complete assimilation is perhaps a hypothetical rather than a practically existing state of affairs. The alien group continues to retain many of their social ways. The Indians who are settled abroad for a number of years still retain 'Indianness' and have not forsaken it altogether.

Distinction Between Accommodation and Assimilation

(a) **Assimilation is permanent, whereas accommodation is non-permanent:** Assimilation is a form of accommodation and is a more permanent method of adjusting inter group differences. The group with a cultural heritage different from the one by which it is surrounded is sooner or later identified with the latter on a more or less permanent basis. But in accommodation, differences among groups are not resolved permanently.

(b) **Assimilation is a slow process, whereas accommodation may be a sudden process:** A minor group when existing amidst major group is assimilated in the latter in due course. This process has to be slow, as it involves more intimate and subtle changes. Accommodation, on the other hand, may take place suddenly and involve radical changes as in the case of conversion.

(c) **Assimilation is unconscious activity, whereas accommodation is deliberate:** Assimilation takes place without any deliberate and conscious efforts on the part of the groups involved in the process. As a matter of fact, in assimilation, the individual or group is unconscious of what is occurring and is incorporated into another culture before becoming aware of it. Accommodation, on the other hand, is the result of deliberate efforts on the part of the parties concerned to reach a settlement, and is thus a conscious process.

QUESTIONS

1. Define social interaction and discuss its various forms.
2. What is a social process? How far is conflict a social process? What is its place in social life?
3. Evaluate the role of co-operation and competition in social life.
4. What parts do assimilation and accommodation play in the social process?
5. 'Society is co-operation crossed by conflict' (R. M. MacIver). Discuss.
6. How would you differentiate between competition and conflict?
7. How does assimilation differ from accommodation? Discuss the aids and hindrances of assimilation.

Unit 2 Sociological Theories

August Comte, Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, and Talcott Parsons

5

AUGUST COMTE

August Comte lived from 1798 to 1857. He was born in France. At the age of 16, he enrolled in Ecole Polytechnic, a famous school of France at that time. The teachers of the school were scholars in natural sciences and had little interest in the study of human affairs and society. However, Comte had a serious interest in the study of society. He decided to study various theoretical sciences, which he identified as positive philosophy. With the help of such a study, he tried to formulate a system of laws governing the society. At the age of 19, and while he was still a student, he became secretary to a great social thinker named Saint Simon. From 1817 to 1823, Comte and Saint Simon worked closely together. However, after 1823, they began to attack each other and never worked together again.

In 1822, when Comte was working with Saint Simon, they conceived the necessity of a new science. They asserted that politics must become social physics, a branch of physiology; that each branch of knowledge must pass through three stages, the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive. Thus, the programme of a new science was clearly stated. The leading proposition of Comte's sociological theory was proclaimed—the law of three stages. In 1822, when Comte (with Saint Simon) conceived the necessity of a new science, he wrote, 'we possess now a celestial physics, a terrestrial physics, either mechanical or chemical, a vegetable physics and an animal physics; we still want one more and last one, social physics, to complete the system of our knowledge of nature. I understand by social physics the science which has for its subject, the study of social phenomena,

considered in the same spirit as astronomical, physical, chemical or physiological phenomena, that is, subject to natural invariable laws, the discovery of which is the special object of investigation'. Later, Comte reluctantly changed the name of the new science from social physics to sociology. In the latter part of his book *Positive Philosophy*, he explained that he had invented the new name because the old one was usurped by a Belgian scientist.

In *Positive Politics*, Comte attempted to give a clearer conception to the rather formal definition of sociology implied in *Positive Philosophy*. Initially, Comte's writings implied that the new science of sociology was the study of the totality of human intellect and its resulting social actions through time. Later, he qualified this definition by stating, that sociology was not the study of intellect as such, but of the cumulative results of the exercise of intellect. This conception of social phenomena is similar to the concept of culture frequently employed by contemporary sociologists, who took it over from cultural anthropology.

Methodology

According to Comte, the new science of human society must use the positive method. By this method, he meant the subordination of concepts to facts and the acceptance of the idea that all social phenomena are subject to general laws—social laws. Comte was a student of mathematics, but he denied that the positive method could be identified with the use of mathematics and statistics. He believed that the positive knowledge could be gained through four methods, that is, observation, experiment, comparison, and historical method. According to him, observation should be guided by a theory of social phenomena. He believed in the use of observation to explain the variations of human behaviour. Comte was aware that actual experiment was not possible in the study of society. But in French language, experiment generally refers to controlled observation. He advocated the careful study of 'Pathological Cases' as the scientific equivalent of pure experimentation. He stressed the need of fruitful comparison for the study of social phenomena. He maintained that comparison could be carried out between the human and the animal societies, between coexisting societies, and between social classes in the same society. He explained that by this method, the different stages of evolution may all be observed at once. Comte maintained that these conventional methods of science—observation, experimentation, and comparison should be used in combination with the historical method. The historical method should be used to search the general laws governing the successive transformations of humanity through fixed, but limited number of stages. He insisted that we cannot understand a 'particular social phenomenon without the knowledge about its social context; for example, to understand the significance of a religion, one should understand the entire social and cultural context. There are two further points of methodological significance that need to be mentioned: (i) In Comte's opinion, society is similar to an organism in that the whole is better known than the parts. From this proposition, he came to a somewhat inconsistent conclusion that such specialized studies as economics are misleading because no social fact taken as an isolated phenomenon should be introduced into a science. (ii) In Comte's work there is a suggestion that anticipates, by more than 50 years, an outstanding contribution of Max Weber. Comte took social types to be 'limits to which social reality approaches closer and closer without being ever able to reach them'. In this statement, one perceives, in rudimentary form, Max Weber's ideal type, an excellent methodological tool for sociological analysis.

Static and Dynamic Sociology

Comte divided sociology into two major parts—static and dynamic. This division was taken over from biology, which was known at that time as physiology. According to Comte, ‘the statical study of sociology consists in the investigation of the laws of action and reaction of the different parts of the social system. Social dynamics, on the other hand, is the study of continuous movements in social phenomena through time’. He wrote in his book, *Positive Philosophy* that the distinction between the two is a distinction between the two aspects of the theory. It corresponds with the double conception of order and progress: for order consists in a permanent harmony among the conditions of social existence and progress consists in social development. Both statics and dynamics are essential for the study of society.

According to Comte, social statics is concerned with the analysis of the structure of society at any given moment as well as the analysis of elements, which at any given moment determines the consensus. The social statics is essential for understanding the nature of social order. On the other hand, social dynamics must be subordinated to social statics. Social dynamics consists of a description of the various stages for the development of mind and society with the help of historical analysis. Social dynamics is history, which is not concerned with individual names, rather it is history of a scientific nature in search of abstract social laws operative in mind and society. Comte believed that social dynamics is concerned with human development and social progress. Progress is observable in all aspects of society—physical, moral, intellectual, and political.

The Law of Three Stages

Comte considered sociology to be a true science, which is concerned with the search of social laws. Based on his belief in social evolution, he puts forth the law of three stages. According to him, ‘each of our leading conceptions, each branch of our knowledge, passes successively through three different theoretical conditions: the theological or fictitious, the metaphysical or abstract, and the scientific or positive’. A brief description of these three stages is as follows:

- (a) **Theological or fictitious stage:** Priests and military dominate this stage. In this stage, man tries to understand the nature of all beings, origins, and purposes of all effects and the beliefs that all things are caused by supernatural beings. In this stage, all theoretical conceptions, whether general or special, bear a supernatural impress. The theological stage went through three phases of fetishism, polytheism, and monotheism.
- (b) **The metaphysical or abstract stage:** Church and lawyers dominate this stage. At this stage, the mindless take into account the abstract forces and a belief that personified abstractions is capable of producing all phenomena. This stage started about CE 1300 and was transitional and short-lived.
- (c) **The positive or scientific stage:** This stage started in the beginning of the 19th Century in which observation predominated over imagination and all theoretical concepts became positive. The industrial administrators and scientists dominated this stage. At this stage, the human mind gives up the futile search for absolute notions, origin of the universe, and its causes; rather it seeks to ‘establish scientific principles governing all types of phenomena.

According to Comte, corresponding to the three stages of mental progress, there are stages of society. The theological and metaphysical stages are dominated by military values. The positive stage marks the beginning of the industrial society. Thus, Comte refers to two major types of societies: the theological–military society, which was dying and scientific–industrial society, which was being

born during his lifetime. He believed that the new scientific–industrial society would become the society of all mankind. This is the final stage in a series of successive transformations and each stage is definitely superior to the previous one.

Hierarchy of Sciences

According to Comte, just like individuals and societies, sciences also pass through the same stages. As astronomy began in mystical speculation and developed through philosophy and finally reached the scientific method, similarly sociology has arrived at a point in which religious notions or metaphysical causes are not relevant. At the scientific stage, sociology is concerned with observation and analysis of all types of human relationships in the society.

The abstract and theoretical sciences are arranged in a hierarchy in which more concrete and complex sciences succeed the more general and abstract science. Mathematics is at the base of hierarchy followed by astronomy, because the positive method was first adopted by these two sciences. Over a period of time, they were followed by mechanics, physics, chemistry, biology, and finally sociology.

Comte believed that the social sciences are at the top of the hierarchy because they enjoy all the resources of the anterior sciences and offer the attributes of a completion of the positive method. The positive method must prevail in history and politics roof of all sciences.

In establishing hierarchy of the sciences, Comte distinguished the methodological features of various sciences. Biology, which immediately precedes social sciences, employs a holistic methodology. Unlike physics and chemistry, which analyse individual elements, biology employs a holistic approach and proceeds from the study of organic wholes. According to Comte, in the inorganic sciences, the elements are much better known to us than the whole which they constitute; in that case we must proceed from the simple to the compound. But the reverse method is necessary in the study of man and society; man and society are better known to us and more accessible subjects of study than the parts which constitute them. Just as biology cannot explain an organ or a function without reference to the total organism, similarly, sociology cannot explain social phenomena without reference to the total social context. In the words of Comte, ‘there can be no scientific study of society either in its conditions or its movements if it is separated into portions and its divisions are studied apart’.

HERBERT SPENCER

Spencer was born in England in 1820. As a child he was weak and sickly. He never attended a regular school and was instructed at his home. By the age of 16, he was well trained in mathematics and natural sciences. But his major interest was in ethics and politics. His first book, *Social Statics*, was published in 1852. This book was followed by another book named *First Principals* in 1862. Later on, his major works included multi-volume work *Principles of Biology* in 1865, then a multi-volume work called *Principles of Psychology* in 1872, followed by multi-volume work entitled *Principles of Sociology* in 1896. He had also written an eight-volume study *Descriptive Sociology* (1873–1894) as well as the highly acclaimed *The Study of Sociology* in 1873. His major contributions have been described below:

Science and Society

Like Comte, Spencer believed in and worked for a science of society, which they both argued to be possible because they thought society was an order of coexistence and progress. Where there is order,

the components of that order may constitute the subject of a science. This social science (sociology) is the science of what Spencer called the super-organic, that is, social evolution. He divided all the phenomena in the universe into three categories, that is, inorganic, organic, and super-organic. Sociology, according to him, was concerned with the super-organic or the socio-cultural phenomena.

Although for both Comte and Spencer, sociology was a positive science, but there were differences of opinion between two of them regarding the function of the new science of society in the modern state. Whereas Comte wanted sociology to guide men in building a better society in which to live, Spencer was of the view that the new science should not interfere with the natural process occurring within the society. There is a tendency within all natural phenomena to improve, and society being a natural phenomenon, is no exception. Spencer, like Comte had perceived the significant role of history for the new science of society. In the words of Spencer, 'That which it really concerns us to know is the natural history of society. The only history that is of practical use is what may be called Descriptive Sociology'. According to Spencer, history, if done well, is essentially sociology, a careful description of social phenomena in evolution.

Organic Analogy

Spencer took great pains to elaborate in great detail the organic analogy, which is the identification of a society with biological organism. He regarded the recognition of the similarity between society and organism as the first step towards a general theory of evolution. In the words of Spencer, 'So completely is a society organised on the same system as an individual being, that we may perceive something more than an analogy between them, the same definition of life applies to both'. Spencer noted several similarities between biological and social organisms, which are as follows:

- (i) Both society and organism are distinguished from inorganic matter by visible growth during the greater part of their existence.
- (ii) As societies and organisms grow in size, they also increase in complexity of structure.
- (iii) Both in societies and organisms, progressive differentiation of structure is accompanied by progressive differentiation of functions.
- (iv) Evolution establishes, for both societies and organisms, differences in structure and function that make each other possible.
- (v) Just as a living organism may be regarded as a nation of units that live individually, so a nation of human beings may be regarded as an organism.

After describing the analogy, Spencer also described the differences between the society and organism. According to him, the parts of an animal form a concrete whole, but the parts of society form a whole which is discrete. While the living units composing the organism are combined together in close contact, the living units composing the society are free, are not in contact, and are more or less widely dispersed. Spencer continued to use the organic analogy as a scientific premise to build his theory of evolution.

Spencer tried to pinpoint the similarities and differences between organic and social life, but denied that he held the doctrine of organic analogy. In his words, 'I have used the analogies, but only as a scaffolding to help in building up a coherent body of sociological induction. Let us take away the scaffolding: the inductions will stand by themselves'. However, Spencer consistently used the terminology of organism in his writings. One chapter of his book *Principles of Sociology*, is entitled 'Society is an Organism'.

Theory of Evolution

The major concern of Spencer was with evolutionary changes in social structures and social institutions. According to him, the evolution of human society, far from being different from other evolutionary phenomenon, is but a special case of universally applicable natural law. Ultimately, all universal phenomena, inorganic and superorganic, are subject to the natural law of evolution.

According to Spencer, 'Evolution is an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion; during which the matter passes from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity; and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation'. Within this framework of universal evolution, Spencer developed his three basic laws and his four secondary propositions, each building upon each and all upon the doctrine of evolution. The three basic laws are (i) the law of persistence of force; (ii) the law of the indestructibility of matter, and (iii) the law of continuity of motion. The four secondary propositions are (i) persistence of the relationship between the force, (ii) transformation and equivalence of forces, (iii) tendency of everything to move along the line of least resistance and greatest attraction, and (iv) the principle of the alteration or rhythm of motion.

There are two distinct and interrelated aspects of Spencer's theory of evolution:

1. The movement from simple societies to various levels of compound societies: Spencer identified four types of societies in terms of their evolutionary stages—simple, compound, doubly compound, and trebly compound, each being distinguishable on the basis of more or less complexity of their social structures and functions. There is an inherent tendency for the homogeneous to become heterogeneous and for the uniform to become multiform.

2. Change from military to industrial society: This view point of society states that types of social structure depend on the relation of a society to other societies in its significant environment. Thus, the evolution is from military to industrial societies, the former characterized by 'compulsory co-operation', whereas the latter is based on 'voluntary co-operation'. The military society is also characterized by a centralized government, a rigid system of stratification, economic autonomy, and state domination of all social organizations. The chief characteristics of an industrial society are free trade, laws of economic autonomy, independent voluntary organization, relatively open system of stratification, and a decentralized government.

A question related to Spencer's writings is, whether he believed that evolution, which was the law of becoming, was directed towards progress. Spencer did not hold the view that evolution necessarily leads to progress. In Spencer's words, 'the doctrine of evolution is erroneously supposed to imply some intrinsic proclivity in every species towards a higher form. Similarly, many make the erroneous assumption that the transformation which constitutes evolution implies an intrinsic tendency to go through those changes which the formula of evolution expresses'. But, according to him, the progress of evolution is not necessary; it depends on certain conditions. The frequent occurrence of dissolution (process opposed to evolution), the movement of the multiform to the uniform, shows that where essential conditions are not maintained the reverse process takes place. Thus, it will be wrong to assume that Spencer claimed the ever-presence of evolution or the notion that evolution necessarily leads to progress. However, Spencer believed that man by his very nature was predestined to progress.

Spencer stated that societies need not necessarily pass through the identical stages of evolution or become exactly one like the other. He maintained that there were differences between the individual

societies due to disturbances that interfered with the straight line of evolution. He refers to five possible disturbances which are as follows:

- (i) A somewhat different original endowment of the races.
- (ii) The effect due to the impact of the immediately preceding stage of evolution.
- (iii) The peculiarities of habit.
- (iv) The position of a given society in the framework of a larger community of societies.
- (v) The impact of the mixture of races.

Social Darwinism

Social Darwinism is an attempt to apply Darwin's theory of evolution, dealing with the development of plants and animals, to social phenomena. Herbert Spencer and Sumner were the two most outspoken advocates of social Darwinism in sociology.

Spencer's social Darwinism is centred on two fundamental principles that are discussed below:

- (i) **The principle of the survival of the fittest:** Spencer fully endorsed the natural process of conflict and survival that operates as a kind of biologically purifying process. According to him, nature is endowed with a providential tendency to get rid of unfit and to make room for the better; it is the law of nature that the weak should be eliminated for the sake of strong.
- (ii) **The principle of non-interference:** Spencer was a serious advocate of individualism and laissez-faire politics. He opposed almost any form of state interference with private activity. He insisted that the state had no business in education, health, sanitation, postal services, money and banking, regulation of housing conditions, or the elimination of poverty. For Spencer, the state was a sort of joint-stock company whose only role was the protection of the rights of the individual and defence of its citizens against external aggression. Spencer was of the opinion that sociologists should convince the state and the citizens not to intervene in the natural process of selection operative in the society. In his words, 'nature is more intelligent than man and once you begin to interfere with the order of nature, there is no knowing where the result will end'.

Functionalism

Spencer was a thoroughgoing functionalist as well as an evolutionist. According to him, 'There can be no true conception of a structure without a true conception of its function'. Function occurs within a social structure and all social structures must have functions. He explained, 'To understand how an organisation originated and developed, it is requisite to understand the need observed by it at the outset and afterwards'. He believed that social institutions are not the result of deliberate intentions and motivations of actors, but arise from the exigencies of social structures and functions. According to him, any serious sociological analysis of social institutions must necessarily employ both the concepts of social evolution and social function. He emphasized that changes in structure cannot occur without changes in functions, and that increases in the size of social units necessarily bring in their wake progressive differentiations in social activities. Spencer combined his functionalism with evolutionism. According to him, if the society is to evolve into higher and more advanced social structures and functions, it must move from the simple to the complex activities, which is moving from the lesser military to the more industrial activities.

EMILE DURKHEIM

Emile Durkheim was a French sociologist. He lived from 1858 to 1917. He did his graduation from Paris after which he travelled to Germany for studying economics, folklore, and cultural anthropology. In 1887, he was appointed professor at the University of Bordeaux where he taught the first course in sociology ever offered in any French university. In his writings and in his thoughts, he was deeply influenced by August Comte, Saint Simon, and to some extent by Herbert Spencer. The main contributions of Durkheim include the concept of social facts, division of labour, suicide, and sociology of religion. These contributions have been discussed below.

Social Facts

The methodology of Durkheim can be explained with reference to his concept of social facts. According to him, there are some facts in social life that cannot be explained in terms of physical or psychological analysis. These social facts have distinctive social characteristics and determinants. The social facts constitute the subject matter of sociology. According to Durkheim, there are two important features of social facts.

(a) Exteriority: Social facts are external to any particular individual considered as a biological entity. They continue to persist over a period of time while particular individuals die and are replaced by others. There are certain ways of action, thinking, and feeling that are external to the individual; for example, the principles of public morality, family, and religious observances, etc.

(b) Coercion: The social facts have coercive power, that is, they impose themselves upon the individual, independent of his own will. Durkheim gives a number of examples that show the element of coercion in social phenomena; for example, in a gathering or a crowd, a feeling imposes itself on everyone or there is a collective reaction. Coercive power of social facts comes into force whenever social demands are violated; for example, the means of social control like law or custom immediately come into operation in case of such violation. However, in his later writings, Durkheim changed his views regarding external constraints. He admitted that some social facts, particularly the moral rules, become internalized in the consciousness of individuals, and then act as effective guides and controls of conduct.

Durkheim defined social fact as 'Every way of acting, fixed or not, capable of exercising on the individual an external constraint'. According to him, social facts should be regarded as things. We do not know in scientific sense, the social phenomena that surrounds us; for example, as a layman, we do not have scientific knowledge about the terms like state, sovereignty, democracy, socialism, or communism. We generally have a vague and confused idea regarding them. When we learn to regard social facts as things we can avoid the preconceptions and prejudices that hinder the scientific knowledge about these facts. Moreover, we must observe social facts from outside, that is, we should gain knowledge about them through objective and scientific research. We can discover them as we discover physical facts. The social facts are general in character because they are collective. According to Durkheim, social fact is any way of behaving which is universal throughout a given society and has an existence of its own, independent of its individual manifestations.

Division of Labour

The view of Durkheim about division of labour have been deeply influenced by August Comte. Durkheim starts with the analysis of relationship between individuals and connectivity. In this

analysis, he distinguishes between two forms of solidarity, that is, mechanical and organic. Mechanical solidarity is a solidarity of resemblances. The major characteristic of a society marked by such solidarity is its homogeneity, that is, individuals in such a society differ from one another as little as possible. The individuals in this type of society have similar emotions, values, and beliefs. On the other hand, in a society marked by organic solidarity, there is a remarkable social differentiation. However, even in this type of society there is a coherent unity of the collectivity that is based on consensus. The primitive societies are characterized by mechanical solidarity and are called segmental societies. On the other hand, modern societies are characterized by organic solidarity and have an elaborate division of labour. In a segmental society, the individuals are strongly attached to particular social groups and are more or less separated from the outside world. Thus, the segmental organization is contrary to the general phenomena of differentiation designated by the term organic solidarity. However, Durkheim concedes that in certain societies that might have advanced forms of economic division of labour, the segmental structure may still persist to some extent. The division of labour that Durkheim tried to define and explain should not be confused with the one explained by the economists. According to Durkheim, differentiation of occupation and multiplication of industrial activities are an expression of social differentiation that precedes the economic differentiation. The origin of social differentiation leads to the disintegration of mechanical solidarity and movement of the society towards organic solidarity, which is characterised by a complex division of labour.

Suicide

Durkheim related the problem of suicide to his study of division of labour. To some extent, he approves of the phenomena of organic division of labour and regards it as a welcome development in human society. However, he also notes that the individual is not properly satisfied with his lot in the modern societies, and hence there is an increase in the number of suicides. The increase in the number of suicides is considered by him as an expression of certain pathological features of modern societies.

Durkheim considers suicide not as an individual, but as a social phenomenon. Apparently, suicide seems to be the most personal matter of an individual because nothing may be considered more personal than the decision to take one's own life. Durkheim argued that the decision of an individual to commit suicide is taken because of certain social forces. He tries to bring out the relationship between suicide as an individual phenomenon and the suicide rate as a social phenomenon. He found that suicide rate, that is, frequency of suicide in a given population, is relatively consistent. It does not vary arbitrarily; rather it varies as a result of many circumstances. According to him, sociology must establish correlations between the circumstances and variations in suicide rates.

Durkheim does not accept the psychological explanations for suicide. In order to prove his view point, he examines variations in the suicide rate in different populations; for example, he considers various religions and remarks that the proportion of neurotic or insane persons among Jews is particularly high, whereas suicide rate among them is quite low. Thus, he comes to the conclusion that there is no correlation between the psychological factors and suicide rates.

Durkheim has explained three types of suicide:

(a) **Egoist:** Those people who think primarily of themselves and are not integrated into a social group are prone to egoist suicide. In order to explain this type of suicide, he establishes correlations between the suicide rate and integrating social contexts such as religion and family. On the basis of this correlation, he comes to certain conclusions.

(i) Suicide rate increases with age.

- (ii) It is higher among men than in women.
- (iii) It is higher among Protestant Christians as compared to Catholic Christians.
- (iv) It is higher among childless women.

(b) Altruistic: When the individual is so much attached to the group that he loses his personal identity, he is prone to this type of suicide; for example, practice of Sati in India. Suicide can also take place due to an internalized social imperative; for example, the captain of a sinking ship prefers to die than to leave it. Similarly, Durkheim finds that in some professional organizations like the army, the suicide rate is higher due to disappearance of individual identity in the group.

(c) Anomie: When there are abnormal conditions and breakdown of norms, individuals are prone to this type of suicide; for example, suicide rate goes up both in times of economic crisis and extreme prosperity. Durkheim explains this type of suicide in terms of crisis created by social disintegration and the weakening of group norms, which bind the individual to the group; for example, the suicide rate increases with the increase in the divorce rate.

Sociology and Religion

Durkheim defined religion as ‘Unified system of beliefs and practices related to sacred things’. The sacred things are those that are set apart and forbidden. What makes any object ‘sacred’ is not based on its basic properties, but rather an attitude towards it. The sacred things are symbols and their significance lies in what they symbolize and not what they are. Durkheim distinguishes sacred from the profane, which is the realm of every day. Sacred refers to the holy realm that is viewed with reverence. The sacred things are set apart by a peculiar emotional attitude of respect and awe. The sacred things are considered to possess special powers, are reserved for special occasions, and a number of restrictions are attached with them. The profane or the ordinary includes whatever is not viewed with these emotions, that is, regarding which there are no such restrictions. Profane includes those ideas, persons, practices, and things that are regarded with everyday attitude of commonness, utility, and familiarity.

According to Durkheim, ‘religion is an eminently collective thing’. Religion is regarded by him as a creation of society and he thinks that religion reflects all aspects of society, even the most vulgar and the most repulsive. He maintained that religion is a social necessity and will be present in one form or another irrespective of the changes that might take place in the organization of the society.

Durkheim distinguished between the two major aspects of religion, beliefs, and rituals. Belief is the cognitive aspect of religion—it attempts to explain the nature and origin of sacred things and implicitly assumes that they exist. The religious beliefs are based upon faith rather than evidence. Durkheim, therefore, emphasised that religion cannot be studied merely as system of beliefs. The religious ritual is the active side of religion. Beliefs can neither be observed nor verified unless they are expressed in ritual actions. Ritual, moreover, involves, the society, which according to Durkheim is the main concern of sociology. He, therefore, emphasizes that the study of rituals is essential for the scientific understanding of religion.

With regard to the origin of religion, Durkheim believes that its absolute origin can never be found. At the most, we can describe the simplest social condition that is actually known and beyond which we cannot go at present. In his search for the simplest social condition, he concentrated upon an analysis of religion as found among the Australian tribes. He propounded his theory of religion in his book ‘*Elementary Forms of Religious Life*’. He rejected the viewpoint held by the earlier

anthropologists that religion must involve a belief in goods or in spiritual beings. He attributed the beginning of religion to ritualistic activities which he considered as the most elementary form of religion. According to Durkheim, the primitive men like many people in civilized societies had an important need to escape daily routine and dullness of everyday life. Therefore, primitive people periodically gathered for some celebrations during which their passions ran high and they reached a stage of ecstasy. The most important activities were group dancing and singing which led to intensification of sentiments so that the group felt that it possessed extraordinary powers. This is the elementary emotion attached to religion.

TALCOTT PARSONS

Parsons is acknowledged as the most outstanding theorist of contemporary functionalism. He was born in 1902 in the United States and was greatly influenced by European Scholars. He was a graduate student at the London School of Economics and studied with the sociologists L. T. Hobhouse, Morris Ginsberg, and the anthropologist Malinowski who aroused his interest in the functional approach.

The two major contributions of Talcott Parsons are (i) action frame of reference and its components, and (ii) the structural-functional analysis. Parsons' book, *The Structure of Social Action* (1937) is considered as the 'watershed in the development of American sociology in general and Sociological theory in particular. It was a landmark in that it set a new Course—the course of functional analysis'. Another book, *Social System* (1951) emphasized the 'importance of institutionalized values and norms and differentiated social roles corresponding to different status position'.

1. Action frame: According to Talcott Parsons, there are four elements of action:

- (i) An actor (may be an individual or collectivity)
- (ii) An end
- (iii) A situation
- (iv) Means

As such, any action is determined by three systems

- (i) Personality system
- (ii) Social system
- (iii) Cultural system

Of these three, the cultural system consisting of values, norms, and symbols is the most important. These three are not interchangeable, though they inter-penetrate each other and are essential for each other. Thus, they are separate yet related aspect of reality.

From his action frame of reference, Parsons derived his concept of pattern variables. According to him, there are five basic pattern variables:

- (i) Affectivity-affective neutrality (the gratification–discipline dilemma).
- (ii) Self-orientation collectivity orientation (The private vs. collective interest dilemma).
- (iii) Universalism-particularism (The choice between the types of value orientation standard)
- (iv) Ascription-achievement (The choice between modalities of social object)
- (v) Specificity-diffuseness (The definition and scope of interest in the subject)

2. The structural-functional analysis: Parsons used the structural functional method in the study of social phenomena. The structural-functional analysis revolves around the two concepts of functions and structures. The basic questions involved are: (a) what basic functions are fulfilled in any given system, (b) by what structures, and (c) under what conditions. While functions deal with the consequences involving objectives as well as processes of patterns of actions, structures refer to those arrangements within the system which perform the functions.

Talcott Parsons has mentioned four types of functional requisites as essential for the survival of a social system. These are (i) pattern maintenance and tension management, (ii) goal attainment, (iii) adaptation, and (iv) integration.

Pattern maintenance means maintenance of the basic patterns of values, institutionalized in the society. The leading institutions that perform this function are family, education, and religion. Tension management means removal of conflicts and society. Judicial system is the chief instrument of tension management. No society can operate unless it sets certain goals towards which the social activities of its members are directed. The state or the political system prescribes these goals and the means to achieve them. Adaptation refers to the relationship between social system and its environment. Economy is the institution charged with this responsibility. Integration refers to the co-ordination and adjustment of parts of the social system. Law is the main instrument of integration. Legal norms define and regulate relations between individuals, individuals and groups, between group and between individuals and formal organizations, including the state.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the main ideas of Comte's sociological thought.
2. What was Comte's law of three stages? Explain briefly.
3. Explain the concept of positive method in Comte's thought.
4. Explain briefly Spencer's theory of evolution.
5. Describe Durkheim's views on religion.
6. 'Suicide is not an individual but a social phenomenon'. Describe Durkheim's views on suicide.
7. What does Parsons mean by social structure?
8. Explain the concept of social system as described by Parsons.
9. What are the essential functional requisites for the survival of social system according to Parsons?

Max Weber and Karl Marx

6

MAX WEBER

Max Weber was born in 1864 in Germany. In the beginning, he studied law. Later, he shifted to the study of social sciences, his Ph.D. thesis was on the 'History of Commercial Societies in the Middle Ages'. In 1896, he became professor of Economics. In addition to his scholarly concerns, Weber also pursued his political interests. It appeared that he will be a major figure in German intellectual life. In 1897, Weber had a clash with his father and after a month his father died. Shortly thereafter, Weber suffered a complete breakdown and did not recover for more than five years. He travelled a great deal, especially to Switzerland and Italy. Then almost unexpectedly in 1903, his intellectual forces were gradually restored. He became the editor of a leading German Social Science Journal. He again resumed a full writing career, but returned to teaching only in the last few years of his life. In the last three years of his life, that is, 1918–1920, he again took active part in politics and wrote a number of newspaper articles and papers on politics of the hour. Weber died in June, 1920.

Social Action

In the field of sociology, Weber's point of departure is the distinction between four types of actions, which are as follows:

- (i) Zweck rational action
- (ii) Wert rational action
- (iii) Affective action
- (iv) Traditional action

A brief description of these four types of actions is as follows:

Zweck rational action: This is a rational action which is performed in relation to a goal. It corresponds to Pareto's logical action. For example, action of the engineer, who is building a bridge or army general who wants to win a war. In such actions, an actor clearly knows his goals and selects specific means to attain these goals. However, Weber defines rationality in terms of knowledge of the actor.

Wert rational action: This type of action is also rational action, but in relation to values; for example, a brave captain goes down with his sinking ship. His action is rational not because it seeks to attain a definite and external goal, but because to abandon the sinking ship would be regarded as dishonourable.

Affective action: This type of action is emotional and is dictated primarily by the state of mind of the actor; for example, the slap which the mother gives her child because of his bad behaviour. In this case, the action is not oriented to a goal or a system of value, rather it is determined by an emotional reaction of the actor in a given set of circumstances.

Traditional action: This type of action is dictated by beliefs and customs that become habitual. In this case, the individual performs the action according to the customs or traditions which have become a part of his personality because of conditioning.

According to Weber, the subject matter of sociology is social action. In sociology, an effort has to be made to understand the meanings which an individual attaches to his conduct. The classification of action into various types by Weber is governed to a certain extent by interpretation of the contemporary period of history. According to him, the major characteristic of the modern world is rationalization, which is expressed in the sphere of Zweck rational actions.

Concept of Ideal Types

The main concern of Weber was to define generalized categories for the analysis of social phenomena. He developed the concept of ideal types for such an analysis. In the words of Shils and Finch, 'An ideal type is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present, and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasised viewpoints into a unified analytical construct'. Thus, an ideal type is a methodological tool that serves the investigator as a measuring rod to ascertain similarities as well as deviations in concrete cases.

According to Weber, there are two types of meaning of an action: (a) actually existing meaning to a concrete individual action and (b) a theoretically conceived pure type of subjective meaning. The second type of meaning is the principle that is known as the ideal type. The ideal type is not merely an abstraction but a specific type of abstraction. The ideal type presents a pattern that may not exist in reality, but is constructed by the sociologist for comprehending the meaning of social actions. The ideal type is the methodological tool that enables the sociologist to analyse and comprehend the social actions. This ideal type does not describe concrete course of action, but under normal conditions an ideal course of action. It does not describe an individual course of action, but a typical one. Thus, ideal type is a generalized concept and by using it, the sociologist can classify a large number of cases in a few categories. For example, the typology of social action and authority presented by Weber is an ideal type which concentrates attention on extreme or polar types.

Weber defines ideal types negatively, that is, by describing what it is not. According to him

- (a) It is not a hypothesis in the sense that it is a proposition about concrete reality, which is verifiable.
- (b) It is not a description of reality or existing process.
- (c) It is not average in the sense what we say that the average man weighs 70 kg.
- (d) It is not a formulation of concrete traits common to a class of concrete things.

According to Weber, it is necessary for the sociologist to construct pure ideal type of actions in order to give precise meaning to them. He points out that the case is similar to a physical reaction which is carried forward on the assumption of an absolute vacuum. In case of sociology also, the theoretical analysis is possible only in terms of such pure ideal types. According to him, the ideal type serves its methodological function in a better way if it is more and more abstract and unrealistic. Ideal type is mentally constructed. It is constructed by exaggeration or accentuation of one or more elements or points of view observable in reality. The type thus constructed may be called ideal because it exists only as an ideal. It is a tool or a method of analysis for the comprehension of concrete events or situations. Weber made extensive use of ideal type method in the sociological analysis. The formulation of ideal types is based on an extensive study of a large number of social phenomena, and he seems to select the traits to be included in an ideal type rather intuitively.

Types of Authority

According to Weber, authority relations refer to those relations of men whereby some men feel that they have a legitimate right to expect willing obedience from other people to their command. Weber has constructed the typology of authority as an ideal type. He distinguished three main types of authority, which are as follows:

- (a) **Rational–legal authority:** This type of authority is based on rational grounds and justified by laws, rules, and regulations. It is generally found in modern society. The hierarchical relationships are governed by this type of authority. The rational legitimacy rests on a belief in the legality of rules and the rights of those having legal authority to issue commands.
- (b) **Traditional:** This type of authority is based on domination of past customs or traditions. It is generally found in pre-modern societies. The traditional authority is based on a belief in the sacred quality of the traditions and legitimacy of thoughts. This type of authority is exercised by persons who have either inherited it or have been granted this authority by a higher authority. In the present age, in those countries which still have monarchy, traditional domination persists symbolically, but not actually. The traditional legitimacy rests on an established belief in the sanctity of past traditions and the legitimacy of the status of those exercising authority under them.
- (c) **Charismatic authority:** This type of authority is based on an extraordinary devotion to the sacred quality or exemplary character of a person and of the order created by him. For example, Mahatma Gandhi exercised authority that can be called charismatic. This type of authority is neither based on the rationality of rules and regulations nor on long-standing traditions, but on the devotion of men for certain other persons who are able to influence them on the basis of their character, virtue, or honesty.

Bureaucracy

Max Weber was the first to give an elaborate account of the development of bureaucracy as well as its causes and consequences. He attributed the following characteristics to bureaucracy:

1. The principle of fixed and official jurisdictional areas that are generally ordered by rules. The regular activities associated with each status are distributed in a fixed way as official duties. The structure of authority is clearly laid down and strictly delimited by rules.
2. The principle of office hierarchy and levels of graded authority with a firmly ordered system of super-ordination and subordination in which there is a supervision of the lower offices by the higher ones.
3. A division of labour based on specialized functions and responsibilities.
4. A system of written documents (the files) defining the procedure as well as the rights and duties of people in all positions.
5. Office management based on thorough and expert training.
6. Selection for employment and promotion based on technical competence, specialized knowledge, or skill.
7. Office-holding as a 'vocation'. Official work is no longer a secondary activity, but something that demands the full working capacity of the official.
8. Provision for pecuniary compensation as a fixed salary.
9. Appointment of employees by higher officials, rather than by election.
10. The system of tenure for life. Normally, the position of the bureaucrat is held for life as specified by contract.
11. A clear distinction between the sphere of office and that of the private affairs of the individual. The bureaucratic official is not an owner of the enterprise and, therefore, not entitled to the use of official facilities for personal needs except as defined by strict rules.
12. The practice of performing specialized administrative functions, according to purely objective considerations and the official discharge of business according to calculable rules and 'without regard for persons'.

According to Weber, the most important factors contributing to the development of modern bureaucracy are as follows:

- (a) The development of money economy, which guaranteed a constant income for maintaining bureaucracy through a stable system of taxation; it also encouraged a pecuniary compensation for the officials and a purely economic conception of the office as a source of the official's private income.
- (b) The quantitative development of administrative tasks, especially in the field of politics where 'the great state and mass party are the classic soil for bureaucratization'.
- (c) Qualitative changes of administrative tasks. Among purely political factors, the demand for order and production and for the so called welfare state and among essentially technical factors,

the development of modern means of communication, especially the railroads and the mass media, operate in the direction of bureaucratization.

- (d) The purely technical superiority of bureaucracy over any other form of organization.
- (e) The complicated and specialized nature of modern culture that demands 'the personally detached and strictly objective expert, in lieu of the master of older social structures, who was moved by personal sympathy and favour, by grace and gratitude'.
- (f) The rational interpretation of law on the basis of strictly formal conception of 'equality before the law' and the demand for legal guarantees against arbitrariness.
- (g) The concentration of the material means of management in the hands of the master as exemplified in the development of big capitalist enterprises and the giant public organizations such as the modern state or army.
- (h) The levelling of economic and social differences and the corresponding rise of modern mass representative democracy in contrast to the old democratic self-government of small homogeneous communities.

Although Weber emphasizes the virtues of bureaucracy and its unquestionable advancement in modern society, he also conceded the vices of bureaucracy, that is, the inevitable depersonalization of human relationship in government and industry. He refers to the formalism and the rules-bound character of bureaucratic organization and increasing concentration of the materials of management. According to Weber, bureaucracy is inevitable, irrepressible, and inescapable.

Sociology of Religion

Weber's essay 'Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism' is considered the classical study in the field of sociology of religion. In this work, Weber sought to demonstrate that economic factors do not represent a constant and independent variable to which all others stand in dependence. In the opinion of Weber, the treatment of economic factor as a determining factor was the major weakness of Marx and the ultimate failure of his theoretical formulation. Weber emphasized that economic factors are, as Abraham puts it, 'one variable, a very important one, in close relationship with others affected by them as in fact it in turn can affect them'.

Weber analysed the relationship between the religious values and economic interests. He noticed that Protestants, particularly of the Calvinist sect, were the chief captains of the industry and possessed more wealth and economic means than other religious groups, notably Catholics. Therefore, he wanted to ascertain whether there is an essential harmony between the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism. He also sought to find out whether and to what extent a cluster of values in the religions of India, China, and Middle East facilitated or hindered the development of capitalism.

In order to overcome the methodological problem of defining capitalism and Protestant ethic, Weber made use of the concept of ideal type. Protestant ethic does not refer to any particular theological doctrine, but a set of values and belief systems that make up a religious ideal. Capitalism, in its ideal type, is thought of by Weber to be that complex activity designed specifically to maximize profit through the careful and intentional exercise of rational organization and management of production.

Weber identified the following values embedded in Protestantism that are in harmony with the spirit of capitalism:

1. **The shift from ritualistic and other worldly orientation to down-to-earth pragmatism:** The finite mind of man cannot comprehend the infinite mind of God who created the world for his own glory. Therefore, there is no point in indulging in mysticism; rather man should seek to understand the natural order. This is essentially an anti-ritualistic attitude that favours the development of science and rational investigation.
2. **Changed attitude towards work:** Protestant ethic proclaims work as virtue, something not only good and desirable, but contributing to the glory of God as well.
3. **The concept of calling:** This idea emerged from the Calvinist doctrine of predestination according to which every soul is predestined at birth for heaven or hell and that nothing an individual does in his life can change his ultimate fate. But there are signs by which God indicates to every individual whether he is among the elect, success in life being the most important one. Since every man is anxious to know if he is marked for salvation or damnation, he should select a calling, a vocation, work hard at it, and be successful. The new doctrine encourages people to seek gainful enterprises, accumulate wealth, and prove their destiny.
4. **The new attitude towards the collection of interest on loans:** The theological doctrine of Catholicism proscribed the collection of interest on loans. However, according to Calvinism, there is no restriction on the collection of interest on loans. This Calvinistic ethic led to a spurt of economic activity: establishment of lending houses, new investments, and new floating capital.
5. **Structures on alcoholism:** Protestant ethic prohibits the consumption of alcoholic beverages; there is no comparable theological doctrine in Catholicism.
6. **Encouragement of literacy and learning:** Protestant ethic emphasized that every man should read his own Bible rather than depend on priestly interpretations. This led to the development of mass education and of specialized skills.
7. **Rejection of holidays:** The Catholic Calendar is full of holy days and almost every holy day is a holiday. However, according to Protestant ethic, work contributes to the glory of God, and thus there is no need for celebrations on holy days.
8. **Protestant Asceticism:** Protestant ethic emphasizes the notion that earthly things and flesh belong to the order of sin and death and, therefore, one should abstain from the pleasures of the world. Thus, on the one hand, Protestant ethic encourages people to accumulate wealth and on the other hand, it forbids the use of wealth for enjoyment. The wealth should be used for producing more and more, undoubtedly a condition par excellence for the development of capitalism.

After establishing the essential harmony between Protestant ethic and the spirit of Capitalism, Weber turned to other religions to see if there is a discernible cluster of values in them comparable to Protestant ethic, which is favourable to the rise of capitalism. He found a variety of non-religious, social, and economic conditions conducive to the development of capitalism in China and India, but the ethical system of Confucianism and the doctrine of Karma in Hinduism were not particularly favourable. Moreover, the combination of religious values that constituted the Protestant ethic was unique: an unusual blend of two apparently inconsistent notions, namely, limitless accumulation of wealth and abstention from enjoyment. It would be wrong to assume that Weber replaced a

one-sided economic determinism with one-sided ideological determinism. He considered a variety of factors—social, economic, and political—but the confluence of values inherent in religion played a central role in the matrix of interrelationships.

KARL MARX

Karl Marx lived from 1818 to 1883. He initially studied law and later he turned to the study of philosophy. In 1841, at the age of 23, he received the doctorate degree. After completing his studies, he began writing for a radical left-wing paper in Cologne and became its editor in 1842. After the closure of the paper, Marx travelled to Paris. During his stay in Paris, he met Friedrich Engels and the friendship between the two was immediate and eternal. Both of them wrote a number of classic works together. The major works of Karl Marx include, *The Communist Manifesto*, *Contributions to a Critique of Political Economy*, *The Class Struggle in France*, and the classic three volume work, *Das Kapital*.

Hegel and Marx

Georg F. W. Hegel was a German philosopher who dominated the intellectual climate of his day. While Marx was living in Berlin, he became young Hegelian by virtue of Hegel's thought. The basic idea of Hegel's philosophy is that the essence of reality is reason, but the spirit of reason manifests itself only gradually, revealing more and more facets of itself during the course of time. The most important idea, which Marx adopted from Hegel, was that of 'dialectics'. According to Hegel, each statement of truth or thesis has its opposite statement or antithesis that may be reconciled on a higher level of synthesis. But this is not the end for the dialectical process; the chain continues, as the synthesis becomes a new thesis with its antithesis, and so on. The adoption of dialectical method is the only similarity between Marx and Hegel. Hegel perceived truth in ideas, but for Marx, ideas are not the realm of truth but rather matter is. Accordingly, Hegel's conception could be called 'dialectical idealism', whereas the conception of Marx can be considered as 'dialectical materialism'.

Marx like Hegel was also interested in the analysis of the truth of history, but Hegel advocated an idealistic approach to history, whereas Marx emphasized the materialistic approach. Therefore, it is generally remarked that Marx turned Hegel upside down.

The shift, from Hegelian idealism to historical materialism led Marx to believe that the motivating factor in human existence was not ideas about religion and society, but a materialistic realism having to do with survival. This survival, the necessity to produce the means of subsistence, was fundamental to human life and human action in community and society. In the words of Marx, 'The first historical act is the production of material life itself. This is indeed a historical act, a fundamental condition of all history'.

According to Marx, 'Men begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence. In producing their means of subsistence men indirectly produced their actual material life'. This stage occurs within the framework of a progressive historical evolution. Just as Comte distinguished three phases of human evolution, on the basis of ways of thinking, Marx identified four stages of human history on the basis of modes of production: primitive communism, ancient slave production, feudalism, and capitalism. Primitive communism signifies communal ownership; ancient mode of production was characterized by slavery; the feudal mode of production by serfdom, and the capitalist system by the bourgeois exploitation and wage earners. Each of these stages, except primitive communism, constituted a distinct mode of man's exploitation by man and his struggle for freedom.

Dialectical Materialism

As explained above, Marx turned from Hegelian idealism to materialism, Marx made good use of the dialectical method in what came to be called ‘dialectical materialism’ or ‘historical materialism’. Hegel was an idealist who asserted the primacy of mind, whereas Marx was a materialist who asserted the primacy of the matter. According to Marx, matter is not a product of mind; on the contrary, mind is simply the most advanced product of matter.

Larson has outlined the basic postulates of Marxian dialectical method as follows:

- (i) All the phenomena of nature are part of an integrated whole.
- (ii) Nature is in a continuous state of movement and change
- (iii) The developmental process is a product of quantitative advances that culminate in abrupt qualitative changes.
- (iv) Contradictions are inherent in all realms of nature, particularly human society.

This methodology perceived history as a series of stages based on a particular mode of production and characterized by a particular type of economic organization. Because of the inherent contradictions, each stage contained the seeds of its own destruction. In the words of Stalin, ‘the dialectical method holds that the process of development should be understood not as a movement in a circle, not a simple repetition of what’ has already occurred, but as an onward and upward movement, as transition from an old qualitative state to a new qualitative state, from the lower to the higher’. Marx believed that society may be functioning quite efficiently, but it is destined to face revolution until the final breakdown of all class divisions. According to Timasheff, ‘Even when a society exemplifies the best that mankind can establish in terms of harmony and cooperation, in time, the established order becomes an obstacle to progress and a new order (antithesis) begins to arise. A struggle ensues between the class representing the old order and the class representing the new order. The emerging class is eventually victorious creating a new order of production that is synthesis of the old and the new. This new order, however, contains the seeds of its eventual destruction and the dialectical process continues’. The inevitability of the continuing struggle is related to the emergence of the division of labour within society, for it is this phenomenon of labour differentiation that forms antagonistic classes that, in turn, become the centre of competition and struggle against nature as well as against other elements within the society.

The use of the dialectic in the analysis of society and history became a major characteristic of Marxism. According to Lenin, ‘materialism in general recognises objectively real being (matter) as independent of consciousness, sensation experience . . . Consciousness is only the reflection of being, at best and approximately true (adequate, ideal) reflection of it’. A further clarification is provided by Stalin on materialism in the following words, ‘Marx’s philosophical materialism holds the world by its very nature material, that the multi-fold phenomena of the world constitute different forms of matter in motion, that interconnection and interdependence of phenomena, as established by the dialectical method, are a law of the development of moving matter and that the world develops in accordance with the laws of movement in matter and stands in no need of a universal spirit’.

Economic Infrastructure and Socio-Economic Superstructure

Although Marx did not constantly argue for a crude economic determinism, he left no doubt that he considered the economy to be the foundation of whole socio-cultural system. Throughout

their study, Marx and Engels emphasized the primacy of economic factor in human relationship and the centrality of the economic dimension in the political structures. The economic system of production and distribution, or the means and relations of production in the Marxian sense, constitute the basic structure of society, on which are built all other social institutions, particularly the state and the legal system. According to Engels, ‘the production of immediate material means of subsistence, and consequently, the degree of economic development attained by a given people or during a given epoch, form the foundation upon which the state institutions, the legal conceptions, the ideas on art, and even on religion of the people concerned have been evolved’.

Marx’s economic interpretation of history and social change is amply clear from the following quotation, ‘In the social production which men carry on, they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; the relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material powers of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society—the real foundation on which rise legal and political superstructures and which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence but, on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness’. According to Marx, ‘Human thought, human awareness, and human consciousness, were not self-originating, but were derivatives of the economic principles. And it is in the arena of political economy that governments and religions must be controlled and human consciousness brought under dominance; particularly when it comes to the governance of the material world, men must realise that the social environment is dependent upon the economics of the situation and the classes’. As Doyle Johnson reminds us, ‘Marx may have overstated his case to establish his point against competing viewpoints, but Marx’s economic interpretation of history provides a note of hard realism that is sometimes lacking in more idealistic theories of society’.

Theory of Class and Class Conflict

According to Marx, a social class is any aggregate of persons who perform the same function in the organization of production. It is determined not by occupation or income, but by the position an individual occupies and the function he performs in the process of production. For example, two carpenters, of whom one is the shop owner and the other his paid worker, belong to two different classes even though their occupation is the same. Bendix and Lipset have identified five variables that determine a class in the Marxian sense:

1. Conflicts over the distribution of economic rewards between the classes.
2. Easy communication between the individuals in the same class and positions, so that ideas and action programmes are readily disseminated.
3. Growth of class consciousness in the sense that the members of the class have a feeling of solidarity and understanding of their historic role.
4. Profound dissatisfaction of the lower class over its inability to control the economic structure of which it feels itself to be the exploited victim.
5. Establishment of a political organization resulting from the economic structure, the historical situation, and maturation of class consciousness.

According to Marxian viewpoint, from the beginning of human existence in community, society has been divided into classes because of its absolute dependence on the division of labour. The following classic statement of Marx's clearly states his views on classes and class struggles, 'the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Free men and slave, patrician and plebian, lord and serf, guild master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large or in the common ruin of the contending classes'.

Marx was not only interested in the origin of class, he was even more interested in the future of class, especially as that future relates to the emergence of class consciousness, awareness of shared interests, and the necessity of mutual support to other struggling classes against the ruling class. Marx made a distinction between 'class in itself' and 'class for itself. This distinction is reflected in the movement from a class's potential self-awareness to actual self-awareness. Only when the 'common struggle' as a point of consciousness appears within a class, does that class actually emerge as a potential power force.

According to Marxian viewpoint, social class was bigger than the individual and the individual was dominated by it. In the words of Marx, 'here individuals are dealt with only in so far as they are personifications of economic categories, embodiments of particular class relations and class interests'. To deal with the predicament of the modern man, alienated, dominated, and estranged from himself, his neighbour, and his world, the analyst must not begin with the individual, but with the social structures within which the individual is essentially caught up and lost as a person.

The main aspects of Marx's theory of class conflict have been described below:

(i) The development of the proletariat: Marx described the process of development of the proletariat as follows, 'The first attempts of the workers to associate among themselves always take place in the form of combinations (unions). Large-scale industry concentrates, in one place, a crowd of people unknown to one another. Competition divides their interests. But the maintenance of wages, this common interest, which they have against their boss, unites them in a common thought of resistance combination. Thus, combination always has a double aim, that of stopping the competition among themselves, in order to bring about a general competition with the capitalist'.

(ii) The importance of property: According to Marx, the most distinctive feature of any society is its form of property, and the crucial determinant of an individual's behaviour is his relation to the property. Property divisions are the crucial breaking lines in the class structure.

(iii) The identification of economic and political power and authority: Although classes are based on forces and relations of production, they become socially significant only in the political sphere. Since the capitalist society is based on the concentration of the means of production and distribution in the hands of a few, political power becomes the means by which the ruling class perpetuates its domination and exploitation of the masses.

(iv) Polarization of classes: According to Marx, 'The whole society breaks up more and more into two hostile camps, two great directly antagonistic classes: bourgeoisie and proletariat'. The capitalists own the means of production and distribution and the working classes own nothing but their labour. This is not to deny the existence of other classes. Marx referred to other classes as small capitalists, the petit bourgeoisie, and the lumpen proletariat.

(v) The theory of surplus value: The capitalists accumulate profit through the exploitation of labour. The value of any commodity is determined by the amount of labour it takes to produce

it. The worker works half of the time for himself and the other half for the capitalist. The term surplus value refers to the quantity of value produced by the worker beyond the necessary labour and time (the working time required to produce a value equal to the one he has received in the form of wages). Since the employers have the monopoly of the instruments of production, they can force the workers to do extra hours of work, and profits tend to accumulate with increasing exploitation of labour.

(vi) Pauperization: Poverty of the proletariat grows with increasing exploitation of labour. According to Marx, 'In every mode of production, there is exploitation of man by man, the social product is so distributed that the majority of people, the people who labour, are condemned to toil for no more than the barest necessities of life. On the other hand, a minority, the owners of means of production, the property owners, enjoy leisure and luxury. Society is divided into rich and poor'. Thus, according to Marxian viewpoint, poverty is the result of exploitation and not of scarcity.

(vii) Alienation: According to Marx, 'Within the capitalist system all methods for raising the social productiveness of labour are brought about at the cost of the individual labourer; all means for the development of production transform themselves into means of domination over and exploitation of the producer, they mutilate the labourer into a fragment of a man, degrade him to the level of an appendage of a machine, destroy every remnant of charm in his work and turn it into hateful toil; they estrange from him intellectual potentialities of the labour process in the same proportion as science is incorporated in it as an independent power. As a result of the plight of the workers described above, the product of work becomes an instrument of alien purpose; the worker becomes estranged from himself, from the process as well as the product of his labour, from his fellow-men, and from human community itself.

(viii) Class solidarity and antagonism: In the words of Marx, '... with the development of industry, the proletariat only increases in number, it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength more ... ! Collisions between individual workman and individual bourgeoisie take more and more the character of collisions between two classes. Thereupon, the workers begin to form combination (trade unions) against the bourgeoisie; they club together in order to keep up the rate of wages; they found permanent associations in order to make provisions beforehand for the occasional revolts. Here and there the contest breaks out into riots'.

(ix) Revolution: At the height of the class war, a violent revolution breaks out which destroys the structure of the capitalist society. This revolution is most likely to occur at the peak of an economic crisis, which is part of the recurring booms and recessions, characteristic of capitalism.

(x) The dictatorship of the proletariat: The bloody revolution terminates capitalist society and leads to the social dictatorship of the proletariat! The revolution is violent, but does not necessarily involve mass killings of the bourgeoisie. Since property is wrested from the bourgeoisie, they will cease to *have* power and will be transformed into the ranks of the proletariat.

(xi) Inauguration of the communist society: Socialization of effective private property will eliminate class, and thereby the causes of social conflict. The state will eventually wither away as it becomes obsolete in a classless society in which nobody owns anything, but everybody owns everything and each individual contributes according to his ability and receives according to his need.

Alienation

The material life conditions generate alienation and no institution, whether religious, political, or economic is exempted from the condition of alienation. In the words of Marx, 'Objectification is the practice of alienation. Just as man, so long as he is engrossed in religion, can only objectify his essence by an alien and fantastic being, so under the sway of egoistic need, he can only affirm himself and produce objects in practice by subordinating his products and his own activity to the domination of an alien entity, and by attributing to them, the significance of an alien entity, named money'.

Marx was particularly interested in the process of alienation in the capitalist society. As a result of his close association with Engels, Marx became personally aware of the anguish, and alienation of the urban industrial workers. While alienation is commonplace in capitalist society and dominates every institutional sphere such as religion, economy, and polity, its predominance in workplace assumes an overriding importance for Marx. The alienated or estranged labour involves four aspects: workers' alienation from the object he produces, from the process of production, from himself, and from the community of his fellowmen.

The worker puts his life into the object he creates, but the very object becomes an instrument of alien purpose and strengthens the hands of his exploiters. The worker becomes a slave of his object. In the words of Marx, 'The alienation of the workers in his product means not only that his labour becomes an object, an external existence, but that it exists outside him, independently, something alien to him and that it becomes a power on its own confronting him; it means that the life which he has conferred on the object confronts him as something hostile and alien'. In short, the worker spends his life and produces everything not for himself but for the powers that manipulate him. Marx has identified two hostile powers that render labour and its product alien. One is the 'other man', the capitalist who commands production. The other is the economic system, the market situation, which governs the behaviour of capital and the process of production. The former is a human power and the latter an inhuman power. According to Marx, 'Alienation is apparent not only in the fact that my means of life belong to someone else, but also that ... an inhuman power rules over everything'. The impersonal forces of the market economy are alien to the worker, they make him dependent upon all the fluctuations in the market price and in the movement of capital. They have no regard for his welfare, are independent of his will, and ultimately produce his beggary or starvation.

QUESTIONS

1. Explain briefly Max Weber's concept of ideal type.
2. Describe the essential characteristics of bureaucracy according to Max Weber.
3. Explain Marxian's theory of Materialistic Interpretation of History.
4. 'Economy is the foundation of whole socio-cultural system'. Explain Marxian views.

Unit 3 Social Institutions

7

Family and Kinship

Of all the human groups, family is the most important primary group. It is a small social group consisting ordinarily of a father, a mother, and one or more children.

MEANING OF FAMILY

Some of the definitions of family are as follows:

- (i) 'Family is a group defined by a sex relationship sufficiently precise and enduring to provide for the procreation and upbringing of children'.
—*MacIver*
- (ii) 'Family is a more or less durable association of husband and wife with or without children, or of a man or woman alone, with children'.
—*Nimkoff*
- (iii) 'Family is a group of persons whose relations to one another are based upon consanguinity and who are therefore, kin to another'.
—*Davis*
- (iv) 'Family is the biological social unit composed of husband, wife and children'.
—*Eliot and Merrill*

On the basis of these definitions, the following characteristics of a family may be deduced.

- (i) **A mating relationship:** A family comes into existence when a man and a woman establish a mating relation between them. This relation may be of a shorter duration or lifelong. When the marital relations break up, the family disintegrates.

(ii) **A form of marriage:** Mating relationship is established through the institution of marriage, which may be solemnized in a simple way as is the case in Europe, or its celebration may be a long process as is generally in India.

(iii) **A system of nomenclature:** Every family is known by a name and has its own system of reckoning descent. Descent may be reckoned through the male line or through the female line. Usually, the wife goes and joins her husband's relatives, but sometimes the husband may also go and join his wife's relatives.

(iv) **An economic provision:** Every family needs an economic provision to satisfy the economic needs. The head of the family works to earn money to maintain the family.

(v) **A common habitation:** A family requires a house for its living. Without a dwelling place the task of child bearing and child rearing cannot be adequately performed.

The family, thus, is a biological unit implying institutionalized sex relationship between husband and wife.

NATURE OF FAMILY

Besides the characteristics mentioned above, a family is possessed of several distinctive features.

(i) **Universality:** Family is the most universal group. It is the first institution in the history of mankind. It has existed in every age and in every society and is found in all parts of the world. No culture or society has ever existed without some form of family organization. Each one of us is a member of a family. No other group is so universal as the family is.

(ii) **Emotional basis:** The family is a fundamental unit of human society. It is based on our impulses of mating, procreation, and parental care. It is a close-knit group that fortifies these emotions.

(iii) **Limited size:** A family is usually a small-sized organization. Its size is generally defined by biological conditions, which it cannot transcend. Other groups may be smaller than a family, but they are not formed because of biological conditions.

(iv) **Formative influence:** The family exercises the most profound influence over its members. It moulds the character of individuals. Its influence in infancy determines the personality structure of the individual. From its initial units, the father and mother, the child receives his/her physical inheritance. Freud and other psychologists have proved that a child exhibits the same character and mental tendencies in adult age that he acquires in the family. Confucius rightly remarked that if you want to improve society, improve family. 'To be well born is to possess the greatest of all gifts. To be ill born there is nothing which this world can afford that will be adequate compensation for the lack of good heredity'.

(v) **Nuclear position:** The family is the nucleus of all other social groups. The distinctive characteristics of marriage, parental obligations, and sibling relations make family the primary institutional cell of a society. The whole social structure is built of family units.

(vi) **Responsibility of the members:** In the family the child learns the meaning of social responsibility and the necessity for co-operation. As MacIver aptly describes, 'In times of crisis

men may work, and fight and die for their country, but they toil for their families all their lives. In it, the child develops his basic attitudes and ideals. It is a great agency of the socialisation of the child’.

(vii) Social regulation: The family is peculiarly guarded by social customs and legal regulations. It is not easy to violate them. Family is the group in which the consenting parties may freely enter, but which they cannot easily leave or dissolve. Marriages are not trivially taken.

(viii) Permanent and temporary: Family as an institution is permanent and universal, while as an association it is temporary and transitional. When the son marries, he goes out of the family and starts another family, which again may give rise to more families.

All this tends to show that although the family is one of the most limited groups of the society, it differs from all of them in being a distinct type of group. It is the smallest kinship group. It usually begins when the partners marry; it changes when the sons marry, it ends when one of the partners dies. When the children are young and entirely dependent on parents, the family looks like a compact human group. When children grow in age, this compactness becomes loose and when they marry the old family disintegrates and new families rise up. The original relations are reversed, the parents become dependent on the children.

FORMS OF FAMILY

Families may be classified variously, as follows:

1. On the basis of authority a family may be patriarchal or matriarchal.

(i) The patriarchal family: Under the patriarchal family the male head of the family is possessed of inclusive powers. He is the owner and administrator of the family property; to him all persons living in the family are subordinated. He presides over the religious rites of the family. In short, the father or the eldest male descendant is the protector and ruler of the family, enjoying full authority over the family members.

The chief characteristics of a patriarchal family are the following:

- (a) The wife after marriage comes to live in the husband’s house.
- (b) The father is the supreme lord of the family property.
- (c) Descent is reckoned through the father. The children are known by the name of their father.
- (d) The children can inherit the property of their father only.

They have no right over the property of the mother’s family.

(ii) The matriarchal family: MacIver prefers to call it by the name of maternal family rather than the matriarchal family. In a matriarchal family, the authority vests in the woman head of the family with the males being subordinate. She is the owner of the property and rules over the family. There are grave doubts whether this type of family ever existed in society, although L. H. Morgan, McLennan, and Bachopen believe it to have been the earliest form of family. Bachopen maintained that in early times, mankind lived in a state of promiscuity and that the earliest type of family was the matriarchal. Morgan referred to as the ‘father of American

anthropology' postulated that the family evolved through various stages, from the lowest promiscuity to the highest monogamy. The chief characteristics of matriarchal family are the following:

- (a) Descent is reckoned through the mother and-not the father, because maternity is a fact, whereas paternity is only an opinion.
- (b) Marriage relations are transient. The husband is sometimes merely a casual visitor.
- (c) The children are brought up in the home of the wife's relatives.
- (d) The authority in the family rests in the hands of the wife or in the hands of some representative of the wife's kin.
- (e) Property is transferred through the mother and only females succeed to it.

The matriarchal family is said to prevail among the primitive people who led their lives as wanderers or hunters. The father roamed far and wide, coming home irregularly and staying away for long periods of time. The absence of the father from the home made it necessary for the woman to 'stay on the job'. She was the leader of the clan for a great deal of time. Hence, she came to possess authority in the family. Briffault is of the opinion that the earliest form of family was matriarchal and that the patriarchal type emerged only with the development of agriculture and economic dominance of men.

However, the fact that women in earlier times possessed positions of authority is not a conclusive evidence of matriarchal system. On the basis of the fact that Britain is ruled by Queen Elizabeth II and India has Mrs Pratibha Patil as the president, we cannot conclude that the form of family in Britain and India is matriarchal. Also, the view that under matriarchal system the position of women is better than under the patriarchal regime is not correct. Today, matrilineal system prevails among some groups such as Trobriand Islanders, American Iroquois, the Veddas of Ceylon, and some African tribes, but this should not be taken to mean that mother rules the family. The woman under matrilineal system is merely the agent of transmission and not the active wielder of power. It is simply recognition of 'mother-right' and not of 'mother-rule'.

The organization of matrilineal or matriarchal family is not similar among the tribes where it prevails. In India, the Nairs in Kerala and the Khasis and Garos in Assam are matrilineal people. The Khasi family is distinct from the Garo family. In the South-west the matrilineal organization differs from that in the North-east. The Khasis have matrilocal residence and matrilineal descent. Property is transmitted through the females and is held by the females alone. However, the family property is indivisible. Among the Garos too, the descent is matrilineal and residence matrilocal. Property passes through the female, but all female members do not share in the family property. The parents appoint one of the daughters as the heir, and she need not be the eldest or youngest child. Although the woman owns the property, it is controlled by the husband.

2. On the basis of structure the family can be classified as nuclear and extended family.

A nuclear family is one which consists of a husband, a wife, and their children. The children leave the parental household after marriage. A nuclear family is an autonomous unit free from the control of the elders.

An extended family can be viewed as a merger of several nuclear families. Thus, a small extended family may include grandparents, their son, the son's wife, and the son's children. A large extended family may include multiple generations in the family. Grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins, their unmarried children, married sons and their wives along with their married/unmarried children live together within the same household..

There are two important features of an extended family. First, an extended family is continuous, whereas a nuclear family is not. In an extended family, a person is a member of a residential kin group that has probably persisted for many generations. Second, while a nuclear family is, to some degree, a separate and independent unit run by husband, wife, or both, an extended family is usually run by the patriarch. Its constituent nuclear families may have little power for independent decision-making.

3. On the basis of residence the family may be classified as follows:

- (i) **Matrilocal family:** In this type of family, the husband goes to live in the house of his wife.
- (ii) **Patrilocal family:** In this kind of family, the wife goes and lives in the house of her husband.

4. On the basis of marriage the family may be classified as follows:

- (i) **Monogamous family:** In which one man marries only one woman at one time.
- (ii) **Polygamous family:** In this kind of family, one man marries many women at one time.
- (iii) **Polyandrous family:** In this kind of family, one woman marries many men and lives with all of them or with each of them alternately.

5. On the basis of ancestry the family is classified into (i) matrilineal and (ii) patrilineal.

In the matrilineal family mother is the basis of ancestry. A woman is believed to be the ancestor of the family. The rights of each member of the family depend on his relation to the mother.

In the patrilineal family, ancestry continues through the father. This is the common type of family prevalent today.

6. On the basis of in-group and out-group affiliation a family may be classified into endogamous family and exogamous family. An endogamous family is one that sanctions marriage only among the members of the in-group, whereas an exogamous family sanctions marriage of members of an in-group with the members of an out-group.

7. On the basis of blood relationships: A family may be conjugal family or consanguineous family. A conjugal family consists of spouses, their offspring, and relatives through marriage.

A consanguineous family consists of blood relatives together with their mates and children.

It may also be pointed out that the patriarchal or patrilineal or patrilocal family is more common than the matriarchal or matrilineal or matrilocal family. The matrilineal family among the Khasis is also undergoing the process of disintegration, which is partly due to the influence of Christianity and partly due to the migration, of educated Khasis to the cities. Although it may also be said that the patriarchal family, in traditional sense, has also changed in its nature on account of the new social and economic forces, particularly the women's liberation movement, yet the fact still remains that family system is patriarchal in the greater parts of the world.

FUNCTIONS OF THE FAMILY

Davis has characterized the main social functions of the family into four divisions: reproduction, maintenance, placement, and socialization of the young. It also performs individual functions, but these are a corollary of its social functions.

Lundberg has enumerated the following basic functions of the family:

- (i) The regulation of sexual behaviour and reproduction.
- (ii) Care and training of children.
- (iii) Co-operation and division of labour.
- (iv) Primary group satisfactions.

Besides, there are many auxiliary functions as well. Ogburn and Nimkoff have divided family functions into six categories: (i) Affectional, (ii) Economic, (iii) Recreational, (iv) Protective, (v) Religious, and (vi) Educational.

Reed has described the following functions of the family: (i) Race perpetuation, (ii) Socialization, (iii) Regulation and satisfaction of sex needs, (iv) Economic functions.

MacIver divides the functions of the family into two categories—essential and non-essential. Under the essential he includes three functions: (i) stable satisfaction of sex need, (ii) production and rearing of children, and (iii) provision of a home.

Under the non-essential functions he mentions religious, educational, economic, health, and recreation which, he says, have now been transferred to specialized agencies in society.

Essential Functions

(i) Satisfaction of sex need: This is the first essential function that the family performs. Manu, the Ancient Indian law-giver, regarded sexual satisfaction as the aim of family; Vatsyayan also looked upon sexual satisfaction as the primary objective of the family. Satisfaction of sex instinct brings the desire for lifelong partnership among males and females. The satisfaction of sex instinct makes for normal personality. If sex instinct is suppressed, it may produce personality maladjustments and disrupt social relations. According to Havelock, 'With failure of sexual harmony, the marriage structure rests on shifting sand'. The modern family satisfies this instinct in greater degree than the traditional family. In the traditional family the sexual act was combined with reproduction. The fear of pregnancy, as a result of intercourse, prevented the couple to satisfy their sex urge. But in the modern families the task of sexual satisfaction has been eased by the invention of contraceptives and other methods of birth control. The present wife is in a better position to satisfy sex instinct without any fear of conception.

It may be referred that while premarital or extramarital mating is permitted or tolerated in some societies, however, every society places some restrictions on such mating; although these restrictions may vary from culture to culture. No society is entirely promiscuous. It may also be noted that premarital mating is not uncommon in a society that by law as well as custom prohibits all sexual relations except those between husband and wife. Many societies regard the idea of virgin marriage as absurd. In such societies, premarital sex experience is viewed as a preparation for marriage, not as a recreational pastime. Its purpose is generally to determine fertility. Most of these societies have not merely allowed premarital sexual behaviour, they have rather institutionalized it.

(ii) Production and rearing of children: The inevitable result of sexual satisfaction is procreation. The task of race perpetuation has always been an important function of the family. The Hindu scriptures hold that the religious activities of man cannot be consummated unless he has

a son. They permit a second marriage if there is no issue from the first wife. In the Hindu marriage, the groom says to his bride that 'I accept you in order to obtain good progeny'. Although childbirth can occur outside the family, nowhere is illegitimacy approved. Family is an institution par excellence for the production and rearing of children. Some countries, especially Soviet Russia after the Revolution practised experiments in communal child rearing, but they soon abandoned it. The function of child rearing is better performed today than in the past because now more skill and knowledge are devoted to the care of the unborn and newborn child. The infant death rate has shown a marked decline. In the achievement of this result, specialized agencies such as nursing and child welfare centres have come to the aid of the family. Looking at the data collected in the west it is seen that the number of illegitimate children is falling down, the practice of prostitution is vanishing away and the number of marriages is increasing, which clearly shows that the function of procreation of race is only performed through family.

It is claimed that with the practice of birth control methods the function of child procreation is now being given up by modern families.

Non-essential Functions

Economic: The non-essential functions of a family are various and varied. First, it serves as *an economic unit*. In the traditional families, most of the goods for consumption were made at home. The members of the family were all engaged in the family industry. The ancient Hindu joint family served as a type of mutual insurance society. It was a unit of production and the centre of economic activities. Today, the importance of family as an economic unit has been lessened, as most of the goods for consumption, including food, are purchased ready-made from the market. The members of the modern family do not work together as they did in the past times. They are engaged in different activities outside the home. However, the old pattern has not been completely destroyed, it has merely changed. In the family, one or the other profession is still carried on though of a different sort and in a different atmosphere. There is a clear division of labour between man and woman. The family members help in the economic adjustment of the family. Every family has its own economic capacity. The members purchase property—movable and immovable for the family. Property is an important economic institution that is protected and maintained by the family. The use and transmission of the property is usually prescribed by rules of the society. The equal distribution of property is an important function of the family.

Religious: The second non-essential function that the family performs is of a religious character. It is a centre for the religious training of the children who learn various religious virtues from their parents. In the traditional family, different religious practices such as idol worship, yagya, religious discourses, and sermons by pandits were held, which made the outlook of the children religious. In the Hindu scriptures, religious rituals are considered incomplete in the absence of wife. The modern family, however, does not observe religious practices and has become secular in outlook.

Educational: Another function performed by a family is the education of children. Family is an important educational agency. Every child learns the first letters under the guidance of parents. The traditional family was the centre of vocational education also because the children from the early childhood were associated with the family task. The modern family has delegated the task of vocational education to technical institutes and colleges.

Health: The functions related to health that were performed in the old family have now been transferred to hospitals and clinics. Formerly, a sick man was cared for in the family by his own kith and kin, but today he is admitted to a hospital and looked after by nurses. The child is born today not in the comforting fragrance of a home, but in the maternity wards of a well-equipped hospital. Instead of 'the house where I was born', the phrase 'the hospital where I was born' is more relevant to modern conditions.

Recreation: The old family provided recreation to its members. They used to sing and dance together and visit the family relations. In modern family, relation is individual rather than collective. The present forms of recreation such as bridge, tennis, carom, and movies provide for only individual or couple participation. Today, people prefer to go to a club or a hotel for recreation.

Civic: Family is the school of civic virtues. The child learns the first lessons of citizenship in the family. The virtues of love, co-operation, toleration, sacrifice, obedience, and discipline are first learnt by the child in the family. These qualities enable him to grow into a good citizen. That is why family has been called the cradle of civic virtues.

Social: Family imparts the knowledge of social customs, mores, etc. to the younger generation. It exercises social control over its members, which helps in the maintenance of a well-organized society. Family is an important agency of social control. It is also the custodian of culture and serves as the natural and convenient channel of social continuity.

Role of family in socialization: We have already dealt with the process of socialization in a previous chapter. Herein, we merely propose to throw light on the peculiar role of the family in this process. The family, on account of its several characteristics, is of strategic importance in socialization.

- (i) When the child is born into a family, he/she is a social blank, more plastic than he will ever be again. The process of socialization begins within the family. It prepares the ground work upon which the agencies coming afterwards build. It monopolizes the time and experiences of the child during his formative years.
- (ii) The influence of the family upon the child is deeper and more abiding than that of other groups. The child drops his childhood playmates, changes his school, forgets the school fellows, but the parents retain their close contact with him through most of his early life.
- (iii) Family is a primary group. Its members are imbued with 'we' feeling, which is a helpful agent in transmitting the family attitudes and sentiments.
- (iv) No other single group satisfies the needs of the child as much as the family does. No group can compete with the family in that respect.
- (v) In a family, there are both kinds of relationships, the authoritarian and the .equalitarian. Each type of relationship supplies a unique and necessary element in socialization. The child learns to be a man, a husband, and a father mainly through having lived in a family headed by a man, a husband, and a father.
- (vi) A child continues to identify himself with the family forever. It is the only group that is always there in the life of man.

Thus, on account of its strategic position, the family, more than any other group, exerts a persistent, intimate, and far-reaching influence on the habits, attitudes, and social experiences of the child. It plays the foremost role in the formation of personality. It occupies a key place in social organization.

THE MODERN FAMILY

The family system in most parts of the world has been mainly patriarchal in which the father or any other elder male member dominates the family. The renaissance and reformation ushered in the new age of technology and democracy, which began to undermine the foundations of the patriarchal family. On the one hand, there were economic factors involving industrialism, urbanism, and mobility which broke down the self-sufficiency of the patriarchal family. On the other hand, there were cultural factors, the growth of democratic ideals, and the decline of religious orthodoxy, which were in less harmony with the prerogatives and attitudes of the patriarchal family. These factors combined to challenge the patriarchal family and gave birth to what is called the 'modern family'.

Causes of the Decay of Patriarchal Family

The following factors were responsible for undermining the foundations of patriarchal family.

(i) **Economic factors:** The Industrial Revolution substituted the power machine for the manual tool. As new techniques of production advanced, they shelved the old family of its economic functions. New factories with heavy machines were set up, which took both the work and the workers out of the family. Now, cloth was produced not on the family handlooms, but in the textile mills. Thousands of workers were required to work in the factories. Not only males but females also began to go to the factory for work. The work of women became specialized like that of men and instead of being busy with the multifarious tasks of the family they went to workshops and factories for work. Women and daughters became as good earning members of the household as the men and sons. This earning power of women made them feel independent.

The technological discovery affected the patriarchal family in other ways too. It not only drew out larger numbers of women into workshops and substituted ready-made commodities for home-made commodities but also introduced labour-saving devices in the performance of family tasks. Various appliances were used in cooking, baking, washing, and rearing up of the children that saved much energy and time of the housewife. She could now engage herself more on essential functions.

(ii) **Cultural factors:** The emergence of democratic institutions in political field undermined the domination of the patriarch over the family members. The right to vote, which was given to a man by virtue of his being a property holder, became gradually, an individual right. The religious functions of the family diminished. The view that family was a divine creation and that the patriarch was the symbol of God in the family became less accepted. The choice of the mate was no longer made by parents, but by the individual himself. Woman attained a new political and legal status and a high degree of economic independence. Marriage was no-longer a devotion of woman to man, but contracting to live together on equal terms.

All this sounded the death knell for the patriarchal family and brought into existence the modern family, which is very much different in structure and function from the traditional family.

Presenting a contrast between patriarchal family and modern family, E. W. Burgess and H. J. Locke wrote: 'The patriarchal family is authoritarian and autocratic with power vested in the head of the family and with the subordination of his wife, sons, and their wives and children and his unmarried daughter to his authority. The modern family is democratic, based on equality between husband and wife, with consensus in making decision and with increasing participation by children as they grow older. Marriage is arranged by parents in the patriarchal family with emphasis upon social and economic status,

and upon adjustment of the son-in-law or daughter-in-law to the family group. In the modern family, marriage is in the hands of young people and selection is made on the basis of romance, affection and personality adjustment to each other. Compliance with duty and the following of tradition are guiding principles of the patriarchal family. The achievement of personal happiness and desire for innovation are watch words of the modern family. The chief historical functions of the family, i.e., economic, educational, recreational, health, productive and religious are found in the fullest development in the extended patriarchal family. These historic functions have departed from the modern family'.

Features of Modern Family

(i) **Decreased control of the marriage contract:** Marriage is the basis of family. In traditional family, the marriage was contracted by the parents. The marriage ceremony was based on the principle of male dominance and female obedience. In modern family, people are less subject to the parental control concerning whom and when they shall marry. The marriage is now settled by the partners themselves. It is choice of mate by mate usually preceded by courtship.

(ii) **Changes in the relationship of man and woman:** In modern family, the woman is not the devotee of man, but an equal partner in life with equal rights. A husband now does not dictate, but only requests the wife to do a task for him. She is now emancipated of the man's slavery. She is no longer the drudge and slave of olden days. She can divorce her husband as the husband can divorce her. She can sue the husband for her rights and likewise be sued.

(iii) **Laxity in sex relationships:** The rigidity traditionally associated with sexual relationships no longer characterizes the modern family, cases of illegitimate sex relationship of the husband and wife too can be seen in modern family.

(iv) **Economic independence:** Women in modern family have attained an increasing degree of economic independence. It is not only the husband who leaves the home for work, the wife also goes out for work. The percentage of women employed outside the home is continually on the increase. In India, the number of women going out for employment is steadily increasing. In upper classes, women are property owners and in lower classes they are wage earners or professional workers. This economic independence has largely affected the attitude of modern woman. Formerly, she had no choice but to find a male partner who could marry her and support her economically. She now does not feel helpless before man, but settles matters with him in terms of her own. She is not a slave of the man who provides her with food, clothing, and shelter; she can now earn her own living. Such a feature did not mark the traditional family. According to MacIver and Page, 'Not only the economic and the religious changes but the whole process of modern civilisation within which they fall has worked towards giving woman a new position in society and specially in relation to man'. In short, woman in the modern family has come as near achieving equality with men and children emancipation from parents.

(v) **Smaller family:** The modern family is generally a nuclear family. It is no longer a joint family. Moreover, the tendency is to have a smaller family, and the contraceptives help in checking the birth.

(vi) **Decline of religious control:** The modern family is secular in attitude. The religious rites of the traditional family such as early prayer, yagya, etc. are no longer performed in modern family. Marriage also has become a civil contract rather than a religious sacrament. It can be broken at any hour. The authority of religion over the conditions of marriage and divorce has markedly

declined. Divorce is a frequent occurrence in modern family. In traditional family, it was a rare phenomenon.

(vii) Separation of non-essential functions: The modern family has given up a great many functions that were performed by the traditional family. These functions have now been taken over by specialized agencies. Thus, the hospital offers room for the birth of child, crèches and kindergartens look after the child and his education in the initial years. Many of the traditional tasks of the household such as cooking and baking, cleaning and washing are also performed outside the household by specialized agencies. The process advances still further as more and more families rely upon prepared and manufactured goods consumed by the family.

(viii) Filocentric family: The modern trend is towards the filocentric family. A filocentric family is one wherein the children tend to dominate the scene and their wishes determine the policy of the family. In modern family, use of physical punishment is rare. The children now decide which school they will study in, what clothes they will wear, what food will be cooked, and which movie they will go to enjoy.

Thus, the family has been subjected to profound modifications of an economic, social, and biological nature. The modern family is no longer the economic and self-sufficient unit. The women are no longer subordinated to the male dominance and are no longer confined to the drudgery of incessant toil in addition to the continual bearing of children. The use of contraception has reduced the number of children born during marriage. Ceremony and religion have lost almost all connection with the home as an entity. The individuation of family members has reached a point beyond which it cannot go. The size and functions of the family have been reduced. It has suffered a change in regard to both its structure and functions. It now consists of the married couple and two or three children. Even this smallest family unit has shown a tendency towards instability. Its functions have been taken over by several specialized agencies. The functions of the present day family tend to revolve around personality. Burgess referred to the modern family as 'a unity of interacting personalities'. The modern family is more individualized and democratic where women enjoy a high prestige and position. From an institution, it has moved towards companionship.

Instability of Modern Family

The striking problem that confronts the modern family is its instability. The traditional family was a stable type of family whose dissolution was rarely thought of and was not very easy. It faced the world as a unit. Women outside the family had no refuge. The profession of the family was fixed, which was continued by succeeding generations. Social mobility was slight. But today it has all changed. The control of the family over its members has decreased. The younger generation does not like any interference by their elders. There is lack of unity among the family members. Faith in one another is decreasing. The problems of working women have hindered the development of the children and led to increased conflicts between husband and wife. There is lack of mutual trust. The marriage bonds have weakened. The ancient ideal of fidelity in sex-relationship has been adversely affected. Premarital and extramarital relationships have increased. There is sexual disharmony between husband and wife. There is no longer any family craft or profession. The members of the same family are engaged in different pursuits; one in service, the other in business, a third in politics. The increase of specialized agencies has greatly diminished common participation, which was the backbone of the traditional family. Members of the modern family take more interest outside the family. They take meals in hotels and pass their nights in clubs and return home for a very short period. To women, marriage is not the only career open. They work in factories and offices and earn an independent living. The modern family has shrunk both structurally and functionally and is gradually

losing its primary character. The state has undertaken to provide prenatal attention and infant schools, expensive medical facilities are available, the factory and office provide the place of work, and clubs and bars are provided for recreation. If people find their education, their work, and their recreation outside the family, and if women can get jobs which make them independent, surely the chance of a broken home can be laid at the door of a modern family. In many developed countries divorce rate has increased markedly. The United States holds the leading position in the number of divorces granted; the divorce rate being more than one divorce for every five marriages. In India, although the divorce rate is not so alarming, the influence of individualism and the impact of western culture have adversely affected the stability of Indian family system. It may also be noted that the divorce rates provide only a very indirect measure of family instability because they do not include cases of broken families which have not secured divorce for one reason or the other. If we take into account also the domestic discords, desertion, and separation without being followed by divorce, it will be revealed that family instability is on the increase.

Future of the Family

From the above discussion, it is thus clear that there has been a great change in the functions of the family. It is no longer a home for recreation of its members, a school of education for children, or a centre for their religious training. Many family duties that were discharged formerly by the parents have now been transferred to external agencies. Cooking, washing, and caring for the children are hardly performed in numerous homes of the West and also in some of the East. A number of external agencies such as maternity hospitals, baby clinics, crèches, baby sitters, hotels, clubs, and cinemas have taken over the functions once performed in the family. The functions of a modern family are much limited.

Even the task of procreation has suffered a setback. Of course, the task of satisfaction of sex need is better performed without any fear of pregnancy by modern family. In short, the family has lost some of its former functions. It is to be, however, remembered that though there is a loss of functions, the family is not going to perish. The task of procreation of children, the most essential social function, is only performed through the family. This function is incapable of being shifted to any other institution—without a radical change in society. If marriage is not for the purpose of having children, there would be no purpose in having it at all, because companionship and sexual gratification can be had without the formalities of wedlock. More people are being married than ever before. In addition, more women are having children.

The family satisfies not only the physiological needs of the male and female but it also satisfies their psychological needs, the desire to love and to be loved. Mutual affection among family members provides solace against many of the mental difficulties of a complicated society. Despite its structural and functional changes the family still plays a significant role in social strength and social solidarity. It is the foundation of all social life. It is an inseparable part of man's nature. Burgess and Locke write, 'It seems safe to predict that the family will survive, both because of its long history of adaptability to changing conditions and because of the importance of its functions of affection giving and receiving in personal satisfaction and in personality development'.

KINSHIP

Man does not live alone in society. From birth till death he is surrounded by a number of people. Some of these people are his relatives, some are friends, some are neighbours and others are strangers and unknown to him. He is bound to all the people who are related to him either on the basis of blood or marriage. The relations based on blood or marriage may be close or distant. The bond of blood or marriage that binds people together in group is called kinship.

Type of Kinship

- (i) Affinal kinship
- (ii) Consanguineous kinship

(i) **Affinal Kinship:** The bond of marriage is called affinal kinship. Marriage establishes a relation not only between a man and a woman but also brings together two families. Thus, a host of relations are created as soon as a marriage takes place. For example, after marriage a man becomes not only a husband, but also a brother-in-law and a son-in-law. Likewise, a girl after marriage becomes not only a wife but also a daughter-in-law. Thus, marriage creates a host of relationships which are called affinal.

(ii) **Consanguineous Kinship:** The bond of blood is called consanguineous kinship. The consanguineous kin are related through blood, whereas the affinal kin are related through marriage. The bond between parents and their children and that between siblings is consanguineous kinship. Siblings, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, nephew, and cousin are consanguineous kin, that is, related through blood. In this connection, it may be pointed out that blood relationships may be actual as well as supposed. Among polyandrous tribes the actual father of a child is unknown. An adopted child is treated as if it were one's own biologically produced child. Thus, blood relationship may be established not only on biological basis but also on the basis of social recognition.

Degree of Kinship

On the basis of nearness or distance, relatives can be classified in several categories. Some relations are very close, direct, and near; for example, father, mother, sister, brother, husband, wife are our primary kin.

Secondary kin are related through primary kin. They are not our primary kin, but are the primary kin of our primary kin; hence, our secondary kin. For example, father's father, mother's brother, father's brother (chacha), sister's husband (bahnoi) are secondary kin. Father is one's primary kin and his brother is the primary kin of father. Therefore, father's brother is one's secondary kin. Similarly, sister is one's primary kin, but her husband is one's secondary kin.

Tertiary kins are the secondary kin of our primary kin or primary kin of our secondary kin. Thus, the wife of brother-in-law (sala) called sarhaj in Hindi is tertiary kin because brother-in-law is one's secondary kin and his wife is the primary kin of brother-in-law. Similarly, the brother-in-law of one's brother is one's tertiary kin because the brother is one's primary kin and his brother-in-law is his secondary kin.

Kinship Usages

The study of kinship system also includes the study of behaviour patterns of different kins. Every relationship involves a particular type of behaviour. The behaviour of a son towards his father is one of respect, whereas the behaviour of husband towards wife is one of love. The behaviour of a brother towards his sister is one of affection. There are some usages that regulate the behaviour of different kin. These usages are called kinship usages. Some of these usages are the following:

(i) **Avoidance:** In all societies the usage of avoidance is observed in one form or another. It means that the two kins, normally of opposite sex, should avoid each-other to maintain certain amount of modesty. Thus, a father-in-law (sasur) should avoid daughter-in-law. The purdah system in Hindu family illustrates the usage of avoidance.

(ii) **Joking relationship:** It is the reverse of avoidance relationship. The usage of this relationship permits an individual to tease or make fun of the other. The relationship between devar-bhabhi, jija-sali is a joking relationship.

(iii) **Teknonymy:** The word 'teknonymy' has been taken from the Greek word and was used in anthropology for the first time by Taylor. According to this usage, a kin is not referred to directly, but he is referred to through another kin. A kin becomes the medium of reference between two kins. Thus, in traditional Hindu family wife does not utter the name of her husband. He is referred to by her as the father of so and so.

Kinship usages accomplish two major tasks. First, they create groups (special groupings of kin). The second major function of kinship usage is to govern the role of relationships among the kin, that is, how one kinsman should behave in a particular kinsman's presence, or what one kinsman owes to another. Kinship assigns guidelines for interactions between persons. It defines proper, acceptable relationship between father and daughter, between brother and sister, between son-in-law and mother-in-law, and among fellow lineage members and clansmen. Kinship, thus, acts as a regulator of social life and maintains the solidarity of social system.

QUESTIONS

1. Define family and discuss its characteristics and distinctive features.
2. Explain the various kinds or forms of family.
3. Discuss the essential and non-essential functions of family.
4. Discuss the causes of the decay of the patriarchal family.
5. Discuss the main features of modern family and the causes of its instability.
6. What do you mean by kinship? Describe the kinds of kinship.
7. Define the terms classificatory and descriptive kinship.
8. Explain the various kinship usages.
9. Write short notes on the following:
 - (i) Primary kins
 - (ii) Secondary kins
 - (iii) Tertiary kins

Marriage

8

DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE

Marriage is an institution that admits men and women to family life. It is a stable relationship in which a man and a woman are socially permitted to have children, implying the right to sexual relations. Edward Westermark defined marriage as the 'more or less durable connection between male and female, lasting beyond the mere act of propagation till after the birth of offspring'. Ernest R. Groves defined it as 'a public confession and legal registration of an adventure in fellowship'. Lowie defined it as a 'relatively permanent bond between permissible mates'. Malinowski defined marriage as 'a contract for the production and maintenance of children'. According to Lundberg, 'Marriage consists of the rules and regulations which define the rights, duties and privileges of husband and wife, with respect to each other'. According to Horton and Hunt, 'Marriage is the approved social pattern whereby two or more persons establish a family'. H. T. Mazumdar defines marriage as 'a socially sanctioned union of male and female, or as a secondary institution devised by society to sanction the union and mating of male and female, for purposes of (a) establishing a household, (b) entering into sex relations, to procreating, and (d) providing care for the offspring'. According to Anderson and Parker, 'Marriage is the sanctioning by a society of a durable bond between one or more males and one or more female established to permit sexual intercourse for the implied purpose of parenthood'. According to John Levy and Ruth Munroe, 'people get married because of the feeling that being in a family is the only proper, indeed the only possible, way to live. People do not marry because it is their social duty to perpetuate the institution of the family or because the scriptures recommend matrimony or because they have fallen in love with each other but because they lived in a family as children and cannot get over the feeling that being in family is the only proper way to live in society'. In almost all the societies, one or the other form of marriage exists.

FORMS OF MARRIAGE

The main forms of marriage are as follows:

(A) Polyandry: One wife, many husbands. It is a form of marriage wherein one woman marries more than one man at a given time. It is thought to be widespread in Tibet where the conditions of social life are harsh, and where perhaps the efforts of two or more men are needed to support a family. The Marquesans of Polynesia and the Todas of Malabar are also supposed to have this institution. From the Hindu mythology, we learn that the five Pandava brothers shared one wife. Polyandry is also said to exist in some tribes as the Namib Bushmen, the Yaruro of Venezuela, the Lengua of El Chaco, the Singhalese, the Mundas, and some ancient tribes of the Malay Peninsula.

Polyandry may take two forms:

(1) Fraternal polyandry: In this form of polyandry one wife, is regarded the wife of all brothers who have sexual relation with her. The children are treated as the offspring of the eldest brother.

(2) Non-fraternal polyandry: In this form one woman has many husbands with whom she cohabits in turn. It is not necessary that these husbands be brothers. If a child is born, then any one husband is chosen as the social parent by a special ritual.

The causes of polyandry are said to be the following:

(i) Lesser number of women: According to Westermarck, when the number of women is lesser than the number of males in a society, polyandry is found; for example, among the Todas of Nilgiri. But according to Briffault, polyandry can exist even when the number of women is not less; for example, in Tibet, Sikkim, and Laddakh polyandry is found, although there is not much disparity in the number of men and women.

(ii) Poverty: Polyandry has developed in such areas where there was scarcity of natural resources so that many men may support one woman and her children.

(iii) Bride price: When in a society, bride price is high on account of the lesser number of women, polyandry develops.

(iv) Population control: Polyandry has also been considered a means to check the growth of population in some societies.

(v) Backwardness: Generally polyandry is found in the areas that are situated far away from the centres of culture and progress.

(vi) Joint family: The spirit of joint family gets strengthened when several brothers marry the same woman.

The advantages of polyandry are as follows:

(i) It controls the growth of population. (ii) The family property does not get divided. (iii) It strengthens the economic position of the family. (iv) It fosters community feeling among the members of the family. (v) The members feel security of life.

Its disadvantages are as follows:

(i) It adversely affects the health of the woman because the same woman has to satisfy the sexual desires of several husbands.

(ii) It leads to sterility. According to biologists, if the same woman cohabits several men, it may lead to sterility.

- (iii) It may diminish population. It is said that if polyandry continues in some tribal societies for another hundred years, it may lead to their extinction.
- (iv) Divorce is easy in a polyandrous society.

Polyandry is generally considered an obstacle in the way of social progress. It causes harm to married life and creates several other psychological problems. It is on this account that polyandry has gradually come to an end in those societies wherein it once prevailed.

(B) Polygyny: One husband many wives. Under this system one man has two or more wives at a time. In primitive times, it was quite prevalent among the Assyro-Babylonians and the Hebrews. In India, even today it exists among Muslims and also among Hindus. It is more frequent than polyandry. Polygyny is closely related to the institution of slavery. Generally, the women captured in war were made wives and concubines by the captor. Sometimes, a chieftain or Rajah may purchase women for wives. The Nawabs of Oudh in India, during Muslim times, were said to have a large number of wives, sometimes, the number reaching several hundred. Westermark has mentioned the following causes of polygyny:

- (i) **Enforced celibacy:** Men do not approach the women during the period of pregnancy and while the child is being breastfed. Due to this long period of enforced celibacy, a second marriage was contracted.
- (ii) **Earlier aging of the female:** In the uncivilized tribes, men remarried a number of times because the women aged earlier.
- (iii) **Variety:** The desire for variety is also the cause of polygyny.
- (iv) **More children:** Polygyny is also a practice to obtain more children.
- (v) **Social prestige:** In some tribes the leaders have more wives in order to prove their superiority. A single marriage is considered a sign of poverty.
- (vi) **Economic necessity:** In some areas polygyny is practised to get cheap and reliable labourers in the form of wives. In the Himalayan ranges, the men marry many times in order to protect their property and to obtain help in their agricultural activities. Polygyny lessens the cases of sexual infidelity, but it creates jealousy and hatred among the wives.

The advantages of polygyny are as follows:

- (i) It checks prostitution because man can satisfy his sex desire in a better way by keeping himself within the confines of marriage.
- (ii) It gives healthy children to the society because only rich people can afford to maintain several wives.
- (iii) Children are better looked after because there are several women to look after them.

Its disadvantages are as follows:

- (i) It increases economic burden on the head of the family because he has to support many women and children.
- (ii) The children cannot be looked after properly because too many of them are to be looked after.
- (iii) It creates jealousy among the wives and their children.
- (iv) It destroys family happiness.
- (v) The women possess lower positions.

On account of its greater harmful effects on family life, polygyny has been declared illegal in the civilized societies. The Indian Government has declared polygyny an offence under Hindu Marriage Act, 1955. Public opinion also is generally against the system.

(C) Monogamy: One man one wife. Under monogamy one man marries one woman at a time. This is the leading form of marriage. Its advantages are now well recognized. It produces the highest types of affection and sincere devotion. The children are well looked after. Both father and mother give earnest attention to the upbringing of their offspring. Although monogamy is said to cause extramarital relations and exploitation of women, according to Malinowski, 'Monogamy is, has been, and will remain the only true type of marriage'. It is probably on account of great advantages of monogamy that the public officers in India have been legally forbidden to practise polygyny.

(D) Companionate marriage: This is 'the marriage of two persons on the understanding that as long as there are no children the marriage may be dissolved simply by mutual consent'. Judge Ben B. Lindsey was of the opinion that this system is much better than free love or trial marriage because the knowledge that in case there are no children divorce may be obtained will provide wholesome attitudes toward marriage. The opponents of the system, however, point out that it leads to quick-married and quick-divorced trends and makes it easy for persons to marry on the basis of sex alone.

(E) Experimental marriage: Some thinkers have proposed experimental marriages to find out the compatibility of the two people before they settle down to a life of permanent union. A man and woman may be allowed to lead marital life temporarily in order to find out if they can settle down permanently in matrimonial relations. This approach would lessen the chances of divorce at a later stage. During the period of experiment they would become acquainted with each other and come to know each other's personality intimately. If they find that they have compatible personality, they may enter into permanent marriage relations; otherwise depart from each other. There may be something to be said in favour of experimental marriages, but the experimental approach is fine in the laboratory, and not in marriage. Here it may also be mentioned that many societies permit extramarital or premarital sexual relations. In our society, the attitude towards sexual relations is extremely restrictive. We think that the sexual relations should be confined to marriage and that a person should have only one marriage partner at a time. But this rule is broken as well. It is found that percentage of men having premarital intercourse is higher than that of the women. In the West, the proportion of men and women having premarital intercourse is higher than that in India.

Other Forms of Marriage

In connection with marriage there are certain terms that need explanation. One is *sororal polygyny* which means the marriage of a man with several sisters. *Levirate*, another term, is the marriage of a man with the childless widow of his deceased brother. *Sororate* a third term, means the marriage of a man with the sister of his deceased wife, especially if she has left no offspring. *Concubinage* is a state of living together as husband and wife without being married, it is cohabitation with one or more women who are distinct from wife or wives. Concubinage is sometimes recognized by various societies as an accepted institution. *Hypergamy* means the marriage of the daughter in the superior

and noble family. It is highly practised in India. If the parents give their daughters in a low family it is regarded a blot upon their family. *Anuloma* marriage is a form of intercaste marriage wherein men of higher caste wed women of lower caste. *Protiloma* marriage is also a form of intercaste marriage in which men of lower caste marry women of superior castes.

MATE CHOICE

Marriage is a very important social institution. No society allows a couple to quietly pair off and start living as husband and wife. Every society has developed a pattern for guiding marriages. Before marriage is solemnized, the first and most important task is the choice of mates. The question of proper choice of mates is so important that a wrong choice may for ever doom the family to unhappiness. Selection of partners is entirely an individual affair. Although no standards of choice are laid down by the community, from time to time certain rules have been made to regulate the selection of mates.

Exogamy

Exogamy means marriage outside the group. Generally, people prohibit marriage between individuals sharing certain degrees of blood or affinal relationships. A man must not only seek a wife out of his own clan but also must avoid the clans of all the grandparents. Then there are certain relations that are not to be married, but the degree of nearness differs from community to community.

The following forms of exogamy are found in India:

- (i) **Gotra exogamy:** Among the Hindus, the prevailing practice is to marry outside the 'gotra'. People of the same 'gotra' are believed to have similar blood and so their inter-marriage is prohibited.
- (ii) **Village exogamy:** Among many Indian tribes, there is the practice to marry outside the village.

Endogamy

Marriage within the class is known as endogamy. Hence, marriages with out-group members are prohibited. Even today intercaste marriages are not encouraged. Hitler had declared an Aryan-Jewish marriage a criminal act. In India, a Brahmin can marry only a Brahmin and that too of his/her own sub-caste. A marriage of a Vaishya with a Brahmin is not socially approved. In the old polynesian society, marriages between nobles and commoners were severely deprecated. Even today, a labourer cannot marry the daughter of a big industrialist. In India, endogamy is mostly obligatory. However, today endogamous attitudes have somewhat relaxed and softened and we sometimes hear of an intercaste marriages, but that is not common as yet.

In India, we find the following forms of endogamy:

- (i) **Tribal endogamy:** No one can marry outside his own tribe.
- (ii) **Caste endogamy:** Marriage should take place within the caste.
- (iii) **Class endogamy:** Marriage is contracted between people of one class or of a particular status.
- (iv) **Sub-caste endogamy:** Choice for marriage is restricted to the sub-caste.

(v) **Race endogamy:** People can marry within the race.

By preventing marriage outside the group, endogamy (i) preserves the group's homogeneity, (ii) protects its prestige and status, (iii) maintains the numerical force of its group, (iv) preserves the purity in the group, (v) keeps women happier, (vi) fosters the sense of unity within the group, (vii) keeps property within the group.

However, endogamy has some disadvantages.

- (i) It limits the sphere of mate selection.
- (ii) It lays emphasis on group feeling, which creates communalism and checks the growth of national unity.
- (iii) Encourages casteism.
- (iv) Encourages hatred and jealousy among different groups.
- (v) Encourages dowry and bride price.

Selection by Parents

The selection of mates in the East is generally made by parents or elders. It is considered that they being experienced can better evaluate the merits of prospective partners. Young boys and girls are not that experienced and are led more by transitory rather than permanent valuable considerations. In the West, the usual procedure of choosing mates is that of 'falling in love', which does not give consideration to sound principles of eugenics. As Bogardus observes, 'Love, often is a tumultuous god who takes delight in freak matings'.

It is contended that parents, in making the selection of mates, are often moved by their own caprices and personal desires and neglect the wishes of the mates to be married. They force their children to marry someone whom they do not like. This contention is not futile. It has come to light that sometimes parents marry their son or daughter to one who is not a suitable match on biological or psychological grounds, but whose status and wealth would add greatly to their prestige. It is, therefore, desirable that parents before contracting a marriage should consult their children's wishes, make known the reasons of the choice, and secure their approval by making appeal to their mind and not by exercising threat.

QUESTIONS

1. Give the definition of marriage.
2. Discuss the main forms of marriage with their advantages and disadvantages.
3. Discuss the exogamy and endogamy forms of marriage with their merits and demerits.
4. Discuss the practice of mate choices in India.

Work and Economic Institutions

9

The first important task for a society is to maintain itself. There must be food, clothing, and shelter for its members. Modern man spends most of his time making a living. It is not sufficient only to have a system of production in society, equally important is its distributive system. The more complex the society, the more its welfare rests on the distributive system. In a simple society, the problem of distribution is simple because the society is usually self-supporting. The family in the simple society satisfies its needs almost directly. But in a complex society, goods pass through many hands until they reach the consumers. In our country, one of the major causes of economic ills is maldistribution of goods. Economic institutions arise out of the determinations we make with respect to the goods we need. They are the basic ideas, norms, and statuses which govern our economic life.

The twentieth century has brought about mass production, rise of many near-monopolies, and a high degree of division of labour. The consumer has become more and more dependent on the institutions of the market place. Advertising profoundly influences consumers' wants and habits of buying. A product is associated with a popular film star so that it may appeal the people. The nature of retailing has changed. The government takes an increasing interest in consumer protection. There are laws providing for pure food and drugs and for standard methods of packing and labelling. The prices are fixed by the government. The traditional theory of economic competition has now been replaced by governmental control in the fields of production, distribution, exchange, and consumption. The age of *laissez-faire* is gone.

INSTITUTION OF CAPITALISM AND ITS GROWTH

In primitive societies, the usual system of exchanging goods was the *barter system*. Trading came gradually to involve money as a medium of exchange. According to Simmel, 'The establishment of the *institution of money* in the economic system of modern society has had far-reaching effects upon

almost every phase of life. It has made us pecuniary in our attitudes, so that everything is evaluated in terms of money, and social relations have become superficial and cold’.

The Industrial Revolution changed the techniques of production. To secure maximum production of goods, the new doctrine of ‘laissez-faire’ was propounded. The doctrine preached non-interference in economic matters. If individuals pursue their own interest, unhampered by restriction, they will achieve the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Its advocates, Adam Smith, J. S. Mill, Spencer, and Sumner contended that government should remove all legal restrictions on trade, on production, on the exchange of wealth, and on the accumulation of property. Adam Smith enunciated four principles: (i) the doctrine of self-interest, (ii) laissez faire policy, (iii) the theory of competition, and (iv) profit motive.

Upon these principles and in response to the changing techniques of production brought about by Industrial Revolution, a new system of property ownership and ‘production’ called capitalism developed.

Features of Capitalism

In the broadest sense, capitalism may be defined as the economic system making the widest use of capital in the process of production. In the technical sense, capitalism may be defined as the economic system of production in which capital goods are owned privately by individuals or corporations. The following are the economic bases of capitalism.

- (i) **Private property:** The institution of private property lies at the basis of modern economic life. The right to property is considered an inviolable right.
- (ii) **Large-scale production:** It is another important feature of capitalism. Capitalism arose as a result of industrial revolution, which made large-scale production possible.
- (iii) **Profit institution:** According to Marx, capitalism cannot exist in the absence of institution of profit. Production under capitalism is profit-oriented.
- (iv) **Competition:** Competition is the inevitable result of a capitalist economy. There is cut-throat competition under capitalism.
- (v) **Price mechanism:** In capitalism the price of a commodity is determined not by the cost of production, but by the law of demand and supply.
- (vi) **Wage institution:** In capitalism, the objective of the capitalist is to pay as less wages as possible and to take as much work out of the labour as possible. There is exploitation of labour in capitalism.
- (vii) **Money and credit:** In capitalism, the institution of credit has become important. The capitalists get credit and develop their business. Thus, despite a lack of capital, the capitalist increases his property on the basis of credit.
- (viii) **Business organization:** Capitalism is marked by vast business structures. The capital of numerous shareholders is pooled and an industrial house is set up.
- (ix) **Market economy:** Under capitalism, there is no governmental control over the forces of production, distribution, and exchange. It is controlled by the forces operating in the market. There is no price control or regulated distribution by the government. The economy operates freely under the law of demand and supply. The capitalist economy is a liberalized or market economy.

Social Consequences of Capitalism

Capitalism has brought in some good consequences, which are as follows:

- (i) **High standard of living:** Capitalism is the product of industrialization. Industrialization has increased production, and the necessities of life are easily available.
- (ii) **Economic progress:** Capitalism has led men to exploit the natural resources more and more. People exert themselves utmost for earning money. This has led to many inventions in the field of industry, agriculture, and business, which have contributed to the economic progress.
- (iii) **Exchange of culture:** Capitalism has led to international trade and exchange. People in different countries have come nearer to each other. The development of the means of transport and communication has facilitated contacts among the peoples of the world, thereby leading to the exchange of ideas and culture.
- (iv) **Lessening of racial differences:** Capitalism has also led to the lessening of differences based on race, creed, caste, and nationality. In the factory, the workers and officials belonging to different castes co-operate with one another and work shoulder to shoulder.

Bad Effects of Capitalism

In spite of the above good consequences, capitalism has proved a curse instead of a blessing. Its bad effects are as follows:

- (i) **Greed for wealth:** Capitalism is based on greed for wealth. Wealth has become the be-all and end-all of human life. The modern man wants to earn more and more wealth by any means. The idea for morality does not enter into the means of earning. It has thus led to moral degeneration.
- (ii) **Destruction of human values:** In a capitalist order, everything has come to be measured in terms of wealth. All values of human life such as sympathy, benevolence, love, and affection are evaluated in terms money.
- (iii) **Materialism:** Capitalism manifests materialism in its extreme form. Religion and spirituality lose their force. Religion becomes the opium of people. The big capitalists save lakhs of rupees by evading tax through contribution to fictitious charitable institutions. While people are short of goods, the capitalists hoard them to soar the prices.
- (iv) **Artificiality:** Capitalism has transformed modern culture into mere artificiality. One does not find gentility and human touch. One can see false prestige, mere artificiality, and sheer advertisement even in art and literature, nothing to speak of diet, dress, and speech, etc. Life today has become artificial.
- (v) **Emphasis on sex:** The capitalist culture lays emphasis on sex. Marriage has become a mere agreement for the satisfaction of sex hunger. The capitalists advertise their goods through the display of sex instincts. Literature and movies are based on sexual passion. Premarital and extra-marital sexual relations are on the increase.
- (vi) **Imbalance in social system:** Capitalism has led to an imbalance in the social system. It has widened the gap between the haves and have-nots and created insatiable greed for wealth among

the people. It has changed the very outlook of man and led to his moral degeneration. Money-making has become the be-all and end-all of life. Numerous scams have occurred in our country that have shaken the foundation of Indian economy. Karl Marx was its bitter critic.

PROPERTY

Meaning of Property

Property is a very important institution in the economy of societies. In terms of goods or things, property is one's own. It may be tangible or intangible. Tangible items are those that can be seen and touched. Clothing, ornaments, weapons, tools, utensils, houses, lands, automobile, animals, etc. are tangible items. The intangible property is that which cannot be seen and touched. Such property consists of goodwill, copyrights, trademark, etc. Most of our property consists of tangible items.

Understood in terms of rights the following are the characteristics of property rights:

(i) Transferability: Property can be transferred by its owner through sale, exchange, or gift. A landowner can transfer his land. A person can sell his automobile. But one cannot transfer one's skill, and so skill is not a property.

(ii) Property rights do not necessarily imply actual use and enjoyment of objects by the owner: Law makes a distinction between ownership and possession. One may own property without actually using it. In other words, possession of property may be in the hands of a person who is not its owner. A tenant is in possession of a house, but the house is not his property. It is the property of the landlord.

(iii) Property refers to a concrete external object: It is suggested by some writers that property rights refer to a concrete external object, but such a view limits narrowly the range of property rights. One can have property of intangible thing like goodwill. When one sells the goodwill of one's business, what he actually sells is not any external object. For example, if the manufacturers of 'Bajaj' electrical goods sell their goodwill, what they agree to is that they will not thereafter brand their goods by the name of 'Bajaj'. They do not sell their goods, but only the name by which these goods were known in the market. They have sold their property of goodwill.

(iv) Property is usually non-human: This means that the object of property has no rights of its own, but it is only the passive object of such rights. The land has no right of its own, it only serves the landowner. In other words, human beings cannot be the objects of property. A woman cannot be the property of her husband nor can the children be the property of their parents. Property rights apply only to those things that have no rights of their own.

Institution of Private Property

An outstanding feature of modern economic life is the institution of private property. By private property we mean the things owned exclusively by a person or group of persons with the right to use them as desired. It differs from the public property in the sense that public property is owned by the community at large and administered by individuals or groups as agents of the community.

For example, railways are public property. The land owned by a landlord is a private property. The private property may be distinguished from the public property in respect of the following points:

- (i) Private property is owned by a person or group of persons, whereas public property is owned by the community.
- (ii) Private property is usually used by its owner for his own good, whereas public property is used for public good.
- (iii) Private property is subject to regulations by the state, whereas public property belongs to the state itself and is not subject to regulation by any external group. In other words, private property rights are subject to supervision, regulation, and control by the state.

The institution of private property has got both its strong supporters and bitter critics. On the one hand, if it is regarded as essential for social progress, on the other, it is called 'theft'. The economic institution of capitalism is based on private property.

Advantages of Private Property

The advocates of the institution of private property put forth the following arguments:

- (i) **Incentive to work:** The institution of private property induces a man to work hard, which is ultimately beneficial to the community.
- (ii) **Satisfaction of natural instinct:** Man has an acquisitive instinct. He wants to acquire something which he can call his own. He wants to have a house, an automobile, and several other things of comfort and luxury. He works hard to get these things and when he gets them he feels pleasure.
- (iii) **Security against future:** Property is a foreguard against the wants of the morrow, and those who have no property, are uncertain whether the morrow will give them the means of life.
- (iv) **Ethically sound:** Private property is justified on the ground that it is the reward to an individual for his labour.
- (v) **Nurse of virtues:** Private property creates social virtues like love of one's family, generosity, energy, philanthropy, etc. The man who has private property has a great stake in the country. It is on this account that some political thinkers have suggested that the right to vote should be given only to those who have some property.
- (vi) **Economic progress:** The incentive to private property leads people to exert themselves utmost for earning money. This has led to many inventions in the field of industry, agriculture, and business, which have contributed to economic progress.
- (vii) **Historical justification:** The institution of private property is also justified on the basis of history. It is said that all the progressive societies are those that are built upon the system of private property. The United States is a progressive society, as it is based on the institution of private property and free enterprise.

Disadvantages of Private Property

All the above-mentioned advantages of private property are said to be fallacious. The power to acquire property may defeat more incentives than it creates. In Russia, the right to private property

is severely limited. Yet the Russians are no less hardworking than the Americans. A person in order to acquire more property may indulge in unsocial or antisocial activities like adulteration, smuggling, hoarding, etc. Its possession may not necessarily be related to socially useful functions.

- (i) **Greed for property:** Private property makes man greedy. He wants to earn more and more money by any means.
- (ii) **Destruction of human values:** In a private property system, all values of human life such as love, sympathy, benevolence, and affection are evaluated in terms of silver coins.
- (iii) **Basis of capitalism:** The institution of private property is the basis of capitalism. In capitalism, every person has the right to earn and maintain property. The right to property is considered sacred. Capitalism is injurious to both the individual and the society.
- (iv) **Inequality:** Private property is a source of inequality. It creates wide gap between the haves and have-nots. The propertied class gets control of the political machinery and uses it for its personal advantage.
- (v) **Economically inadequate:** The system of private property has lost the allegiance of the vast majority of the people. It is regarded with hate and indifference by them. Much of the private property is earned by a person without doing any socially useful work. A number of property owners are absentee owners. They get paid for simply owning the productive instruments rather than for doing any kind of work.

In view of the above evils, the institution of private property has been criticized by socialists who want to establish collective ownership of property. However, there is need for restructuring of the institution of private property and its adjustment to the changing social system.

INSTITUTION OF DIVISION OF LABOUR

Meaning of Division of Labour

By division of labour we mean an arrangement whereby people perform different functions at the same time. Although the term 'division of labour' refers only to labour and is applied in the field of economics, the division of labour in the modern society is not limited simply to labour. It also applies to all the factors of production and exists beyond the purely economic field. There may be three forms of division of labour.

- (i) **Social division of labour:** This means division in occupations. Thus, there are farmers, carpenters, weavers, teachers, priests, soldiers, etc.
- (ii) **Technical division of labour:** This means division of labour within a particular enterprise. Thus, within a factory there are weavers, spinners, designers, accountants, managers, and engineers. Technical division of labour is a marked feature of the modern machine age.
- (iii) **Territorial division of labour:** This is also known as localization of industries. Certain places or regions come to specialize in the making of certain articles; for example, hosiery at Ludhiana, cotton textile at Ahmedabad and Mumbai, jute industry at Kolkata, leather industry at Agra and Kanpur, etc.

Division of labour is based on the principle of co-operation or interdependence. The different persons among whom the work is divided co-operate in the production of a thing; for example, to

make a chair, one group is engaged in making legs, another in making backs, another seats, and still another joins them, and finally, there is a group of workers polishing the chairs. All of them cooperate, and through their cooperation a chair is made.

Social Dimensions of Division of Labour

Division of labour is an inevitable feature of the modern industrial system. It is advantageous in the following ways:

- (i) **The right man in the right place:** Under division of labour, the chance is that each man will get the job for which he is best fitted. There will be no round pegs in square holes.
- (ii) **The worker becomes an expert:** Under division of labour, the worker repeats his task. By constant repetition he is bound to become expert in his task.
- (iii) **Heavy work taken over by machinery:** Division of labour makes it possible for heavy work to be passed on to machinery. Only light work is done by the workers so that there is less strain on their muscles.
- (iv) **Less training required:** As the worker has to do only a part of the job, he needs to learn only that much. Long and costly training is rendered unnecessary.
- (v) **Inventions:** When a man is doing the same work over and over again some new ideas are bound to occur. This leads to many inventions.
- (vi) **Cheaper things:** On account of mass production made possible by division of labour and the use of machinery, cheaper things are turned out. Even poor persons can buy them. Standard of living improves.
- (vii) **Economy in the use of tools:** It is not necessary to provide each worker with a complete set of tools. He needs only a few tools for the job he has to do. These tools are kept continuously employed. This is very economical.
- (viii) **Saving in time:** The worker has no longer to move from one process to another. He is employed on the same process. He therefore, goes on working without loss of time.

The demerits of division of labour are as follows:

- (i) **Monotony:** Doing the same work over and over again without any change produces mental fatigue. Work becomes joyless and monotonous. The quality of work suffers.
- (ii) **Kills the creative instinct:** Since many men contribute to the making of an article, none can say that he made it. His creative instinct is not satisfied. The work gives him no pride and no pleasure, since no worker can claim the product as his own creation.
- (iii) **Loss of skill:** The worker deteriorates in the technical skill. Instead of making the whole article, he is required just to repeat a few simple movements. The skill gradually dies out.
- (iv) **Checks mobility:** The worker is doing only a part of the job. It may not be easy for him to find exactly the same job elsewhere, if he desires a change. In this way, the worker loses mobility.
- (v) **Risk of unemployment:** If the worker is dismissed from one factory, then he may have to search far and wide before he secures a job in which he has specialized. He may be making only

the legs of a chair. It is doubtful if he can get the same job. On the other hand, if he knew how to make the complete chair, his chance of getting a job elsewhere would be brighter.

(vi) **Checks development of personality:** If a man has been making an eighteenth part of a pin, he becomes an eighteenth part of a man. A narrow sphere of work checks proper physical and mental development of the worker.

(vii) **Loss of sense of responsibility:** None can be held responsible for bad production because none makes the complete article. When the thing is bad, everybody tries to shift the responsibility to somebody else.

(viii) **Evils of factory system:** Division of labour give rise to the factory system which is full of evils. It leads to exploitation of women and children and removes the personal factor in production and management.

(ix) **Problem of distribution:** Under division of labour, many persons contribute to the production of an article. They must receive a due share of the product, and it is not easy to determine this share. Division of labour has divided the community into two conflicting groups, that is, capital and labour. The gap between them is daily growing wider. Strikes and lockouts have become a common occurrence in the present day.

(x) **Dependence:** The dependence of one country upon another, which is the necessary consequence of division of labour, proves dangerous in times of war.

Division of labour is no doubt attended with a number of drawbacks, but the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. Division of labour is universal and found in all societies. Division of labour rules not only industry but also agriculture, art, medicine, literature, and government. Large-scale organization is essential to maintain our civilization, and so is the division of labour.

INSTITUTION OF THE CORPORATE BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS

Character of Corporate Organization

The corporate form of private business enterprise is the most important and the largest type of business group. Generally, banking, insurance, manufacture, mercantile enterprise, and air transportation are the leading business occupations that have adopted the corporate form of organization. Under this form of organization the needed capital is supplied by a number of persons who become its shareholders. Each shareholder receives his proportionate share of stock and is liable only on the value of the shares he holds. The general management of the corporation is delegated to a board of directors who choose the general manager—a full time officer of the corporation. Generally, before starting its work, the corporation has to receive a licence from the Government. It is regulated by the Company Act of the country. The workers generally receive a share in the profits of the corporation in proportion to their wages or according to some other scale. The bonuses, by which profits are distributed may be given in cash or combined with a kind of retirement pay, or may be transformed into shares of the same enterprise. The scheme is called profit sharing.

The corporate business enterprise has many merits.

(i) It has eliminated competitive costs and permits the purchase of large quantities of materials at lower prices than the proprietor of the small enterprise can obtain.

- (ii) Such enterprises permit the undertaking of vast enterprises, requiring huge wealth and extending over many years.
- (iii) Goods are provided in large quantities so that the country does not suffer from want of goods.
- (iv) Large units of capital bring about technological changes such as manufacture and installation of automatic machinery, development and application of electric power.
- (v) It creates a spirit of co-operation among citizens.

The corporate business enterprise has some demerits also. Often big business rushes into an orgy of speculation and becomes legalized, gambling on a gigantic scale. Likewise, it may lead to overproduction, causing slump in the market. Large corporate groups become impersonal and ignore their responsibility to the people. They get control over the government through their money power and pollute the democratic process. Some of them develop attitudes of economic superiority, of profitism, of class aloofness, and of competitive shrewdness opposing needed economic reforms.

INSTITUTION FOR PROMOTION OF INTERESTS OF THE OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS

With the functional specialization and interdependence of society, there have grown up numerous and powerful occupational groups. We may distinguish between two types of occupational groups, first, the vocational groups, in the strict sense, which are based on the performance of a specific function such as trade unions and organizations of teachers, doctors, lawyers, artists and so forth; second, the groups that exist to promote the interests of an inclusive group bound together by similarity of status or functions such as chambers of commerce, rotary clubs, federations of labour unions, etc. These groups are so numerous in number that each of them cannot be described separately, though they play very significant roles in present day society. Here we shall limit ourselves to the study of trade unions.

The Trade Unions

Growth of trade unions: The trade union is a phenomenon of the modern industrialized society. It is a group of workers engaged in a particular trade for the purpose of securing better wages, shorter hours of work, and improved conditions of labour. The early trade unions were regarded as being in the nature of a mutiny against their employers and masters, destructive of the discipline necessary to the expansion of trade, and interfering with the right of the employer to do what he liked with his own capital. However, little by little, the truth began to dawn on many minds that the workers had a right to unite in order to be capable of defending themselves against the capitalists and their pressure upon the Government. Thus, in modern times the trade unions are not merely tolerated but also recognized as essential in the economic structure of the country. Their size and number have greatly increased, and now they play a significant role in the determination of wages, working hours, and conditions.

Aims of a Trade Union

The institution of the trade union in India is primarily an economic organization organized for economic struggle. Its essential function is to strengthen the economic status of its members and

improve their working conditions. But in England and America trade union has placed before itself ambitious goals. It has become an integral part of the industrial management. The management has incorporated labour as an intrinsic part of the managerial apparatus rather than as individual hired hands. The unions have gained control or near control in many areas of industrial management.

Methods of a Trade Union

The methods which the trade union adopts for getting its demands accepted are various and varied. First, it believes in collective bargaining, which means that the representatives of the union meet the representatives of the employing concern and settle the terms with them regarding wage scales, hours of work, and other conditions of work. If the method of collective bargaining fails, they may opt for arbitration. Under arbitration, representatives of both the capital and labour are appointed who reach a decision by which both abide. The trade unions generally object to compulsory arbitration. If no decision is reached at arbitration, then the trade union resorts to strikes. The strike is a powerful weapon. It stops production. The consumers are put to difficulties. The world comes to know that a group of workers is on strike and is not being fairly treated by the employer. If the strike occurs in some big, public concern like posts and telegraphs, railways, coal and steel, and the entire social life is paralysed. That is why the Government in India has banned strikes in essential services. In a strike, the workers lay down their tools, stop work, and walk out. If there is apprehension that the employers will bring in other workers to take their places, they resort to picketing whereby members are stationed or walk back and forth in front of the business establishment.

In recent decades, strike is said to have become a menace to the public. It causes scarcity of goods and brings starvation to the door of the poor. The public is put to embarrassing situations. The nation suffers due to a fall in production. Strikes are harmful to the country's interests, but the question is 'how are the workers to get a redress of their grievances in the modern capitalistic age wherein the capitalists wield great influence in the Government?' If labour cannot strike the employers should be forbidden to exercise 'lockout'. The trade union is not interested in stopping the work or paralysing the economic life of the society. What it is interested in is a fair deal for its members at the hand of the employers. It asks for more pay, shorter work hours, and better conditions of work for the same reason that the capitalist always wants more profit and more leisure. If differences between the labour and capital are discussed by their representatives frankly and in a friendly manner and if they have the spirit to accommodate each other not making unreasonable or impracticable demands, the labour-capital problems would be easily solved. The labour problems will never develop if capitalism has the social vision and the willingness to correct its own weakness.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the growth of capitalism and discuss its influence on the present-day society.
2. What are the merits and demerits of capitalism?
3. How would you distinguish between capitalism and industrialization?
4. Describe the advantages and disadvantages of the institution of private property.
5. What are the merits and demerits of division of labour?
6. Write a note on trade unionism.

Power and Political Institutions

10

Among political institutions state is the most powerful institution. It regulates the social relationship of man and is the overall controlling institution of society. Therefore, its study becomes important for a student of sociology.

MEANING OF THE STATE

State has been defined variously by political thinkers. Some of the definitions are as follows:

- (i) 'State is a people organised for law within a definite territory'. —*Wilson*
- (ii) 'State is a territorial society divided into government and subjects claiming within its allotted physical area a supremacy over all other institutions'. —*Laski*
- (iii) 'The marks of an independent state are that the community constituting it is permanently established for a political end, that it possesses a defined territory and that it is independent of external control'. —*Hall*
- (iv) 'The state as a concept of political science and public law, is a community of persons more or less numerous, permanently occupying a definite portion of territory, independent, or nearly so, of external control possessing an organised government to which the great body of inhabitants render habitual obedience'. —*Garner*
- (v) 'State is an association which, acting through law as promulgated by a government endowed to this end with coercive power, maintains within a community territorially demarcated the universal external conditions of social order'. —*MacIver*

(vi) 'State is an organisation which rules by means of a supreme government over a definite territory'.
—Ogburn

From the above definitions we conclude that state consists of four elements, that is, population, territory, government, and sovereignty.

Population: There can be no state without population. Of course, no absolute standard can be laid down regarding the number of people in a state. Modern states vary in size and population as widely as China and India on the one hand, and Monaco and San Marino on the other.

Territory: Just as without population there can be no state, so without a fixed territory no state can exist. It marks it off from the other states and decides its area of authority. Nomadic people cannot be said to constitute a state, although they may have some form of political organization through common subjection to a chief.

Government: Government is the machinery through which the state functions. All the citizens of a state are not part of a government. It includes only those officials and departments who are elected, appointed, or employed to determine, interpret, and carry out the regulations of the state or its subdivisions.

Sovereignty: Sovereignty is the most distinguishing characteristic of the state. Indeed, it is its essential attribute. All the individuals and groups of individuals within the state have to submit to the will of the state. It is internally supreme and externally independent. To use the language of Laski, 'it is by the possession of sovereignty that the state is distinguished from all other forms of human associations'.

On the basis of the above four factors, state may be defined as an association of people inhabiting a territory and living under a sovereign government.

Difference Between State and Society

The following points of difference between state and society are worth remembering:

- (i) In point of time, society is prior to the state. The people lived in society much before the state emerged.
- (ii) State is organized, whereas society may be organized or unorganized. The primitive society was unorganized, but the state is always organized.
- (iii) Society exercises authority largely through customs and persuasion. The state exercises authority through laws and coercion. The state alone can legitimately use force.
- (iv) State is a territorial organization, whereas a society does not occupy any definite territory. A Society may extend to the whole world. It may be international like the Red Cross Society.
- (v) The membership of the state is compulsory, but not so of the society. Man like Robinson Crusoe may, if he so likes, live outside the society.

It may also be noted that society is held together by the state and if it were not so held together, *it* would not exist.

Functions of the State

There is incessant controversy about what the state should do. Political thinkers have from time to time advanced many theories to define the sphere of state activity. On the one hand, there are thinkers

like anarchists, communities, syndicalists who question the very existence of the state and advocate a stateless society. On the other hand, there are absolute thinkers like idealists who regard the state omnipotent and entrust to it every action pertaining to human life. In between these two extreme types of thinking, there are the individualists who hold that government is the best, which governs the least. Thus, there is no unanimity among the political thinkers as to what the state should do.

The state is a limited agency. MacIver has beautifully discussed the entire questions of the thereof state activity in Chapter 5 of his book *The Modern State*. According to MacIver, *the very nature of the state sets a limitation on the functions of the state*. The state has limits to what it would do. The state, as stated above, though universal, is a limited agency. It is limited by the means at its disposal. It is limited by the customs of the community. It is limited by the fear of resistance. And it is limited by the existence of other associations in society whose function it cannot perform or undertake. MacIver says, 'It is needless and futile to concentrate in one agency all the activities of life. Certain tasks the instrument can perform, but badly and clumsily—we do not sharpen our pencils with an axe. Other tasks it cannot perform at all and when it is directed upon them it only ruins the material'.

Thus, there are functions that only the state can perform; there are others that it is wholly incapable of performing; and lastly there are functions for which it is well adapted.

Maintenance of order: The primary function of the maintenance of order in society is the type of function that the state alone can perform. The state is possessed of peculiar attributes which enable it to perform this function, it has the power of life and death over all associations no less than over persons because of its unabated right to make war and peace. It claims the right to settle political disputes by force. In so doing, it elevates political interests to complete supremacy over all other interests. It alone can make rules of universal application. 'It alone can establish rights and obligations which admit of no exceptions It alone can define the areas and limits of subordinate powers. It alone can co-ordinate within one great social framework the various organisations of a society. The state in short, is the guarantor and the guardian of the public order'. Order is not for its own sake, but for the sake of protection and of conservation and development. It is justified only to the extent to which it serves the needs of the community in conformity with and limited by the ideals of the community, particularly by the ideals of justice and liberty. For the maintenance of order, the state performs a number of subsidiary functions like that of regulating and co-ordinating the work of other associations, defining the rights and obligations of citizenship, establishing and controlling means of communication and transportation, etc., formulating specific rights and obligations of persons within the family, within the economic order and within other social relationships, maintaining armies and police and providing for justice.

Conservation and development: Considering the second type of functions, that is, functions for which the state is well adapted, MacIver includes in this category 'the conservation and development of human capacities as well as of economic resources'. The state is well adapted to regulate the exploitation of natural resources in the interest of the present and future generations of the entire community. If the exploitation of natural resources is left in the hands of private individuals, then they will seek their own gain at the cost of mankind, conservation of forests, fisheries, and exploitation of mineral resources are functions that the state should undertake.

The conservation and development of human capacities are no less important than that of the natural resources. The state should provide for education, public parks, museums, playgrounds, and contribute to the development of science, and to the encouragement of art. Although other agencies can perform these tasks, but none so efficiently and on so great a scale, and with such authority as can the state.

Should not control public opinion: Taking up the functions that the state should not undertake, MacIver says, 'The state should not seek to control public opinion, no matter what the opinion may be, provided there is no incitement to break its laws or defy its authority'.

Should not interfere with custom and fashion: The state should not interfere with the customs and fashion directly. MacIver states, 'People will follow eagerly the dictates of fashion proclaimed by some unknown coterie in Paris or London or New York. But were the state to decree changes in themselves so insignificant, it would be regarded as monstrous tyranny; it might even lead to revolution'.

Should not create culture: The state cannot create culture, because culture is the expression of the spirit of people or of an age. Art, literature, and music do not come directly within the purview of the state. 'In all these activities people or a civilization goes its own way'.

It may be emphasized that in recent times there has been a tendency towards the growth of state functions. The welfare state is now a popular ideal. There is now hardly a phase of life in which the state does not participate either as a renderer of services, as an arbiter, or as a controller.

To conclude the sphere of state action is undoubtedly vast, still it is not omniscient. It should refrain from the futile or pernicious effort to do those things that it is unqualified to do and gird itself more resolutely, more nobly to the fulfillment of those functions that it is well qualified to do.

GOVERNMENT

Meaning of Government

Sometimes, a confusion is made between the state and the government, and the two words are used interchangeably. Government is an instrument of the state through which it carries out its purposes. A state is a politically organized and geographically limited body of people that possesses the right to use force. All the citizens of a state are not part of a government. A government includes only those officials and persons who are appointed or elected to determine, interpret, and carry out the regulations of the state. Thus, it has three main organs the *legislative* to determine the laws of the state, the *executive* to carry out these laws, and the *judiciary* to interpret them. The sole purpose of a government is to act as the instrumentality of the state. Its powers and organization are defined by the basic law called 'constitution' of the country. Most states have now written constitutions. The Indian constitution is the ultimate basis for judging the legality of any law a legislative body enacts or any order an executive body issues. The Supreme Court of India has the final power to determine whether laws or executive orders are made in pursuance of the constitution.

Forms of Government

Government may take several forms. In history, there have appeared many forms of governments. Aristotle had given a six-fold classification of governments—three normal and three perverted forms of government. The three normal types of government are monarchy, rule by one person; aristocracy, rule by a few; and polity, rule by many. If these normal forms are perverted, monarchy becomes tyranny, aristocracy becomes oligarchy, and polity becomes democracy. Thus, Aristotle regarded democracy as the worst form of government, but he felt that the potential capacity of the citizens for sound collective judgement could assure the success of this form. After Aristotle, numerous classifications of governments have been proposed by political thinkers, but as pointed by Garner, 'There seems to be no single principle, or criterion, juridical or otherwise, upon which a satisfactory classification of government can be made'.

Today, our attention is drawn towards two major forms: totalitarianism, in which the control is in the hands of one or a few persons and democracy, in which political power is diffused among the

governed by the process of representation. Russia and China are the classic instances of totalitarian form of government. Under totalitarianism, usually, questioning of the ideas and practices of the ruler is not tolerated. Freedom of expression by the press or individual is denied. Obedience is the supreme law which is enforced by the use of police powers.

Democracy is founded upon the principle of popular sovereignty, that is, ultimate power resides in the citizens. An importable principle of democracy is that all the citizens have equal political privileges. Another foundational principle is that the rule of the majority shall prevail; this majority has to be expressed by the citizens either through direct voting or through their elected representatives. A third principle is that the citizens can vote the government out of office if it loses their confidence.

Democracy is based on two basic cultural values of equality and liberty. It has attained a marked popularity in the world, yet it is often criticized for certain defects. The first of these is that the citizens do not fully exercise their rights nor accept their obligations. Voting is a paramount right of the citizens in a democracy, but the citizens do not fully and honestly discharge their obligation to vote. The percentage of the Indian citizens who fulfil this obligation ranges between 40 and 45 per cent. Moreover, voting is on the basis of caste and extraneous considerations. Election campaigns instead of educating the voters become exercise in praising one's own side and condemning the other to the extreme. Voting is so quantitatively and qualitatively poor that the whole process of democratic government is jeopardized.

Another defect lies in leadership. The leaders in a democracy indulge in unscrupulous activities in order to come into power and carry out unethical practices to remain in power. As a consequence, democracy attracts only those people who are unscrupulous or have little knowledge for governmental careers. It is a serious defect of democracy that so much of it is in the hands of poorly qualified persons in the art of government. Political leaders in democracy must be of the people and not of any class, peasantry or industrial, rural, or urban. They should not be dominated by special interests.

Political Parties

Political parties have become necessary adjuncts of government in modern times. They are the instruments whereby candidates are nominated and elected. The ultimate aim of a political party is to capture political power and keep control of the government.

The number of political parties in a state varies from one to many. England and the United States have two-party system. The advantage of this system is its capacity to present more clear-cut issues and fewer candidates instead of a multiplicity of positions on issues and a wide number of candidates. The losing party in this system serves as an effective opposition. France is an example of a state with multiple-party system. Under a multiple-party system, governments change rapidly. The voters are bewildered by a number of viewpoints and the multiplicity of candidates they must assess. One-party system does not allow any opposition or criticism of state policy. The party leaders enjoy monopoly of power, and it is difficult to remove them peaceably. India has a multiple-party system. Defections and counter-defections continue. The political parties in India are 'personality centred' rather than 'policy centred'. More than forty parties operate at the national and local levels. There is frequent competition and factional conflicts within the parties. Sometimes, inner cliques or 'rings' develop.

Voting: Election or voting is a distinctive feature of a modern democratic polity. One of the main functions of political parties is to contest elections. Their first function is to select suitable candidates for party ticket and assist such candidates to win the elections. Voting is the process of

electing representatives to a body representing the people. It is these elected representatives, who in a democracy, perform decision-making functions. For the successful working of any democracy, a healthy system of voting is a *sine qua non*. The right to vote is a basic right guaranteed by the fundamental law of the country. Universal adult suffrage is recognized to be the most democratic system of franchise. In India, every man and woman of 18 years of age is entitled to be enrolled as a voter.

Voting behaviour: Voting behaviour depends on several factors and differs from place to place. Generally speaking, educated and urban population is seen more involved in elections, whereas the illiterate and rural population shows its apathy. Some voters are committed to a particular party, whereas some take decision at the time of election. In India, voting behaviour has undergone tremendous changes. Since independence, the level of political awareness is constantly rising among all segments of population.

Political mobilization is taking place at a faster speed in rural areas. There is only a minor difference in the turn-out rate between urban and rural areas.

The voting behaviour is affected by the following factors:

(i) **Religion:** India, since ancient days, has been predominantly a country inhabited by different religions. Despite the fact that the constitution declares India to be a secular state, no political party including the Congress (I) has ever ignored it. The religious structure of a constituency is kept in mind while selecting the candidates or appealing for votes. During election campaigns, the religious sentiments are exploited to the maximum. Voters are attracted to the candidates belonging to their own religion. The Ayodhya issue has been exploited by all the political parties for the politics of votes.

(ii) **Caste:** Elections in India are contested very much on the basis of casteism. The voters are asked to vote for the candidate of their caste. Casteism is maintained by the elected leaders after the elections are over. Political parties sponsor only that candidate from a particular constituency whose caste is the most numerous in that area. In spite of their professions to the contrary, the Indian politicians including the political tacticians of the Congress and the CPI give a great deal of attention to caste considerations. 'While caste itself as a social institution is undergoing radical changes on account of the influence of western education and the development of urban life, it nevertheless, continues to play an important role in determining the choice of voters from among the various candidates.

(iii) **Community:** Community feeling is another factor influencing the voters. Community feelings had led the Telugu people to demand a separate state of Andhra; likewise, hilly people in Uttar Pradesh asked for Uttarakhand state. The voters of a particular community, say Punjabi, vote for their community candidates not because he is the best but because he belongs to their own community. The candidates also make appeals in the name of community, pointing out the injustices being suffered by their community and take pledge to ameliorate their condition. All politicians have been exploiting community sentiments since the first general elections in India.

(iv) **Class:** It is one of the factors influencing voting behaviour in the regions where the electorate is mostly composed of voters belonging to working class. In big industrial town like Mumbai, Ahmedabad, and Kanpur a trade union leader wins election on the basis of class considerations. The workers aspire that their leader should be elected to fight their cause in the legislature. A number of our legislators are persons who have at one time or other been in the forefront of Trade Union movement.

(v) **Money:** Money perhaps plays the greatest role during elections. Crores of rupees are spent by the political parties in their bid to capture political power. A lot of money is spent in election campaign and helicopters are hired to reach the voters in far flung constituencies. Big industrialists and business magnates contribute a lot of money for election funds. Votes are purchased through payment in cash or kind. As a majority of voters are poor people belonging to lower castes, they are easily swayed away by money.

(vi) **Charisma:** The personality of the party leader also influences the choice of voters. Thus, the Congress won several elections in the name of Nehru and Indira Gandhi.

(vii) **Accidental factors:** Sometimes, some accidental factors like excesses during Emergency or the murder of Rajiv Gandhi influences the voters.

To conclude, voters in India seldom vote after objective assessment of the comparative merits of various candidates or scientific analysis of the election manifestos; they are mostly influenced in their choice by non-rational factors like those of religion, caste, and community, etc.

PRESSURE GROUPS

Pressure groups play a vital role in the process of government. A pressure group is generally an association of persons with a common economic interest who try to influence governmental action in legislation, administrative procedures, or judicial decisions. The Chamber of Commerce, the Trade Unions, the Scheduled Caste Federation, Kissan Sammelan are instances of pressure groups. They come into being to make the government responsive to the interests of particular groups of citizens. In the Indian political system, pressure groups play conspicuous part in the political process as a whole. Their role in elections is conspicuous. At different levels of electoral process in nomination, canvassing and campaigning these groups take cudgels on behalf of their favourites and get them a coveted place in the legislature and later in the cabinet. They have a sizeable block of voters in their pockets and also contribute to the financial sinews of the party concerned. The members elected with the support of a pressure group are compelled to do their biddings with far greater strength than the biddings of their party. The pressure groups make use of all their resources and persuasive forms to procure political decisions and administrative actions of their choice. They also influence public opinion through mass media at their disposal. In a democracy, their role is greater than in a totalitarian government. The party in power in a totalitarian political system does not recognize the existence of such particularistic entities and even regards their emergence as anathema.

INSTITUTION OF POWER

Meaning of Power

Kingsley Davis defines power as 'the determination of the behaviour of others in accordance with one's own ends'. According to Sheriff and Sheriff, 'Power denotes the relative weights of behaviour by member in a group structure'. Weber has defined power as 'the probability that one factor (individual or group) within a social relationship is in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests'. He goes on to say, 'All conceivable qualities of a person and all conceivable combination of circumstances may put him in a position to impose his will in a given situation'. These definitions show that power is a broad concept. In general, it means

the ability to get one's wishes carried out despite opposition, if any. As put by Green, 'Power is simply the extent of capability to control others so that they will do what they are wanted to do'. Lundberg and others also say, 'By power we mean the extent to which persons or groups can limit or regulate the alternative courses of action open to other persons or groups, with or without their consent'. Similarly, R. H. Tawney states that, "Power is the capacity of an individual or group of individuals, to modify the conduct of other individuals or groups in the manner which he desires'. According to MacIver, By the possession of power we mean the capacity to centralise, regulate or direct the behaviour of persons'.

From the legal point of view power has been classified into (i) Legitimate and (ii) Illegitimate. Legitimate power may be of three kinds, that is, legal power, traditional power, and charismatic power. Legal power is the power given by the law and the constitution of the country; for example, the power of the army or the police. The sources of traditional powers are the customs and traditions of the society; for example, the power of the parents or the teachers. The source of charismatic power lies in some peculiar quality; for example, the power of religious 'guru' like Sai Baba over his followers. Illegitimate power is one not recognized by the society; for example, the power of dacoits.

INSTITUTION OF AUTHORITY

The concept of authority is closely linked with the concept of power. Authority means legitimate power. Hamuel Arendt portrays authority as power based on consent. Following are the definitions of authority:

1. 'Authority is often defined as power, the power to command obedience'. —*MacIver*
2. 'Authority is the power to make decisions which guide the actions of another. It is relationship between two individuals—one superior and the other subordinate'. —*Herbert A. Simon*
3. 'Legitimate power is often called authority'. —*Robert A. Dahl*
4. 'Authority is the capacity innate or acquired for exercising ascendancy over a group. It is manifestation of power and implies obedience to it'. —*Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*

Sources of Authority

According to Max Weber, there are three sources of political authority, viz., traditional, charismatic, and legal.

- (a) When a continuous use of political power or its exercise on the basis of customs and traditions leads to emergence of right to rule it is known as traditional authority.
- (b) When the right to rule springs from the dynamism of a political leader, it is termed as charismatic authority. —*Tclweru*
- (c) When the right to rule emerges from the constitutional rules, it is termed as legal rational authority.

It will not be out of place to point out that in ancient times, king and his advisors were the fountain of authority. In democracy, authority is hierarchical. The official on the top of hierarchy enjoys the maximum authority. According to Peter Oadjuar, 'Power structure or systems are usually hierarchical

in form with those at the top normally bearing more power than those at the lower level, since decisions made and enjoyed at the top of the pyramid have more widespread effect than those made further down'.

The Limits of Authority

Authority is always subject to limits. If the limit is violated by those who possess authority, the subordinate can ignore or oppose it. In the words of Merriam, 'Leader or the man in authority is like the bus driver. He is allowed to use his discretion in the selection of the road, but he must take his passengers in the desired direction and if he does not they leave him on the way and choose their own path'.

Authority vs. power: Power and authority are considered synonymous, but in actual fact both differ. In the words of Lasswell, 'Power becomes authority when it is legalized. Capacity to issue orders is power, whereas authority is exhibited at a point where decisions are taken. The main points of difference are as follows:

- (a) Authority is always legitimate, whereas power is both legitimate and illegitimate.
- (b) Authority is based on consent, whereas power is based on force. According to Eric Row 'Power like authority is a means of favourably affecting the behaviour of another, but by might not right'.
- (c) By nature, authority is more democratic than power, as it is always legitimate and based on popular support.
- (d) Authority reflects the ability of man to get his proposals accepted, but power is the capacity of man to change the behaviour of others.

Despite these minor differences the concepts of power and authority are most vital and inseparable elements of politics. They have become central to the study of politics.

BUREAUCRACY

Meaning of Bureaucracy

The growth of bureaucracy is a major social trend of modern society. It is found in both public and private organizations. Literally, the term bureaucracy means administration by bureaus. Bureau is an administrative unit. Some of the definitions of bureaucracy are as follows:

- (i) According to Max Weber, 'Bureaucracy is a system of administration characterised by expertness, impartiality and the absence of humanity'.
- (ii) According to Willoughby, 'Bureaucracy is any personnel system where the employees are classified in a system of administration composed of a hierarchy of sections, divisions, bureaus, departments and the like'.

A bureaucracy is a pyramid of officials who conduct rationally the work of an organization. Max Weber has given the following characteristics of bureaucracy:

- (a) A hierarchical principle in all bureaucratic organizations.
- (b) A reliance on written documents, file records, and the other apparatus of modern office management.

(c) The formulation of general rules or practices for the management of the office.

Thompson gave the following characteristics of bureaucracy:

(a) **Specialization:** Specialization means that each task is assigned to an expert.

(b) **Merit appointment:** The appointments are made on merit basis without any personal favour.

(c) **Job Tenure:** The officer holds office for a fixed tenure.

(d) **Formalistic impersonality:** A set of formal rules and procedures are followed to ensure impartiality.

(e) **A chain of command:** There is a hierarchy of command. Each lower office is under the control and supervision of a higher one.

To sum up, a bureaucracy has the following features:

- (i) Differentiation of functions.
- (ii) Technical Specialization.
- (iii) Hierarchical organization and discipline.
- (iv) Objectivity of method.
- (v) Adherence to rules.
- (vi) Maintenance of files and records.
- (vii) Appointment and not election of staff.
- (viii) Fixed salary scales.
- (ix) Separation of the official from the ownership of the means of production or administration.
- (x) Political neutrality.

Social Consequences of Bureaucracy

Max Weber called bureaucratic administration the most rational type of administration. It has brought in some good consequences, which are as follows:

- (i) It lays stress on technical knowledge.
- (ii) It is dominated by the principle of appointment.
- (iii) It is subject to strict discipline.
- (iv) Specialization of functions increases administrative efficiency.
- (v) There are well laid out rules, which are uniformly applied without any favour.
- (vi) A bureaucratic administration is objective oriented.
- (vii) There is impartiality and objectivity in administration.

Criticism or Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy has largely succeeded in reaching the objectives for which it was established, yet it is still subject to criticism. It has led to some evil social consequences, which are as follows:

(i) **Depersonalization:** Bureaucracy is looked upon with ridicule. Civil servants are contemptuously called 'bureaucrats'. The procedure becomes more important than results. Everything goes 'through proper channel'. There is no human touch anywhere. It is easy for a bureaucrat to defend himself by citing the regulations and his duties as a public official. The depersonalized character of bureaucratic administration tends to create ill will and resentment.

(ii) **Formalism:** Another great defect of bureaucracy is its excessive adherence to formalism. There are set rules and printed forms. The language and the forms of official letters, the method of making note, sending it upwards or downwards all are fixed beforehand. Each officer acts mechanically. All this kills the sense of judgement and initiative of the official.

(iii) **Red tape:** Red tapism is a great vice of bureaucratic administration. There is blind attachment to rules, which in some cases are outdated and old. The bureaucrats consider the forms of business more important than its substance. The bureaucrats have a mania for regulations and formal procedure. They are indifferent towards the convenience of the citizens.

(iv) **Inflexibility:** Bureaucracy is generally inflexible in its attitude. It keeps on following its old procedures and does not react to the changing social and political climate of the country. Routine procedures breed inflexibility. The official becomes oriented towards techniques rather than people.

(v) **Division of responsibility:** It is another irritating aspect of bureaucracy. No official can take a decision without consulting several officers at different levels of hierarchy. The citizen is incapable to find the person whom he can pin down for a decision. He goes from table to table and gets lost in the circumlocution office.

(vi) **Creation of a new social class:** Bureaucracy has created a new social class that consists of white-collar workers. They assume an excessive sense of self-importance. They remain aloof from the common man and are indifferent to his feeling or convenience. They have their separate clubs and mode of life. Ramsay Muir was very critical of the growth of the power of bureaucracy. A bureaucrat becomes a soulless automation. He develops an authoritative attitude.

In short, bureaucracy has produced numerous social consequences. Professor W. A. Robson has summarized the defects of bureaucracy in these words, 'The maladies from which bureaucracy most frequently suffers are an excessive sense of self-importance on the part of officials or an undue idea of the importance of their office and indifference towards the feeling or the convenience of the individual citizen; an obsession with the binding and inflexible authority of departmental decisions, precedents, arrangement or forms, regardless of how kindly or with what justice they may work in individual cases, a mania for regulations and formal procedure, a preoccupation with the activities of particular units of administration and an inability to consider the government as a whole, a failure to recognise the relation between the governors and the governed as an essential part of democratic process'.

In India, the bureaucratic machinery has grown in size, but not in quality. It has become politicized and corrupt. There is a close nexus between the politician, bureaucrat, and criminal. But this only emphasizes the need for the rational organization of bureaucracy. The system should be so built

as to avoid unnecessary delay, red-tapism, and formalism and to create among the functionaries a sense of participation in and identification with it. Checks should be devised that bureaucracy functions like true servants of the people.

QUESTIONS

1. Define state and discuss its main elements.
2. How does state differ from society?
3. Discuss the functions of the state.
4. Define government and discuss its main forms.
5. Discuss the role of political parties in a democracy.
6. Write a detailed note on voting behaviour of the electorate and the factors affecting it.
7. Define pressure groups and their role in politics of a country.
8. Give the meaning of power and its classification.
9. Define authority and discuss its various sources and limits.
10. Define bureaucracy and discuss its social consequences.
11. Discuss the role of bureaucracy in government, its merits and demerits.

MEANING OF RELIGION

It is not an easy task to give a definition of religion that will satisfy everyone. Writers have defined religion in various ways. According to Ogburn, 'Religion is attitude towards superhuman powers'. James G. Frazer considered religion as a belief in 'powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature of human life'. Arnold W. Green defines religion as 'a system of beliefs and symbolic practices and objects governed by faith rather than by knowledge, which relates man to an unseen supernatural realm beyond the known and beyond the controllable. According to Malinowski, 'Religion is a mode of action as well as system of belief and a sociological phenomenon as well as a personal experience'.

Thus, there are numerous definitions of religion given by thinkers according to their own conceptions. As a matter of fact the forms in which religion expresses itself vary so much that it is difficult to agree upon a definition. Some maintain that religion includes a belief in the supernatural or mysterious powers and that it expresses itself in overt activities designed to deal with those powers. Some regard religion as belief in the immortality of the soul. While it is possible to define religion as belief in God or some supernatural powers, it is well to remember that there can also be a godless religion as Buddhism. The Buddhists reject belief in the immortality of the soul and the life in the hereafter. Sumner and Keller asserted that, 'Religion in history from the earliest to very recent days has not been a matter of morality at all but of rites, ritual observance and ceremony'.

In sociology, the word religion is used in a wider sense than that used in religious books. A recent sociological work defines religion as 'those institutionalized systems of beliefs, symbols, values, and practices that provides groups of men with solutions to their questions of ultimate being'. A common characteristic found among all religions is that they represent a complex of emotional feelings and

attitudes towards mysteries and perplexities of life. As such religion comprises (i) system of attitudes, beliefs, and symbols that are based on the assumption that certain kinds of social relations are sacred or morally imperative and (ii) a structure of activities governed or influenced by these systems.

According to Anderson and Parker, each religion consists of four components.

(i) **Belief in supernatural forces:** Each religion believes in some supernatural forces—powers outside of man and his observable world. These powers are believed to influence human conditions and events. Some call them forces of God, some call them gods, yet others leave them nameless.

(ii) **Man's adjustment to supernatural powers:** Since man is dependent on these powers, he must adjust himself to them. Consequently, each religion provides for some outward acts like prayers, hymns, kirtans, yagyas, and other forms of reverence. Failure to perform these acts is regarded as sinful.

(iii) **Acts defined as sinful:** Each religion defines certain acts as sinful. Such acts destroy man's harmonious relationship with god or the gods and he suffers the wrath of God.

(iv) **Method of salvation:** Man needs some method by which he can regain harmony with the gods through removal of guilt. Thus, Buddhism provides for Nirvana, and Hinduism provides salvation in the release from the bondage of Karma.

FORMS OF RELIGION

Religion seeks to interpret and control man's relations to the forces of his physical and social environment. These forces are thought to be under the control of some supernatural power. The attempt to interpret man's relations to these forces led to several forms of religion like superstition, animism, magic, ceremonialism. A brief explanation of these forms is necessary in order to clarify the concept of religion.

Superstition: Superstition is the conviction that something shall happen owing to the causes utterly disproportionate to the event; for example, the belief that there would be some trouble in the journey or pain at its end because a cat has crossed the path, or that there will come some calamity because a star has fallen from the sky, or that Saturday is not a good day for sending a woman to her husband's house, or number 13 is inauspicious. The Hindu religion is full of such superstitions.

Animism: Animism is a belief in the spirits of the dead. It is a name given to the theory of spirits that are supposed to be dwelling in certain places or things so that they can communicate with men. Very commonly the view is held that spirits visit a man in sleep. Sometimes a man is said to have heard the spirit speak from a corner of the house. If Hindus do not feed their ancestors, their spirits will not feel happy in the other world. To feed the ancestors a fifteen-day festival called 'shradh' is celebrated among Hindus.

Magic: Magic is a system of manipulation by which an effect is sought through the action of unseen powers. The magician attempts to control the powers by magical practices not validated by scientific knowledge, such as rubbing a stone on the diseased part of the body to cure it, walking on fire without being burnt, eating glass pieces without shedding any blood, turning a piece of charcoal into a rupee, making a body disappear, getting a purse out of the pocket of a man without going near or about him.

Ceremonialism: Ceremonialism is a collective practice usually associated with religion. Thus, praying, feasting, dancing, singing, kneeling are examples of ceremonialism or ritualism. Like the

belief itself it comes to have a quality of sacredness attached to it. Hinduism lays great stress on rituals. At the time of birth, marriage, and death in a Hindu family many ritual ceremonies are observed.

Religion pervades practically in all the societies, but there is an endless diversity of the forms of religious belief and practice. The form that it assumes in a society is determined by a host of complex factors. Different societies emphasize different elements of religion. Some assign greater importance to ceremonialism. Thus, Hindu society attaches great importance to ceremonies. The Mantras must be recited at the time of birth, marriage, and death whether or not one understands their meaning.

SOCIAL ROLE OF RELIGION

Although religion is a highly personal thing, yet it has a social aspect and social role to play. It has been a powerful agency in the society and performed many important social functions.

(i) **Explains individual suffering:** Man does not live by knowledge alone. He is an emotional creature as well. Religion serves to soothe the emotions of man in times of his suffering and disappointments and contributes to the integration of his personality. In this world, man often suffers disappointment and frustration even in the midst of all hopes and achievements. The things for which he strives are in some measure always denied to him. When human hopes are blighted, when all that was planned and striven for has been swept away, man naturally wants something to console and compensate him.

(ii) **A source of social cohesion:** Religion is the ultimate source of social cohesion. The primary requirement of society is the common possession of social values by which individuals control the actions of self and others and through which society is perpetuated. These social values are never scientifically demonstrated, but emanate from religious faith. Religion is the foundation on which these values rest. Science and technology cannot create these values. Children should obey their parents, should not tell a lie or cheat, women should be faithful to men, people should be honest and virtuous are some of the social values which maintain social cohesion. It is religion that asks man to renounce unsocial activities and requires him to accept limitations upon his wants and desires. Love and service are two great teachings of religion. All religions preach love and honesty to the followers.

(iii) **Social welfare:** Religion has served humanity through the spreading of education. The scriptures Ramayan, Bhagvad Gita, Quran, and Bible are great literary works and storehouse of knowledge. It has also emphasized benevolence and forbearance. It also created the habit of charity among the people who opened 'many charitable institutions like hospitals, rest-houses, and temples to help the needy and the poor.

(iv) **Agency of social control:** Religions emphasize, in one form or another, the consequences resulting from behaviour. Rewards or punishments follow approved or disapproved actions. Religions support the folkways and customs by placing the power sanctions of the supernatural behind them. They make certain acts not only offences against society but against God as well. Disobedience brings condemnation from the spiritual forces. In its positive form, religion provides a model for living. It upholds certain ideals and values. The believer imbibes these ideals and values in his life. Religion can help our youth become moral, disciplined, and socialized citizens of the society.

(v) **Religion controls and affects economic life also:** Max Weber was of the view that religion also influences the economic system of the believers. Thus, according to him, capitalism grew in the protestant nations like England, USA, and Holland. It did not grow in Italy and Spain where the people are Catholics. The Hindus lay great stress on spiritual progress than on material progress. Hence, materialism could not grow in India.

(vi) **Promotion of literature:** Besides, religion has also contributed to the growth of literature, art, and music. The desire to laud and please gods had led people to extol them in song, sculpture, painting, and architecture. Some of the world's most beautiful monuments are buildings erected to the glory of the gods. Vast temples like Tirupati and Mahabaleshwar, mosques like Jama Masjid, cathedrals like Roman Church, and artistic images of gods and goddesses like Vishnu and Durga express man's desire to portray his conceptions of the supernatural in aesthetic and inspiring ways. The sacred writings stimulate appreciation of beautiful prose and poetry. Religious themes are the inspiration for some of man's finest paintings, and the desire to sing praises has led to the creation of some of the world's finest music.

Dysfunctions of religion: Religion is the supremely integrating and unifying force in human society. But at the same time it has also proved to be a catastrophic force. Marx called religion 'the opiate of the masses', which has kept them in degrading subjection. The masses are taught to submit to their poor lot in life and remain in that station of life in which God wanted them to be. The history of religion is mostly the history of persecution. Wars have been fought in its name. It has degenerated in dogmatism and bigotry, denying freedom of thought. It has favoured war and poverty, exploitation and fatalism, prostitution and idleness and advocated such practices as cannibalism, suicide, slavery, untouchability, and incest. There is hardly a vice that religion has not at one time or another actively supported. It suppressed the democratic aspirations of the common people. In India, the country was partitioned in the name of religion, and even today religion in the garb of communalism stands to threaten the national solidarity. The Ayodhya issue has revived the memories of 1947. The Mandir–Masjid dispute has engulfed the nation into communal riots. The political parties exploit the religious card to create vote-banks. The sane leaders have surrendered to religious militancy. Genuine religion has disappeared. It has been commercialized and politicized. Sectarian organizations have come up which flourish by preaching hatred for 'others'. Religious leaders also have entered the play-field of politics and the places of religion—temples and mosques, have become the arena of political manipulations.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the nature of religion comparing it with supernatural and animism.
2. Explain the concept of animism and describe the different beliefs connected with it.
3. Describe the social role of religion.
4. Religion is the opiate of the masses. Explain and evaluate the disservice of religion to society.
5. Discuss the various beliefs associated with magic in society.
6. Write a note on recent trends in religion.

MEANING OF EDUCATION

According to Aristotle, to educate means 'to develop man's faculties, especially his mind so that he may be able to enjoy the contemplation of supreme truth, beauty and goodness'. Summer defined education as the attempt to transmit to the child the mores of the groups, so that he can learn, 'what conduct is approved and what disapproved, how he ought to behave in all kinds of cases, what he ought to believe and reject'. According to Anderson, 'Education is the social process by which an individual learns the things necessary to fit him to the life of his society'.

Education is a process of transmission of social heritage. In its broadest sense, education may be defined as the process whereby the social heritage of a group is passed on from one generation to another and whereby the child learns the rules of social behaviour. It is a conscious training of the young for the later adoption of adult roles. It is synonymous with socialization. In a limited sense, education is training by a body of instructors within the institutional pattern of the schools, colleges, and universities.

THE OBJECTIVES OF EDUCATION

Education has a great social significance. Since earliest times, philosophers have devoted to it a good deal of attention, defining its nature and objectives. In modern times too, eminent educational philosophers and outstanding teachers have accorded education a high place in their works. Following Arnold, the objectives of education may be briefly described as follows:

- (i) **To complete the socialization process:** The first and the foremost objective of education is 'to complete the socialization process'. Modern family has failed to perform the role of a

socializing agency. Now, it is felt that it is the school's business to instill in the child the qualities of honesty, fair play, consideration of others, and a sense of right and wrong.

(ii) Transmission of cultural heritage: Education should aim at the transmission of cultural heritage, that is, the knowledge of the past, its art, literature, philosophy, religion, and music. Through history text books and indirectly through celebration of patriotic holidays the child is acquainted with his cultural heritage.

(iii) Reformation of attitudes: Education should aim at the reformation of attitudes wrongly formed by the children already. Within his family group, the child often comes to absorb a host of attitudes, beliefs, loyalties, and prejudices. To reform these beliefs and prejudices is the function of education.

(iv) Occupational placement: Education should enable one to do a productive task and earn enough for himself and his family.

(v) To instill the sense of competition: The school's main emphasis is upon personal competition. Each child is compared with his companions by the percentage of marks or division. The school not only ranks all those within its walls, but also sifts its raw material, passing some and rejecting others on the basis of intelligence and diligence. It thus acts as a social selector.

The Radhakrishnan Report on University Education in India adds, 'The purpose of all education, it is admitted by thinkers of East and West, is to provide a coherent picture of the universe and integrated way of life'. And in fact if education can achieve this objective then any product of our educational institutions could well play his role in life and help in building a better world.

Herein, it may also be remarked that education is sometimes used as a medium of indoctrination. In the communist countries, the students are taught lessons in communism, while in Islamic countries they are taught Islamic fundamentalism. In India, although the old forms of social stratification based on caste are coming to an end, yet social stratification is making its appearance in a new form. The public school system has given birth to a new class—the upper class children. An 'elite' class of children taught western style of living has come up.

Education has accelerated the rate of social mobility. An educated youth finds no avenues open in the village and consequently migrates to the city where he gets employed in a lucrative job that enhances his social status. The modern society is more 'open' than the traditional one, and one of the reasons is education explosion.

CHALLENGES TO EDUCATION

Within the context of our civilization, education faces numerous challenges. First, it faces the problem of the curriculum and the methods of executing it. What shall be taught at the school and college level? What subjects a student will be required to offer and what contents will be included in each subject? We find our universities and boards changing the syllabi of different classes off and on under the pressure of political and other extraneous considerations, leading to confusion and sometimes even to repetition.

Second, the present education sharpens only the memory of the students. It does not develop his physical and spiritual faculties. To be meaningful, education should attempt to develop body, mind, and heart.

Third, the educationists have to find an answer to the following issues:

(a) To what extent shall formal education follow the lead of the social education movement, which attempts to inculcate values through indoctrination, and even propaganda?

- (b) Does formal education include extracurricular or co-curricular activities on the campus?
- (c) Can we bypass the moral education from our formal education?
- (d) To what extent should the state control the management and aid the finances of an educational institution and prescribe what is to be taught at the school and higher levels?
- (e) Should the so-called 'public schools' be abolished to implement the theory of democracy in education?
- (f) What should be the place of examinations in testing the achievements of the students and what should be the system of examination?

Fourth, certain subjects are never brought to the attention of the child on the plea that they are beyond his comprehension. These 'tabooed' subjects are taught at the secondary or college level. What happens to the child who does not go through college? Does the exclusion of certain subjects from the school curriculum not handicap his growth as a full man?

Fifth, what should be the place of vocational education in our system of education? Should education concern itself with turning out expert craftsmen or should it lay emphasis on liberal education?

Last, how can education preserve our culture and also train people to explore and introduce new values?

CRISIS IN INDIAN EDUCATION

Defects during British rule: There are various defects in our present system of education. In spite of some reforms introduced here and there in the educational system, the hard fact is that the system as a whole remains as we inherited it from our British rulers. The British designed the educational system as means of establishing British imperialism firmly in India. No effort was made by them to keep it in harmony with the social and cultural conditions in the country or to make it an instrument for inculcating intelligent citizenship among the people. No emphasis was laid on technical and vocational education. It did not fit the young men for practical life, who often found themselves incapable to face the struggle for existence. In addition to it, even the literary education was so expensive that it became the more or less exclusive privilege of the well-to-do. There were no good schools and colleges in the rural areas. It neglected the education for women and was notoriously examination-ridden. The salaries of the teachers were low and they did not enjoy any social status.

The defects continue: These defects still exist in the educational system of the country. Perhaps some more defects have added themselves to the system. There are too few schools, too few teachers, too obsolete equipment, and too few buildings. Every year hundreds of students are refused admission to the schools and colleges. The problem of unemployment among the educated ones has assumed serious proportions. The engineers and other technically trained persons are idle in the country. There is no planning of education in conformity with the political and economic structure of the country. The emphasis on literary education continues, syllabi are outdated, examination system is the same; the lot of the teachers has not improved and the students are no better equipped and disciplined to face the hard realities of life. Recently, they have taken even to violence, burning buses, pulling down the telegraph and telephone poles, putting 'gheraos', manhandling the teachers, indulging in mass-copying during examination, and forcing the authorities to close down the institutions. Even the introduction of NCC or NSS has not made them better-disciplined citizens. Politics has made deep inroads into the educational structures.

The real crisis: However, the crisis in modern education does not result from the low salary of the teachers, the poor buildings, obsolete equipment, and too few schools. The crisis results from the school's inability to decide what it is going to do with the students and what to teach them. In other words, it is uncertainty and ambivalence of purpose that create the crisis. Modern education lives in the past and has not kept pace with the changes that have overtaken our civilization. Our schools have failed to give due consideration to the content of education needed to fit the masses to operate in a democracy. Instead of devising a curriculum suitable to democratic objectives and national needs, our education has permitted the teachers to continue with a type of instruction and a method of examination that had been worked out in the nineteenth century for the purpose of forming a class of clerks, 'Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, opinion, words, and intellect'. The content of education is still oriented towards the past. There is little direct connection between what the boy reads at the school and the problems that press to the forefront of his attention in finding the girl to marry and making a place for himself in the society. The schools are overcrowded because we have little place for the youngsters to go elsewhere. It is strange to see that students in India want more holidays than days of instruction. Rather than preparing students for society, it alienates them from it. Formal education has generated urban values, competitiveness, and consumerism. Although it is claimed that education is a mobility multiplier and an equalizer, in actual practice it legitimizes inequality and creates new class differences. Rather than leading to a dynamic transformation of society, the present education system actively works for the maintenance of the status quo. Finally, the educational system of today provides only a routine information package. As said, education is not purposeful if it aims at imparting 'knowledge plenty and wisdom scanty'. Learning without wisdom is a load of books on an ass's back.

Post-independence efforts to reform educational system: Since the attainment of freedom, a definite trend towards reformation of educational system is discernible. From time to time committees have been appointed to probe into the defects and suggest means for improvement. The Mudaliar Report on Secondary Education (1952) stressed the need of training Indians in the democratic way of life. The Report reads 'Citizenship in a democracy is a very exacting and challenging responsibility for which every citizen has to be carefully trained. It involves many intellectual, social and moral qualities which cannot be expected to grow of their own accord'. Similarly, the Radhakrishnan Report on University Education emphasized that the purpose of education was to provide a coherent picture of the universe and an integrated way of life. On the basis of these reports, some reforms were introduced in the educational system of the country; for example, the introduction of higher secondary scheme along with three-year degree course, and the opening of more and more vocational and technical schools and colleges. The Education Commission, 1964, reviewed the existing system of education— primary, secondary, university, and technical, in all its aspects. In the main, the commission stressed that Indian education needs a drastic reconstruction, almost a revolution. The commission has said that there is need to bring about major improvement in the effectiveness of primary education: to introduce work-experience as an integral element of general education, to vocationalize secondary education, to improve the quality of teachers at all levels and to provide teachers in sufficient strength to strengthen centres of advanced study and strive to attain higher international standards, to lay special emphasis on the combination of teaching and research, and to pay particular attention to education and research in agriculture and allied sciences. The commission has stated that if education is to develop adequately in India, educational expenditure in the next 20 years should rise.

In 1986, the Parliament adopted the National Policy on Education prepared under the leadership of Sh. Rajiv Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India. In order to implement the national policy, a

programme of action was prepared for the guidance of policy executors. The national policy has laid emphasis on elimination of disparities in the educational system, improvement in the quality of school education, involvement of the community with the educational process, reorientation of the whole system to promote women's equality, and made special provisions for the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other educationally disadvantaged sections, for the minorities, the physically and mentally handicapped, and for the areas that need special attention. It has also given priority to effective universalization of elementary education, eradication of illiteracy and skill development in the 15–35 year age group, vocationalization of education and preparation of the manpower needed for the developmental needs, improvement in quality at all levels, and scientific and technological research.

The National Policy on Education was of course a laudable effort to meet the new challenges of national development. But it too, like previous policies, failed to make any impressive dent in the education system. Actually, what ails the Indian educational system is the lack of proper planning, efficient administration, and effective implementation. There is no dearth of suggestions for the solution of defects in our education system; what is required is a determined political will to implement the various reforms suggested by different committees and commissions. It must be clearly recognized that without education no progress is possible. The nations that have 100 per cent literacy are great, glorious, rich, and powerful. The countries that are world leaders in education are also international leaders in progress and prosperity. We want better men, more educated women, and still more educated children to make the nation great. As Baker said, 'He who opens a school, closes a prison'. At present, India is spending only 2 per cent of its national income on education. Many eminent educationists have said that the education budget should be raised to 6 per cent of our national income. The education budget is a country's barometer of its dynamism, wealth, and power.

The Eighth plan laid emphasis on universalization of primary education in the 6–14 year age group, promotion of adult literacy to achieve 80 per cent literacy among the population in the 15–40 year age group, establishment of secondary schools in unserved areas and Navodaya Vidyalayas in all districts, improvement of teacher education facilities, consolidation and strengthening of college and university education, and creation of teaching and research facilities in areas of emerging technologies. While some steps have been taken, much remains to be done. Actually, what is required is a bold and determined effort on the part of all concerned—rulers, administrators, teachers, students, and society—to make education more meaningful and purposeful. And in the absence of such effort, education in India has failed to serve as a catalyst of human social development.

QUESTIONS

1. What do you understand by education? Describe its objectives.
2. What are the main defects in the Indian system of education?
3. What efforts, if any, have been made in India to reform the system of education?
4. 'The teacher is the soul of education'. Discuss the statement in connection with the position of the teachers in India.
5. Describe the contents of New Education Policy. Has it made any dent in the education system?
6. Critically examine the present system of education in India.

Unit 4 Social Stratification

13

Social Stratification

If we glance at the society around us, we find that it is heterogeneous in nature. Here are the rich, there the poor; here are the industrialists, there the peasantry; here are the rulers, there the sweepers. Everywhere society is divided into various classes—economic, social, political, and religious.

MEANING OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

The process by which individuals and groups are ranked in a more or less enduring hierarchy of status is known as stratification. According to Raymond W. Murray, 'social stratification is a horizontal division of society into "higher" and "lower" social units'. Every society is divided into more or less distinct groups. Even the most primitive societies had some form of social stratification. As Sorokin pointed out, 'Unstratified society, with real equality of its members, is a myth which has never been realised in the history of mankind'. He writes, 'Social stratification means the differentiation of a given population into heretically superimposed classes. It is manifested in the existence of upper and lower social layer. Its basis and very essence consists in an unequal distribution of rights and privileges, duties and responsibilities, social values and privations, social power and influences among the members of a society. No society is unstratified. Stratification involves the distribution of unequal rights and privileges among the members of a society'. According to Gisbert, 'social stratification is the division of society into permanent groups or categories linked with each other by the relationship of superiority and subordination.' Lundberg writes, 'A stratified society is one marked by inequality, by difference among people that are evaluated by them as being "lower" and higher"'.

From the definitions stated above, it would be seen that *inequality of status* or rank differentiation is the distinguishing feature of social stratification; where there is social stratification, there is

social inequality. Some individuals and groups are rated higher than others on the basis of opportunities and privileges that they enjoy. For example, in India doctors or engineers are rated higher than teachers. As a class the former have a higher social prestige. The prestige attached to different positions becomes a part of the social order and that is stratification.

Stratification tends to *restrict interaction*. In a given stratification system, certain kinds of interaction may be more restricted than others, as in seeking a marriage partner, in choosing a profession, in making friends.

According to some sociologists, the origin of stratification is to be found in the conquest of one group by another. The conquering group set itself as an upper class dominating the conquered class which became a lower class. Sorokin, however, does not agree with this theory. According to him, stratification originated in the inherited individual differences and differences in environmental conditions.

Racial differences accompanied by cultural dissimilarity also lead to stratification. India was subjected to a series of racial and cultural invasions that overwhelmed the native people and eventually led to the caste system. Race is the chief factor in the American stratification system.

According to Spengler, stratification is founded on scarcity. Short supply or security is created whenever society differentiates positions in terms of functions and powers and assigns rights and privileges to them. This makes some positions more desirable than others for society grades them by their rewards. There are only a few corporation presidencies or government executive offices available. Stratification evolves from the allocation of scarce privileges and powers.

Kingsley Davis lays emphasis on the functional necessity of stratification. According to him, social inequality is an unconsciously evolved device by which societies ensure that the most important positions are conscientiously filled by the most qualified persons. Hence, every society must possess a certain amount of institutionalized inequality or social stratification.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

The main characteristics of social stratification are the following:

- (i) **It is social:** Stratification is social in the sense that it is not biologically inherited but socially accorded. Biological traits such as intelligence, strength, and sex do not determine social superiority or inferiority until they are socially recognized and evaluated. Further, it is governed by social norms and sanctions and is intimately connected with other systems of society such as political, religious, economic, and other institutions.
- (ii) **It is ancient:** The stratification system is quite old. No society has ever been without it.
- (iii) **It is universal:** The stratification system is universal. It is a worldwide phenomenon. Social differences are visible everywhere. According to Sorokin, all permanently organized groups are stratified.
- (iv) **It is in diverse form:** The stratification system has never been uniform in all the societies. The ancient Roman society was stratified into patricians and plebeians. The Aryan society was divided into four *varnas*—Brahmins, Khatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras. Class, caste, and estate are the general forms of stratification.
- (v) **It is consequential:** Social stratification leads to two important consequences—life chances and life styles. Life chances refer to mortality, longevity, illness, marital conflict, and divorce. Life

styles include matters such as the mode of housing, living, one's education, mode of recreation, and relation between parents and children.

FORMS OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

Social stratification assumes the form of class divisions in society. In the course of history, various social classes have existed at different periods. Thus, the slaves and slave masters, vassals and feudal lords, capitalists and workers have been the prominent classes. In western countries, the common form of social stratification is class system, whereas in India class has assumed a peculiar form in caste.

Since social stratification means division of society into social classes, now we shall examine the idea of a 'social class'.

Meaning and Nature of Social Class

According to Ginsberg, 'a class is a group of individuals who through common descent, similarity of occupation, wealth and education have come to have a similar mode of life, a similar stock of ideas, feelings, attitudes and forms of behaviour'. The relative position of the class in the society arises from the degree of prestige attached to the status. Wherever the considerations of status, lower and higher, limit social intercourse, the social class exists. The status is the basic criterion of the social class or, in other words, class is a status group. MacIver and Page write, 'This understanding of social class as a distinct status group provides us with a precise concept and is generally applicable to any system of social stratification, wherever found. It is the sense of status, sustained by economic, political or ecclesiastical power and by the distinctive modes of life and cultural expressions corresponding to them, that draws class apart from class, gives cohesion to each class and stratifies a whole society'.

Thus, in a social class there is, firstly, a feeling of equality, in relation to members of one's own class, a consciousness that one's mode of behaviour will harmonise with the behaviour of similar standards of life. Individuals belonging to the same social class are expected to maintain similar standards of life and to choose their occupations within a limited range. There is realization of a similarity of attitude and behaviour with members of one's class. Secondly, there is a feeling of inferiority in relation to those who stand above in the social scale. Thirdly, there is the feeling of superiority to those below in the social hierarchy.

Thus, the fundamental attribute of a social class is its social position of relative inferiority or superiority to other social classes. It is the social position which determines for its possessor the degree of respect, prestige, and influence.

The members of each social class constitute a group. They recognize one another as social equals and distinguish in a variety of ways between themselves and the members of other classes. They usually associate with the members of their own class and live together and apart from other classes. They have their own distinctive ways of life. In a sense, each social class is a society within a society, but it is not a complete and independent society.

A social class is distinguished from other classes by certain customary modes of behaviour which are taken to be characteristic of that class and may be concerned with things such as the mode of dress, the type of conveyance, the way of recreation, and expenditure. Thus, the upper class is released from manual labour, and its members are masters rather than servants. Its members live in the castles, rather than in the huts, eat the choicest food, and have leisure.

It is also to be noted that the members of a social class often put obstacles in the way of those people who wish to come up to their position. It also means that a class possessing certain privileges would like not only to possess them exclusively but also to increase them. Capitalists and upper classes never like to give up their privileges voluntarily.

Criteria of Class Distinctions

Society, as history tells us, has been divided into different classes at different times. Now, the question arises: what principles are involved in the various modes of social classification? Characteristics, such as occupation, wealth, birth, race, religion, education, speech, and etiquette, may become the basis for social ranking. Sometimes, two or more characteristics combine to determine the status:

(i) **Criterion of birth:** In feudal and early medieval times, the status was fixed by birth. Thus, there were the slave and slave master, the noble and serf, the gentry and the commonality. When the status is determined by birth, the class structure becomes rigid.

(ii) **Criterion of wealth:** Birth as a determinant of the status remained the controlling factor of social position until new social and economic developments undermined the feudal system. Under the feudal system, the principal form of wealth was the land. The idea of subservience, loyalty, duty, and honour depended on the intrinsic fact that one man holds land from another who thereby is his superior. But with the progress of Industrial Revolution and with the growth of commercial, financial, and factory production enterprise, wealth was redefined so that land was now subordinated to the new forms of money and credit. In modern societies, there is a fairly close relation between economic and social status. Wealth has now penetrated all social divisions and provided a universal and significant basis for social stratification. Classes are now demarcated as an upper class, a middle class, and a lower class.

(iii) **Criterion of occupation:** In modern communities, wealth is the primary determinant of social stratification. It is the possession of wealth for the most part which determines the sort of education an individual is likely to receive and consequently the range of occupations open to him/her. There is an intimate relation between the social class and the occupation it follows. Occupation, while not an altogether accurate indication of the status, is a fair index of a social class, its mode of life, and general social standing.

Take, for instance, the case of farmers. In earlier times, there were two great classes associated with the land—the land owner and the land cultivator. In modern times, a class of ‘owner cultivators’ has come into existence. In India, through the abolition of *zamindari* system, tenants have been made the owner of the land they cultivate. They are now no longer dominated by a land-owning aristocracy. They employ relatively a few labourers outside their family; moreover, their relation to the labourer is not the same as that of the landlord to the peasant. The owner farmer and the tenant farmer now form together an agricultural class with common characteristics arising from the nature of their occupation. They have more or less a common standard of living, their relatively low and inelastic income and a common group consciousness, and form a separate social class.

In recent years, within the agricultural class also social stratification is developing. With the introduction of mechanized forms of cultivation, some of the agriculturists have become farmhouse owners, tractor owners, and white collar agriculturists, enjoying higher status. At the

other end of the scale, there stand the low-class peasantry with their traditional implements of agriculture separating themselves from the high-class peasantry.

Similarly, in non-agricultural field, the type of occupation is a particularly useful general index of the social class. The so-called white collar jobs carry greater prestige than the jobs otherwise, though the former may not yield greater income. If the lower paid teacher is held in a greater esteem than the better paid technician, obviously, income does not determine the social status. Ministers, secretaries, commissioners hold a higher position than the businessmen who may be wallowing in wealth, though formers are of an inferior economic position.

(iv) Criterion of polity: In the modern society, the political system is an important determinant of social study. A democratic, political system aims to abolish the social distinctions and establish social equality, which means that no person will be rated high or low on the basis of one's income, occupation, or birth. An aristocratic political system, on the other hand, starts with the belief that some are born to rule and others to be ruled. Such a system stratifies the society into distinct classes of rulers and ruled. In every society, rulers have enjoyed a higher status. In democracy also, legislators and ministers enjoy a higher prestige though some of them may even be illiterate.

(v) Criterion of education: The social class and education interact in two ways. Firstly, to get higher education one needs money. The children of wealthier classes can get better education and ride up to the highest step of social hierarchy. The poorer youths cannot afford to meet the expenses of higher education and so are left at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Secondly, people's amount and kind of education affects the class rank they will secure; higher education not only brings occupational skills but also brings changes in tastes, interests, goals, etiquette, and speech.

Thus, we conclude that though wealth is a significant factor of social stratification in modern communities, it is not, however, the only factor. The attitude which a community holds towards the different groups is determined by a number of factors. Thus, factors such as race, age, sex, lineage, religion, occupation, education, and mode of life may still modify and limit the status attitude. Sometimes, the attitude held by a community may be merely traditional and not the result of any logical conclusion. To know why a community classifies a particular class inferior or superior, we may have to study the past or present experiences which have produced that attitude. In the case of the United States, the prevalent attitude assigning the low status to Negroes is perhaps adequately explained by the historical fact that Negroes were assigned to a slave status for more than one hundred years. Every society has a large inheritance of purely customary, habitual, and non-functional class stratification for which no rational justification can be found. Therefore, in attempting to account for the fact of social stratification, we must not lose sight of the factors for which no rational justification can be found. We need not be surprised at the lack of rational foundation for many of the facts of social organization.

SOCIAL CLASS AND STYLE OF LIFE

The style of life of people is determined by the social class to which they belong. A social class is generally distinguished from other classes by certain modes of behaviour which includes things such as the mode of dress, the type of conveyance, the mode of recreation, and the contents of diet. The

members of a particular class have more or less the same 'life chances'—the same probability of securing the good things of life. Lasswell has well said, 'The influential are those who get the most of what there is to get'. Thus, the members of a social class possess similar social chances, and since classes differ in their social chances so they also differ in what they learn, how they behave, and how they regard the world about them. We find great diversity in the outlook and behaviour of the several social classes. Thus, the members of the upper class hate manual labour. They live in castles, ride automobiles, eat the choicest food, put on superfine clothes, and speak polished language. For recreation they visit clubs and play sophisticated games such as golf, tennis, and chess. On the other hand, the members of the lower class are given to manual labour. They live in slums and take coarse food. They are shabbily dressed and hardly know of any recreation. Similarly, the members of the upper class are educated and hold administrative posts or run big industrial concerns. The members of the lower class are mostly illiterate and labourers. They are servants rather than masters.

It has also been found that criminality prevails more among the members of the lower class than those of the upper class. The lowest levels of the social hierarchy furnish the greatest number of criminals.

Studies also show differences in the family behaviour of the different social classes. The lower classes rear their children in the homes and observe strict sex code. The children in the upper class families are reared by maid servants and fed on the bottle milk. The children brought up in the upper class families are taught to be polite, to develop good manners, to pay attention to dress and appearance, to play with equals, to get good grades in schools, and to stress achievement. The lower class children learn the opposite in most instances.

Thus, it is evident that the social class affects the life style of its members. Those who belong to a superior class enjoy greater status, prestige, and power. They have a high notion of their self-importance. The members of the inferior class, on the other hand, are given to obedience and yield to the wishes of the superior class members. Indeed, there is hardly any aspect of life which is not differentiated according to the class one belongs to. Social classes constitute subcultures and, therefore, the groups which live differently, also think and behave differently.

However, whatever influence the social class may still have on the style of life, it is waning. Occupation is rapidly becoming the key determinant and index of the status. Members of lower classes change their style of life on having secured a berth in the cabinet or administrative hierarchy. Occupation is now more predictive about the style of life. The style of life of a family unit depends chiefly on the occupation of parents.

THE MARXIAN CONCEPT OF CLASS

Karl Marx, the father of Communism, gave an economic interpretation to the meaning of class. Thus, he differentiated between the bourgeoisie who own the means of production and the proletariat who do not. The bourgeoisie enjoy the high status in society because they own property, while the proletariat's status is inferior because instead of owning the means of production they rather work on them. According to Marx, therefore, ownership of the means of production determines the status of individuals. Max Weber also conceived of class as the product of economic factors. He asserted that 'property and lack of property are the basic categories of all class situations'.

Marx also said that all previous history had been the history of class struggle, a condition that would cease; however, when the proletariat organized to overthrow the bourgeoisie in bloody revolt establishes an international classless society of proletarian.

MacIver has criticized the Marxian distinction between proletariat and bourgeois classes as basically erroneous and ill founded. The identification of the social class with economic division is inadequate for two reasons.

Firstly, there are status-class differences which do not correspond to economic differences. Thus, members of the Brahmin class, a superior class, may be the employees of a lower class and very inferior to the latter with respect to wealth. According to the Marxian thesis, Brahmins would form an inferior class because they do not own property in this case, but in Hindu society they nevertheless are considered belonging to the superior class. Again, an old-established landed class may be regarded as socially superior to a monetarily wealthier class. White collar clerks may not earn more than a manual worker and even earn less, yet their status is higher in society to the status of the manual worker. Thus, they are economically inferior but socially superior. Moreover, all the workers cannot be grouped into a single class, the proletariat. The modern, western society makes distinction between workers in different fields and of different skills. They differ in their interests, attitudes, and sentiments. There is found competitive class feeling among the workers. One can hardly think of them as belonging to one class. Even the capitalists do not form a single class. The small capitalists are opposed to big capitalists. Their interests collide and so they can hardly be regarded as members of the same social class.

Secondly, if we define the social class in terms of any objective criterion, such as ownership of property, it loses its sociological significance. The distinguishing feature of a class is its possession of 'class *consciousness*', a sentiment that unites them and separates them from others. If white collar workers do not regard themselves as belonging to the same class as industrial workers, they do not form one social class. The members of a class share a common sentiment, and unless they share this sentiment they cannot form a social class. Marx maintained that the experience of similar economic situations develops similar attitudes and beliefs in the members of a class—a class consciousness. But there is no necessary coincidence between class membership defined by economic criteria and subjective class consciousness. It is important, as Tawney says, to avoid confusing 'the fact of class with the consciousness of class which is different phenomenon. The fact creates the consciousness, not the consciousness the fact'.

Moreover, Marx could not foresee the later evolution of industrialism, with its separation of ownership and managerial functions, and its demand for a vast new middle class of clerks, managers, and technicians. The rise of the middle class ended the drift towards two isolated camps of capitalists and industrial workers. Thus, Marx is proved to be a false prophet about the evolution of classes in the modern world. The distinctions among classes are more than economic; they are also social, political, attitudinal, and based on a way and style of life. In their behaviour individuals are not motivated solely by economic interests.

THEORY OF FUNCTIONALISM—KINGSLEY DAVIS AND WILBERT E. MOORE

Davis and Moore presented their functional theory of social stratification in 1945 in an article 'Some Principles of Stratification'. They began with the observation that stratification exists in every known human society. They argue that all social systems have certain functional prerequisites which must be met if the system is to survive and operate efficiently. One most fundamental prerequisite is effective role allocation and performance. This means that all roles must be filled, and these must be filled by the best able to perform them. They must be given appropriate training to ensure their best performance, and the roles must be performed diligently and conscientiously. They argue that all societies need some mechanism for ensuring effective role allocation and performance and this mechanism is social stratification which they see as a system which attaches unequal rewards and privileges to the different people of society. If the people and position which make up the society did not differ in

important respects, there would be no need for stratification. However, people differ in their innate ability and positions differ in their importance. Certain positions are functionally more important than others. They require special skill for their effective performance, and there are limited numbers of individuals with the necessary ability to acquire skills. A major function of stratification is to match the most able people with the functionally most important position. It does this by attaching high awards to such positions. The device for such rewards motivates people to compete for them, and most talented will be successful. Such positions usually require long periods of training which involve certain sacrifices. The promise of huge rewards is necessary to provide an incentive to encourage people to undergo training and to compensate them for the sacrifice involved. It is essential for the well-being of the society that those who hold functionally most important positions perform the role to the best of their capacity. Thus, Davis and Moore conclude that social stratification is a device by which society ensures that major, important functions are consciously performed by the most qualified persons.

Criticism of the Theory

(i) Davis and Moore themselves realized that the difficulty with their theory is to determine which position is functionally more important. They observe that a position highly rewarded does not necessarily mean that it is functionally important. They, however, suggest that the importance of a position can be measured by the degree to which the position is functionally unique; there is no other position that can perform the same function satisfactorily. Thus, it could be argued that a doctor is functionally more important than a nurse since his/her position is carrying many other skills necessary to perform the role of a nurse but not vice versa.

The second measure of importance is the degree to which other positions are dependent on the one in question. Thus, it may be argued that managers are more important than routine staff since the latter are dependent on the directions from the management.

(ii) Bottomore holds that the theory concerned is in terms of ranking individuals and does not explain the existence of well-defined social groups.

(iii) According to Melvin M. Tumin, the theory ignores the importance of power in unequal distribution of rewards. Thus, differences in pay and prestige between different groups may be due to difference in their power rather than their functional importance. He further observes that social stratification functions to integrate the social system but the differential reward system can encourage hostility among the various groups in a society.

CONCLUSION

Functional theory of stratification emphasises the proper allocation of roles to individuals and their implementation, most important functions to the high-qualified persons, and the higher rewards to them. Davis and Moore hold that social stratification is a functional necessity for all the societies and it is the solution to the problems faced by all social systems that of placing and motivating individuals in the social structure, and that it implies that social inequality is an inevitable feature of the society. They conclude that differential awards are essential for society and for maintenance of well-being of the social system.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the meaning of social stratification? Discuss its elements.
2. Discuss the meaning and nature of the social class.
3. What are the criteria of class distinction? Discuss with examples.
4. Write a detailed note on 'social class and style of life'.
5. Discuss the Marxian concept of class.
6. 'Social stratification is a functional necessity'. Discuss.

Society, in order to exist and progress, has to exercise a certain control over its members since any marked deviation from the established ways is considered a threat to its welfare. Such control has been termed 'social control' by sociologists.

MEANING OF SOCIAL CONTROL

Mannheim defines social control as 'the sum of those methods by which a society tries to influence human's behaviour to maintain a given order'. According to Ogburn and Nimkoff, 'the patterns of pressure which a society exerts to maintain order and established rules' are social control. E. A. Ross, who was the first American sociologist to deal at length with social control in his book under the same name, refers it as 'system of devices whereby society brings its members into conformity with the accepted standards of behaviour'. According to MacIver, social control is 'the way in which entire social order coheres and maintains itself—how it operates as a whole, as a changing equilibrium'.

In the definition of social control, the following three things are to be noted:

- 1. Social control is an influence:** The influence may be exerted through public opinion, coercion, social suggestion, religion, appeal to reason, or any other method.
- 2. The influence is exercised by society:** It means that a group is better able to exercise influence over the individual than a single individual. This group may be the family, the church, the state, the club, the school, the trade union, etc. The effectiveness of influence, however, depends on variable factors. Sometimes, the family may exercise more effective influence than the state, or sometimes it may be vice versa. Similarly, the influence of the club may be more effective than

that of the church. There are innumerable agencies of social control and the effectiveness of each agency depends largely on the circumstances.

3. The influence is exercised for promoting the welfare of the group as a whole: People are influenced to act in the interest of others rather than in accordance with their own interests.

Thus, a proper definition of social control would be that 'social control is any influence which the society exerts on its members for the purpose of providing the welfare of the group as in whole'.

SOCIAL CONTROL VERSUS SELF-CONTROL

Social control differs from self-control in as much as the latter is from within while the former is from without. When persons control themselves, their impulses are not because of a certain coercion but because of their own will and self-realization, and they are said to have practised self-control. One may exercise self-control either for one's own gain or for others' gain. When somebody gives up drinking because it affected his health, he exercises self-control for his own gain, but if he gives it up because his family is not financially sound, he has exercised self-control for the gain of the family.

The essence of self-control is that it is always the result of one's own inner realization or feeling little influenced by others' authority. If it is not so, it will be transitory and will last as long as one is under the influence of others. But if self-control is out of one's own realization, it will be permanent and real.

SOCIAL CONTROL AND SOCIALIZATION

Social control and socialization are closely related to each other. Social control is a part of socialization. During the process of socialization, the process of social control is also in operation. Through socialization social control becomes ipso-facto effective. Humans from birth to death are undergoing the process of socialization, and their behaviour is controlled in numerous ways. The customs regulate the birth and death ceremonies. The diet, the dress, the manner of speech, the marriage, the education, and a host of other matters are controlled by customs. In order to maintain the social order, there are definite procedures in society.

Further, the various agencies of socialization such as family, state, school, club, and neighbourhood are also the agencies of social control. They exercise regulatory influence over the behaviour of the individual.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL CONTROL

Every society has tried to control the behaviour of its members. In the earliest and primitive society, social control existed as a powerful force in organizing socio-cultural behaviour. From birth to death, humans are surrounded by social control of which they may even be unaware. However, it is only recently that the concept of social control has received any formal statement, although it is foreshadowed in Plato's *Republic* (369 BC) and in Comte's *Positive Philosophy* (1830–42). Lester F. Ward, in his book *Dynamic Sociology* (1883), greatly clarified the concept.

It was in 1894 when the term 'social control' was used for the first time by Small and Vincent. While discussing the effect of authority on social behaviour, these authors in their book *Introduction to the Study of Society* conclude, 'The reaction of public opinion upon authority makes social control

a most delicate and difficult task'. In the same year, E. A. Ross became interested in discovering 'the linchpins which hold society together' and 'developed the germs' of the first book in this field. His book *Social Control* appeared in 1901 wherein Ross fully examined the concept of social control. His book is a pioneer work in the study of social control.

Cooley's *Human Nature and the Social Order* appeared in 1902, which has been regarded as an admirable supplement to the volume of Ross. He laid emphasis on the effect of group pressure on the personality of an individual. While Ross was concerned with studying the mechanism of social control, Cooley was interested in studying the effects of social control.

William Graham Sumner's *Folkways* was published in 1906. In this book, which has been called 'the Old Testament of the sociologist', he laid emphasis on folkways. According to him, 'social behaviour cannot be understood without a study of the folkways and mores which determine whether society will encourage or inhibit any specific item of behaviour'.

The three individuals are the main thinkers who made important contributions towards developing the concept of 'social control' and understanding its nature and effects.

NEED FOR SOCIAL CONTROL

Social solidarity is essential for the existence of society. No two persons are alike in their nature, ideas, attitudes, and interests. Every individual is a separate personality. There are cultural differences among the individuals. Some worship an idol, but others do not. Some eat meat, and others are vegetarians. Some are orthodox, and others are modern. Some are fashionable, but others are simple. Some are Protestants, but others are Catholic. As a matter of fact, society is a heterogeneous organization. If every individual is allowed unrestricted freedom to act and behave, it may create social disorder. For an orderly social life, social control is necessary. The aims of social control are to bring out conformity, solidarity, and continuity of a particular group or society. Social control is necessary for the following reasons:

- (i) **To maintain the old order:** It is necessary for every society or group to maintain its social order, and this is possible only when its members behave in accordance with that social order. An important objective of social control is to maintain the old order. Family helps in the realization of this objective. The aged members of the family enforce their ideas over the children. Marriages are settled by the elder members of the family. In religious and other matters also, the old parents of the family influence the behaviour of its members. Although enforcement of the old order in a changing society may hinder social progress, it is necessary to maintain continuity and uniformity in society.
- (ii) **To establish social unity:** Without social control social unity would be a mere dream. Social control regulates behaviour in accordance with established norms which brings uniformity of behaviour and leads to unity among the individuals. The family maintains its unity because its members behave in a similar manner in accordance with family norms.
- (iii) **To regulate or control individual behaviour:** No two persons are alike in their attitudes, ideas, interests, and habits. Even the children of the same parents do not have the same attitudes, habits, and interests. People believe in different religions, dress differently, eat different food, marry in different ways, and have different ideologies. There is so much difference in the ways of living of the people that at every moment there is the possibility of clash between them. In modern times, this possibility has all the more increased because people have become too self-centred. Social

control is necessary to protect social interests and to satisfy common needs. If social control is removed and every individual is left to behave freely, society would be reduced to a state of jungle.

(iv) To provide social sanction: Social control provides social sanction to the social ways of behaviour. Numerous folkways, mores, and customs are prevalent in society. Every individual has to follow them. If an individual violates the social norms, he/she is compelled through social control to observe them. Thus, social control provides sanction to social norms.

(v) To check cultural maladjustment: Society is subject to change. New inventions, new discoveries, and new philosophies continue to take birth in society. People have to adjust their behaviour to the changes taking place in society, but all the individuals cannot adjust themselves to the new conditions. Some become progressive, while others remain conservative. When persons from the village move into the city, they come across new cultural standards and it is possible that they may wrongly adjust themselves to the new cultural environment. They may become a slave of passions, visit bar, and spend nights in night clubs. During this transitional period in their life, social control is necessary lest they may become a deviant. In India, there is a greater need for social control today. The main cause of indiscipline among the students and chaos in the society is wrong cultural adjustment. It has become a fashion to violate social norms. Their violation is sought to be justified in the name of progress and reform. There is lack of social control. The children do not obey their parents. The students are not under the influence of their teachers, and the people openly violate the laws of the state. Nobody in the country seems to bother about the decreasing social control. India is passing through a transitional period. During this period, there is a need of social control of it. If the agencies of social control do not act effectively, the Indian society may suffer serious disintegration.

The above reasons clearly prove the need for social control. The need is greater in modern society because of its highly complex character and disintegrating forces present in it.

THE PURPOSES OF SOCIAL CONTROL

The study of social control is an important aspect of sociology; here, every academic social discipline in one way or the other considers it. It is a significant field of study. It is a unifying factor, the study of human's behaviour. According to Kimball Young, the aims of social control are 'to bring about conformity, solidarity and continuity of a particular group or society'. These aims are good but most individuals who endeavour to control their fellowmen show little perspective in their efforts. They want that others should accept the modes of conduct which they themselves prefer. This preference may be based on any factor training received in childhood, experience derived in life, desire to exploit others for own gain, political, personal, or economic. Some reformers and leaders try to conceal their motives by 'good reasons' in the form of altruistic rationalization. A newspaper advertisement that ten per cent rebate on goods will be allowed to those who make purchases by a particular date is an example of such rationalizations. As a matter of fact, it is difficult to know and classify the motives of the agents of social control; for example, it is difficult to understand the motives of parents who endeavour to train their children in outmoded patterns of conduct. It may be either because of unfamiliarity of the new patterns of conduct or because they think that what proved good to them will also prove good to their children, or they may be acting primarily from habit or distrust of the new modes. Likewise, it is difficult to ascertain the motives of a teacher who makes an attack on the prevailing folkways and life values.

Thus, classification of the motives or purposes of the agents of social control is not easy. However, these purposes may be roughly classified as (i) exploitative, motivated by self-interest, (ii) regulative, based on habit, and the desire for behaviour of the customary types, and (iii) creative or constructive, based on social benefit. The results of social control are not always beneficial to society or to the individual. Exploitation is clearly injurious to many. Even social control for constructive purposes may confuse the public and end in inactivity. Efforts to regulate behaviour in accordance to custom may cause cultural lag, mental conflict, emotional instability, and even psychosis. The established norms may be too restrictive for the creative individual and too conservative for the adventurous individual.

MEANS OF SOCIAL CONTROL

The means by which individuals are induced or compelled to conform to the usages and life values of the group are so numerous and varied that a classification is not possible. E. A. Ross has described a number of means that have been employed by social groups throughout the human history to keep individuals under control. The important among them are public opinion, law, custom, religion, morality, social suggestion, personality, folkways, and mores. E. C. Hayes, another American sociologist, distinguished between control by sanction and control by suggestion and imitation. By control by sanction he meant a system of rewards and punishments. According to him, education is the most effective means of control and family is the most significant agency. Karl Manpheim distinguished between direct means of social control and indirect means of social control. Kimball Young classified the means of social control into positive and negative means. Reward is a positive means, while punishment is a negative means.

Some sociologists have classified the means of social control into informal means or formal means.

Sympathy, sociability, resentment, the sense of justice, public opinion, folkways, and mores are some of the informal means of social control. They are very powerful in primary social groups where interaction is on a personal basis. The effectiveness of the informal devices of control, though somewhat lessened in modern, large communities wherein contacts tend to be impersonal, may still be observed in small villages. Ross cites instances of such informal effectively preserved without the help of constituted authority. In modern times, the informal methods have given place to formal ones such as laws, education, coercion, and codes.

Informal Means

The informal means of social control grow themselves in society. No special agency is required to create them. The Brahmins do not take meat. They take meals only after bath. The Jains do not take curd. They take their dinner before sunset. The Hindu women do not smoke. One can marry only in one's caste. The children should respect their parents. All this is due to informal social control. It is exercised through customs, traditions, folkways, mores, religion, ridicule, etc. Informal control prevails over all the aspects of human's life. Although it is said that people are not afraid of informal social control, informal means of social control are very powerful particularly in primary groups. No persons want to suffer loss of prestige. They do not want to become the target of ridicule. They do not want to be laughed at by the people. They do not want to be socially boycotted. On the other hand, they want praise, appreciation, honour, and recognition by the society. Thus, informal means such as praise, ridicule, and boycott effectively control their behaviour. Moreover, the child through the process of socialization learns to conform to the norms of the group.

We may now describe briefly the important means of informal control:

- (i) **Belief:** Belief is conviction that a particular thing is true. It is primarily of five kinds:
- (a) The belief in existence of an unseen power
 - (b) The belief in the theory of reincarnation
 - (c) The belief in Nemesis, the goddess of vengeance
 - (d) The belief in existence of hell and heaven
 - (e) The belief in the immortality of soul

All these different beliefs influence human's behaviour in society. The first belief in the existence of an unseen power leads people to right action because they believe that their actions are being watched by an unseen power. The second belief in the theory of reincarnation keeps people away from wrongful acts because they believe that in order to have a good birth in next life they must do good acts in this life. The third belief in the goddess of vengeance also regulates people's behaviour because they believe that they will be punished by the goddess of vengeance for their sins. A sinner is punished here and now. The fourth belief in the existence of hell and heaven influences people to virtuous acts and avoid sins in order to go to heaven or avoid going to hell after death. Heaven is a place full of luxuries, fairies, and romance. Hell is a place of terror, miseries, and tortures. The fifth belief in the immortality of soul leads people to avoid such actions as it will cause pain to the souls of the deceased ancestors.

In this way beliefs are powerful influences on human actions. They are vital for human relations. They define the purposes and interests for the individuals and control their choice of means so that the purposes of the groups may be advanced or at least not hindered. No aspect of social relationship escapes them. Beliefs may be true or false. They may be founded on factual or faulty evidence, but the question of their validity does not necessarily determine their effectiveness as social controls. We act with as much determination from false beliefs as from factually sound ones.

(ii) **Social suggestions:** Social suggestions are also powerful means of social control. Suggestion is the indirect communication of ideas, feeling, and other mental states. Such communications may be made through various methods. The first method is putting the life examples of great people. We celebrate the anniversaries of Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri. We build monuments in the memory of great people. We place their life ideals before the people and exhort them to follow these ideals. The second method of making suggestion is through literature. Books, journals, newspaper, etc., may inspire people to heroic deeds and develop in them national feelings. The literature may also make people narrow minded, communal, conservative, and superstitious. The type of literature one reads will indirectly influence one's mind and consequently one's behaviour. The third method is through education. The educational curriculum may communicate certain ideas to the students and make them disciplined citizens. The fourth method is through advertisements. Many magazines carry beautiful advertisement depicting the advantages of visiting certain places and suggesting the prestige attached to travelling to these places. The advertisements from Doordarshan may attract the people to a particular toothpaste. Many of our business enterprises employ advertising to influence attitudes and, therefore, actions.

(iii) **Ideologies:** Ideology is a theory of social life which interprets social realities from the point of view of ideals to prove the correctness of the analysis and to justify these ideals. It is

the projection of a certain ideal. Leninism, Gandhism, and Fascism are ideologies which have analysed social realities and laid down an ideal before the people. Ideologies influence social life to a great extent. Leninism has influenced the social life of Russians. Hitler's theory of socialism influenced Germans to the extent that they began to regard themselves as the supreme race of the world. Gandhism has influenced social life in India.

(iv) Folkways: Folkways are the recognized modes of behaviour which arise automatically within a group. They are the behaviour patterns of everyday life which arise spontaneously and unconsciously in a group. They are, in general, the habits of the individuals and are common to a group. They are socially approved. They have some degree of traditional sanction. It is not easy for the members of a group to violate the folkways. They are the foundation of group culture. If individuals do not follow them, they may be socially boycotted by their group. A particular dress must be worn at a particular function. The Brahmins shall not take meat. The Jains should not take curd. The Hindu women should not smoke. Since folkways become a matter of habit, these are followed unconsciously and exercise powerful influence over human's behaviour in society.

(v) Mores: More are those folkways which are considered by the group to be of great significance, rather indispensable to its welfare. The mores relate to the fundamental needs of society more directly than do the folkways. They express the group sense of what is right and conducive to social welfare. They imply a value judgement about the folkways. Mores are always moulding human's behaviour. They restrain an individual from doing acts considered as wrong by his/her group. They are the instruments of control. In society there are innumerable mores such as monogamy, prohibition, endogamy, and antislavery. Conformity to mores is regarded necessary. It is essential for the members of the group to conform to them. Behaviour contrary to them is not permitted by society. Certain mores may even be harmful for the physical well-being of an individual, yet these must be obeyed. Thus, mores control human's behaviour in society to a great extent.

(vi) Customs: Customs are the long-established habits and usages of the people. They are those folkways and mores which have persisted for a very long time and have passed down from one generation to another. They arise spontaneously and gradually. There is no constituted authority to declare them, to apply them, or to safeguard them. They are accepted by society. They are followed because they have been followed in the past. The importance of customs as a means of social control cannot be minimized. They are so powerful that no one can escape their range. They regulate social life to a great extent. They bind humans together. They control the purely selfish impulses. They compel the individual to conform to the accepted standards. They are held so sacred that any violation of them is regarded not only a crime but also a sacrilege. In primitive societies, customs were powerful means of social control, but in modern times their force has loosened.

(vii) Religion: Religion also exercises a powerful influence on human's behaviour in society. The term 'religion' has numerous definitions. Religion is an attitude towards superhuman powers. It is a belief in powers superior to humans. Religion pervades practically in all the societies, though there may be different forms of religious beliefs and practices. The Hindu religion assigns great importance to ceremonies. At the time of birth, marriage, and death, a number of ceremonies are performed. 'Mantras' are recited even if one does not understand their meaning. Religion is a powerful agency in society. It influences human's behaviour. Some of the teachings of religion which influence human's behaviour are as follows: Children should obey their parents, and should

not tell a lie or cheat; women should be faithful to men; people should be honest and virtuous; one should limit one's desires; and humans should renounce unsocial activities. People should do good acts is a common teaching of all the religions. Religion makes people benevolent, charitable, forbearing, and truthful. It may also be noted that religion is easily distorted into superstition and dogmatism. Instead of being an incentive to brotherhood, social justice, and ethical idealism, religion may be used as a tool to make people content with their lot, obedient to their rulers, and defenders of status quo. It may deny freedom of thought. It may favour poverty, exploitation, and idleness and encourage practices such as cannibalism, slavery, untouchability, communalism, and even incest.

(viii) Art and literature: Art in its narrow sense includes painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and dance. Literature includes poetry, drama, and fiction. Both art and literature influence the imagination and exert control on human's behaviour. The martial music of the military band arouses feelings of determination and strength. A classical dance creates an appreciation of our culture in us. The statue of Mahatma Gandhi teaches us the virtue of simple living and high thinking. A painting may arouse a feeling of sympathy, affection, and hatred in us. There is always a close relationship between the art of a period and the national life. The civilization of any specified time can be judged by an examination of its art. The Ajanta and Ellora caves give a vivid account of the ancient Hindu culture. An artist has been called an agent of civilization.

Literature also influences human's behaviour in society. We have 'good' literature and 'bad' literature. A good literature possesses an indefinable quality which makes it live through the ages. Ramayana, Bhagvad Gita, and Mahabharat are classical works of great social value. On the other hand, detective literature may have its effect on crime. Romantic literature may make the readers passionate, while religious literature may make them virtuous or superstitious. Rousseau in France hastened French Revolution. Dickens changed the entire school system in Britain by writing David Copperfield and his other books. In this way both art and literature exert control through their influence on the imagination.

(ix) Humour and satire: Humour is also a means of social control. It assumes various forms, depending on the situation and purpose. It often serves to relieve a tense situation.

Humour controls society by supporting the sanctioned values of the society. Through cartoons, comics, and repartees, it supports the values of the society in a form that is light in spirit but effective in control.

Satire employs wit and scorn as indirect criticism of actions felt to be vicious and socially harmful. By ridicule it exposes the falsity and danger of behaviour. Thereby it causes the people to give up their vicious and harmful action. The Flop Show of Mr. Jaspal Bhatti televised by Door-darshan was a great satire on corruption in Indian society.

(x) Public opinion: The influence of public as a means of social control is greater in simple societies. In a village the people are known to one another personally. It is difficult for a villager to act contrary to the public opinion of the village. Public opinion greatly influences our actions. For fear of public ridicule and criticism, we do not indulge in immoral or antisocial activities. Every individual wants to win public praise and avoid public ridicule or criticism. The desire for recognition is a natural desire. Human praise is the sweetest music. The greatest efforts of the human race are made to win public recognition or at least to avoid public ridicule. Thus, opinion is one of the strongest forces influencing the behaviour of people.

Formal Means

Among the formal means of social control, the important ones are law, education, and coercion. A brief explanation of these means is as follows:

(i) **Law:** Law is the most important formal means of social control. Early societies depended on informal means of social control, but when societies grew in size and complexity, they were compelled to formulate rules and regulations which define the required types of behaviour and specify the penalties to be imposed on those who violate them. Law is a body of rules enacted by legally authorized bodies and enforced by authorized agencies. It defines rights, duties, as well as punishments clearly for their violation. The modern societies are large in size. Their structure is complex, consisting of a number of groups, organizations, institutions, and vested interests. Informal means of social control are no longer sufficient to maintain social order and harmony. Therefore modern societies had to resort to formal means of social control.

In modern society relationships are of a secondary nature. Security of life and property, as well as the systematic ordering of relationships, make formalization of rules necessary. Law prescribes uniform norms and penalties throughout a social system. The body of law in every state is being increased. What was in mores and customs earlier has now been formalized into a body of law. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, has laid down the rules regulating the marriage among Hindus. It has recognized the right of a Hindu woman to divorce her husband. A number of laws have been enacted, governing food handling, fire protection, sewage disposal, traffic, sex regulation, entertainment, education, etc. Law prohibits certain actions, for example, Anti-untouchability Act prohibits untouchability in any form and a person practising untouchability is liable to punishment. Prohibition Act forbids drinking at public places. Smoking in cinema halls is prohibited under law. A uniform civil code, if and when enacted, may remove the social barriers in the Indian society. In this way, law exercises a powerful influence on the behaviour of people in modern societies. Today, law takes an ever larger part in total social control.

(ii) **Education:** Along with law, the importance of education as a means of social control is being growingly realized. Education is a process of socialization. It prepares the child for social living. It reforms the attitudes wrongly formed by the children already. Thus, a family may make the children superstitious; education will correct their beliefs and remove their prejudices. It teaches them value of discipline, social cooperation, tolerance, and sacrifice. It instils the qualities of honesty, fair play, and a sense of right and wrong in them. The importance of education for creating right social attitudes among the youth cannot be minimized. It is sad to note that education in India has miserably failed to create right social attitudes among the youth and act as an effective means of social control.

(iii) **Coercion:** Coercion is the use of force to achieve a desired end. It may be physical or non-violent. It is the ultimate means of social control when all other means fail. Physical coercion may take the form of bodily injury, imprisonment, and death penalty. Physical coercion is without doubt the lowest form of social control. Societies would least desire to use it. It may have immediate effects on the offender, but it does not have enduring effects. If a society has to depend on external force, it shows its weakness rather than strength in social control.

Non-violent coercion consists of the strike, boycott, and non-cooperation. A person who threatens to withdraw his support from a friend, if he does not give up smoking, is using non-violent coercion to change his action. The students may go on strike to force the principal to

ensure them adequate library facilities. Boycott is the withholding of social or economic intercourse with others to express disapproval and to force acceptance of demands. A student who teases the girls may be socially boycotted by the other students of the college. Non-cooperation is refusal to cooperate. The teachers may refuse to cooperate with the principal for his/her insulting behaviour. Non-violent coercion can be a successful way of effecting social control. Mahatma Gandhi used it to force the British Government to grant political independence to India.

SOCIAL CONTROL THROUGH AGES

It is evident from what has been said so far that social control through ages has not been exercised through one and the same methods. Their relative efficiency varies with changes in the social organization and life value of the group. In primitive societies, generally informal means such as convention, usage, custom, and tradition were employed for controlling individuals and groups. In the middle ages, since feudal customs and the church had the greatest authority, the whole social life was controlled by the church. With the passage of time, the authority of the church diminished and the power shifted from it to the king. Then, kings became the great controlling agencies who began to rule the state by what was called the Divine Right of Kings. Later on there came the period of *laissez faire* and the control of the state over the individual became less. With the march of technical advance and economic transformation, new social problems cropped up which again necessitated control by the state. This time, however, the state represented not the will of the autocratic ruler but the collective will, the will of the community. A large number of associations—economic, social, and political—gained birth which hence forward began to greatly control the social life. And today social control is so vast and widening that people find themselves at every step of life under control of some agency or the other. Whether this control is necessary or desirable, is a question which has given rise to the great controversy of man versus the state. However, if we remember that there is no contradiction between the interests of society and the individual, then the controversy of man versus society loses all its significance.

Social control in modern society: In modern times social control is mostly exercised through an appeal to reason. Modern society does not favour the use of force, though coercive methods are quite often used in making the individuals obedient to the system. Today, humans' behaviour is controlled by showing them through education and propaganda, the consequences of their action. All discussions and talk about the values of family planning or the evils of drinking are the examples of the modern type of control. Appeal to feelings is not greatly resorted to in modern times. It was only in primitive societies that people behaved according to the social pattern because they feared that any deviation from the prescribed modes would annoy gods and bring curse on them. People do not believe much in supernatural forces today. However, social suggestion as to what people will say and desire to win commendation exercise control over human's behaviour in modern society. Leadership has become a great controlling force in modern times. The leader controls the mob mentality in times of crisis and excitement.

Social control in future: The present society is a highly complex society as compared to the past one, and it is to become still more complex in future. The social problems which an individual has to face are becoming so complicated that it is beyond the power of a single individual to cope with them. Consequently, he/she must join with someone in working for the goal that he/she desires. The individual is impotent before the mighty forces of society, and this fact has led to a significant multiplication of the voluntary agencies of social control committees, clubs, association, institutes, bureaux, and cooperations.

The disintegrating forces present in the modern society are likely to give rise to great social control to secure uniformity of conduct. The theory of 'laissez faire' has collapsed. It is now generally held that intelligent, collective planning alone can solve the present-day social problems. The superiority of the human mind over the blind forces of nature has been established. Society is not the result of forces operating automatically and regardless of human's efforts. In contrast to the theory of 'evolutionary determinism', the conception of 'telesis' proposed by L. F. Ward has greater strength. The more and more increasing control of the government and expanding budgets show that in future social control is further to increase than decrease. Moreover, in recent times we have come to possess more and more knowledge of the methods of social control. New agencies of social control have come into being. In totalitarian states, social control has reached the maximum point: every human's life is under state direction and regulation. In democracies too, social control is no less vast. A number of regulatory agencies and voluntary bodies have cropped up to influence people's behaviour. The increasing complexity of culture will increase rather than diminish the need for effective social control.

QUESTIONS

1. What do you understand by the term 'social control'? How does it differ from self-control?
2. Is social control necessary? What are the various means through which social control may be exercised?
3. What do you mean by formal and informal means of social control? Give examples.
4. Discuss the need and aims of social control.

Social Change

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Change is the law of nature. Society is also an ever-changing phenomenon, growing, decaying, renewing, and accommodating itself to changing conditions and suffering vast modifications in the course of time.

MEANING OF SOCIAL CHANGE

The word 'change' denotes a difference in anything observed over some period. Social change, therefore, would mean observable differences in any social phenomena over any period. The following are some of its definitions:

- (i) 'Social change is a term used to describe variations in, or modifications of, any aspect of social processes, social patterns, social interaction or social organisation'. —*Jones*
- (ii) 'Social change may be defined as a new fashion or mode, either modifying or replacing the old, in the life of a people, or in the operation of a society'. —*H. T. Mazumdar*
- (iii) 'Social change means that large number of persons are engaging in activities that differ from those which they or their immediate forefathers engaged in some time before'. —*Merrill and Eldredge*
- (iv) 'Our direct concern as sociologists is with social relationships. It is the change in these relationships which alone we shall regard as social change'. —*Maclver and Page*
- (v) 'Social change may be defined as modification in ways of doing and thinking of people'. —*M. D. Jenson*

(vi) 'Social change refers to the modifications which occur in the life patterns of people'.
—S. Koenig

(vii) 'Social change refers to any modification in established patterns of inter human relationships and standards of conduct'.
—Lundberg and others

On the basis of these definitions, it may be concluded that social change refers to the modifications which take place in the life patterns of people. Social change will mean variations of any aspect of social processes, social patterns, social interactions, or social organization. It is a change in the institutional and normative structure of society.

NATURE OF SOCIAL CHANGE

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

(i) **Social change is a universal phenomenon:** Social change occurs in all societies. The speed and extent of change may differ from society to society. Some change rapidly, while others change slowly.

(ii) **Social change is community change:** Social change does not refer to the change in the life of an individual or the life patterns of several individuals. It is a change which occurs in the life of the entire community. In other words, only that change can be called social change whose influence can be felt in a community form. Social change is social and not individual.

(iii) **Speed of social change is not uniform:** While social change occurs in societies, its speed is not uniform in every society. In most societies, it occurs so slowly that it is often not noticed by those who live in them. Social change in urban areas is faster than in rural areas.

(iv) **Nature and speed of social change is affected by and related to time factor:** The speed of social change is not uniform in each age or period in the same society. In modern times, the speed of social change is faster today than before 1947. Before 1947, there was less industrialization in India; after 1947, India has become more industrialized. Therefore, the speed of social change after 1947 is faster than before 1947.

(v) **Social change occurs as an essential law:** Change is the law of nature. Social change is also natural. It may occur either in the natural course or as a result of planned efforts. By nature we desire change. Our needs keep on changing. To satisfy our desire for change and our changing needs, social change becomes a necessity.

(vi) **Definite prediction of social change is not possible:** It is difficult to make any prediction about the exact forms of social change. There is no inherent law of social change according to which it would assume definite forms. We may say that on account of the social reform movement untouchability will be abolished from the Indian society; that the basis and ideals of marriage will change due to the marriage laws passed by the government; that industrialization will increase the speed of urbanization but we cannot predict the exact forms which social relationships will assume in future. Likewise, it cannot be predicted as to what shall be our attitudes, ideas, norms, and values in future.

(vii) **Social change shows chain-reaction sequence:** A society's pattern of living is a dynamic system of inter-related parts. Therefore, change in one of these parts usually reacts on others.

For example, industrialism has destroyed the domestic system of production. The destruction of domestic system of production brought women from the home to the factory and the office. The employment of women meant their independence from the bondage of men. It brought a change in their attitudes and ideas. It meant a new social life for women. It consequently affected every part of the family life.

(viii) Social change results from the interaction of a number of factors: Generally, it is thought that particular factors such as changes in technology, economic development, or climatic conditions cause social change. This is called monistic theory which fleeks to interpret social change in terms of one single factor, but the monistic theory does not provide an adequate explanation of the complex phenomenon of social change. As a matter of fact, social change is the consequence of a number of factors.

(xi) Social changes are chiefly those of modification or replacement: Social changes may be broadly categorized as modifications or replacements. It may be modification of physical goods or social relationships. For example, the form of our breakfast has changed. Although we eat the same basic materials which we ate earlier—wheat, eggs, or corn—their form is changed. Ready-to-eat cornflakes, breads, and omelettes are substituted for the form in which these same materials were consumed in yester years. There may also be modifications of social relationships.

The old authoritarian family has become the small equalitarian family, and the one-room school has become a centralized school. Our ideas about women's rights, religion, government, and co-education stand modified today.

Change also takes the form of replacement. A new material or non-material form supplants an old one. Horses have been replaced by automobiles. Similarly, old ideas have been replaced by new ideas. The germ theory of medicine has replaced older views on the causes of diseases. Democracy has replaced aristocracy.

THE FACTORS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Social change has occurred in all societies and in all periods of time, but the rate of social change differs from society to society. In one society the rate is rapid, while in another it is necessarily slow. There are various factors which determine the rate and direction of social change.

Biological Factors

Under biological factors of social change, we include (i) plants and animals in the area and (ii) human beings themselves. The non-human biological environment affects human, social, and cultural life. People utilize the available plant and animal life in ways determined by their culture. Thus, Indians worship snakes and holy fig trees. Many plants are used for medicinal purposes which have given birth to the Indian system of medicine. Cow is regarded sacred among Hindus. Humans ward off bacteria, poisonous plants, insects, pests, and dangerous animals with the best means they have been able to invent. Changes in geographic conditions such as change in climate, change in soil composition, drying up of lakes, or streams kill some organisms and give birth to others. These changes affect the nature of human's struggle for existence.

The human biological environment includes the factors that determine the numbers, the composition, the selection, and the hereditary quality of the successive generations. If we compare

ourselves with our parents, we will know that we are different from them in our make-up, in ideas, and in most other things. No new generation is an exact replica of the old.

The change in population, both in numbers and composition, has a far-reaching effect on society. The growth of population has given birth to a great variety of social problems—unemployment, child labour, use of contraceptives, wars, competition, production of synthetic goods, etc. It has also led to urbanization with all its attendant evils. Since the death rate too has diminished in society, there are more of the older people than there used to be about a century back. Naturally, there is a change in the social attitudes and beliefs.

Moreover, if the growth of population is checked, it would mean a higher standard of living, the emancipation of women from child-bearing drudgery, better care for the young, and consequently a better society. When the growth of population threatens the standard of living, it inspires a change of attitude. Thus, in the nineteenth century contraceptives were designated immoral, but today they are not so regarded; rather their use is encouraged and patronized by the society. With the decrease in the size of the family, the facility of marriage and divorce, the relation between husband and wife, the relation between children and parent, the mode of upbringing of children, the position of the mother in the house, and the degree of economic self-sufficiency of the family have all been changing. Thus, it is evident that the changes in the numbers and composition of population are causing a number of changes in social relations.

Besides, there is a close relationship between the growth of population and the level of physical health and vitality of the people. Because there are many mouths to feed, none gets enough to eat with the result that chronic malnutrition and associated diseases become prevalent, and these induce physical incompetence, apathy, and lack of enterprise. It may be noted that all the subsistence populations of the world are socially backward and unprogressive and their indifference to improve their material welfare is largely a consequence of their low level of physical well-being.

The following are the defects of population growth:

- (i) High birth rate
- (ii) High death rate
- (iii) Greater number of children
- (iv) Greater number of old people
- (v) Great number of widows and widowers
- (vi) Disproportionate number of male and female population
- (vii) Large number of disabled people
- (viii) Large number of rural people
- (ix) High rate of infant mortality
- (x) Short span of age

All these defects affect the quality of population, and consequently, affect the social structure and social institutions adversely. Needless to say that on account of high population growth, the Indian society is passing through a critical period of great poverty unemployment, moral degeneration, criminality, and backwardness.

Physical Factors

The surface of our planet is never at rest. There are slow geographical changes as well as the occasional convulsions of nature in storm, earthquakes, and floods. These changes in the physical environment sometimes bring about important changes in society. The floods in India may hasten the birth of model villages in place of those which have been washed off or they may lead to the construction of dams in order to prevent future floods. The great volcanic eruption of Yokohama in 1923 was responsible for the new kind of architecture in Japan, while London may be called a blessing of the great fire that destroyed it.

It may also be remembered that physical environment governs the social conditions. Every culture develops in some sort of physical setting. Environment limits or permits the growth of civilization. At the poles and in the deserts, there can be little art and no learning, and the available time is spent in the business of keeping alive. In the more temperate climates, there are rapid changes in society. The absence of some factors can prevent the change in a certain direction. The non-availability of coal, iron, and oil within the borders can prevent a large and populous nation from becoming a great military power, but the physical habitat in no way 'causes' the culture. It only sets the stage for social life, but the geographical environment cannot explain most social changes. Nothing much happened to the climate of Europe during the past five centuries, yet the social system was tremendously transformed by industrial revolution. The same geographical environment may support extremely different civilizations, and similar civilizations can exist in quite different physical settings.

Technological Factors

Technology affects society greatly, and a variation in technology causes a variation in some institution or custom. Our attitudes, beliefs, and traditions have crumbled before technological advance. Industrialism has destroyed the domestic system of production, and brought women from the home to the factory and the office. Increased productive efficiency in industry released a considerable proportion of the population for service functions. A large body of people, such as engineers, book keepers, buyers of raw material, and sellers of finished products, not actually engaged in doing production work, grew. Changes in production and trade posed new problems of political regulation. The functions of law expanded. The number of law makers, of bureaucrats to apply the law, of lawyers to interpret the laws increased. The application of science to industry, agriculture, and health gave rise to a host of new service activities. If we just look around us, we will realize the enormous change that is going on in society owing to technological inventions. The most spectacular invention of our age, the atomic energy, has vastly influenced our life. As an agent of war, it brought about the most appalling annihilation of people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As an agent of peace, it may bring an unprecedented era of plenty and prosperity. We can see how the automobile expands the range of social relationships and reduces the communal character of the neighbourhood. The rise of standard of living, the transformation of class structures and of class standards, the rise of middle class, the undermining of local folkways and the disintegration of the neighbourhood, the breaking up of the old family system, the increasing dominance of urban ways over those of the country, the improvement in the conditions of women, the birth of new conceptions, and movements like communism and socialism are the result of the changes in production technology.

Changes in the agricultural techniques have affected the rural community. With the invention of new agricultural tools and chemical manures, agricultural production has increased, thereby raising

the standard of living of the rural people. Fewer people are now needed for agriculture. Consequently, many agricultural labourers have shifted to cities to find employment.

The basic function of all communication devices is the conquest of time and space. The rapidity, with which cultural changes have been occurring in modern age, can be attributed greatly to the increased use of the printed word as a means of communication. The press has influenced entertainment, education, politics, and trade. It has brought the country dwellers to knowledge of the urban life and has often led them to want the things of the city or go to the city. Similarly, the invention of radio, telegraph, and telephone has influenced the business, recreation, and public opinion and furthered the development of new modes of organization.

The changes in the modes of transportation have variously affected our social relationships. The methods and means of transportation determine how easily people can move themselves and how easily they can meet people of other places or other societies to exchange goods or ideas. The importance of transportation in modern social life can hardly be stressed. Modern humans live so much on wheels that they would not be able to live in suburbs and work in the city were it not for the local transport, that they could not leave home for the station with only a few minutes to spare were it not for the automobile, that they could not use many a thing for breakfast were it not for the ships and trains that tie the many places of the world together commercially. If the wheels of transportation were to stop for a single day, the life of the modern society would be put out of gears.

The rapid means of transportation have encouraged the growth of intercontinental trade and the interdependence of countries. The intermixing of people belonging to various countries led to the removal of much of misunderstanding, and feelings of hatred and jealousy were replaced by sympathy and cooperation. This assisted in the progress of the sense of universal brotherhood. The latest inventions in the field of transport, the aeroplanes, have brought swift delivery of goods. The growth of cities with their consequent problems of urban life is another important result of the development of the means of transport. There is greater mobility of population today in which the modern rapid means of transport have played an important role. They have broken the barriers to cultural isolation. Technological changes have affected social values and norms. Family ties have broken and there is a movement away from family and community loyalty to a movement towards individualism. Bureaucracy has grown in number and power. Human relations have become impersonal and secondary.

The effects of technology on major social institutions may be summed up as follows:

(I) Effects on family life: Modern technology has changed the family organization and relations in several ways. The main effects are the following: (i) It has led to the disintegration of joint family system. (ii) The employment of women in factories and offices has changed the form of husband–wife relationship and affected the family structure and functions in several ways. (iii) It has led to the liberation of women. (iv) Love marriage, inter-caste marriage, and late marriage are the other effects of technology. (v) The invention of birth control devices has reduced the size of the family. (vi) It has increased the number of divorces. (vii) It has lessened the importance of family as an agency of social control.

(II) Effects on economic life: (i) Industry has been taken from the household and new types of economic organizations such as factories, agencies, stores, and banks have come up. Economy has acquired a global character. (ii) It has led to the concentration of industries into huge, closely packed cities. (iii) It has given birth to capitalism and its attendant evils. (iv) It has brought in higher standard of living. (v) Division of labour and specialization are the products of technology. (vi) It has caused economic depression, unemployment, industrial disputes, accidents, and

diseases. (vii) It has given birth to trade union movement. (viii) It has created a middle class of white collar employees.

(III) Effects on social life: (i) It has led to the decline of community life. (ii) It has grown the sense of individualism. (iii) It has created the problem of houses and slums in the cities. (iv) Recreation has become commercialized. (v) It has changed the basis of social stratification from birth to wealth. (vi) It has narrowed the gap of caste system. (vii) It has grown psychic conflicts and diseases. The modern human suffers from great mental strain, emotional instability, and economic insecurity. (viii) It has led to 'consumerism'.

(IV) Effects on state: Technology has affected the state in the following ways: (i) A large number of functions have been transferred from the family to the state. The idea of social welfare state is an offshoot of technology. The scope of state activity has been enlarged. (ii) The influence of pressure groups over the state has been increased. (iii) It has led to a shift of functions from local government to the central government. (iv) The barriers of nationalism have been broken and the idea of world state is gaining ground. (v) Democracy has become the common form of government. (vi) It has made the state secular. (vii) It has increased the size and power of bureaucracy.

(V) Effects on religious life: With the growth of scientific knowledge, the role of superstitions has decreased. There is now more of religious toleration. The followers of different religions have shed off their orthodoxy and mix with each other. Religion has now become more secular and scientific.

Social Inventions

Technological inventions may also give rise to what Ogburn calls social inventions. By social invention he means 'any invention that is not material and that is not a discovery in natural science'. Boycott, woman suffrage, non-cooperation movement, proportional representation, old age pensions, juvenile court, matrimonial bureau, civil service, bonus to wage earners, visiting teacher, psychological clinics, rotary club, research institute, and the United Nations are some of the examples of social inventions. So, non-material inventions are social inventions. Although sometimes mechanical inventions go into the creation of a social invention, often mechanical influence may be slight, negligible, or even non-existent; for example, to boycott a social invention does not depend on any immediate mechanical invention. Neither does woman suffrage. It should not be concluded, therefore, that mechanical elements are necessary to social inventions. However, like mechanical inventions social inventions spring from the perception of some adjustment need.

Social inventions bring social changes: Social inventions bring about social changes is quite evident. The invention of language, which is perhaps the greatest of all inventions, has made possible the development of the sciences which have in turn made possible most of the important modern physical inventions. A graduated income tax has the social effect of redistributing wealth. Bonus to wage earners brings about a higher standard of living to workers. Woman suffrage has brought the women into the political field, thus affecting our family life. Legislation making school attendance compulsory has reduced the control of parents over their children. Prohibition has altered the drinking habits of the population. The enactment of Hindu Code has changed the customs relating to marriage and divorce. The control system has created the black market, the anticorruption department, and new ideas of morality. The two world wars influenced the whole range of social institutions. There was hardly any industry that was not affected. Farmers felt the shortage of labour. The

marriage rate and the birth rate were lowered. News were censored and prices went up. It may be concluded, then, that social inventions such as mechanical inventions have far-reaching effects on society.

Opposition to social inventions: Just as technological inventions have been opposed by people, similarly resistance to social inventions has been stubborn and long-lasting. To use old forms is easier than to make or adopt new ones. In the United States, the abolition of slavery and in Britain the introduction of woman suffrage were stubbornly resisted. It was only after a prolonged and devastating war that the abolition of slavery could be accomplished. It took virtually centuries for the democratic form of government to become established. In India the people opposed the enactment of Hindu Code, and now there is opposition to the enactment of a uniform civil code. The Vajpayee Government had to climb down on the issue. In France, Government reform was opposed so vigorously by those in power that the culmination was a revolution in 1789. 'It is a curious phenomenon', write Ogburn and Nimkoff, 'that some of the greatest blessings of the human race should have been bitterly resisted, at times with the spilling of blood, before humanity was allowed to profit by them It is as though there were enemies within the gates; as though many of us did not want to increase our blessings'.

INFLUENCE OF CULTURE ON SOCIAL CHANGE

It has been acknowledged by all that there is an intimate connection between our beliefs and our institutions, our valuations, and our social relationships. The social and cultural changes are so closely interwoven that all cultural change involves social change. It was the social philosophy of Marxism, which gained control of the economic and political orders in Russia. In India Gandhism has influenced to an extent of the economic and social orders. According to some thinkers, religion is the prime initiator of social change. Max Weber in his *Sociology of Religion* has pointed out that there is a direct relation between the practical ethics of a community and the character of its economic system. He found out a close relation between certain forms of Protestantism and early capitalism. Hinduism and Buddhism had a great influence on Indian social institutions. Our religious beliefs determine the structure of our institutions. No institution can endure an instant longer than it is maintained by the contemporary beliefs and attitudes of social beings. Social systems are directly or indirectly the creations of cultural values, and any change in valuations on the part of social groups makes its effect felt on social institutions. As Hobhouse said, there is 'a broad correlation between the system of institutions and mentality behind them'. Our view of the role of sex in human life having undergone a change has changed the family organization and interest. Thus, there is a definite relation between changing attitudes and beliefs and changing social forms.

It may also be noted that culture not only influences our social relationship but also influences the direction and character of technological change. It is not only that our beliefs and social institutions must correspond to the changes in technology, but our beliefs and the social institutions determine the use to which the technological inventions will be put. The atomic energy can be used for munitions of war or for production purposes. The industrial plant can turn out armaments or necessities of life. Steel and iron can be used for building warships or tractors. The indifference of the means of production to the use to which they are put expresses the degree in which culture is itself a determinant factor. Dawson and Gettys rightly remark, 'Culture tends to give direction and momentum to social change to set limits beyond which social change may not go'.

Even if the people of the world were to lose all the material objects in one great catastrophe, the loss would not mean the end of the various societies of the world. For the people who survive

the catastrophe would still possess the ability to construct houses, roads, cities, and machines and rehabilitate their fields. In other words, we may say that as long as the non-material aspects of a culture survive, so can the society. It may, therefore, be said that non-material aspect of a culture is more important than the material aspects. The burning of ancient Rome did not destroy the Roman society nor has the physical devastation of Europe destroyed the European civilization.

We are apt to think that the new industrial civilization has dethroned the old culture. Every new invention disturbs the old adjustment. The transformation of class structures, the breaking up of traditional family system, and the disintegration of social nearness are some of the consequences of changes in technology which appear to be the enemy of our culture. The machines brought ugliness, shoddiness, haste, and standardization. They brought congestion, slums, new hazards, new diseases, and industrial fatigue, but culture began to reassert itself and redirect the civilization. It ceased to tolerate the inhumanity of the new civilization and endowed the machine with beauty. New arts blossomed in the ruins of the old.

QUESTIONS

1. What do you mean by social change?
2. Describe the main characteristics of social change.
3. Describe briefly the numerous factors of social change.
4. Examine the effect of technological factors in social change.
5. To what extent do technological factors govern social change?
6. Explain the factors responsible for social change in India.

Unit 5 Law and Society

Law and Society

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In primitive societies, the folkways, mores, and customs were suffice to control the individual behaviour since there is almost unquestioned compliance with them. But in modern civilized societies, customs tend to loosen their hold with the result that laws are enacted by the state to control the individual.

THE MEANING OF LAW

The term 'law' has been variously defined by writers. According to Sumner 'laws are actually codified mores'. Kant defined law as 'a formula which expresses the necessity of an action.' Krabbe defines law as 'the expression of one of the many judgements of value which we human beings make, by virtue of our disposition and nature'. According to Green, 'law is a more or less systematic body of generalized rules balanced between the fiction of performance and the fact of change, governing specifically defined relationship and situations, and employing force or the threat of force in defined and limited ways'. According to Duguit, laws are 'the rules of conduct which normal men know they must observe in order to preserve and promote the benefits derived from life in society.' Another sociologist writes, 'Law is the standard of conduct, which, in consequence of the inner impulse which urges men toward a reasonable form of life emanates from the whole, and is forced upon the individual. It is distinguished from morals, customs, and, religion as soon as the point is reached at which compulsory standards are separated from those demands that involve merely social amenity'. According to MacIver and Page, 'law is the body of rules which are recognised, interpreted and applied to particular situations by the courts of the State.' B. N. Cardozo writes, 'Law is a principle or rule of conduct so established as to justify a prediction with reasonable certainty that it will be enforced by

the courts if its authority is challenged'. According to Max Weber, law 'is an order, the validity of which is guaranteed by the probability that deviation will be met by physical or psychic sanction by a staff specially empowered to carry out this sanction'. Hertzler comments, 'Law in effect structures the power (SUPERORDINATESUBORDINATE) relationship in society; it maintains the status quo and protects the various strata against each other, both in governmental and non-governmental organisations and relationship'. According to Roscoe Pound, 'law is an authoritative canon of value laid down by the force of politically organised society'. Austin defined law as 'the command given by a superior to an inferior'. He says, 'Laws properly so called are a species of command. But, being a command, every law properly so called flows from a determinate source or emanates from a determinate author'.

Two Approaches

Thus, there is marked disagreement among scholars as to what the law is. There is no single definition of law which will encompass preliterate legal arrangements, the Code of Hammurabi, and law in modern civilization. As MacIver puts it, 'The law of the "savage" is not our law'. Those who take juristic view of law define it as the command of the sovereign or the dictates of the state. Those taking the sociological view define law as the rules of right conduct. The problem here is, shall we keep the word 'law' for the specialized system with their codes, their apparatus for settling disputes, and the penalties for those who have broken the rules, or shall we regard these as mere specializations of a similar kind of control which may be found in unorganized forms or in organized forms, but without what we ordinarily think of as 'legal sanctions'?

Before proceeding further, the following characteristics of law may be observed:

1. Laws are the general conditions of human activity, prescribed by the state for its members.
2. Law is law only if enacted by a proper law-making authority. It is a product of conscious thought, planning, and deliberate formulation.
3. Law is definite, clear, and precise.
4. Law applies equally to all without exception in identical circumstances.
5. The violation of law is followed by penalties determined by the authority of the state.

THE SOCIAL BASIS OF LAW

Generally speaking, law is interpreted in juristic sense: it is enacted by a proper law-making authority and its violation is followed by punishment determined by the judiciary. However, in order to be effective, a state-enacted law has to have a social basis and moral sanction of the society. In the earlier societies, laws were usually based on customs and religious principles. But as societies grew from simple to complex, there was an extensive growth of legal rules. This led some sociological thinkers to emphasize the significance of social factors in the study of law. According to them, law is rooted in social institutions, in socio-economic networks. These social factors influence the course of law. What enacted is not always followed in practice. According to Maine, there is always a necessity for law to adjust itself to social necessities and social opinions. When a law expresses the moral consensus of the society, it will be effectively enforced. If it is not backed by firm moral consensus, effective enforcement is less likely. Law divorced from custom is bound to become artificial which would not

be seriously observed by the people. Take the case of Sarda Act prohibiting marriage of children. This Act is honoured by the people more in breach than in observance. A law which does not give official sanction to customs loses a certain force of sentiment which customs have behind them and which help in obedience. Edmund Burke said, 'Manners are of more importance than laws. Upon them in great measure the laws depend. The law touches us but here and there, manners are what vex or sooth, corrupt or purify, exalt or debase, barbarize or refine us by a constant, steady, uniform, insensible operation, like that of the air we breathe in'. Customs consolidate law and facilitate its practice. If the law is not aided by customs, it cannot succeed.

As the American James Wilson wrote, 'Of all yet suggested the mode for the promulgation of human law by custom seems the most significant and most effectual. It involves in it internal evidence of the strongest kind that the law has been introduced by common consent and that this consent rests upon the most solid basis—experience as well as opinion. This mode of promulgation points to the strongest characteristic of liberty as well as of law. For a consent thus practically given must have been given in the freest and most unbiased manner'. Laws which are not supported by customs have little chance of being enforced. Certainly, a law cannot succeed permanently if it is opposed by deep-seated customary attitudes. Custom is an important source of law. The 'common law' of England is exclusively based on custom. The passing of laws against certain practices can be effective when the mores underlying those practices are in the process of disintegration and a considerable number of people no longer hold to them because then it is mostly a matter of forcing the reluctant ones to accept the new legal way.

Just as custom supplements law, so law also supplements custom. There is reciprocal relationship between law and society. Law functions as an educator. It creates a moral consensus where none exists. Today, law is used to change obsolete customs such as untouchability, dowry system, and child marriage. In the primitive societies, custom well served to regulate the conduct of life, but in modern urban-industrial societies, customs become blurred and are challenged by newly emerging loyalties and interests. The custom becomes less a guideline to conduct, sets limits less, where people are motivated not so much within family and territorial community as by shared interests within secondary group associations. Today, law takes a very large part in total social control. There are several reasons for it. Firstly, custom lacks an agency of authoritative jurisdiction due to which the interests of the community do not remain fully secure. Law with special agency of enforcement is required if interests are to be pursued in peace. Secondly, it is a shortcoming of custom that it cannot adapt itself readily to changing conditions. Being fixed and permanent customs change very slowly. Social necessities are always in advance of custom. Therefore, to meet the social necessities and for quick adaptation to changing conditions, another kind of code is demanded, a code which does not slowly evolve but one which is made expressly for the situation. Thus, with the coming of railroads and automobiles, it was impossible for their regulation to be exclusively in terms of the old customs because these did not provide specific rules to meet the new situation created by the new modes of transportation. Consequently, a whole system of law sprang up in every country to regulate them—the clearest example being the system of traffic rules governing automobiles. The society became so complex and the devices were so new that deliberate regulation became necessary. Thirdly, since there are different customs of different groups, therefore, to have a single and uniform rule of behaviour where it is desirable, it is necessary to supplement custom by law; for example, the need for a uniform civil code is now being felt in India though the issue is being looked at from a political angle by different political parties.

It often happens that the state makes a law attacking the customs of the people. In such cases custom and law come into clash and the people are hard put to choose between custom and law. In practice, it has been observed that people render obedience to custom rather than to law in case of

a clash between the two. When law attacks custom, it has to depend very largely on the precarious sanction of force. People might be forced to obey the law as against the custom, but this obedience of theirs would be only unwilling and temporary. The forced obedience may even create a force of resistance which may endanger the authority of law. As MacIver observes, 'Custom when attacked, attacks law in turn, attacks not only the particular law which opposes it, but what is more vital, the spirit of law-abidingness, the unity of the general will'. Custom has one superiority over law in that it is obeyed by people more spontaneously and does not come from without, curtly demanding their obedience. Therefore, a law which is opposed to custom lacks the ground of support which is essential to its effective operation. Ultimately, the law must carry with it the sanction of public approval. It must operate with, and not against the forces, of social change. Although there may be behind law the force or the physical powers of the government and majesty of the state, these will not be enough to secure active obedience to the law if it infringes too far upon 'the sense of right' of the individuals and groups to which it applies.

Above we gave the examples of Sarda Act; similarly, consider Anti-untouchability Act, the Hindu Marriages Act, and the Prohibition Act, and it would become clear that while law can put certain limitations, it cannot by itself fully control the customary practices of people whose attitudes are grounded in ignorance and group prejudices.

As we said above, sometimes laws which are contrary to the customs are promulgated by the state. The question is how such laws ever become instituted. The answer is 'pressure groups'. In every society certain pressure groups are always working which seek to gain control over the law-making body. These groups, following their own interests, get laws engineered which offend the sentiments of the rest of the society. Among such groups, the government itself is the greatest pressure group. The government group wishes to stay in power and is thereby tempted to use the machinery of the government in its own interest. The dictator in a dictatorial form of the government obviously does so, but even in democracy the governing group tries to please the organized interests in the state to get their support and cooperation and give them all help, legitimate or illegitimate. These interests may often be far from representing the interests of the people at large. The role of pressure groups in modern society need hardly be emphasised.

It has also been asserted that in a period of change the law lags behind other aspects of society, but this is not necessarily true. The law is often utilized as an instrument of social reform. Thus, the Anti Untouchability Act, the Hindu Code Bill, the Sarda Act, and the Prohibition Act are 'forward-looking' Acts. They are certainly ahead of the customs. In the twentieth century, much enlightened legislation has been passed everywhere. Thus, law does not always lag behind the times. As said above, one great merit of law is that it adapts itself to the changing needs of society and maintains stability when the rapid alterations disturb the relations in society. Law helps the society assimilate the changes by adjusting group advantages and injuries resulting from them.

Finally, by affecting the social framework in which relations take place, law may become an advanced instrument of social change on a national as well as international level. However, if law is greatly in advance of, or greatly behind, the trends of change in the society, it remains unenforceable. If it is in harmony with the processes of change, it accelerates and institutionalizes changes.

LAW AS AN INTEGRATIVE MECHANISM

As we saw in the chapter on social control, law is the most important formal means of social control. Early societies depended on informal means of social control, but in modern societies, which are large in size and complex in structure, law has taken an ever larger part in total Social control and has

grown into the voluminous codes of modern times. The body of law in every state is always increased. The parliament and state legislature enact hundreds of laws every year, baffling the common people and opening the golden paradise for the lawyers. The language of law is beyond the comprehension of an ordinary citizen; even well-educated people fail to understand its intricacies and legal meanings. That is why the number of lawyers and courts is increasing infinitely in India. Different kinds of special courts, for example, labour courts, family courts, open adalats, tax tribunals, consumers protection courts, and common judicial courts, have come up.

The main reason for the growth of law into the voluminous codes of is the failure of customs to impose social control in view of the changing complexities of modern society. In the primitive society, custom well served to regulate the conduct of life, but in modern urban-industrial societies customs have become blurred and are being challenged by newly emerging loyalties and interests. The custom becomes a guideline to conduct and set limits where people are motivated not so much within family and territorial community as by shared interests within secondary group associations. Today, law takes a very large part in total social control. There are several reasons for it. Firstly, customs lack an agency of authoritative jurisdiction due to which the interests of the community do not remain fully secure. Law with special agency of enforcement is required if interests are to be pursued in peace. Secondly, it is a shortcoming of custom that it cannot adopt itself readily to changing conditions. To meet the social necessities and for quick adoption to social changes, a code which can be immediately enacted and made expressly to meet the new situation is required. Thirdly, since there are different customs of different groups, to have a single and uniform code of behaviour is desirable. The need for a uniform civil code is now being felt in India, though the issue is being looked at from a political angle by different political parties.

On account of the above deficiencies of custom as regulator of social conduct, law has grown up to meet the challenges created by industrialization, urbanization, decay of family life, new political situation, new economic conditions, growth of consciousness caused by spread of education, and other various agencies of media.

SOCIOLOGY OF LEGAL PROFESSION

Sociology is the study of human in society. Legal system is a part of social system and therefore society affects the legal system and the legal system influences the society. Today, particularly in developing societies governed by rule of law, the interaction between legal and social processes are so close that the study of behavioural and policy dimensions of legal norms and processes cannot be ignored by any student of law. Similarly, no students of sociology can ignore the study of legal frameworks and procedures in their understanding of human behaviours. Law deals in a way with human's behaviour in society and so it has been called behavioural science and the lawyer has been called 'social engineer'. It is now not sufficient for them to get acquainted with the laws of the society but equally more important to broaden their knowledge of society so that they may competently understand its structure and processes. The impact of sociology on law is so vast that it has led to the emergence of the sociological school of jurisprudence.

It need not be pointed out that the challenge of Marxian philosophy, the emergence of the social welfare state, and the growth of sociological literature necessitated a new approach to the conventional study of law. The light sociological sciences threw on human society made the study of law more meaningful and interesting. The knowledge of law was so far confined to the narrow world of statutes and cases. The study of sociology made the lawyers more sensitized to the social problems and needs and gave them a humanistic attitude in the application of their legal skills and knowledge.

Sociology has rendered great service to the legal profession by throwing light on how the laws actually work and how the crime can be effectively dealt with. Sociology has undertaken the study of various social problems, such as crime, drug addiction, prostitution, and sexual crimes, which society has to solve. The sociological knowledge has given a new meaning to criminal jurisprudence that laws are to be made for people and the law makers and its executors are to take into consideration the human and social aspects while making or executing it.

The social mission of the lawyers is not to get the accused convicted or released. It is their mission to facilitate social change in a manner that creates the minimum friction and maximum happiness for the maximum number of people. Law, so far, has been used as an instrument of repression and deterrence. Law should adopt a new development-related approach in the Indian context. Today, legal profession is isolated from social realities and continues to adhere to colonial procedures and socially barren approaches. Sociology has helped to illumine legal knowledge both in thought and in action to the advantage of society.

The application of sociological knowledge to legal phenomena and the operation of legal institutions will help to develop an appreciation of the possibilities, difficulties, and limitations of legal profession in social ordering and social change. In conclusion, legal profession cannot afford to remain untouched with the social realities, policies, and values.

QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the relationship between sociology and law.
2. Discuss the meaning of law and its role in society.
3. 'Law is the command of the sovereign'. Do you agree?
4. How does law differ from custom? Compare their respective roles in society.
5. Define 'law' and describe its characteristics.
6. What do you understand by the term 'social basis of law'?
7. To what extent and in what cases can law override the customs of the people?
8. 'Custom supplements law'. Explain.
9. Describe the role of law as an integrative mechanism.
10. What explains the growth of law into the voluminous codes of modern times?
11. Write a note on sociology of legal profession. Do you think it necessary for a student of law to study sociology?

Part 2 Sociology of India

Unit 6: Development of Indian Society

Unit 7: Major Social Institutions

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Unit 6 Development of Indian Society

Development of Indian Society

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The etymological definition of sociology is the 'science of society', that is, the study of the web of human interactions and interrelations. Since all human beings on this planet do not act in like manner; therefore, there have come to exist different types of societies with differences of usages and customs, modes of action, forms of authority, and means of control. The term 'Indian society' signifies its own peculiar characteristics, which briefly put, are traditionalism, secularism, universalism, and spiritualism.

Society as such has no origin. It emerged spontaneously and followed its own line of development. It passed through several stages of evolution before reaching its modern complex form. Existing societies are on different stages of development. Human society has advanced from a savage state to a civilized state. The process of development of society has not been the same everywhere on this planet nor has it been similar throughout the course of human history. Generally speaking, society has passed through three stages of development tribal, agrarian, and industrial.

PRIMITIVE SOCIETY

It is difficult to say anything definite about the earlier period of Indian society, as there are no written records available about it. The historians have only speculated about the original inhabitants of India on the basis of anthropological sources. According to them, there were six major racial elements in the population of India: Negrito, Proto-Australoid, Mongoloid, Mediterranean, Western Brachycephals, and Nordic. Of these, the first three are the older residents whose descendents are found in different parts of India. The latter three are said to have arrived later. The Nordics were the last major ethnic elements to arrive in India who made a profound impact on its culture and society.

Thus, the primitive society of India consisted of ethnic elements, that is, tribal people. They were nomads and lived in caves. Life was indeed very difficult because they wandered from place to place in search of food and shelter.

Even today, there are many comparatively inaccessible hill and forest- regions where primitive tribes are sheltered from the presence of more advanced populations. These regions are scattered throughout the country. In the north-east part including Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, and the northern parts of Uttar Pradesh, the main tribes are Lepcha, Mishmi, Garo, Khasi, Naga, Kuki, Chakma, etc. In the middle part are the hilly areas in between the Narmada and Godavari rivers. The main tribes are Gondas of Madhya Pradesh; Bhils of Rajasthan; Santhals, Mundas, Singhbhum, and Uraon of Chhota Nagpur; and Saura, Bonda, Kharia, and Kondh of Orissa. Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Hyderabad, Mysore, and Travancore-Cochin areas are included in the southern part. These areas are inhabited by Toda of Nilgiri, Chechu and Kurokan of Hyderabad and Jobha, Nicobari, Ongoo, and Shopan of Nicobar and Andaman islands. These tribes follow different customs and traditions. For example, Khasi tribe believes in adelphic polyandry wherein the wife of the eldest brother is considered the wife of all the other brothers. The younger brothers are not allowed to marry a different wife. The Nagas, Gondas, and Todas believe in polygamy, wherein a man marries several women. Likewise, the rules of divorce differ. The tribal people are religious in their outlook and believe in totemism, magic, and fetishism.

Throughout the Muslim rule in India, no attempts were made by the Muslim rulers to draw the aboriginal tribes into the habitat of Hindu society. The Hindus also did not feel any courage to impose their beliefs, norms, and values upon them. The British rulers followed the policy of systematic exploitation of the tribal land. In most cases, the right to exploit jungles, land revenue collection, and zamindari rights were given to the outsiders. After the attainment of independence, the Government of India adopted the policy of isolationism—certain tribal areas were excluded from the main state and placed under a special administrative machinery; for example, North-East Forest Alliance was established as one area and excluded from the state of Assam. In some cases, regions inhabited mainly by aboriginal tribes were notified as scheduled areas for which the governor of the state had a special responsibility.

About 30 million more or less primitive people are spread unevenly all over the country, and there seems to be no immediate prospect of their absorption within any of the larger sections of the population. It may also be remarked that the aboriginals themselves are divided into numerous ethnic groups based on race, language, and culture. As the most ancient population element in the subcontinent, they belong to very archaic racial strata. In the present state of Indian society, there is very little likelihood of any substantial integration involving people of basically different social groups, although some efforts both at the constitutional and administrative level are being made to promote the welfare of scheduled tribes. There are special provisions (Articles 16, 19, 16, 164, 338, 339, 275, 330, 244, 332, 334, 339, 342, and the 5th and 6th schedules in the Indian constitution) seeking to remove the social disabilities and safeguard their rights as citizens of India. There also exists the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to study socio-economic and other relevant circumstances relating to offences against persons belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and to recommend remedial measures. Development schemes to raise their level of living have also been initiated. The North-Eastern Hill University at Shillong in Meghalaya is doing its bit in spreading education in the state where until not long ago human sacrifice to propitiate, a mythical gigantic snake, was not infrequent. However, whatever progress under the impact of urbanization and industrialization might have been made, there can be no doubt that for a long time to come, most tribes will persist as groups of distinct racial characteristics alienated from the cultural

mainstream of India. The situation in tribal areas is disturbing. The rise of insurgency in the north-east, like militancy in Jammu and Kashmir, is a serious problem being faced by the government.

SOCIETY IN ANCIENT INDIA

As we have studied above, the earliest men lived in relatively small bands who formed different tribes on the basis of family and blood ties. Their life was simple and their economy consisted of seed and root gathering, of hunting and fishing. They were religious people in their outlook and believed in mythological gods and goddesses. In course of time, man acquired skill and knowledge in domestication of plants and animals, which laid the foundation of agrarian society. Man founded villages and thereby created the need for new forms of social structure and social control.

Vedic period: Social life in Indian society of early times was broadly based on the Varnashram system, under which men were classified into four broader classes (varnas) according to the nature of functions to be performed by them. These four classes were (i) Brahman (the scholarly class performing religious rites and teaching), (ii) Kshatriya (the ruling class responsible for the administration and defence of the kingdom), (iii) Vaishya (the trading class that carried trade and agriculture), and (iv) Shudras (the servants and slaves for menial work).

Another important factor regulating social life in ancient India was a series of sacraments, 'Samskaras', which mark the various stages of the human life; for example, related to birth like Garbhadhan (relating to conception), Namkaran (name giving ceremony), Annaprashan (first feeding of a child), Mundan (head shaving), Karanvedh (piercing the ears); related to education like Vidyaramobha (entering the Ashram of Guru, i.e., school), Upanayan (wearing yajnopavit, i.e. a sacred thread to be hung over the left shoulder and diagonally down the right arm), Vedarambha (learning Vedas); related to marriage like Saptapadi (taking seven steps around the religious fire), Kanyadan, (gifting away the girl as bride), Mangalya-Dharma (wearing the mangal sutra); and related to death like Daha Sanskara (cremation), Asthi-sangraha (collection of ashes), Asthi-visarjan (immersion of ashes in the holy Ganges) and Pind-dan (offering to ancestors).

The ancient Indian society was marked by strong in-group feeling wherein the force of traditional mores and religious precepts was more dominant. Crime was rare, and informal pressures and social sanctions were sufficient to maintain peace and order. The life patterns of the people were fixed and the production relations between the different classes were stabilized. Occupational mobility was unknown and the people lived a simple and peaceful life. They were free from mental conflicts and were hard working and sincere. Since there were not many special organizations, family was the only organization to perform the tasks of child rearing and social security. It was patriarchal in nature. Women enjoyed high status. No religious ceremony was considered complete without the presence of Ardhangini (wife).

Post-Vedic period: In the post-Rigvedic period, the varna ashram system acquired the form of caste system based on the element of birth. The Brahmins considered themselves superior to Kshatriyas, whereas Vaishyas were considered inferior to Kshatriyas. Shudras came to be regarded as untouchables. The caste system is, thus, an institution of Hindu society having originated in India. The women also did no longer enjoy the status that they enjoyed in the Rigvedic period. Rituals and superstitions spread their network. During the course of time, Brahmins lost their respectable place in society and became covetous, corrupt, and cheats. Through myths, rituals, and superstitions they befooled the people and collected money in the name of propitiating the angry gods, curing the incurable diseases, and bringing health and happiness in the family. The Aryan religion lost its purity and degenerated into dogmatism, fatalism, supernaturalism, animism, and ritualism. Against

the background of the evils that crept in Vedic religion and affected the social life of the people, Lord Mahavira and Lord Buddha propagated their faith known as Jainism and Buddhism, respectively, in the sixth century BCE. This period is known as the era of religious transition in ancient India. Here it may be mentioned that India in these times was politically divided into numerous small and big republics or kingdoms always eager to extend their boundaries. It was not a single united state with a central government.

Mauryan age: The Mauryan age (321 BCE–185 BCE) marks a new era in the ancient Indian history. For the first time, political unity was established in India under a king—Chandragupta Maurya. According to Megasthenese, Mauryan society was divided into seven classes of (i) Brahmans and philosophers, (ii) farmers, (iii) soldiers, (iv) traders and artisans, (v) herdsmen and hunters, (vi) junior officers, and (vii) king's ministers, advisors, and judges. The people led an honest life. They were people of good conduct. Slavery and sati systems did not exist. However, polygamy was practised, and girls could be purchased to serve as wives.

Post-Mauryan age: Mauryan period from 200 BCE–300 CE saw the rise of many states all over the Indian subcontinent. Some were small, whereas others were large. Three dynasties, Sunga, Kanvas, and Satavahan, ruled over those states. The importance of Sunga dynasty lies in the fact that during their period great progress was made in the fields of Hindu dharma, Sanskrit language, literature, and art. Manusmriti was written during this period. Efforts were made to reinforce the Varna ashram system of Hindu religion. The Brahmans were restored their superior status, whereas Shudras lived in pitiable conditions. Several foreign classes entered in and settled in India. They were the Bactrian Greek (also called the Indo-Greeks), the Parthians, the Shakas, and the Kushanas. These foreigners became a part of the population of India and were recognized as a part of the Kshatriya class. An important result of this contact was that a number of new ideas on religion, art, and science entered into various aspects of Indian life. Intercaste marriages, child marriage, Anuloma and Pratiloma marriages were prevalent during the post-Mauryan period. The widows, however, did not enjoy respectable place.

Gupta period: The advent of Gupta dynasty marks another landmark in the development of Indian society. It ruled the country from 335 CE to 467 CE. The Gupta period is called the golden age of Indian history. The following are the important features of social life in the Gupta period:

- (i) The caste system took deep roots. The Brahmans were considered the purest and most respectable caste. The priestly functions could be performed by them only. However, there was flexibility in the matters of marriage, occupation, and food. Pratiloma and Anuloma marriages were not forbidden. King Rudrasen, a Brahman, married the daughter of Chandra Gupta II. There were examples of marriages with foreigners. The prince of Ikshwaku caste married the daughter of Shakya caste. The restrictions on occupation also were not rigid. Brahmans and Kshatriyas could adopt an occupation regarded inferior to their caste occupation. The Vaishyas followed the occupations of goldsmith, carpenter, blacksmith, and farmer. Untouchability started spreading its wings. According to Fa-Hien, the Chandals (untouchables) had to live outside the town, separated from the rest of the town people. They were regarded so impure that high caste people did not even look at them. Most of the people were vegetarians, though non-vegetarian food was also allowed on special occasions.
- (ii) The slavery system also existed, though only under exceptional circumstances. People were captured as slaves. The prisoners of war and the losers in the dice worked as slaves; but their life was not made miserable and they were not tortured.

(iii) The joint family system was an inseparable part of Indian social life. The eldest male member used to be the owner of the family property. He was bound by the rules laid down in Smritis in the matter of his rights and duties.

(iv) The women occupied an honourable position. The wife was not the slave of the husband. She had equal rights and led an independent life. Child-marriages and widow marriages were also prevalent in Gupta period. Chandra Gupta II himself married the widow of his brother. The widows led a life of simplicity. Sati system also existed. The wife of Gopalraj—the army chief of Bhamu Gupta, became sati on his death. Purdah system did not exist.

(v) The people were law abiding and honest. They lived in peace with each other. Religious sacrifices were held, but not as often as in Vedic times. It was a period of religious toleration. In the Mauryan period, Buddhism got royal patronage, but the Gupta kings were staunch followers of Hindu religion, which made it a powerful religion. However, they equally respected other religions also.

After the end of Gupta period, India fell prey to foreign invasions that destroyed its unity and created chaos and turmoil all around, and the Indian society got afflicted with numerous social evils.

INDIAN SOCIETY DURING THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

During the medieval period, the Indian society of ancient times retained its basic social structure, although here and there some changes crept in due to the policies followed by the rulers of this period. After the death of Harsha (647 CE), chaos, confusion, and anarchy prevailed in the country. The unity of Harsha's empire disappeared and small independent states sprang up continually at war with one another. Most of these states in the north were ruled over by the Rajput kings (800 CE–1200 CE) who were brave, courageous, patriotic, and generous. Women occupied a respectable position in the Rajput society. Swayamvar and Johar were the two great virtues of their women. There was no 'purdah system'. The caste system became rigid, which prevented national integration. The Rajputs were followers of Hinduism. Many beautiful temples of the Hindu gods and goddesses were built by them. Agriculture continued to be the main occupation of the people who led a happy life. The economic and administrative system of the Rajputs was based on the pattern of feudal system. The kingdom was divided into jagirs held by jagirdars who quarrelled among themselves and often revolted against the ruler.

In the south, the two important dynasties were those of Rashtrakutas and Cholas. Both of them were great patrons of temples. The Rashtrakuta ruler king Krishna I built the rock-cut Kailash temple at Ellora. The biggest and most perfectly built temple of south India is perhaps the Brihadeshwara temple at Tanjore built by the Chola ruler Rajaraja I in honour of Lord Shiva in 1011 CE. The Brahmins were the most respectable class of the Chola society. The people followed Hinduism and worshipped the Hindu gods. Shankaracharya and Ramanuja were the two great religious teachers of this period—the former preached the Gyan Marg while the latter preached the Bhakti Marg.

The period from 1001 CE to 1526 CE was the period of political turmoil and invasions during which Muslim warriors invaded India either to plunder it or conquer territories. Mahmud of Ghazni was the first Turkish invader who carried 17 raids in the course of 25 years (1001 CE–1025 CE). His invasion on Somnath temple in Kathiawar in 1025 CE was the fiercest one. He successfully destroyed the sacred and the richest temple of the Hindus and took away hundreds of maunds of gold, silver, and costly jewels. The Hindus have not yet forgotten the invasion which is cited in the

Ayodhya case. Thereafter, Muhammad Ghori attacked India in 1175 CE and captured Multan, Peshawar, Sialkot, and Punjab. Subsequently he defeated Prithviraj, the bravest ruler in north India, which marked the end of Rajput rule in northern India.

Muhammad Ghori is regarded as the real founder of the Muslim empire in India.

The Muslim rule in India affected Indian society in several ways:

(i) The society became divided into three main groups: Kings, nobles, and high men formed the upper class. They lived a life of luxury. The other group was that of the middle class, which consisted of traders, officers, etc. They led a simple but comfortable life. The third was the lower class, which consisted of farmers, artisans, and labourers. They were poor people who worked hard to earn their livelihood. There arose social classes with different modes of living, later leading to class struggle.

(ii) The position of women deteriorated. They could not move freely. Purdah system, child marriage and sati system became common features.

(iii) Varna ashram system of ancient Hindu society degenerated into caste system, which acquired rigidity and became a closed system out of which none could go out and none could come in.

(iv) The Mughal kings, except Aurangzeb, generally followed the policy of religious toleration and communal unity, which brought the Hindus and the Muslims closer and influenced the customs of each other. The Sufi saints had many Hindu followers. The Dargah of Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti at Ajmer is a place of pilgrimage for Hindus as well. Likewise, the Bhakti movement laid stress on common bonds of humanity. The ideas of Sufism and Bhakti movement created tolerance among the people—both Hindus and Muslims.

(v) The Mughal rulers made great contribution in the cultural field. Urdu was born as a language which was a mixture of Persian and Hindi languages. This brought mutual interaction between the Hindus and the Muslims who also adopted the style of dress, food habits, and other family pursuits of one another, music became an intermixture of Indian and Persian styles and developed in various forms like Thumri, Khayal, and Ghazal. The classical music received great impetus. Some new instruments were invented to enrich various forms of rhythm. Likewise, in painting the Persian and Hindu styles got mixed. The magnificent buildings built by Mughal emperors were pieces of architectural grandeur. The culture of Indian society was thus greatly enriched during Mughal rule. It may be noted that Hindu rule was never completely wiped out from India.

INDIAN SOCIETY DURING BRITISH RULE

The British entered India as traders, but soon became its ruler. The main aim of British rule in India was to consolidate its empire and continue its hold over the country. With this end in view, they did not interfere much with the social life of the Indian people, their customs and traditions, their family structure and norms, and their modes of living. Whatever administrative or legislative measures were undertaken by them was to please the social reformers or to consolidate their hold over India.

Before 1857, the year of First War of Independence, popularly known as the Great Indian Mutiny or Sepoy Mutiny, the British Government did some commendable work in the fields of social reforms. In 1829, Lord Bentinck declared the practice of sati illegal—a demand put forward

by Raja Ram Mohan Roy. It was declared that anyone who instigated, inspired, or forced a woman to immolate herself as sati, would be punished by death. Likewise, female infanticide was also declared illegal in 1802 and was made punishable by death. The banning of sati practice caused the problem of widow remarriage, which was prohibited under Hindu law. Under the pressure of social reformers like Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Ranade, and Bhandarkar, the Government passed a law in 1856 that allowed the widows to remarry. The marriageable age of boys was raised to 18 years and that of girls to 14 years in order to suppress child marriage. The practice of human sacrifice, sacrificing little children to appease gods and goddesses, was also banned in 1846. The above steps of the British Government were, however, taken as interference in their social life by the people, thereby creating discontent and unrest, which became one of the causes leading to the Revolt of 1857.

The British prestige had suffered a lot during the Great Rising of 1857. As such, many changes took place in the British policy towards India. One such change was the policy of non-interference in the ancient customs and usages of the Indian people and to follow the policy of religious tolerance. Consequently, British Government gave up its policy of social reforms after 1857. Whenever social reformers raised their voice against the prevailing social evils, the British Government remained silent, which was, however, unfortunate from the viewpoint of ridding Indian society of its social evils. It may, therefore, be said that the British policy in this regard after 1857 was worse than before the reform movements.

A brief reference to the social reformers of the nineteenth century, who felt the need for removing irrational social and religious practices that were hampering the unity and progress of Indian society, may help in better understanding the Indian society during British rule. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the first great social and religious reformer of the nineteenth century. He spearheaded the movement to eradicate social evils pertaining to women. He founded the Brahma Samaj in 1828. Through it he preached the worship of one god. He was against idol worship, superstitions, rigidity of the caste system, meaningless customs, and the domination by the Brahmans. The Brahma Samaj actively fought against child marriage and polygamy. It worked for the education of girls, remarriage of widows, and abolishing of the purdah system and played a major role in removing many long-held prejudices and orthodoxies of Indian society. In Maharashtra, a movement called Prarthna Samaj similar to Brahma Samaj was started by R. G. Bhandarkar and Mahadev Govind Ranade. It preached the principles of Brahma Samaj, worked for the welfare of the backward and oppressed classes, and also laid great stress on female education. Gopal Krishna Gokhale also joined it. He founded the Servants of India Society. Jyotiba Phule was the founder of Satya Shodhak Samaj in 1848, which worked for the upliftment of the oppressed classes. Phule condemned the caste structure and attacked the supremacy of the Brahmans. He even started the practice of performing the marriage ceremonies without the Brahman priests.

It may be noted that throughout the span of Indian history south India was never directly affected by the political upheavals caused by the series of invasions. It was north India that bore the brunt of foreign invasions. As such the social structure in south India remained more or less unchanged over the centuries; one in which the Brahmans occupied a dominant position. The coming of the British did not change the situation very much. Still some enlightened personalities like Sridharubu Naidu, Kandakuri Veera Salingan, and Sri Narayana Guru condemned the superstitions and orthodoxies of Hindu society, propagated belief in one supreme god, and advocated widow remarriage. Sri Narayana Guru who was born into the Ezhava family carried on a crusade against the oppression of the Ezhava—who were considered to be outcastes. He advocated one caste, one god, and one religion for all. He fought for the right of untouchables to worship in Hindu temples. It may also be noted that south is the home of wealthy temples. Their wealth was controlled by the priests. The reformers

of south India wanted public control of temple funds. They also campaigned against the Devdasi system under which young girls were dedicated to temples who were eventually made victims of exploitation.

Arya Samaj was established by Dayanand Saraswati who was born in 1824 in a Brahmin family in Morvi, a small princely state in Kathiawar, Gujarat. He questioned the meaningless ritual, worship of idols, and the caste system. He launched a vigorous campaign against Brahman priesthood. His philosophy was, 'Go back to Vedas'. According to him, all knowledge was preserved in the Vedas, and their study alone could solve all the social problems in the Indian society. He preached against social inequalities. He believed that women were equal to men and they should be provided education and not be married off before the age of 16. He was strongly in favour of widow remarriage and condemned untouchability. He founded the Arya Samaj in 1875 to revive Hinduism and reorganize the Hindu society. He started the Shuddhi Movement and brought back to Hinduism many people who had embraced either Islam or Christianity. He opened the doors of Arya Samaj to the Shudras and the depressed classes. He opposed purdah system. Arya Samaj became a social movement and did useful work. Arya Samaj mandirs were built for its followers to perform 'yagya' and hold religious functions. Also, a number of educational institutions were set up to provide education consisting of both traditional learning and western scientific studies. The Arya Samaj played a very positive role in the field of social and religious reforms. It was quite popular in north India.

Swami Vivekanand (1863–1902) was the disciple of Ramakrishna Paramhansa. His address to the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893 was universally acclaimed as a brilliant discourse on Hindu religion, which removed some of the wrong notions that existed in the Western minds about Hindu religion and its culture. He founded the Ramakrishna Mission in 1896 to propagate the message of his 'guru' and work for the social good. He preached against superstition, narrow-mindedness, and weakness in all forms. He condemned caste system, ritual ceremonies, and dogmas. He urged the people to imbibe the spirit of humanism, equality, liberty, and social service.

The religious and social reform movements in the second half of the nineteenth century played a vital role in awakening the people of India and make them conscious of the need to eradicate social evils. All the social reformers attacked caste system and emphasized the need for improving the status of women and removing the evils pertaining to them. Movements for temple entry of untouchables, removal of long-held taboos and social evils began to spread across the country. By an Act of 1872, intercaste and intercommunal marriages were made legal. The effective age for marriage of girls was raised to 12 years by the Age of Consent Act, 1891. The Sharda Act of 1929 raised the marriageable age of girls to 14 years and that of boys to 18 years. Steps were also taken to promote women education, and women schools and colleges were established. Even medical colleges were set up for women. The Lady Dufferin Fund was set up for training women as doctors, nurses, and midwives.

It may also be pointed out that the political leaders who played a pioneering role during the freedom movement were social reformers as well. They awakened the people against social evils and exhorted them to fight against them. The names of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, and M. K Gandhi are notable ones.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak was a revivalist. He was eager to revive all that was good and glorious in India's culture. He realized that the social order in India necessitated a drastic change, but the change must be from within. It must not be Western import. He condemned religious orthodoxy and dogged adherence to customs. He was also hostile to bring about social reform through bureaucratic legislation. He considered it sheer humiliation that the Hindus should pander before bureaucracy and request them to make social laws, thus exhibiting their inability to do so. He did not like social reforms to be imposed from above.

Lala Lajpat Rai rendered social and humanitarian service through Arya Samaj and the ‘Servants of People Society’. He devoted himself to the cause of removal of untouchability and the emancipation of the depressed classes. He established All India Achhut Uddhar Sabha for their uplift. As an Arya Samajist he was opposed to the inequities in the name of the caste. He regretted that, in India, the reformers are working against heavy odds for they have to contend against prejudice and ignorance without absolutely any help from the state.

M. K. Gandhi or popularly called Gandhiji was opposed to dogmatism. He did not preach harking back to primitive or paganism. Rather he stood for a strenuous, dynamic, and morality-oriented life, which involved quest of the good of one’s soul and the eradication of wrong and injustice. According to him, religion is always within us and has to be evolved out of us. Although Gandhiji felt inspired by all the religions of the world, yet Hinduism had profound influence on his mind. However, he did not accept every word of Hindu scriptures. He did not subscribe to the pernicious and cruel system of untouchability, nor did he believe in the caste system. He firmly believed that an ideal social order could be evolved on the basis of the ancient Varna ashram system interpreted in the real sense of the term. This system does not presuppose any hierarchical gradation of occupations; all are treated as equal and a profession is taken as a means for performing one’s duty towards society. The upliftment of women was an important part of the national movement under the leadership of Gandhiji.

From the above account, it is thus clear that the main role in the field of social reforms during British rule in India was played by social reformers and political leaders of the nineteenth and twentieth century.

Growth of Middle Class

Generally speaking, in societies there are usually two classes—kings and subjects, patricians and plebeians, feudal lords and vassals, upper and lower classes, capitalists and proletariat, masters and slaves, haves and have nots, rich and poor, lords and commoners, and the like. An important development in Indian society during the nineteenth century was the emergence of a new social class, that is, the middle class. It was the consequence of a two-fold process—the destruction of the old ruling class, on the one hand, and the rise of the new groups of landholders, businessmen, and intellectuals, on the other. The destruction of the old upper class was the direct result of the British conquest, the formation of the business class a by-product of European business enterprise, and the growth of the landholding and intellectual groups was due to the establishment of British administration and introduction of Western education. In other words, the creator of the Indian middle class was the British rule.

The new social class—the middle class—had its conspicuous appearance in the three major cities of Kolkata, Mumbai, and Chennai. This class was a hotchpotch of several groups performing various functions in connection with trade, commerce, and administration. It included the following groups:

- (i) The merchants, agents and proprietors of modern trading firms, excluding those at the top.
- (ii) The salaried executive and officers including technical and supervisory staff.
- (iii) The main body of civil servants and other public servants excepting those at the top.
- (iv) The members of the principal recognized professions, salaried or otherwise, such as lawyers and doctors, lecturers and professors, writers and journalists, etc.

- (v) The body of well-to-do shopkeepers including accountants and other officers employed in the joint stock concerns.
- (vi) The holders of the middle grades of proprietary tenures of land.
- (vii) The group of rural entrepreneurs engaged in plantation industry.
- (viii) The main body of clerks, assistants, and other non-manual workers below the management level.

The middle class stood between the capitalist and the working class and formed a composite intermediate layer consisting of a wide range of occupational interests, but bound together by a common style of living and behaviour pattern. It stood for liberal democratic values. They imitated the ways of foreign rulers by learning their education, and thereby reaping the economic benefits of the new social and economic structure. This class constituted the modern Indian intelligentsia who played an important role in the field of social reforms and the contemporary political history. As described earlier, they organized various progressive socio-reform and religious-reform movements in the country.

Rural Conditions During British Rule

The Indian society is agrarian in nature. About 75 per cent of India's population lives in villages and follows agriculture as their main occupation. Any study of Indian society cannot, therefore, ignore the study of Indian villages and village economic structure.

At the outset it may be said that British rule in India destroyed the village economy, its mores and customs, peace and simplicity, self-sufficiency and homogeneity. India in ancient times was known as a 'Golden Bird', which today lies at the bottom of poverty among the countries of the world. Poverty is more pronounced in the rural areas than in the urban ones. In ancient India, there were no landlords or intermediaries. King's officers used to collect land revenue directly from the peasant-owners. The farmers were provided all facilities regarding irrigation. In times of natural calamities the land revenue was remitted. Besides agriculture, the other economic pursuits were animal husbandry and small-scale manufacturing. There was integrated system of living. Production was need oriented and not for marketing. The economic relations were of informal type. The manufacturers, workers, and consumers were personally known to each other.

During the early middle age, agriculture remained the main feature of Indian economy. Animal husbandry acquired a prestigious position. The prosperous farmers, rich people, and kings, all of them used to have animal wealth in ample measure. The cow was regarded sacred and was even worshipped. Different kinds of metals also came to be used for making implements, jewellery, and utensils. Weaving and other handicrafts became the common occupations done mostly by women or assisted by them. Foreign trade also increased. It may, however, be noted that some tyrant kings in between and foreign invaders did plunder the country's wealth and exploited the peasants. The land revenue policy also differed from king to king. If a king was benevolent, peasants felt respite, but if he was autocratic, the peasants felt suppressed. There were both good and bad kings in the dynasties that came in and went out during the medieval age. A positive feature of the Indian society was that the quarrels and discords in society were seldom based on religious differences. The Hindus and Muslims had adopted one another's culture in terms of customs, language, dress, and mode of living. There were no mosque-temple disputes.

The history of modern period in India began after the Battle of Plassey (1757), which laid the foundation of the British empire and paved the way for the British mastery over the whole of India. As told above, the British government had adopted the policy of non-interference in the religious and social matters of people in India. Whatever social legislation was enacted by it was due to the pressure of reform movements launched by social reformers. In regard to agrarian matters, there were three main land-revenue systems: (a) The permanent settlement (b) The ryotwari settlement, and (c) The mahalwari settlement. The permanent settlement was introduced by Lord Cornwallis who became the Governor General of India in 1786. He first introduced a decimal settlement in 1790, which was made permanent in 1793. Under this system, the zamindars who had purchased the right of revenue collection through highest bid in 1790 became the permanent owners of the land. Thus, from revenue collectors they became landlords and the ownership of rights became hereditary. It is called Zamindari system and prevailed in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Northern Sarkars, and Oudh. Under the Ryotwari system adopted in 1820, there were no intermediaries. Revenue was collected directly from the cultivators called 'ryats'. The rate of revenue, one half of the produce, was levied for a period of 30 years after which, it could be revised. The cultivator had a right to his land. It was introduced in Karnataka, Mysore, Mumbai, and Chennai. The mahalwari settlement was introduced in the 1830's in western UP, parts of Madhya Pradesh, and Punjab. A system of common ownership of land prevailed in group of villages or mahals. The head of a 'mahal' was called 'talukdar'. He was responsible for collecting the revenue from the villages. Revenue under all these three systems was fixed arbitrarily, and was not fixed in accordance with the productivity of the land. There were rigid rules of collection and no remission was granted even during times of monsoon failure or floods. The Indian movie *Lagaan* depicts it very brilliantly.

The revenue system during British rule gave a boost to landlordism. While the government and the landlords prospered, the peasants suffered. The rates of revenue were high and in case of failure to pay it, their lands and belongings could be auctioned. The peasants used to raise loans from money lenders at high rate of interest, which landed them in perpetual indebtedness. The peasants under the British rule lived a life of penury, indebtedness, and impoverishment. In fact, the British government was least concerned with the well-being of the peasantry class, nor was it interested in introducing agricultural reforms. The Zamindari system caused immense harm to the nation. It may also be mentioned that during the British rule there were numerous famines. Indian agriculture mainly depended on monsoon, so whenever the monsoon failed, famines followed. In the second half of the nineteenth century, there were nearly 20 famines, which ravaged different parts of the country. According to the British writer William Digby, nearly 28 crore people lost their lives during the famines from 1854 to 1901. The worst famine of 1943 caused the death of nearly 30 lakh people in Bengal. In short, during British rule, peasants were oppressed by zamindars, agricultural production was low, rural people lived a life of utter poverty, the crafts and cottage industries collapsed, and the whole village economy and agriculture got shattered.

Industrial Development

A notable feature of Indian society during British rule was the growing distance between Muslims and Hindus. As mentioned above, the Hindus and Muslims lived peacefully during the Muslim rule in India. They had adopted the customs, manners, and food habits of each other. The language Urdu was a mixture of Persian and Hindi languages, which was read and spoken by Hindu families also. There were no Hindu–Muslim clashes during the reign of Muslim rulers. Some of the Muslim rulers even married Hindu women who were given royal status in the family. The British, in order

to check the growth of Hindu–Muslim unity, followed the policy of ‘divide and rule’. The growth of Muslim nationalism was the creation of British rulers who lost no opportunity to encourage separation tendencies among the Muslim community and their leaders during the course of freedom movement. A permanent political association called All India Muslim League was formed in 1906. Separate electorates were introduced by the Indian Communal Act of 1909. After some years, the two nation theory was propounded, ultimately leading to the partition of India in 1947.

We may also briefly look into the industrial scene during the British rule. India in ancient and medieval period was known for its handicrafts and skills. Indian economy was not only self-sufficient but also produced goods for export. Indian textile fabric, cotton, silk, and other goods like salt and indigo were exported to Europe and other parts of the world. The British rule adopted a policy of neglect and indifference towards the Indian cottage and small-scale industries and did not give any protection to them. Under the impact of *Laissez-faire* policy and industrialization, the Indian artisans suffered. Faced with the giant-like machines and market competition, they were forced to abandon their ancestral crafts and join the rank of workers in the factories. Slowly and gradually all Indian industries suffered, and consequently the artisans were adversely affected and forced to abandon their professional trade. By 1880, the decline of handicrafts was an accomplished fact.

Industrialization and urbanization under British rule brought about great changes in the social structure and norms of the Indian society. The traditional patriarchal and joint family system was replaced by modern nuclear family system. The villagers fled to cities and became workers in factories. They lived in slums where they did not have proper living conditions. A new class of industrial workers arose which later formed their unions for the betterment of wages and improvement of their living facilities. The growth of trade unions marked a new beginning in the industrial relations. New classes of capitalists and workers divided society between the ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’. Political parties came forward to take up their cause and fight against the British rulers to get them better facilities and wages. Factory laws were passed to regulate their working conditions. But in spite of all this, the British government’s policy was pro-industrialists. The life of workers continued to be a virtual hell, as was the life of peasants.

It may not, however, be denied that industrialization under British rule did bring in some good results. Industrialization increased production, and necessities of life became easily available. People were encouraged to exert themselves utmost for earning money. The development of the means of transport and communication like railways, roads, and telegraphs facilitated contacts among the people and made it easier for the village people to move to towns and sell their produce and goods at better price. This also helped in the exchange of ideas and breaking down class, caste differences. They travelled together in the railways and buses and worked as co-workers in the factories. They co-operated with one another and worked shoulder to shoulder. Therefore, the setting up of industries during British rule did help in economic advancement of India and loosening the control of traditional customs.

To sum up, the Indian society during the British rule was marked by impoverishment of peasants, exploitation of factory workers, bondage of labour, birth of communalism, destruction of village economy, decay of joint family system, lack of community feeling, predominance of individualism, growth of mercantalism, and loss of moral values.

INDIAN SOCIETY DURING THE POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

India got independence from the British rule on 15 August 1947 after a long freedom struggle. The Indian leaders of freedom movement professed high ideals regarding social regeneration. Some of these ideals were social justice, economic equality, secularism, democracy, national integration, and

rural development. The successive governments have done a lot to bring in reforms in social and economic fields through legislation and other means. Thus, a number of laws have been enacted in the social field—the chief ones being Hindu Marriage Act and Divorce Act, 1955; Hindu Succession Act, 1956; Hindu Guardianship Act, 1956; Child Marriage Restraint (Amendment) Act, 1978; Marriage Laws Amendment Act, 1976; Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961; Commission of Sati Act, 1987; Maternity Benefits Act, 1961; Equal Remuneration Act, 1976; Women's and Children's Institution (Licensing) Act, 1960; Untouchability Offences Act, 1955; etc. In the economic field, the main enactments are Factory Act, 1948; Dock Workers (Regulation of Employment) Act, 1948; Motor Transport Workers Act, 1961; Civil Mines (Conservation and Safety Act, 1952; Minimum Wages Act, 1948 and 1961); Bonus Act, 1955; Fatal Accidents Act, 1955; Employee's State Provident Fund Act, 1952; Employee's State Insurance Act, 1948; Maternity Benefits Act, 1961; Coal Mines Labour Welfare Fund Act, 1947; Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Act, 1960; Industrial Disputes Act, 1947; Industrial Disputes Banking and Insurance Company Act, 1949; etc. For rural development, the main laws passed are Zamindari Abolition Act, Land Ceiling Acts, and Consolidation of Holdings Act. Agriculture is a state subject. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1993 revitalized the Panchayati Raj. Besides, a number of developmental programmes and schemes have also been initiated along with the programme of national awakening through different agencies of public opinion.

Despite all what has been done and achieved, the fact remains that Indian society today is faced with serious problems such as social, economic, and political, and finds itself in a state of social disorganization. Ours is a diseased society needing urgent treatment to regain its health so that its different parts may perform their roles properly.

Decay of family: Family forms the nucleus of society. The joint family system, a feature peculiar to Hindu society, which performed numerous social functions, is collapsing and has given way to nuclear families in the urban society. The joint family fostered social virtues and worked as a social insurance company for the old, sick, and handicapped. The modern society is today faced with the problems of the aged, widows, and abandoned children. The control of elders has loosened, and now not only the grown-ups but even children insist on their choices in matters of food, entertainment, and education. It is called generation gap. There is change in ideas about marital fidelity and extramarital relations. Women are rebelling against male supremacy. The problems of well-educated couples in the form of tension, bitterness, and maladjustment have come to the fore. Love marriages and divorces are no longer a rarity. Even the rural families are not an exception. Self-indulgence in place of self-denial, self-seeking in place of social service, and materialism in place of religious consciousness has led to sapping the very basis of marital harmony. The statistics regarding divorce do not fully represent the volume of marital discord in India.

The dowry system is another problem facing the Indian society. Girls remain unmarried for long years because the parents are not financially well-off to manage the dowry demanded by the parents of the boy. Sometimes the girl herself or her father commits suicide. The parents often commit theft, forgery, or misappropriation to arrange for dowry. Due to the dowry system, the parents are sometimes compelled to marry the girl to a man who is almost fit to be her father. In some cases girls have shown courage in refusing to marry a boy whose parents asked for dowry, but such cases are exceptional. Along with dowry, the huge amount spent in marriage celebration and making it more showy destroys its solemnity. The Government of India enacted a Dowry Prohibition Act in 1961, but it is observed more in breach than compliance. Even our leaders—political and social—have not lagged behind in asking for huge dowry and putting up a costly show at marriage time to exhibit their status and wealth.

The modern Indian family has, thus, failed to effectively play its role of socialization and to exercise social control. The Indian home is riddled with economic tensions, sexual laxity, parental conflicts, and marital disorders. The old restraints of religion and morality have lost their control, and observance of family traditions has become a mere formality.

It may, however, be noted that women in the modern Indian family are in a better position than their counterparts in ancient India. They have now been liberated from the drudgery of the kitchen and the burden of bearing and rearing up a number of children. The birth control methods and legalized termination of pregnancy have made sexual life tension free. Women have taken the place of man in every sphere including civil services, business enterprises, media, and army. They have been chief ministers and governors of the states. Mrs Indira Gandhi has been the Prime Minister of India. They are political leaders in their own right. They actively participated in the freedom movement of India. Under the Panchayati Raj system, 30 per cent of seats are reserved for women in the elected bodies. The Hindu Marriage Act and Divorce Act, 1955; the Hindu Succession Act, 1956; and the Hindu Guardianship Act, 1956 have removed the several disabilities Indian women suffered from. The daughter has an equal right of share in the self-acquired property of father. The Government has also implemented numerous schemes and programmes for their economic development, education, and awareness. A number of voluntary organizations are working for their upliftment and social betterment. However, the number of cases of sexual harassment, rape, molestation; attack on their modesty, illegal traffic in women and other crimes is increasing day by day which have made them insecure and apprehensive of their honour and dignity.

Casteism: Now, we come to the caste system, another peculiar feature of the Indian society. Caste system is a part of Hindu religious order and enjoys the sanction of scriptures. Although untouchability has been made unconstitutional and there has also been intermixture of castes under the impact of urbanization and industrialization, yet caste remains, particularly in the villages, the strongest feature of the social life. The older generation still thinks in old caste terms. Intercaste marriages are exceptional, which take place generally in the case of love marriages. In the villages, such marriages are not welcomed; often the young boy and girl who marry outside their caste are exiled from the village or otherwise punished. One has to still depend very largely on one's caste for help in critical periods of one's life, like marriage and death. There are caste associations and caste dharamshalas for particular castes. Political parties are named after castes. The elections in India are contested very much on the basis of casteism. The voters are asked to vote for the candidates of their caste and the elected representatives work more for their caste welfare than for general welfare. Political parties sponsor only such candidate from a particular constituency whose caste is the most numerous in that area. Casteism persists in government services where seats are reserved for different castes—scheduled castes, backward castes, and other backward classes. In order to get a job or a seat in a professional college, one sometimes even manages a false caste certificate. Caste journals have made their appearance. Caste institutions have been given legal freedom to maintain their respective identity in the name of minority. Thus, Indian democracy has in practice encouraged rather than discouraged the caste system. Attitudes of exclusiveness and distrust between one caste and the other still exist. The recent atrocities on Harijans by landed aristocracy in Bihar and other places point out to our failure to solve the problem of casteism. The supreme court judgement in the Mandal case has revitalized casteism in acute form, divided the nation into the so called forward and backward classes and opened up new vistas for internecine conflicts disintegrating and made backwardness a vested interest. It has replanted the poisonous weed of casteism. To sum up, the post independent society in India has failed to shed off its casteist character.

Rural society: India is a country of villages. Accordingly, social disorganization in rural society implies disorganization of Indian society. In the villages of today the community life has disappeared. The unifying bonds have disappeared. Mercantile culture has invaded social relationships. The community consciousness has been replaced by groupism and selfishness. The incidence of litigation has gone very high. There have been instances of burning of Harijans alive and cases of rapes and murders of Harijan women have been reported from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The Panchayati system has collapsed under the weight of political interference and caste politics. The reservation of seats for women in the Panchayat has not raised the status of rural women; rather they have become pawns in the game of political dice and lost their modesty. No doubt, several schemes and programmes of rural development have been undertaken by the government and numerous facilities made available in the fields of education, economic development, transport, communication, and agriculture. They have, however, benefited the large farmers and political leaders. The majority of villagers are still leading the life of poverty and deprivation. The Indian village of today is no longer the abode of gods and goddesses. It has become an arena of political rivalry and centre of dishonest pursuits.

Urban society: If the rural society of free India has become the arena of political rivalry and centre of dishonest pursuits, urban society has become the home for mafia, sex traffickers, and criminals. Incidences of juvenile delinquency, raping, gangsterism (criminal gangs committing extortion and abduction), and moral depravity (illicit sex, sexual harassment, traffic in women) are constantly increasing. Every sphere of urban life is fraught with corruption, moral antagonism, unhealthy economic competition, and religious and caste hatred. There is scarcely any trace of community life and feeling of fellowship. People are divided on regional, communal, and economic basis. There are wide gaps between the living styles of the rich in posh colonies and the poor in the slum areas. There is no social intercourse between the different class groups. Although numerous amenities and facilities have been provided to the urban dwellers, yet there is shortage of housing, drinking water, electricity, and even consumable goods. Alcoholism has become a norm of urban life and the trade of prostitution has become a flourishing trade. The casino culture has crossed the limits of decency. In view of the increasing crime rate and crowded vehicular traffic, the city life has been rendered unsafe and insecure. The murder of old people in the cities has become a frequent phenomenon. The condition of law and order has become serious with no guarantee of the safety of the life and property of people. In short, the modern urban society in India suffers from absence of primacy relationships, predominance of individualism, lack of community feeling, non-existence of family life, low morality, development of lopsided personality, artificial life, and last but not the least, environmental degradation.

To conclude, social change is a natural phenomenon. No society remains completely static. This is true of all societies—primitive as well as civilized, western or Indian. The speed of social change is not uniform in every society. Sometimes it occurs so slowly that it goes unnoticed. Before 1947, there was less industrialization in India, after 1947 India has become more industrialized. Therefore, the speed of social change after 1947 has been faster.

The ancient Indian society was simple and peaceful, whereas the modern society is complex and tension-ridden. If the former was homogeneous, the latter is heterogeneous. Whether the changes brought about in the Indian society during the course of history amount to progress is a debatable question. Some consider the modern civilization as failure in spite of the many technological development, big industries, and imposing dams and grand villas. The fact remains that in India the evils of unemployment, crime, poverty, and disease have increased. More marriages break now than yesteryears. The family bonds have loosened. The social evils like drug addiction, dowry system, prostitution, alcoholism, child exploitation, sexual violence, atrocities on Harijans, illicit sex,

casteism, and delinquency have increased manifold. We are today politically hypocrites, economically corrupt, socially dishonest, and morally unfaithful. Nobody would deny that we have marched ahead in technology and that there are now more opportunities available for personal development than before. However, in the face of multitudinous defects in our social conduct and social problems facing the society, it would be difficult to maintain that we have progressed. Development is not necessarily progress.

QUESTIONS

1. Briefly describe the development of Indian society through the ages.
2. Mention briefly the contribution of social reformers in the resurgence of Indian society.
3. The ancient society in India was peaceful, simple, and religion-oriented. When and how did it lose its peaceful social character?
4. What changes have taken place in the Indian society during post-independent period?
5. In what sense was the British rule responsible for the decay of Indian society?
6. Despite the technological development, the Indian Society remains a diseased society. Discuss.
7. Describe the main social evils the Indian Society suffers from.

Unity and Diversity

18

India is a vast country or rather a subcontinent. It spreads between latitudes $8^{\circ} 4'$ and $37^{\circ} 5'$ north and longitudes $68^{\circ} 7'$ and $97^{\circ} 25'$ east. The mainland measures 3214 km from north to south and 2933 km east to west. The total length of our coastline including Andaman and Nicobar measures to 7516.6 km. Its total area is 32,87,263 sq. km and its population is 1170 million. India shares its borders with seven countries: Pakistan, Afghanistan, China, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar, and Bangladesh. It is world's second-most populous country. Politically it is divided into 28 states and 7 union territories.

One of the unique features of Indian culture is unity-in diversity, which means that Indian social structure and cultural patterns are characterized by diversity as well as unity. Diversity signifies collective differences, which mark off one group of people from another group. Like diversity, unity also is a collective concept. A group of people sharing certain characteristics in common shows unity. It also stands for integration, that is, emotional bonds that bind the members of the society together.

INDIAN DIVERSITY

Geographical diversity: Since the geographical location and environment of a place influence its culture; therefore, knowledge of Indian geography and environment may help to understand its social structure and cultural pattern. The Himalayan ranges, the river basins, and the long coastline have given India its distinct geographical regions. The climate varies from the near freezing temperatures of Kashmir to the dry hot climate of the Rajasthan deserts. The rainfall, too, ranges from very low in the north-west to the world's highest in the north-east. The agricultural crops are also not uniform all over India. While paddy is grown as the main crop in the south and the north-east, wheat is the main crop in the north-west.

The geographical conditions of different places have influenced the distribution, size, and density of its population. Thus, the plains in Uttar Pradesh are the most-density populated, whereas the mountains in Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir are sparsely populated. The population density in Uttar Pradesh is 689 per unit area, 880 and in Bihar, 109 in Himachal Pradesh, and 99 in Jammu and Kashmir.

The topographical features affect the human habitation, diet, dress, and animal husbandry. The houses in mountains are made of wood and stone, whereas those in the plains of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are built of bricks and cement. If rice is the diet of Bengalis, wheat is the diet of Punjabis. People living in hilly areas put on thick and woollen clothes, whereas those living in the plains wear cotton and silken clothes. Camels are found in Rajasthan, goats and sheep in the hills, cows and buffaloes in the plains.

The occupations that the people of an area generally follow are also largely influenced by the geographical factors. The main occupation of the people in the coastal regions of India is fishing, while the main occupation in the north is agriculture.

The forests of central and north-east India have been the home for many tribes. Their customs and traditions are influenced by the flora and fauna of their regions.

Racial diversity: The population of India is racially diverse, containing elements from subracial types—Negritos, Proto-Australoids, Mongoloid, Mediterranean, Nordic, and Western Brachycephals. A race is a large group of people having distinct physical characteristics such as skin colour, facial features, type of nose, lips, hair form, etc., presumed to be biologically inherited and remaining relatively constant through numerous generations. It is a biological concept. The Negritos are the people who belong to the black racial stocks found in Africa. Their physical features are black skin colour, curly hair, and thick lips, etc. In India, some of the tribes of south India like Katar have distinct features. The Proto-Australoid consists of an ethnic group which includes the people of South Asia and Pacific islands. In India, the tribes of north India belong to this race; for example, Bhils Mongoloids are the major racial stock native to Asia. The Mediterranean are characterized by their medium or short stature, slender built, and long head; for example, Parsis. The Nordics are characterized by tall stature, light skin, and long head; in India, they are found in different parts of the north, especially Punjab and Rajasthan.

According to Sir Herbel Risley, India has seven types of races:

- (i) Pre-Dravidian type, surviving among primitive tribes of the hills and jungles, such as Bhils.
- (ii) The Dravidian type living in the southern peninsula up to the Gangetic valley.
- (iii) The Indo-Arya type living in Kashmir, Punjab, and Rajasthan.
- (iv) The Arya-Dravidian type in the Gangetic valley.
- (v) The Cyto-Dravidian type running east of Indus.
- (vi) The Mongoloid type found in Assam and the foothills of the eastern Himalayas.
- (vii) The Manglo-Dravidian type.

The Hindus are considered to be the subrace of Caucasians. The Indo-Aryan race is said to have entered India in about 1500 BCE.

Religious diversity: India is a land of many religions. Almost all major religions of the world such as Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Islam, Christianity, and Zoroastrianism are found in India. Besides these, the tribal communities have their own religious and cultural traditions. Not

only that, there are numerous sects believing in different gods and goddesses and following different rituals. Thus, Vaishnavs and Arya-Samajis, Shias and Sunnis, Catholics and Protestants, Akali and Nirankaris, Digamber and Shvetamber are sub-religions of the main religions—Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, and Jainism, respectively. In fact, very few countries of the world have so many religions. Every religion has its own festivals and ceremonies, rituals, beliefs, celebrations, and places of worship—temples, mosques, church, and gurudwaras, etc. The existence of so many religions in India has often led to religious riots and social conflicts. Hindus form the majority (about 82 per cent), while Muslims constitute about 12 per cent of the population.

Linguistic diversity: The eighth schedule of the Indian constitution has recognized 18 languages in India: Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Sindhi, Konkani, Manipuri, and Nepali. Besides, the people of India speak nearly 227 different mother tongues. So many languages and dialects spoken in India have served to separate one group of people from another and limit intergroup communication. An Indian from the north becomes a foreigner in one's own land when he visits a place in the south. It also creates linguistic ego. The people in the south have refused to learn Hindi—the national language of India. The states in India were reorganized on linguistic basis in 1966, of course, other considerations of financial viability and geographical nearness were also kept in view. That there is no single language spoken by the people of India is due to the fact that the population from the north belong to the Aryan race, whereas the people from south belong to the Dravidian race. Along with language diversity, there is diversity in food, dress, and customs, that is, in culture.

Caste diversity: The institution of caste is paradoxical, that is, on the one hand, caste stands for the way of life, which is distinctive and separate from others, on the other hand, caste of a region forms part of a single social framework. Thus, if at one level caste plays a divisive role, at the other level it has a unifying tendency. The divisive effect of caste can be seen from the fact that it separated more than 16 million Harijans from the main stream Hindus not only by religion but also by poverty and ignorance. It is not the place to describe the evils of caste system, however, what is relevant is the fact that caste-patriotism engenders opposition to other castes and creates an unhealthy atmosphere for the growth of national consciousness. In Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, there are internecine conflicts between the so-called upper castes and backward castes. Sometimes, the whole village has been put on fire and Harijan families burnt. Whatever little our social reformers and Gandhiji did to rid the Indian society of casteism has been unfortunately undone by our present-day political leaders. They have replanted the poisonous word of casteism, threatening national unity, perhaps in greater degree than in the ancient times.

Along with castes, we may also throw our glance towards tribes whose number exceeds 13 million. They live in the remote areas surrounded by forests and jungles. They have their own religious and cultural traditions, which differ to such a great extent that one can find among them different cultural regions that are outside Hinduism. They have built their own brigades and often take to killing innocent people. They zealously guard their customs and traditions and do not tolerate even the least of any violation. They do not hesitate to kill an intruder. They have a peculiar political organization headed by their chief who enjoys supreme power over all the members of the tribe. Although new states of Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh have been formed to appease the tribes of those areas, the demand for Bodoland is yet to be met. Insurgency in the tribal areas is a threatening force to national unity in India.

Finally, there is another element of diversity that has recently cropped up. It is the division between the mass of people and the educated middle class. This division is sharp not because of the poverty of the mass, but because the educated middle class are educated in the thought of an alien culture.

From the above account, it is clear that India does not have homogeneous population or culture. Differences in physical appearance, dress, diet, modes of living, manner of speech, kinds of entertainment, habits, traditions, and other aspects of culture may be seen in different regions, cities, and villages. If one travels the length and breadth of the country, it would appear as if one has crossed several separate countries. India is a continent of varied cultures.

INDIAN UNITY

Despite the above-mentioned differences of regions, population, race, language, region, and caste, etc. the existence of national unity in India cannot be questioned. The diversities of culture have not made India a weak nation. It is a strong and united nation that has faced its wars with Pakistan victoriously. In the world forum, it has its independent voice and its views are given due consideration by world diplomats. The people of India forget their differences whenever the country faces a calamity or an emergency and meet the situation as 'one people'. The sages and saints of different regions of both ancient and modern times have called this vast country as one country and spoken of its culture as 'Indian culture'.

Nation-building: When India won her independence in 1947, the foremost task before her was the problem of nation-building, a problem faced by many new nations from which the colonial powers withdrew during the years following the Second World War. They were also beset with the problem of maintaining political stability, which would require that their economic development is fast enough to ensure confidence among the people, in the capacity of governance, to satisfy their economic needs. Most nations have to deal with the problem of civil war, instability of governments, outburst of violence, nation-wide strikes, and communal riots. Under these circumstances, India's nation-building can be regarded as successful, particularly in the context of its large size and diversity.

The Government took several measures to improve the economic and social conditions of the different sections of the society so that they do not entertain the feeling of hatred, deprivation, violence, and isolation and remain united in the aftermath of partition of India. The immediate problem after partition was the integration of princely states into the Indian Union, which was very ably solved by Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel. Had these states or majority of them decided to remain independent or vacillated for a long time, there would have been political turmoil in the country. Jammu and Kashmir is a painful reminder in this direction. Likewise, the refugee problem of their proper rehabilitation was satisfactorily solved. The Indian economy and social structure were shattered by the British rulers, so another important task was to build the national economy and bring in social reforms. Accordingly, a Planning Commission was set up in March, 1950 to formulate development plans of both the central and state governments, allocate resources, and evaluate the progress achieved in the execution of different programmes and schemes. Although it is not the place to examine the various developmental projects for both rural and urban development and the deprived sections of society like scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, workers, children, girls, and women, yet it may be said that (i) the villages of today are economically better than the villages of ancient India, (ii) the urban area population is increasing due to the attraction of city life, (iii) the lot of depressed classes is better (they have reached the highest ladder of status), (iv) there are various alveolus of progress open for young boys and girls, (v) the factory workers have been provided numerous amenities of life and better working conditions, and (vi) women in independent India have a bright future in view of the various massive programmes undertaken for their welfare.

To bring in social reforms the Government has enacted numerous laws regarding family, religion, caste system, education, drug addiction, delinquency, beggary, and social security.

The timely action taken by the Government and the efforts to implement the programme of economic and social development along with the political steps undertaken to ensure stability and protect the country from disintegration helped to preserve and promote the unity of India. Presently, the mass media press, radio, television, etc. is contributing a lot to raise social awareness and make the people realize the need of national unity in view of the terrorist attacks in different parts of the country.

Indian constitution: The concept of Indian unity is inherent in the fact that India is a political entity, every part of which is under the same constitution. In less than 30 months, the Constituent Assembly completed the difficult task of framing eight suitable constitutions, taking note of the political, geographical, and cultural diversity of the country. It was indeed a great achievement considering that India had to tackle the post-partition crises that arose over Jammu and Kashmir, Hyderabad, Junagarh, and rehabilitation of refugees pouring from the west and east Pakistan, and the one created by the abolition of British paramountcy over the 565 princely states and giving them the freedom to join any of the two nations—India and Pakistan. The acumen and practical wisdom of Sardar Patel led the princely states to join India which gave to it a unified and integrated political shape. The Constitution of India has made several provisions to promote and maintain unity of the country. Thus, India has been declared to be a Union of States and no state has a right to secede from the Indian Union. The power to admit into the Union or establish new states has been given to the Parliament. Vast powers have been given to the Union Government over the states lest they become hostile and rebellious. The parliament can take over the government of a state if it violates the directions of the Union. The governors are appointed by the President on the advice of the Union Council of Ministers. There is single citizenship and single judicial system. The laws enacted by the Union Parliament are enforceable in all the states except Jammu and Kashmir. There is only one constitution (the states do not have their own constitution) except for Jammu and Kashmir, one national bird (peacock), one national flower (lotus), and one national animal (dark-striped tiger). Our national symbols—the national flag, the national anthem, the national song, and the national emblem act as a cementing force. These are symbols of our unity and identity. Any disrespect shown to any of the national symbols is disrespect shown to the entire nation, punishable under law. On the occasion of celebration of national festivals such as Independence Day and Republic Day, people from far and wide, cutting across religious, social, and linguistic barriers come to witness these celebrations. They celebrate these festivals as Indians and not as individuals representing different states or religions. These festivals strengthen the bonds of unity and oneness and make them lasting.

Cultural unity: Linguistic, regional, and religious diversities have made Indian culture rich. The music and dances of India represent a rich and colourful pageantry of distinct cultures. The western music, Khyal, Ghazal, and Rubai of Muslims, Bharatnatyam, Kathakali, Odissi, and other classical dances like the Bhangra of Punjab all have been assimilated in the Indian culture. It is because of their sense of oneness that people of different regions of India have remained distinctively Indian with the same national heritage, moral values, and ideas despite the fact that they have retained different languages, customs, food habits, and dresses. The uniqueness of Indian culture lies in its composite nature. From the dawn of its history, India has received successive waves of foreign people with diverse racial affiliations and cultures who have all mingled and merged. All the saints of the past were aware of this unity. As a matter of fact, the name 'Bharat' denotes not merely geographical boundaries, but actually the idea of a cultural unity. Despite the people following different religions and observing different rituals and forms of worship, there has been synthesis of all religions preaching

the idea of one god. India has been declared a secular state. The concept of secularism denotes that all religions are one and the state does not make any discrimination between different religions. Although the Indian people speak different languages in the different parts of the country, yet the national language is only one, that is, Hindi, which when one speaks is understood by all the people.

From the above analysis, it is clear that in spite of their differences the people of India have an underlying sense of unity. During the freedom struggle, the people of all religions, castes, and regions including women unitedly took part to achieve the goal of independence. Now, after freedom they are equally zealous to protect their freedom and preserve and promote national unity.

NATIONAL INTEGRATION

Along with the national unity we may also consider the problem of national integration, which is of paramount importance for the unity of our country. The process of dividing the country is going unchecked with the formation of new states. The number of states has gone up to 28 in place of 14 at the time of independence. Strangely, the demand for new states is still catching force; for example, the demand for Harit Pradesh, Vidarbha, and Bodoland. It may be interesting to note that the American society is also composed of racial groups and diverse identities, but they have not divided any state of the Union in 220 years of independence.

Meaning of national integration: National integration means unification of all the forces—social, political, and economic—in the country, so as to give the idea of one nation. It is a genuine realization of the fact that we are one despite our differences. Negatively defined, it is doing away with interstate, interlinguistic, interreligious, and intercultural differences and fostering a spirit of tolerance, respect, and appreciation of the viewpoint of those belonging to other states or other linguistic, religious, and cultural groups. Radhakrishnan once said, 'National integration is a psychological and educational process involving the development of feeling of unity, solidarity, and cohesion, in the hearts of the people, a sense of common citizenship and a feeling of loyalty to the nation'. Coexistence, tolerance, co-operation, mutual understanding, and unity are the fundamentals of national integration. It is unification of emotions, thoughts, sentiments, and development of national understanding. National integration ensures peaceful environment wherein minorities and majorities live together peacefully and amicably with mutual trust and respect.

National integration in India: The problem of national integration has assumed great significance in India where social, economic, cultural, religious, and linguistic diversities are manifest. The problem is the legacy of British rule which is known for its policy of 'divide and rule', which created fissures in the well-knit Indian society. In order to ensure their survival, they divided Indian people into groups on the basis of religion, caste, regions, and language and created mistrust and discord among them. However, the struggle against the British rule unified the divided Indian people. After India won independence, the country began its march on the road to social upliftment, economic development, and political unification. On the way to realizing the above goals, India faced several problems.

Economic backwardness: The British rule destroyed the Indian economy, which threw the country into poverty, unemployment, and economic backwardness. The various programmes and plans for economic development have of course, been launched by the Government, but the fact remains that India as a country stands at the bottom of poverty among the countries of the world. It has been ranked as one among the ten poorest nations of the world. One of every five Indian youths is unemployed, and of every four Indian farmers, one is in utter poverty. About 30 per cent of the people live below the poverty line. The task of economic development in India is very gigantic. The evil of

corruption has thrown the economy out of gear. The amount earmarked for economic development goes into the pockets of corrupt politicians and bureaucrats with the result that both agricultural and industrial development suffer for shortage of available funds. In the absence of any notable economic development during the last four/five decades, the Indian people are groaning under the weight of poverty and shortages. The slum dwellers live in pitiable conditions. The economic backwardness offers a fertile soil to the vested interests to hatch their plans to start secessionist agitations. Often the poor people and unemployed youth become a frustrated lot who can be instigated for any kind of violence. The main cause of the rise of militancy in Punjab was youth unemployment. Likewise, the terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir are the young boys who have been recruited for committing acts of terrorism. Most of the crimes such as murder, dacoity, rape, and abduction are committed by the youth. It is these groups who are hired for booth capturing and poll-rigging. As a matter of fact, what stakes do those below the poverty line and unemployed have in national integration? The Indian economy has been exposed to global competition. The multinationals have ousted the Indian entrepreneurs from the market. What sort of competition can there be between a multimillionaire and a semistarved craftsman? We are going away from the socialistic pattern and in the name of liberalization we are bringing in capitalism. The sale of public sector undertakings to private hands is a pointer in that direction. The WTO (World Trade Organisation) has always favoured the European Union and the United States at the expense of developing countries in the world trade issues. India has to be economically strong to protect its political freedom and save the country from disintegration.

Linguistic fanaticism: The linguistic fanaticism is another major factor that is causing great threat to the unity of India. Myron Weiner in his book *Indian Paradox* writes, 'In the mid 1950's, violent conflicts erupted in several states, as a number of linguistic groups demanded states of their own. Though these were not secessionist demands, the call for linguistic states disrupted many state governments and led to conflicts'. The Central Government following a policy of appeasement reorganized the states in 1956. Prior to it, Andhra state of the Telugu-speaking people, after cutting a part of the then Madras state, was created in 1953 following the death of Potti Sreeramulu after 56 day hunger-strike for the cause of Andhra. It was the first linguistic state created under pressure and threat. After 1956, the political map of India continued to change owing to the growing pressure of linguistic lobbies and regional groups. In 1960, the bilingual Bombay state was bifurcated into Gujarat and Maharashtra for the Gujarati- and Marathi-speaking people. Matters thereafter flared up in Punjab. Master Tara Singh, a Sikh leader, went on a fast for a Sikh homeland, and the situation took a communal turn. Consequently, the state of Punjab was bifurcated in 1966 into the states of Punjab and Haryana, giving some hilly areas to Himachal Pradesh, leaving the matter of the city of Chandigarh undecided, which till date continues to be the bone of conflict between the two states. With a view to satisfy the hostile Nagas, the state of Nagaland came into being in 1963 and thereafter in 1969, Meghalaya was created, bifurcating the state of Assam. Recently, the states of Chhatisgarh, Jharkhand, and Uttaranchal have come into existence by bifurcating the states of Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh.

While the reorganization of states on linguistic basis may have appeased the local vested interests, it has created an anomalous position for many linguistic nationalities by making them a demographic majority in one state and a demographic minority in the other. Such a situation restricts mobility and hampers the growth of unity between different linguistic groups, some times even creates disdain and hatred against each other, leading to alienation and discrimination.

Religious fundamentalism: India is a land of many religions where large number of temples, mosques, churches, and gurudwaras exist. Hundreds of seers and saints go round the country to preach their sermons. Round the year, every day one or the other group of people may be seen

celebrating a festival or performing a religious ceremony. While religion serves a unifying force, it has also proved to be a catastrophic force. In India, it has lost its divine character and assumed its fundamentalist and communal form. When we analyse its operational modalities, we find that it has become a promoter of sectarian tendencies and religious fanaticism. When used for electoral purposes it acquires the dimensions of communal ideology, which is the operative mechanism behind communal violence rocking the Indian polity. India was partitioned in the name of religion.

Regionalism: India is a vast country in which people of diverse identities are found. People in different regions speak different languages, wear different dresses, have different life style, follow different customs, and believe in different religions. Although they show a common feeling of being Indian, yet they have a strong regional identity and call themselves Bengalis, Biharis, Maharashtrians, Madrasis, Assamese, Punjabis, etc. In the postcolonial period, regional identities have been strengthened and in certain areas there have been clashes between various regional interests and between regional and central interests. The regional–central clashes have led to autonomy movements, in certain situations bordering secessionism. The reorganization of states on linguistic basis in 1966 was the first recognition of regional identities in free India. The creation of states on linguistic basis created many complications, which include unsettled territorial disputes, problem of sharing river waters, control over the common projects and the promotion of minority language within these states. This led to disputes between various ethnic groups and ultimately created alienation and sense of deprivation among these groups. There has been no satisfactory solution to many interstate disputes. Punjab and Haryana have a dispute over the construction of Satluj-Yamuna canal, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have a dispute over the sharing of Cauvery water. Likewise, Chandigarh is a matter of dispute between Haryana and Punjab. The status of minority language has also been a subject of dispute—status of Punjabi in Hindi-speaking state of Haryana, or status of Hindi in the southern states. The demand for decentralization of power at regional level is looked upon as a conspiracy to weaken the country.

The tension in centre–state relations has increased, with different regional parties coming into power in the states. Punjab is ruled by the Congress; Uttar Pradesh by Samajwadi Party; Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh by Bhartiya Janta Party; Karnataka, Assam, Orissa, Delhi, by the Congress; Tamil Nadu by DMK; West Bengal by Communist Party (Marxist); Bihar by Rashtriya Lok Dal of Laloo Yadav; Haryana by Indian National Lok Dal. In some states, there is coalition government. On the other hand, Centre also has a coalition government, largely composed of regional parties. The political interests of the party in power at the state level conflict with the interest at the central level. The central government is often charged of discriminatory treatments by a state government and deliberately try to create problems for it. There are movements based on class struggle, caste tensions, communal clashes, linguistic tensions, and regional differences in several parts of the country that threaten national integration.

To conclude, national integration or unity is a psychological process involving the development of the feeling of oneness, solidarity, and cohesion in the hearts of the people, and the sense of common citizenship and national loyalty. National integration has to be a mass movement where people of all religions, castes, classes, and occupations should work unitedly in safeguarding and promoting the unity, integrity, and oneness of the country. For this, the forces of regionalism, parochialism, and communalism will have to be strongly and sternly suppressed through legislation and public opinion.

QUESTIONS

1. What do you understand by 'Unity in Diversity'? Explain in the light of Indian society.
2. Describe the main aspects of Indian diversity.
3. Describe the features which show oneness of Indian society.
4. Describe the forces which threaten national integration in India.

Unit 7 Major Social Institutions

Village Community

19

Villages play an important part in Indian life. From the prehistoric times, the village has been enjoying an important place as the unit of Indian social structure. India can rightly be called a land of villages. A bulk of India's population lives in the villages. According to the census of 2001, about 75 per cent of the total population lives in villages. There are around 5,75,721 villages in the country.

CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIAN VILLAGES

(i) **Isolation and self-sufficiency:** Almost till the middle of the nineteenth century, the villages in India were more or less self-contained, isolated, and self-sufficient units. The inhabitants of the village had very little to do with the people outside. All of their essential needs were satisfied in the village itself. This feature of the Indian village is described as follows:

Each village tends to be self-contained, in each will be found persons with permanent rights in the land as owners or tenants with hereditary occupancy rights, of these some cultivate all they hold, others with large areas at their disposal rent out to tenants on a yearly agreement a part or whole of their lands, below these in the scale are agricultural labourers ... some have a field or two on rent, some work in the field only at times of pressure and are mainly engaged in crafts, such as leather work, or in tasks regarded as menial, in all but the smallest village, there are one or two skilled artisans, carpenters or blacksmiths who provide and repair the simple agricultural implements, bullock gear, and water-lifts. The household requirements are supplied by a shop 'or

two whose owners usually provide the first market for the village produce and add to their earnings in money lending.

In short, it was more of a society within itself.

However, changing political and economic conditions are putting an end to the isolation and self-sufficiency of the Indian village. The rapid development of the means of transport and communication has broken the barriers between the village and city. The former is now socially and even economically connected with the neighbourhood city or town. Political parties have made village the centre of their activities as much as the city.

(ii) Peace and simplicity: The second feature of an Indian village is the atmosphere of simplicity, calmness, and peace prevailing therein. In the village, there is no noise and little sophistication. The humdrum activities of the modern civilization are rarely seen there. Although occasionally a car or a bus rolling along the kuchcha road enveloped in thick clouds of dust may be seen there, but, on the whole, life in the village moves with traditional quietude and peace. The villagers lead a simple life, eat frugally, dress simply, and live in mud-walled houses completely lacking in the trappings of modern civilization. They have a sense of unity and personally know each other.

But here also the old order is yielding place to a new one. The mud-walled houses are giving place to well-designed buildings. Fashion is making its inroads in the life of young men and women of the village. Here and there notes of music issue from dry-cell radio. However, this change is gradual and slow.

(iii) Conservatism: The inhabitants of the village are strongly attached to old customs and traditions. Their outlook is primarily religious and conservative and they accept changes with extreme reluctance. They have close neighbourhood relations and love old ways and are less eager to follow the advice of zealous social reformers regarding their marriage and other customs. Writing on Indian villages, Sir Charles Metcalfe wrote, 'they seem to last where nothing else lasts. Dynasties tumble down, revolution succeeds revolution. Hindu, Pathan, Mughal, Marathe, Sikh, English all the masters change in turn, but the village communities remain the same'.

(iv) Poverty and illiteracy: Probably the most glaring and also depressing features of Indian villages are the poverty and illiteracy of the village people. They are generally poor with a very low income. They take coarse food and put on rough clothes. The pressure on land is high resulting in fragmentation of holdings and poor productivity. Besides poverty, the village people are steeped in ignorance and illiteracy. The opportunities for education are meager in the village. The village school is generally in a dilapidated condition. Facilities for higher education are practically nil. Due to poverty, the villagers cannot send their children to the city for education. Due to illiteracy, they cannot improve upon their agriculture or supplement their income by other means. Poverty is thus the cause and effect of illiteracy and the backwardness of the villagers.

However, recently, the need has been realized for rural reconstruction. An all India organization under the name of 'All India Kissan Sammelan' has been formed to focus the attention of the government on the problems of peasantry class. There is greater realization now that the country can march ahead only if its villages are prosperous. The governments, both at the centre and states, have launched numerous schemes such as total literacy programme, fertilizer subsidy, crop insurance, free power, concessional water rate, minimum procurement price, and low interest loans for liquidating illiteracy and removing poverty of the people living in the villages. Agricultural production is becoming more and more mechanized and agricultural products are fetching high prices.

(v) **Local self-government:** The villages in ancient India enjoyed a considerable measure of autonomy or self-government. The villagers managed their own affairs through the traditional institution of panchayat. The central government had neither the inclination nor the means for interfering with the self-government of the villages. With the advent of British in India and their introduction of a highly centralized system of administration, the importance of panchayats began to decline. Their judicial powers were taken over by the British courts and the officers were appointed to look after the administrative affairs of the villages. This change produced unpleasant results. Since the times of Lord Ripon, attempts were made to revive the old system of village local self-government, but the progress was very slow in this direction. With the attainment of freedom, now, fresh efforts are being made to strengthen the panchayat system and make panchayats play a better part in the work of national reconstruction. The 73rd Amendment Act, 1993, has laid the foundation of strong and vibrant Panchayati Raj institutions in the country.

Modern Trends of Village System in India

Change is the law of nature. It is the need of life. Change is but natural in human communities. The village community is also undergoing change, although the speed of change as compared with urban community is slow. The change in village community may be seen in different spheres.

(i) **Caste system:** The British rule in India gave a serious blow to the caste system in the villages. The economic policy and the laws of British rules induced the different castes to adopt occupations other than the traditional ones. The hold of caste panchayat was loosened. The status of a village man was determined on the basis of his economic position and personal attainments. The restrictions on food, dress, mode of living, and other matters imposed under caste system were removed. Even untouchability was weakened. Thus, the caste system has now lost its traditional hold in the villages; however, casteism is getting strengthened on account of political interests.

(ii) **Jajmani system:** The 'Jajmani' system, a feature of village community in India, has now weakened due to the governmental efforts to raise the status of the lower castes and due to the impact of urbanization. The occupations adopted by the village people are not entirely hereditary or based on caste system, nor the payment for services rendered by the lower caste is in kind; it is now mostly cash payment.

(iii) **Family system:** The joint family system is no longer the peculiar characteristic of the village community. Nuclear families have taken its place. The family control over its members in matters of diet, dress, and marriage has weakened. The family is no longer an economic unit. Several activities which were once carried out within the family are now performed by outside agencies. The education of village girls has raised the status of rural women.

(iv) **Marriage system:** Change can also be seen in the institution of marriage. Although intercaste marriages are rare and parents continue to dominate the mate choice, the boys and girls are consulted by the parents in the matter of mate choice. Love marriages and divorces are almost non-existent. The individual qualities such as education, economic pursuit, beauty, and appearance of the marriage partners are given preference over the old family status. There is now less expenditure on marriages. The marriage rites also have been minimized. The custom of child marriage is being abolished.

(v) **Living standards:** The standard of living in the village community is gradually going higher. The rural diet no more consists of coarse food only. It now includes vegetables, milk, bread, tea,

and vegetable ghee. The dress is getting urbanized. The youths put on pants and the girls put on frocks and bell-bottoms. Even the old ladies put on blouses instead of shirts. Mill cloth is used in place of handloom cloth. Gold ornaments have replaced the old heavy silver ornaments. The young boys live bare-headed with well-combed long hair and the girls use cosmetics. There are now 'pucca' houses to live. These are now better ventilated, well furnished, and in some cases electrified too. Ceiling fans can also be seen in some houses. Lanterns have replaced the earthen lamps in most houses. Gobar gas plants have been installed in some houses. The sanitary habits of the people have improved. They now use soap for bathing and washing clothes. Safety razors are used for shaving. The drainage system is also much better. Primary health centres have made the villagers health conscious. The threat of epidemics has lessened due to vaccination and other preventive measures taken to the villages. The family planning programme has been understood by the village people who now adopt measures to limit the family size. Schools have been opened. In some villages degree and post-degree colleges can also be found. Agriculture institutes and other rural institutes have also been opened in some villages.

(vi) Economic system: Change has also taken place in the economic field. The educated rural youth seeks jobs in the cities rather than settle on the land. The demand for new scientific instruments of agriculture is increasing. The farmers have been taught new methods to raise their production. The rural co-operative societies have lessened the woes and miseries of the village people in getting seeds, fertilizers, and credit. The 'Sahukara' system is on the wane. More and more banks are being opened in the villages. The Government gives financial assistance and other facilities for setting up industries in villages. The per capita income has increased. Economic exploitation has decreased and the farmers get a good price for their products.

(vii) Political system: The setting up of 'panchayats' has led to the growth of political consciousness among the village people. The newspapers, radio, and television in some areas have added to the political knowledge of the villagers. However, political parties have divided the people into groups. Caste conflicts and group rivalries have increased. The community feeling has decreased. Selfishness and individualism are growing.

It is thus evident that the Indian village is not a static community; it is dynamic. Sir Charles Metcalfe was wrong to hold that the village communities in India seem to last where nothing else lasts.

The villages in India are, at present, passing through a transitional period. From the sociological point of view the old social relations, bonds, and ties have disappeared. Community consciousness is steadily decreasing. Politics of the country has made deep inroads into the peaceful life of village people and has divided them into political and subcaste groups. The joint family system is fast disintegrating and morality has gone down. The only feature of the village community now left is agriculture.

Conclusion

In India, the task of rural reconstruction is a big and complicated affair not to be accomplished easily. As we have seen above, 75 per cent of population lives in villages. To raise the standard of living of 70 crore people is no easy talk. However, trends show that considerable progress is under way despite great difficulties. A Ministry of Rural Development exists at the centre to look after the overall task of rural development and co-ordinate the different schemes in this direction. Agricultural development along with irrigation and generation of electric power had the highest priority in the First Plan and were by and

large achieved. In the Second Plan, new targets of agricultural production were laid down which have been more than achieved. In the Third and Fourth Plans also, adequate importance was given to task of rural reconstruction. The successive plans also have given due attention to the programme of rural development. Various schemes such as Small Farmers Development Project (SFDP), Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Project (MFAL), Drought Prone Areas Programme (DP AP), Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Applied Nutrition Programme (ANP), and finally Jawahar Rozgar Yojna Programme have been in vogue for the upliftment of rural masses. The rural school is undergoing transformation. It is now better equipped and adequately staffed. The introduction of labour-saving machinery has shortened farm hours, decreased the difficulty of labour and increased the amount of leisure time. Link roads are being constructed in the villages, electricity is being provided, sanitary conditions have improved, health facilities are being provided, and well-equipped hospitals with qualified doctors are being opened. Many of the conveniences and comforts of the city are being introduced into rural homes. The 73rd Amendment Act, 1993 has sought to make the Panchayati Raj System more effective in the field of rural development. With the passing of the unattractive barren and drudgery features of village home, it is hoped, that there would come a new appreciation of the deeper rural values so that the young men would not flee to the cities, depriving the village of energetic and educated rural leadership.

QUESTIONS

1. What are the features of the village community in India?
2. In what sense was the traditional Indian village a community? Bring out the impact of the Community Development Programme on the Indian villages.
3. What are the modern trends of the village system in India?

Joint Family System

20

For the Indian students of sociology, the study of the Indian family system deserves special attention, not only because they are born in Indian families but also because here the family system differs in material respects from the western family system. The family in India does not consist only of husband, wife, and their children but also of uncles, aunts, cousins, and grandsons. This system, called a joint family or extended family system, is a peculiar characteristics of the Indian social life. A son after marriage does not usually separate himself from the parents but continues to stay with them under the same roof, messing together and holding property in common. The family has joint property and every person has his share in it since the time he is born. The earnings of all the members are put in a common fund out of which the family expenses are met. The non-earning members have as much share as the earning members. The Indian family system is thus like a socialistic community in which everyone earns according to his capacity and receives according to his needs.

The family in India is based on patrilineal descent. Children are identified by name and allegiance with the father's family. Property is passed from generation to generation within the father's family.

MEANING OF JOINT FAMILY

Some definitions of the joint family are as follows:

- (i) 'A joint family is a group of people who generally live under one roof, who eat food cooked at one hearth, who hold property in common and who participate in common worship and are related to each other as some particular type of kindred'.
—Karve

(ii) 'We call that household a joint family which has greater generation depth than individual family and the members of which are related to one another by property, income and mutual rights and obligations'.
—*J. P. Desai*

(iii) 'The joint family consists of persons having a common male ancestor, female offspring not yet married, and women brought into the group by marriage. All of these persons might live in a common household or in several households near to one another. In any case, so long as the joint family holds together, its members are expected to contribute to the support of the whole and to receive from it a share of the total product'.
—*Davis*

(iv) 'In a joint family not only parents and children, brothers and step-brothers live on the common property, but it may sometime include ascendants and collaterals up to many generations'.
—*Jolly*

(v) 'The Hindu joint family is a group constituted of known ancestors and adopted sons and relatives related to these sons through marriage'.
—*Henry Maine*

CHARACTERISTICS OF JOINT FAMILY

The chief characteristics of the joint family are the following:

(i) **Large size:** The first characteristic of the joint family is its large size. A single family consists of only the husband, wife, and their children, but a joint family consists of parents, children, grandchildren, and other near relatives along with their women. It is a group where several basic families live together at one and the same time.

(ii) **Joint property:** In a joint family, the ownership, production, and consumption of wealth take place on a joint basis. It is a cooperative institution similar to a joint stock company, in which there is joint property. The head of the family is like a trustee who manages the property of the family for the material and spiritual welfare of the family members. The total earnings of all the family members are pooled together.

(iii) **Common residence:** The members of the joint family usually live under the same roof. They may also live in separate houses in close proximity to one another. They eat the same food and wear the same type of clothes.

(iv) **Cooperative organization:** The basis of the joint family system is cooperation. A joint family consists of a large number of members, and if they do not cooperate with one another it is not possible to maintain the organization and structure of the joint family.

(v) **Common religion:** Generally, the members of a joint family believe in the same religion and worship similar deities. They perform the religious rites and duties jointly. They celebrate all the festivals and social functions jointly. They also hold themselves jointly accountable for participating in social ceremonies such as marriage, death, and other occasions of the family sorrows and rejoicing. They all share the family burden together.

(vi) **A productive unit:** This feature of a joint family is found among agricultural families. All the members work at one and the same field. They do the sowing and harvesting of the crops together. Even in the case of artisan classes, all the members of the joint family do one and the same function.

(vii) Mutual rights and obligations: The rights and obligations of the members of the joint family are the same. None except the head of the family has special privileges. Every member of the family has equal obligations. If the first female member works in the kitchen, the second one does the laundry work and the third one looks after the children. There is rotation of duties as well.

ORIGIN OF JOINT FAMILY SYSTEM

It may not, however, be presumed that the joint family system originated in India. This institution is said to be the outcome of the settling down of the Aryans in different parts of the world. We have similar institutions practically all over the world. In other parts of the world, while the joint family system has disappeared, in India it still continues though suffering heavy strains brought about by industrialization and urbanization.

MERITS OF JOINT FAMILY SYSTEM

The following are the chief merits of the joint family system:

- (i) Ensuring economic progress:** It enables economic progress of the country since every one in the family is guaranteed bare subsistence, a first condition of economic progress. Unless people are assured of food and shelter, they would not devote themselves sincerely to the work of country's progress. It is an essential condition of national progress that the citizens must get at least two meals a day; the joint family provides this to its members and thus enables them to devote themselves to nation's progress.
- (ii) Division of labour:** It secures the advantages of the division of labour. Every member in the family works according to his/her abilities without being taxed unduly. Every phase of family's life is managed by all members including women and children. Thus, during the harvest season every member of the family helps in harvesting the crops.
- (iii) Economy:** It secures economy of expenditure. Since things are consumed in large quantities, they are procured at economic prices. Within small means a large family can be maintained if it lives jointly.
- (iv) Opportunity for leisure:** It provides opportunities for leisure to the members. The female members divide the household work and finish it within a little time, spending the rest of it in leisure.
- (v) Social insurance:** In the joint family, the orphans find a comfortable asylum instead of being thrown out. Similarly, widows are assured of their proper living for whom remarriage in India is unthinkable. The joint family acts as a social insurance company for the old, sick, and incapacitated.
- (vi) Social virtues:** It fosters great virtues such as sacrifice, affection, cooperation, spirit of selflessness, and broadmindedness among its members and makes the family a cradle of social virtues. Under the care of elders, the undesirable and antisocial tendencies of the young are checked and they are prevented from going astray. They learn to exercise self-control. All members learn to obey family rules and respect their elders.

(vii) Avoidance of fragmentation of holdings: It avoids fragmentation of holdings and the evils inherent therein. It prevents property from being divided.

(viii) Socialism: According to Sir Henry Maine, the joint family is like a corporation where the trustee is the father. Everyone in the joint family works according to his/her capabilities but obtains according to his/her needs. Thus, it realizes the socialistic ideal—from each according to his/her ability to each according to his/her needs.

DEMERITS OF JOINT FAMILY SYSTEM

If the joint family system has received the highest praise for its many advantages, it has no less been vehemently denounced. The main defects of the system are said to be the following:

(i) Home for idlers: The joint family is the home for idlers and drones as the non-earning members do not want to earn their livelihood. When a person can eat comfortably without exerting himself, he is unlikely to indulge in any strenuous activity. Mostly, in the joint family it happens that some people have to exhaust themselves while the others lead a life of utter lethargy.

(ii) Hindrance in the development of personality: In the joint family, there is very little opportunity for the fostering of individual autonomy or self-dependence. The whole environment of the family is not congenial for the growth of the individual because he is bound by the minutest rules and regulations framed by the head of the family who looks upon men and women as children even when they attain adulthood.

(iii) Litigation: The joint family system encourages litigation; at the time of partition of common property, disputes generally crop up which are not settled without a recourse being taken to law. In case of agricultural families, partition leads to fragmentation of holdings which is harmful from the viewpoint of agricultural progress.

(iv) Quarrels: It is the hotbed of quarrels and bickerings especially among the female members. Generally, there is hatred and jealousy between the wives of brothers. There is continuous strife and fighting over the doings of children. There is also the clash of ideas and temperaments on account of which there are constant quarrels between the elder and young members of the family.

(v) Privacy denied: In a joint family, privacy is denied to the newly wed couple. The brides of the sons do not get an opportunity to develop their personality. They hardly meet their husbands during the day. The invariable presence of other family members ashames the bride and she cannot freely talk to her husband. Any natural love between a husband and a wife is prevented from blossoming. There is also no limit to the injustice done by the mother-in-law. In some cases the injustice becomes so inhumane and unbearable that women become fed up and commit suicide.

(vi) Unfavourable to accumulation of capital: It is not favourable to large accumulation of capital. When one has to share one's income with a large family, it is not possible to save much.

(vii) Uncontrolled procreation: In the joint family, the responsibility for bringing up and educating the children is shared. No individual feels responsibility to control procreation because of the limited income of the family. The offspring of one member will be treated in the same footing as others. No distinction is made between the status of the family members. In this way no direct benefits occur to an individual in the joint family by practising family planning or earning more.

Thus, the joint family system has got both its strong proponents and opponents. However, we are to remember that no institution is perfect and also that no institution full of defects can exist very long. The joint family system has been in existence since the society changed from the agricultural stage of economic development. While the system is breaking down in cities, it still largely prevails in the villages especially among the agricultural families. Although there may be exceptions here and there, it cannot be said that the system has been completely abolished. It is undoubtedly true that the system once considered the pillar of stability is finding it difficult to withstand the dizzying pace of social mobility and the transformation of values.

DISINTEGRATION OF JOINT FAMILY

The following factors are responsible for the disintegration of the joint family system:

- (i) **Industrialization:** The joint family system is most suited to agricultural families. India today is on the way to industrialization. With the establishment of new factories in urban areas, workers from the villages move to the cities, which breaks the joint family.
- (ii) **Extension of communication and transport:** Difficulties of communication and travel in ancient times compelled all the members of the family to live together and carry on the family occupation in agriculture and trade jointly. Today, when the means of communication and transport have been extended, it is no longer necessary for men to stay with the family and carry on the family occupation. Now, they go to the city and take up any other occupation or even living in their village adopt some other trade, and when they adopt a trade different from the family trade, they establish a new home.
- (iii) **Decline of agriculture and village trades:** The joint family system in India flourished in the days of yore when agriculture and trade in the villages were in a sound position. Today, with the establishment of factories, the commodities produced by the village craftsmen cannot compete in quality or price with those produced in factories, with the result that the village industries suffer loss and after some time close down. With the closing down of the village industry, the workers move to the city. Further, more land is being acquired by the government for setting up big public undertakings, creating new sectors for habitation, and providing public amenities. The population in the villages is growing at a faster rate than in the urban areas. Thus, the pressure on land is high, and not only the workers but land holders are also compelled to go to the city to find a job there. Owing to the onrush of people from the villages to the cities, the Hindu joint family system breaks down. Besides the decline of agriculture and trade, there are other causes which induce people to move to the city. In the villages there are fewer facilities for entertainment and recreation, less opportunities for employment for the educated, and inadequate opportunities for the education of children.
- (iv) **Impact of the west:** India today has been greatly influenced in its social outlook by western thought and ideology. Our modern laws relating to marriage and divorce have been enacted on western pattern. Our education is entirely foreign in outlook and approach. We have begun to look at the family as a partnership and not as a sacrament. Our views especially of the young men and women on sex and family relations have undergone a change. The influence of individualism has made deep inroads in our outlook.
- (v) **New social legislation:** The joint family system in India has been very much influenced by the new social legislations consisting of the Civil Marriage Act (1872), Hindu Marriage Act

(1955), and Hindu Succession Act (1956). The Civil Marriage Act enabled the adult boys and girls to marry against the wishes of their parents. The Hindu Marriage Act enabled the women to seek divorce under certain conditions. The Hindu Succession Act gave the right of equal inheritance to women. All these acts have influenced the solidarity of the joint family and relationships between brothers and sisters, parents and children, and husbands and wives.

It is, however, to be remembered that the joint family system in India has not completely died out. The causes of its disintegration are mainly social. The Indian people still keep intact the family attachment and live their traditional morality. Hindu sentiments are even today in favour of the joint family. Even in cases where family property has got divided and income of the family members is not pooled, the constituent householders consider themselves duty bound to participate in ceremonial celebrations such as marriage, birthday, and religious functions. Such participation keeps the joint family feelings alive. The thinkers who criticize the system have not been able to appreciate it properly. Compromise and mutual adjustment are the keynotes of the Indian joint family system. The joint family is not a place where individuality is crushed, but it is a cooperative institution where every member does his/her duty under the guidance of the eldest members. In it we have a synthesis of individual and common interest; here are inculcated social virtues which make humans a good citizen and teach them to live for all. What is needed today is to find out the ways by which the virtues of the joint family system can be retained.

RECONSTRUCTING THE FAMILY

From the discussion so far, it is clear that the Indian family has changed a good deal from what it was in the past and has assumed a new form, presenting many social problems.

Writing about American homes Mr. Hoover wrote, 'Our homes are not the sanctuaries of family life they once were. We need homes where children learn respect for their parents, respect for law, respect for God and the religious principles which must be perpetuated if America is to survive as a great nation'. The same holds true about the Indian family. This is the opinion of many writers that the tendencies such as divorce and domestic discord arising in the modern families would bring about the downfall of civilization, if left unchecked. There is no point denying that the modern family faces problems of serious nature which need urgent solution to make it 'home sweet home'. The following programmes are suggested:

(i) **Better marriages:** In spite of the challenge of changing concepts—growing sense of individuality and economic independence of women—marriage still remains the most essential and important familial institution. With the responsibilities and restrictions which marriage entails, people voluntarily choose to live within the framework of the institution of marriage. Therefore, in the reconstruction of family we should first arrange for better marriages. Marriage is an institution admitting men and women to family life. Poor marriages concluded hastily without careful and mature thought are one of the chief causes of family discords leading to divorce. Many young boys and girls seem to assume that marriage is not a serious affair and that they can take decisions themselves. They fall in romantic love before marriage and after a short romance get married. They forget that love is blind and that the relation of lovers to one another is one thing and the relation of parents to children is the other. When the thrill of romance subsides, they begin to find the family a burden and manage to get out of it. Therefore, it is necessary that romantic love should not be considered a true bond of marriage; romantic love by itself cannot normally sustain the family through the inevitable stages of growth. While love gives the push that keeps a marriage moving, it does not give the direction which comes from understanding and cooperation. Marriage on short acquaintance too

often proves a delusion. Careful thought for a period of time, consideration of temperaments, and family backgrounds are essential before making the choice of mates. The mates may themselves take the decision, but the advice of sympathetic and experienced elders will prove them helpful.

It is also desirable that the marriage of persons of widely different ages, of persons with mental defectiveness or venereal diseases, or of persons with widely different cultural and racial backgrounds should be legally prohibited. But a legal prohibition is not enough. Legislation must be supported by public opinion. Unless it is so supported, it cannot improve the matter. The reconstruction of the family lies within the realm of human attitudes. Marriage is to be considered not as an expression of purely sexual urge but as a social safeguard. It is both a social institution and a bilateral man–woman relationship. The family is to be considered not merely a partnership but an institution socially necessary and sacred. Educating the young men and women for marriage will remove family instability to a great extent. This education should include not only adequate information concerning the facts of sex but also an understanding about the means of securing successful marriages and stable family groups.

Here, are the nine guideposts for a successful marriage:

- (i) Building of a union that is just to both.
 - (ii) Decisions must be made on the basis of what is good for both, not the selfish or narrow wish of either.
 - (iii) No demand should be made upon the mate that requires a drastic change of personality.
 - (iv) Too great concentration should be avoided.
 - (v) There should be neither holding on to the present nor seeking to bring back the past. Each moment is good and new in itself.
 - (vi) There must be no cultivation of sensitiveness, no looking for hurt, but instead a complete trust in each other.
 - (vii) There should be willingness to grow. Marriage is a life programme of going on together that requires maturity.
 - (viii) Instead of an adolescent type of blind love, there should be mature affection.
 - (ix) Marriage is not merely sex adjustment. What is essential is life adjustment of which sex is but a part. We consider this point below.
- (ii) Mental adjustment:** Marital happiness is largely the result of mental adjustment between partners. Personality is the most crucial single factor in marital adjustment. Terman has tried to describe how the many different personality traits affect happiness in marriage. He writes, 'Our theory is that what comes out of marriage depends upon what goes into it and that among the most important things going into it are the attitudes, preferences, aversions, habit patterns, and emotional response patterns which give or deny to one, the aptitude for compatibility'. It must be frankly recognized that every disturbance of the mental relation, especially of its sexual aspect, is not a reasonable ground for the dissolution of the family. If the family is not to suffer disorganization, every attempt must be made to bring about an adjustment of attitude between the couples. How the adjustments can be brought about, no hard and fast rule can be laid down. The problem admits of endless variations on individual cases. The point stressed is simply that if mental discord and frustration are to be avoided, there must be greater general understanding of the realities of sex life and divorce would not be viewed as an automatic solution for every disharmony in the family.

Harts have brought together a number of important suggestions to reduce marital conflicts. These are (i) eliminating needless annoyances, (ii) holding in frank discussions but avoiding arguments over problems, (iii) being just, not always expecting justice, (iv) working out plans together, (v) giving special attention to enlarging areas of agreement, (vi) avoiding quarrels over non-essentials and overlooking petty differences; and (vii) playing the role of a good sportsman. In other words, it may be said that the family must be organized on a democratic basis. A democratic family is one in which the husband and the wife share the authority more or less equally and according to a prearranged division of labour. It is a group whose life is primarily based not on the fear and force of authority but on the drawing power of mutual respect and affection. Rational love rules. Mutual self-sacrifice is the principle of a democratic family. In it the members adjust naturally to each other's need and to the sharing of each other's problems. If parents can be trained in principles of democratic parenthood and youth in principles of rational marriages, then society will keep the family group as one of its stable institutions. Married life is serious business, but it is easier and, at the same time, more rewarding than single life. It is an inner bulwark against loneliness.

It is however to be remembered that although the modern family is faced with serious problems, it has nevertheless also gained in many directions. The life of a woman need no longer be exhausted in the toils of childbearing, sucking, and the inadequate care of numberless offspring with its attendant morality, with the perpetual poverty which accompanied it. The responsibility and devotion of the family in the upbringing of children is more fully compensated by the satisfactions which they add to the life of the parents. Thus, the demands of sex and the demands of procreation are both more fully harmonized with the whole complex of interests and needs, which make up the existence of civilized humans.

MARRIAGE IN INDIA

Since marriage is the entrance gate to the family, we may also give a little thought to marriage in India.

Marriage—a Sacrament

In India, according to the traditional Hindu law, marriage is a sacrament and not a civil contract. The Hindu religious books have described marriage as a duty because an unmarried man cannot perform some of the most important religious rites. The union is sacred and indissoluble in life and continues even after the death of the husband. The parents are morally obliged to find mates for their children, and the children are obliged to accept the parental choice. The marriage is considered a union between two joint families rather than between two young persons. As such in Hindu marriage there is no room for romantic love as the basis of marital selection. There is no room for courtship, because young people never see each other before marriage. Romantic love could result from marriage but could not be a cause of it. Manu did not recognize selection by mutual choice as a possible form of marriage. In short, among Hindus, marriage is compulsory. It is a sacrament, an indestructible and secret union. Second marriages, especially for women, are abhorred.

Forms of Marriage

In India marriage regulations existed from the very beginning. In Vedic times marriage was left to the choice of the persons concerned. There was the practice of giving dowry in marriages. In the later *samhitas*, there is clear evidence of giving the bride price. 'Brahma' marriage is the best form of

marriage. A marriage is a Brahma marriage if the father or the guardian of the girl does not receive any consideration from the bridegroom for giving the girl in marriage. It differs from the 'asura' form in as much as in the latter there is always some consideration given by the bridegroom to the kinsmen of the bride or to the bride herself. Both these forms of marriage are open to Hindus belonging to any caste.

Hindu Marriage Act of 1955

The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 has now regulated the marriage among Hindus. Section 5 of the Act lays down:

A marriage may be solemnized between any two Hindus, if the following conditions are fulfilled, namely,

- (i) neither party has a spouse living at the time of marriage;
- (ii) neither party is an idiot or a lunatic at the time of marriage;
- (iii) the bridegroom has completed the age of eighteen years and the bride the age of fifteen years at the time of marriage—it has now been raised to twenty-one and eighteen years, respectively;
- (iv) the parties are not within the degrees of prohibited relationship unless the custom or usage governing each of them permits of a marriage between the two;
- (v) the parties are not sapindas of each other unless the custom or usage governing each of them permits of a marriage between the two;
- (vi) if the bride has not completed the age of eighteen years, the consent of her guardians in marriage, if any, has been obtained for the marriage.

Marriage Rites

Before a marriage takes legal effect, certain ceremonies are required to be observed. These ceremonies differ from community to community and from place to place. Sometimes, some of these ceremonies may look ridiculous and playful; nevertheless, they are regarded indispensable as well as highly religious and significant. Among the Hindus, the marriage rites are said to be most complicated. Here, we are not going to describe all the rites that begin to take place since marriage is contracted and continue till the bride comes to the home of the bridegroom. Everyone of you must have attended a marriage party, and there you might have had the occasion to witness some of these rites, or in your own family a marriage might have been solemnized where you might have seen these rites being performed. Here, we draw the reader's attention to 'saptapadi' which means taking seven steps by the bride and the bridegroom jointly around the consecrated fire. When the seventh step has been taken, the marriage becomes complete and binding under law. Before the seventh step is taken, marriage is incomplete and may be revoked. Thus, the performance of 'saptapadi' is an essential condition of Hindu marriage.

DIVORCE IN INDIA

The Hindu shastras regarded marriage a bond indissoluble in life. The wife was to worship her husband as a god. To Hindu law there was no such thing as divorce. The custom of divorce existed only among the lower castes. The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 has recognized the right

of a Hindu woman to divorce her husband. Under Section 13 of the Act, any marriage solemnized, whether before or after the commencement of this Act, may, on a petition presented by either the husband or the wife, be dissolved by a decree of divorce on the ground that the other party (i) is living in adultery; or (ii) has ceased to be a Hindu by conversion to another religion; (iii) has been incurably of unsound mind for a continuous period of not less than three years immediately preceding the presentation of the petition; or (iv) been suffering from a virulent and incurable form of leprosy; or (v) venereal disease in the communicable form; or (vi) has renounced the world by entering any religious order; or (vii) has not been heard of as being alive for a period of seven years or by those persons who would naturally have heard of it, had that party been alive or; (viii) has not resumed cohabitation for a space of two years or upwards after the passing of a decree of judicial separation against that party; or (ix) has failed to comply with a decree for restitution of conjugal rights for a period of two years or upwards after the passing of the decree.

A wife besides the above grounds may present a petition for the dissolution of her marriage on the following grounds: (i) in the case of any marriage solemnized before the commencement of this Act, that the husband had married again before such commencement or that any other wife of the husband married before such commencement was alive at the time of the solemnization of the marriage of the petitioner, provided that in either case the other wife is alive at the time of the presentation of petition; or (ii) that the husband has, since the solemnization of the marriage, been guilty of rape, sodomy, or bestiality.

A petition for divorce cannot be presented before a period of three years of marriage. The Act also provides for judicial separation on the ground that the other party (i) has deserted the petitioner for a continuous period of not less than two years immediately preceding the presentation of the petition or; (ii) has treated the petitioner with such cruelty as to cause a reasonable apprehension in the mind of the petitioner that it will be harmful or injurious for the petitioner to live with the other party; (iii) has, for a period of not less than one academic year immediately preceding the presentation of the petition, been suffering from a virulent form of leprosy; or (iv) has, for a period of not less than three years immediately preceding the presentation of the petition, been suffering from venereal disease in the communicable form, the disease not having been contracted from the petitioner; or (v) has been continuously of unsound mind for a period of not less than two years immediately preceding the presentation of the petition; or (vi) has after the solemnization of the marriage had sexual intercourse with any person other than his or her spouse.

Although it may be said that divorce has helped the women to develop the feeling of independence in them and make them feel equal partner, it may not be advocated that divorce should be easily granted by the courts. It cannot be denied that divorce causes instability of the family. In view of its serious repercussions on family life, divorce should not be within easy reach of the partners. Efforts should be made to bring reunion between a husband and a wife. Divorce should be granted only when it has become unavoidable and is in the interests of both the husband and wife and the society at large.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY PROBLEMS IN INDIA

- (i) **Present lower status of women:** In considering the marriage and family problems in India, we have first to consider the 'status' of women in the Hindu family. Critics of the Indian family system say that Indian women do not enjoy equal rights with men in the social, political,

religious, and economic fields, they are ill treated, and they cannot claim any share in the family property. Before marriage a woman depends on her father, after marriage on her husband and in old age on her sons. She never has an independent living according to her own likes and dislikes but is made to live as her patrons direct her to live. She from the cradle to the grave has to bear degradation and insult silently, and if the husband dies leaving her still young, she is forced to live a widowed life and is not allowed to remarry.

In ancient India, women enjoyed a high place in society. No religious ceremony in the family was considered to be complete without her participation. 'Where women are honoured,' says Manu, 'the gods are pleased, but where they are not honoured, no sacred rite yields any reward'. She was called the goddess of the family, 'Grih Laxmi'. It is due to certain historical factors that she has now come to occupy a lower position. In order to maintain the purity of the Aryan race from the Dravidians, a number of restrictions began to be imposed on her. The social drive towards the restrictions of her freedom resulted in her fall in the long run. The woman was no more an emancipated personality, but became a slave of the man. The socializing force of a woman to the Indo-Aryan society disappeared. Man-made laws and Manu's viewpoints decided her fate.

In the Gupta period, with the revival of Brahminism, greater restrictions were put upon women. Marriage became an obligation to women. The custom of *sati* was established. During the Rajput period, this custom was practised with severity. The widow had to throw her living body on to the funeral pyre of her husband. Widows were prohibited from remarrying. With the advent of Islam, child marriage came to be established and purdah system became widely practised. In short, the position of the woman deteriorated to such an extent that she had hardly any rights worth the name; her keen senses were dulled and without any right of knowledge she was steeped in ignorance and prejudice. Social prejudices against her were so firmly established that she had hardly any opportunity, freedom, or chances of development and self-expression.

(ii) Reform movements: Social reformers such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chander Vidyasagar, Justice Ranade, and Nataranjan started movements to put an end to some of the inhumane practices. These reformers succeed to some extent and were able to get certain Acts passed, putting an end to some evil practices. The All India Women Conference also made its bid to improve the conditions of women. Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation, gave a call to the women of this country to join him in freedom struggle. The call did not go in vain. Women in large numbers began to take part in the freedom movement. The part that they played amazed the world. Their picketing of liquor and foreign goods shops, marching in demonstrations, courting prisons, facing lathi charges and bullets—all these things were unique in the history of a country where women were suppressed, degraded, and insulted through the centuries. The age-old restrictions were broken within no space of time; slowly and gradually women acquired more and more rights without even begging for them. The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, the Hindu Succession Act of 1956, the Dowry prohibition Act of 1985, and the Commission of Sati Act of 1987 are fresh efforts to remove most of the disabilities from which Indian women are suffering. The Department of Women and Child Development in the Government of India has been given the main responsibility of coordinating and executing the welfare programmes for women. A number of voluntary agencies are working in the field of women development. Women Development Corporations have been set up to assist women in better employment opportunities. The year 1987 was declared International Women Year. A National Commission of self-employed women has also been appointed. The 73rd Amendment Act has reserved one-third seats for women in the

local bodies and now there is a move for similar reservation in the elections to the parliament and state legislations. However, there is much to be done especially for the womenfolk of the villages where old prejudices and customs still hold deep roots in the family life.

(iii) Dowry system: Another problem that is to be considered regarding marriage problems in India is the commercial aspect of the marriage. By it we mean the dowry system. It needs no mention with what evils the system is fraught; the father of the girl commits suicide because he has not been able to manage for the dowry demanded by the parents of the boy. Sometimes, the girl herself commits suicide on that account. Due to dowry system, the parents are sometimes compelled to marry the girl to a man who is almost fit to be her father. The parents often commit theft, forgery, or misappropriation to arrange the dowry. The Government of India having realized the evils of the system has brought a Dowry Prohibition Act on the statute book. With the passage of the Act, it is hoped the evils of the system will be removed. But the Act by itself would not be able to achieve its purpose unless public opinion is aroused against the system.

QUESTIONS

1. Define the joint family and describe its characteristics.
2. What has been the impact of individualism on the joint family system?
3. Describe the merits and demerits of the joint family system in India.
4. Describe the changes brought about in the Indian family system in regard to its form, structure, and function.
5. Does Hindu law permit the right of divorce to women? Examine the provisions of Hindu Marriage Act of 1955.
6. What factors are responsible for the disintegration of the joint family system in India?
7. Despite the far-reaching changes in the Indian family system, the joint family system still retains its hold and existence. Discuss.
8. Disintegration of the joint family system is the consequence of industrialism. Do you agree?
9. What is the future of the joint family system in India?
10. Explain the position of women in the Indian family.

MEANING OF CASTE

As said earlier, in India class has assumed a peculiar form in caste. The word 'caste' owes its origin to the Spanish word *casta* which means 'breed, race, strain, or a complex of hereditary qualities'.

The following definitions of the word 'caste' have been given:

- (i) 'When a class is somewhat strictly hereditary, we may call it a caste.' —*H. Cooley*
- (ii) 'When status is wholly predetermined, so that men are born to their lot without any hope of changing it, then class takes the extreme form of caste'. —*MacIver*
- (iii) 'Caste is a system of stratification in which mobility, up and down the status ladder, at least ideally may not occur'. —*Green*
- (iv) 'Caste is a system in which an individual's rank and its accompanying rights and obligations is ascribed on the basis of birth into a particular group'. —*Williams*

FEATURES OF CASTE

According to Megasthenes, two elements of the caste system are the following: (i) there is no inter-marriage and (ii) there can be no change of profession. Although the statement of Megasthenes draws attention to two important factors of the caste system, it does not give us a complete idea of the system. To give a complete idea of what a caste is, the following features may be described:

- (i) **Segmental division of society:** The society is divided into various castes with a well-developed life of their own, the membership of which is determined by the consideration of birth.

The status of a person does not depend on his wealth but on the traditional importance of the caste in which he had the fortune of being born. Caste is hereditary. No amount of wealth and no amount of penance or prayer can change his caste status. The status is determined not by vocation but by birth.

(ii) Social and religious hierarchy: The whole society is divided into distinct classes with a concept of high and low. Thus, Brahmins in India stand at the apex of the social ladder, while Sudras are at its bottom and are considered 'untouchable'.

(iii) Restrictions on feeding and social intercourse: Another element of caste is the complex of taboos by which the superior castes try to preserve their ceremonial purity. There are restrictions on feeding and social intercourse, and minute rules are laid down with regard to the kind of food that can be acceptable by a person and from what castes. For example, a Brahmin will accept 'pakka' food (i.e., food prepared in ghee) from any community, but he can accept 'kachcha' food at the hands of no other caste.

Even the wells are polluted if a low-caste man draws water from them. So rigid are the rules about defilement that Brahmins will not perform even their ablutions within the precincts of a Sudra's habitation. Even a Brahmin doctor, when feeling the pulse of a Sudra, first wraps up the patient's wrist with a small piece of silk so that he may not be defiled by touching the skin.

(iv) Endogamy: A person born in a caste remains in it for life and dies in it. Every caste is subdivided into subcastes, everyone of which forbids its members to marry persons outside it. Thus, each subcaste is endogamous. This principle of endogamy is so strict that one sociologist regards endogamy as 'the essence of the caste system'.

(v) Lack of unrestricted choice of occupation: Members of a particular caste are expected to follow the caste occupation. They cannot change to other occupation.

(vi) Civil and religious disabilities: Generally, the impure castes are made to live on the outskirts of the city. In southern India, certain parts of the town or village are inaccessible to certain castes. It is recorded that under the Marathas and the Peshwas, the Mahars and Mangs were not allowed within the gates of Poona between 3 pm and 9 am because before nine and after three their bodies cast too long a shadow, which falling on members of the higher caste defiles them. All over India the impure castes were not permitted to draw water from wells used by the members of other castes. The public schools did not admit impure castes such as Chamars and Mahars. The Sudras could not study the sacred literature.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CASTE AND CLASS

The fundamental points of difference between class and caste are the following:

(i) Open versus closed: Class is more open than caste. A person by his/her enterprise and initiative can change his/her class and thereby rise in the social status. If people are born in a labour class, it is not necessary for them to live in the class for life and die in it. They can strive for money and success in life, and with wealth they can change their social status implied in the class distinction. In case of the caste system, it is impossible to change one's caste status. Once people are born in a caste, they remain in it for their lifetime and make their children suffer the same fate. A caste is thus a closed class. The individual's status is determined by the caste status of his/her parents, so that what an individual does has little bearing on his/her status. On the other

hand, the membership of a class does not depend on the heredity basis; it rather depends on the worldly achievements of an individual. Thus, the class system is an open and flexible system, while the caste system is a closed and rigid system.

(ii) **Divine versus secular:** The caste system is believed to have been divinely ordained. In the Bhagavad Gita, the Creator is said to have apportioned the duties and functions of the four castes. An individual must do the duty proper to his/her caste. Failure to act according to one's caste means rebirth in a lower caste and finally spiritual annihilation. People of lower castes are reborn in higher castes if they have fulfilled their duties. The caste system in India would not have survived for so many centuries if the religious system had not made it sacred and inviolable. On the contrary, there is nothing sacred or of divine origin in the class stratification of society. Classes are secular in origin. They are not founded on religious dogmas.

(iii) **Endogamous:** The choice of mates in the caste system is generally endogamous. Members have to marry within their own castes. The members marrying outside their caste are treated as outcaste. No such restrictions exist in the class system. A wealthy man may marry a poor girl without being outcast. An educated girl may marry an uneducated man without being thrown out from the class of teachers.

(iv) **Class consciousness:** The feeling of class consciousness is necessary to constitute a class, but there is no need for any subjective consciousness in the members of caste.

(v) **Prestige:** The relative prestige of the different castes is well established, but in the class system there is no rigidly fixed order of prestige.

Recently, the Honourable Supreme Court while adjudging the constitutionality of job reservation for the other backward classes (OBCs), as provided under Article 16(4) of the Indian Constitution, by a majority opinion has upheld the criterion of caste as the determinant of a backward class. In its judgment, it has excluded all members of the so-called forward classes howsoever economically and educationally backward from the definition of backward classes. It has thus equated class with caste.

ORIGIN OF THE CASTE SYSTEM

The exact origins of the caste system cannot be traced. The system is said to have originated in India. The records of the Indo-Aryan culture contain the first mention and a continuous history of the factors that make up caste. The people, who are known as Indo-Aryans, belong linguistically to the larger family of people designated either as Indo-Europeans or as Indo-Germans. They comprised the Anglo-Saxons, the Celts, the Romans, the Spanish, the Portuguese, and the Iranians among others. One of the branches of these people who reached India in about 2500 BC is called Indo-Aryans.

(i) **Racial theory:** According to Dr. Mazumdar, the caste system took its birth after the arrival of Aryans in India. In order to maintain their separate existence, the Indo-Aryans used for certain groups of people the favourite word 'varna', 'colour'. Thus, they spoke of the 'Dasa varna', or more properly the Dasa people. Rigvedic literature stresses very significantly the differences between the Arya and the Dasa, not only in their colour but also in their speech, religious practices, and physical features. The three classes—Brahma, Kshatra, and Vis—are frequently mentioned in the Rig Veda. The name of the fourth class, the 'Sudra', occurs only once in the Rig Veda. The first two classes—Brahma and Kshatra—represented broadly the two professions of the poet-priest and

the warrior-chief. Vis comprised all the common people. The Sudra class represented domestic servants approximating very nearly to the position of slaves. On the relations subsisting between the four classes, the Rig Veda has little to say. However, the Brahmin is definitely said to be superior to the Kshatriya.

(ii) Political theory: According to this theory, the caste system is a clever device invented by the Brahmins in order to place themselves on the highest ladder of social hierarchy. Dr. Ghury states, 'Caste is a Brahminic child of Indo-Aryan culture cradled ill: the land of the Ganges and thence transferred to other parts of India'. The Brahmanic literature of the post-Vedic period mentions certain mixed classes (Sankara jati) and also a group of outcaste classes (Antyavasayin). Among the four varnas, the old distinction of Arya and Sudra now appears as Dvija and Sudra. The first three classes are called Dvija (twice born) because they have to go through the initiation ceremony which is symbolic of rebirth. The Sudra was called 'ekajati' (once born). The word 'jati' is henceforward employed to mean the numerous subdivisions of a 'varna'. However, this demarcation is not rigidly maintained. The word 'jati' is sometimes used for 'varna'. In the Brahmin period, the position of the Brahmins increased manifold. The three lower classes were ordered to live according to the teaching of the Brahmins who declared their duties, while the king was also exhorted to regulate his conduct accordingly. The pre-eminence of the Brahmins had secured them many social privileges sanctioned by the law givers. The statement that God created the Sudras to be the slave of all was repeated and they were given the name of 'padaja' (born from the feet).

As the priestly influence grew in India, complicated rules of ritual and conduct were built up and incorporated into the religious books. The Brahmins closed their ranks and tried to maintain their superiority over the other classes. It is true that in the beginning there were no rigid restrictions, but slowly and gradually the idea of separation stiffened. It was first the ritual and ceremonial purity which as time went on took an exaggerated aspect. Distinction began to be made between things pure and impure. Restrictions were imposed on food and drink. When the Brahmins closed their ranks, it was natural that other classes should also follow suit.

(iii) Occupational theory: According to this theory, the origin of the caste system can be found in the nature and quality of social work performed by the various groups of people. Those professions which were regarded as better and respectable made the persons who performed them superior to those who were engaged in dirty professions. According to Nesfield, 'Function and function alone is responsible for the origin of caste structure in India'. With functional differentiation, occupational differentiation and numerous subcastes such as Lohar, Sonar, Chamar, Bhangi, Barhai, Patwa, Teli, Nai, Tamboli, Kahar, Galaria, and Mali came into existence.

(iv) Traditional theory: According to this theory, the caste system is of divine origin. There are some references in Vedic literature wherein it is said that castes were created by Brahma, the supreme creator, so that human beings may harmoniously perform the various social functions essential for the maintenance of society. According to Dr. Mazumdar, 'if, however we take the divine origin of the Varuas as an allegorical explanation of the functional divisions of society, the theory assumes practical significance'.

(v) Guild theory: According to Denzil Ibbetson, castes are the modified forms of guilds. In his opinion, the caste system is the product of interaction of three forces: (i) tribes, (ii) guilds, and (iii) religion. The tribes adopted certain fixed professions and assumed the form of guilds. In

ancient India, the priests enjoyed greater prestige. They were a hereditary and endogamous group. The other guilds also adopted the same practices and in course of time became castes.

(vi) Religious theory: Hocart and Senart are the two main advocates of religious theory. According to Hocart, social stratification originated on account of religious principles and customs. In ancient India religion had a prominent place. The king was considered the image of God. The priest and kings accorded different positions to different functional groups. Senart has tried to explain the origin of the caste system on the basis of prohibitions regarding sacramental food. He holds that on account of different family duties there grew up certain prohibitions regarding sacramental food. The followers of one particular deity considered themselves the descendants of the same ancestor and offered a particular kind of food as offering to their deity. Those who believed in the same deity considered themselves as different from those who believed in some other deity.

(vii) Evolutionary theory: According to this theory, the caste system did not come into existence all of a sudden or at a particular date. It is the result of a long process of social evolution. A number of factors played their part in the development of the present caste system. Among these factors, we may enumerate the following:

- (i) Hereditary occupations
- (ii) The desire of the Brahmins to keep themselves pure
- (iii) The lack of rigid unitary control of the state
- (iv) The unwillingness of rulers to enforce a uniform standard of law and custom and their readiness to recognize the varying customs of different groups as valid
- (v) Beliefs in reincarnation and the doctrine of karma
- (vi) Ideas of exclusive family, ancestor worship, and the sacramental meal
- (vii) Clash of antagonistic cultures particularly of the patriarchal and matriarchal systems
- (viii) Clash of races, colour prejudices, and conquest
- (ix) Deliberate economic and administrative policies followed by the various conquerors particularly by the British
- (x) Geographical isolation of the Indian peninsula
- (xi) Static nature of Hindu society
- (xii) Foreign invasions
- (xiii) Rural, social structure

All the above factors conspired to encourage the formation of small groups based on petty distinctions from time to time. The lack of rigid unitary control of the state, the unwillingness of the rulers to enforce a uniform standard of law and custom, their readiness to recognize the varying customs of different groups as valid, and their usual practice of allowing things somehow to adjust themselves led to the growth of groups and promoted the spirit of solidarity and community feeling in every group. Multiplicity of the groups and the thoroughness of the system are also due to the habit of the Hindu mind to create categories and to carry things to their logical end, a characteristic manifested in our literature, philosophy, and religious creeds.

It may, however, be noted that the caste system is not specifically an institution of the Hindus but is a typical Indian institution. Buddhism in its practice was at least not opposed to the caste system, and the two primary attributes of interdining and intermarriage between different hereditary determined sets of people in the same community are also found among the Muslims of India. Further, the caste system is not a monopoly of India. It existed and still exists in many parts of the world. The feudal system of the medieval Europe was a species of the caste system. Certain ethnic groups such as Jews and Negroes are still treated as castes in many civilized countries including the United States. What is unique in the Hindu caste system is that it alone classified some groups as untouchable and unapproachable.

MERITS OF THE CASTE SYSTEM

From time to time the Indian caste system has been attacked from various quarters, and it has been ascribed to all the numerous evils from which society is suffering. But the very fact that it continues, in spite of these attacks as before, goes to prove that the system is not as bad as it is thought to be. The very fact that the Brahmins retained their supremacy for two thousand years proves that they were eminently fitted to be in a position of domination.

The merits of the caste system are the following:

- (i) **Trade union and orphanage:** It has provided a fixed social environment to the members of the caste. One is provided with a permanent body of associations which control almost all of one's behaviour and contacts.
- (ii) **Spirit of cooperation:** It has fostered the spirit of cooperation and fellow feeling among members of the same caste.
- (iii) **Economic pursuits:** It defines the economic pursuits of the individual. There is an occupation pertaining to every caste so that not only the child's future is carved out but also a proper place of apprenticeship is provided. There is more pride in workmanship. Ancient India was a land provided with generations of craftsmen and soil cultivators who were extremely skilful in their avocations.
- (iv) **Racial purity:** It has preserved the racial purity of the higher caste by forbidding indiscriminate intercaste marriages.
- (v) **Influence on intellectual make-up:** It influences the intellectual make-up of an individual. Since the caste dictates to each member—customs to be observed in the manner of diet, the observance of ceremonies, and whether he may marry a widow—his views on the social and political matters are bound to be influenced by his caste customs.
- (vi) **Integration of the country:** It develops class consciousness without breeding class struggle. It has created an efficient organization of Hindu society without giving any chance to class frictions and factions. It integrated Indian society into one vast and variegated community and provided the country with a sure basis of security and continuity, whereby a stable and orderly organization of society could be possible.
- (vii) **Various functions:** It provides for the various functions necessary to social life—functions ranging from education to scavenging, from government to domestic service of the most menial kinds—and it makes this provision under the sanction of a religious dogma, the belief in karma. It provides a much better method of division of labour than the European class system.

(viii) Cultural diffusion: It helps in cultural diffusion within the group. The caste customs, beliefs, skill, behaviour, and trade secrets are passed on from generation to generation. Culture is thus carried from one age to another.

(ix) Separation of social from political life: It has separated the social from political life and has maintained its independence from political influences.

DEMERITS OF THE CASTE SYSTEM

The system has given rise to several evils:

(i) Denial of mobility of labour: It has denied mobility of labour since the individual must follow the caste occupation and cannot change it according to likes or dislikes. This leads to stagnation.

(ii) Untouchability: It leads to untouchability. Large section of people are reduced to the state of virtual slavery. In addition, it has created many other social evils such as child marriage, dowry system, and casteism.

(iii) Retardation of solidarity: It has retarded the growth of solidarity and brotherhood in the Hindu society by rigidly separating one class from another and denying any type of social intercourse between them. It has led to the disintegration of Hindu society and weakened it.

(iv) Wrong occupation: It often results in putting individuals on wrong occupation. There is no guarantee that a priest's son would also be able to be a priest or would possess the qualities for a successful priest. Under the caste system, one cannot take up any other profession even though one may possess the skill and liking for that. It does not fully utilize the talents and capabilities of the population and is, therefore, a barrier to optimum productivity.

(v) Obstacle to national unity: It has proved an obstacle to the growth of national unity in the country. The lower classes feel discontented at the behaviour meted out to them in society. As Dr. G. S. Ghurye states, 'It is the spirit of caste-patriotism which engenders opposition to other castes and creates an unhealthy atmosphere for the growth of national consciousness'.

(vi) Obstacle to social progress: It is a great obstacle to the social and economic progress of the nation. Since the people believe in the theory of 'karma', they become conservative. And because their economic position is fixed, they are led to inertia, killing their initiative and enterprise.

(vii) Undemocratic: The caste system is undemocratic because it denies equal rights to all irrespective of their caste, creed, or colour.

(viii) Promotion of casteism: The caste system has created the feeling of casteism. Under the influence of casteism, members of one caste do not hesitate in harming the interests of members of other castes. The politicians exploit the feeling of casteism to their advantage at the cost of nation's interests.

On the perusal of comparative merits and demerits of the caste system, it may be concluded that the demerits far outweigh the merits. Although the caste system played an important role at a certain stage of Indian history by supplying the social foundation to the village community system, it has lost its utility in modern India. It is on account of the closed character of the Indian caste system that the people of India are lowly motivated and the society as a whole is inert and

apathetic. As James Bryce says, ‘Social structure is an important factor. Where men are divided by religion, or caste distinctions grounded on race or on occupation, there are grounds for mutual distrust and animosity which make it hard for them to act together or for each section to recognise equal rights in the other’. Until the caste barriers are broken and it becomes possible for a person of low status to profit by individual effort, such effort will not be forthcoming and the society will ultimately suffer.

INTERDEPENDENCE OF CASTES (JAJMANI SYSTEM)

The caste system, as seen above, is a peculiar feature of the Indian society. It has a stronger hold in the rural areas than in the cities. Caste provides rules of social behaviour which cannot be violated. Each caste under the caste system tries to maintain its hold over its members and controls their behaviour. The traditions, customs, and rules of behaviour differ from caste to caste. Although the different castes are socially segregated, there arise several social occasions when one caste has to secure the services of the other castes. Such dependence among the castes has been called vertical unity by Sri Nivas. It has also been given the name of jajmani system under which each group within a village is expected to give certain standardized services to the other castes. The more important castes who render services to other castes are the following:

- (i) **Brahmins:** The primary function of the Brahmin caste is to perform various religious and ceremonial rituals. At the birth of a child, the Brahmin is called to note the time of birth and prepare the horoscope of the child. He also fixes the day and time for ‘mundan’ ceremony. At the time of marriage, the Brahmin performs the marriage rituals and cites “mantras”. At the time of death, he is called to perform the last ceremonies. If he finds some ill omens, he also tells the methods to get rid of the evil days in future. In return for his services, the Brahmin gets payment in both cash and kind. Generally, the landlords do not pay cash but pay a part of the crops during harvest. The Brahmin continues to perform his traditional services even today for all the castes.
- (ii) **Kumhars:** The ‘Kumhars’ or potters make earthen pots. In the villages, the people use earthen pots to store the grain and for other domestic purposes. These pots are supplied by the potters. They also supply ‘kulhars’ and other earthen pots at the time of birth, marriage, and death. They get either cash or grain in return for the pots supplied by them. They are given food during marriage period. Sometimes they get clothes also.
- (iii) **Nai:** The ‘Nai’ or barber is an important person for several social and religious functions. At the time of birth, marriage, or death, he cuts the hair of the family members of his ‘jajman’. He also carries marriage or death message to the relatives. Sometimes, he acts as a mediator for negotiating a marriage. In return for his services, he gets clothes and a part of the crops.
- (iv) **Dhobi:** The ‘Dhobi’ or washerman washes the clothes of his ‘jajman’. In return for his services, he gets a part of the grains. On special occasions like marriage or birth, he also gets clothes or utensils.
- (v) **Barhi and Lohar:** The carpenter and the blacksmith make or repair the traditional agricultural implements of the farmers. They also do other works such as making doors and windows. They get fixed rates of payment for different services. The services of these classes are needed by all the castes in the village.

(vi) **Darji:** The 'Darji' or tailor stitches new clothes or mends the old ones. His services are also required by all the castes in the village. Generally, the village tailor mends the old clothes free, while he charges fixed rates for stitching the new ones. From some families, he gets a part of the crops during harvest.

(vii) **Chamar:** The 'Chamar' generally carries the work of shoemaking and shoe repair. Their services are required on other occasions also. They do the menial work like sweeping the animal sheds and looking after the animals. They also remove carcasses. They also work as agricultural labourers. They receive payment in the form of food, grain, or cash. For removal of the carcasses, they get the skin of the animal as payment.

(viii) **Gaderia:** The 'Gaderia' or shepherds are the herdsmen who keep sheep, goats, cows, and buffaloes. They sell milk and get cash payment. After harvesting, they take their animals to the fields. They also cultivate the land.

(ix) **Bhangi:** The 'Bhangi' or sweepers do the sanitary work. In villages there are no flush or ever-clean latrines. The sweepers remove the night soil from the houses and throw them away from the village. On ceremonial occasions, their services are particularly important for which they are paid in both cash and kind. They work as agricultural labourers for which they get a part of the crops at the time of harvest. They also get old clothes from their jajmans.

(x) **Bania:** The 'Bania' generally sells the things of daily necessities on cash or credit basis to the villagers. He also lends money to the farmers and other castes. The rate of interest is generally compound. Such loans are usually given to purchase bullocks and agricultural implements or meet marriage expenses. The agriculturists mortgage their land to the moneylender.

From the above brief description of the 'jajmani' system, we may deduce the following features:

(i) **Permanent:** The jajmani rights are permanent. A 'jajman' or patron cannot remove his 'parjan' (servant) at his will. His difficulty will not be in dismissing him, but in finding a substitute.

(ii) **Hereditary:** The jajmani rights are property rights and hence are inherited according to the law of inheritance.

(iii) **Barter system:** The exchange of services is not based on the money system but on the barter system. The serving family gets things in exchange for the services rendered by it; though in some cases it may also get money. As a matter of fact, the relationship between the 'jajman' and the 'parjan' is not one of the employer and the servant. The jajman looks after the all needs of his parjan and helps him whenever it is so required.

The 'jajmani' system is advantageous as (i) it provides security of occupation, the occupation being hereditary; (ii) it provides economic security as the jajman looks after all the needs of the serving family; and (iii) it reinforces the relations between the jajman and his parjan which are more personal than economic.

But the jajmani system once useful in the Indian society has gradually been reduced into exploitation of the lower castes. The higher castes exploit the lower caste people who find themselves helpless before the money power of their patrons. The jajmani system suffers from all evils of the caste system. Due to the impact of urbanization and the growth of rapid means of transport, the jajmani system is getting disintegrated; yet it may not be denied that the functional interdependence of castes is a marked feature of the Indian caste system in the villages.

CASTE SYSTEM IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA

While discussing the features of the caste system, we had the occasion to remark that the caste system is a rigid system, but it is not possible to maintain an absolute caste system. Social change requires social adaptation.

In India, rigidity was never maintained. In modern times, this rigid element of the caste system has undergone changes and one can confidently say that rigid distinctions are watering down. The various factors that have brought about changes in the caste system may be described as follows:

(i) **Influence of reformist movements:** The first important factor nibbling at the root of the caste system was the spread of western education. The British brought a casteless culture and literature full of thoughts on individual liberty with them to India. The Indians who studied this literature could be impressed with the progressive ideas of English writers. Swami Vivekanand observed, 'The caste system is opposed to religion or the Vedantas'. All our great preachers have tried to break it down. From Buddhism onwards every sect has preached against castes. Reformers such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Devendranath Tagore started movements aiming at the brotherhood wherein humans shall not be divided from humans on account of caste. Swami Dayanand preached for the substitution of four old divisions of the Hindu society in place of the present manifold ramifications and started an association, 'Arya Samaj', for reviving the ancient purity of the Vedic society. The chief centre of Arya Samaj was in Punjab. The Theosophical movement also worked for the abolition of the caste system, particularly since 1893 when Annie Besant became the president of the society. Another reform movement was the nationalist movement which launched mass campaigns under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation, who made the problem of the removal of untouchability a national one. His name will always be remembered in the history of its abolition.

(ii) **Legislation during British rule:** Apart from the attacks of Indian reformers, the Britishers, when they occupied the country, tried to impose the western type of culture, and in doing so they came into direct conflict with the established caste system in this country. By the establishment of British courts and administering a uniform criminal law, they removed from the hands of the caste panchayats, many matters that used to be erstwhile adjudicated by them. After it the British administrators tackled civil matters. In 1856, the Widow Remarriage Act was passed which contained clauses practically violating the customs of the lower castes.

The Caste Disabilities Removal Act of 1850 facilitates conversion to another religion or admission into another caste without affecting the property rights of the person. The British administrators took a further step for removing some of the civil disabilities of the untouchables. They recognized the rights of untouchables to be properly educated, and to be given all social, economic, and political benefits. In 1925 in Chennai, all public wells and schools were thrown open to all the classes including the depressed. Government scholarships and concessions in fees were awarded to the students of the depressed classes. Under the Montague-Chelmsford scheme, social representation was extended to depressed classes.

(iii) **Impact of industrial revolution:** Industrial revolution has also been a factor responsible for transforming the Hindu social structure. The Caste system in India is to a very large extent related to village industries and handicrafts. The decay of village handicrafts and hereditary occupations, which is the inevitable result of industrialization, affects the social structure in a number of ways. The old occupations having disappeared, new occupations have appeared wherein the Brahmin and the Sudra freely meet and mix. There is much more freedom of choice of occupation today

than under the old regime. At present many members of the Brahmin caste are seen engaged in almost any of the occupations excepting, of course, of sweeper and scavenger. Many members of the various artisan castes are shopkeepers, bank clerks, and teachers. Whatever restrictions caste imposed on the choice of occupation have now ceased to exist and guide the individuals. Industrialization leads to urbanization of population. The village people are forced to put aside their orthodox ideas and have to eat food prepared by non-caste fellows. With the spread of communication, personal contacts have multiplied which have changed the attitudes which separated caste from caste. The place of caste panchayats has been taken over by trade unions, law courts, and other such bodies. The trade union includes all the workers, to whatever caste they belong, as members. Caste restrictions cannot be enforced in a factory where members from the lower class rub their shoulders with the members of the higher class. The caste associations have been replaced by occupational associations such as teacher's associations, civil services associations, and a host of traders and services associations where people of different castes mix freely and plan their strategy for pursuit of common ends.

(iv) Attack by Indian constitution: The most systematic and severe attack on the caste system has been made by the Constitution of India. Its very preamble solemnly asserts that the people of India have constituted themselves into a sovereign, secular, democratic, republic, which is named 'India, that is, Bharat'. The aim is to secure to all its citizens justice, social, economic, and political; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith, and worship; equality of status and opportunity, and to promote among them all fraternity ensuring the dignity of the individual. Equality guaranteed is not only of opportunity, but also of status.

In guaranteeing the right of equality, Section 15 of the Indian Constitution reads:

(1) The state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth, or any of them.

(2) No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth, or any of them, be subject to any disability, liability, restriction, or condition with regard to (a) access to shops, public restaurants, hotels, and places of public entertainment; (b) the use of wells, tanks, bathing ghats, roads, and places of public resort maintained wholly or partly out of state funds or dedicated to the use of the general public.

Article 16 guarantees equality of appointment to any office under the state irrespective of religion, race, caste, sex, descent, place of birth, residence, or any of them. Article 17 has abolished untouchability, and its practice in any form is thereby forbidden. The right of freedom under Article 19 guarantees, among other things, that of practice of any lawful calling without restriction.

Besides the above provisions, the constitution includes various provisions to improve the social condition of the depressed classes. Article 46 reads, 'The state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and, in particular, of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation'.

Article 330 provides reservation of seats in the House of People for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Under Article 332, seats are to be reserved for them in the legislative assembly of every state. The number of seats thus reserved will bear the same proportion to the total number of seats in the assembly as the population of the scheduled castes in the state bears to the total population of the state concerned. Article 338 makes provision for the appointment of a special officer for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes whose duty will be to promote their welfare and safeguard

their interests. Articles 16 and 335 permit the state to make reservation for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and other backward classes in public services.

The government has also started various schemes for the upliftment of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Among such schemes the notable ones are the setting up of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (which has since been bifurcated into two separate commissions one each for scheduled caste and scheduled tribes with effect from 23 February 2004, since the problems of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are different), pre-matric scholarships for children of the scavenging class, post-matric scholarships scheme to provide financial assistance to the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe students to enable them to pursue post-matriculate education, Book Bank Scheme for scheduled caste/tribe students studying in medical and engineering colleges, Girls Hostel Scheme for scheduled castes, Coaching and Guidance Scheme for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes for successfully competing in competitive examinations held by various recruiting agencies including the UPSC. The Scheduled Castes Development Corporations have been set up in the states to provide an interface between scheduled castes families and financial institutions in respect of bankable scheme of economic development. Central aid is provided on 100 per cent basis to the voluntary organizations who are engaged in the welfare of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

Thus, the Constitution of India and the various programmes in pursuance of the constitutional provisions have sought to abolish the caste system and improve the social and economic conditions of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

The provision of reservation of seats for other backward classes (OBCs) in educational institutions and public services is the latest step taken for the welfare of the 'dalit' classes.

Future of the Caste System in India

From the above brief discussion of the various measures that have been taken in India, it may be said that though the influence of the caste system is slowly decreasing in the Indian society, it continues as before and there is very little change in the attitude and mentality of the people. The caste system is a part of Hindu religious order and enjoys the sanction of scriptures. The village, the heart of Hindu social organization, is the seat of caste at its strongest. The endogamous nature of caste has remained almost the same with this difference; whereas formerly marriage outside the caste was not even thought of, today many young men and women are prepared to break through the caste if love marriage demands it. In such marriages the female partner belongs to a caste lower than that of the male partner. The older generation, however, still thinks in old caste terms. The elections in India are contested very much on the basis of casteism. The voters are asked to vote for their caste candidates, and thus casteism is maintained by the elected leaders after the elections are over. Political parties also sponsor only that candidate from a particular constituency whose caste is the most numerous in that area. Casteism still persists in government services. Seats are reserved for backward and scheduled castes in government services as well as in the legislatures. They are given special scholarships for education. In the name of minority their separate identity is maintained. Thus, the Indian democracy has in practice encouraged rather than discouraged the caste system. G. S. Ghurye is right when he says that there is no fear of the extinction of the caste system in the near future. 'The difference between the old regime and contemporary society', as Ghurye states, 'lies in this that whereas under the ancient organisation the facts mentioned above were almost universally true, today there is a section of society—the modern educated persons small yet important, which has risen above all these restrictions'. Attitudes of exclusiveness and distrust between castes still exist. The recent atrocities on

Harijans by landed aristocracy in Bihar and other places point to our failure to solve the problem of casteism. Sh. B. N. Singh, former Assam Governor observed, 'Dr. B. R. Ambedkar fixed the limit of reservation for 10 years in the hope that within this period untouchability would end and a new social order would emerge. But it did not end'. We are still trying to solve the problem and fixing another limit. The judgement of the Supreme Court in the Mandal case has ensured a fresh lease of life to the cancer of casteism for a long and indefinite future. The judgement would revitalize casteism, divide the nation into two—forward and backward—and open up new vistas for internecine conflicts and disintegrating and divisive forces, and make backwardness a vested interest. It will probably undo whatever has been achieved since independence towards creating a unified and integrated nation. It has replanted the poisonous weed of casteism. It is doubtful if our political leaders thriving on casteism will ever shed their caste character.

What is now needed is to educate public opinion, denounce caste patriotism in unequivocal terms, and give to Hindu religion a new doctrinal basis in consonance with the values of liberty and fraternity. The enthusiasm of youth will surely denounce Hindu fundamentalism and transcend the artificial barriers of caste. With the spread of education, political reforms, and the amelioration of economic position, it is hoped that Indian people will rise to the occasion and throw off the caste system.

QUESTIONS

1. Define caste. How does it differ from class?
2. Define class. How far is it based only on economic considerations?
3. What are the peculiar features of the caste system?
4. Discuss the various theories regarding the origin of the caste system.
5. Describe the merits and demerits of the caste system.
6. What changes are taking place in India's caste system? What is its future? Is caste being replaced by class in contemporary Indian society?

Unit 8 Backward Classes

22

Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes

DEFINITION OF SCHEDULED CASTES/SCHEDULED TRIBES

The term 'scheduled caste' appeared for the first time in the Government of India Act, 1935. In April 1936, the British Government issued the Government of India (Scheduled Castes) order, 1936, specifying certain castes, races, and tribes as scheduled castes (SCs)/scheduled tribes (STs).

Under Article 341 of the Constitution, certain backward classes/communities suffering from untouchability and social disabilities were declared as SCs. So, generally speaking, the term 'scheduled castes' refers to the 'untouchable castes'. After the Constitution came into force, the list of SCs was notified under the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) order, 1950 by the President of India. Any amendment to the existing list of SCs/STs is made by a Parliamentary enactment. On the part of the Government, no definition of an SC or an ST has ever been given. Only at the pleasure of authorities, a community becomes an SC or an ST. No wonder, a community having some socio-cultural-economic characteristics is an SC or an ST in one state, but not in another.

The SCs and the STs constitute 15.74 per cent and 7.85 per cent, respectively, that is, one-fourth of the total population of the country. About 52 per cent of all SC workers are agricultural labourers and 28 per cent are small and marginal farmers and share croppers.

Although there are have-nots and downtrodden among other sections of the populace, the major chunk of the deprived section of India's population that is living in abject poverty, abnormal ignorance, and unparalleled superstition comes from the SC. Among the deprived people too, it were the harijans who for centuries lived practically the life of servitude, humiliation, and utter helplessness.

Problems of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

As described under 'Caste System' (Chapter 21), the Varna system of the Vedic period, in course of time degenerated into the caste system and shudras came to be called 'untouchables' who were called harijans by Mahatma Gandhi. Later, the Government of India Act, 1935, issued an order in 1936 specifying certain castes as SCs. The people of these castes were denied any political, civil, or economic rights and suffered from various social, religious, educational, legal, and other disabilities. Briefly stated, such disabilities were the following:

(i) **Lower status in the social hierarchy:** The society in ancient India was divided into four classes—Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra. The shudras were assigned the menial functions of sweeping and scavenging and were ascribed the lowest status. They were considered unholy, inferior, and low; hence, untouchables. They did not mix with the other classes and were kept physically and socially at a distance from the higher castes.

(ii) **Education disabilities:** The untouchables were not allowed to study Vedas or Sanskrit language considered to be the language of gods. They were quite illiterate and ignorant. The schools were closed for them.

(iii) **Civic disabilities:** For a long time, the untouchables were denied the facility to use village wells, ponds, temples, hostels, hospitals, dharmshalas, rest houses, etc. They lived on the outskirts of the towns and villages and led a life of utter poverty—half naked and half starved. Their places of abode were dirty, filthy, and dark.

(iv) **Religious disabilities:** They were not allowed to enter temples. The Brahmins did not perform their religious ceremonies. The Vedic mantras could not be listened to and chanted by them.

(v) **Selection of occupation limited:** The caste system imposes restrictions on choice of occupation. The untouchables could not take the occupations reserved for the higher castes. They were assigned inferior occupations such as removing the human wastes, sweeping, scavenging, tanning, shoemaking, carrying the dead animals, and curing hides.

(vi) **No property:** The untouchables did not own property. They lead a pecuniary life and lived in dirty, dreary, and dark mud houses. They worked as menials and had hardly anything to save.

(vii) **Landless labourers:** Majority of the SC members were landless labourers. They worked in the fields as petty labourers. It has been estimated that agriculture in India employs about 70 per cent of the SC workers. They were exploited by the upper caste people and the village moneylender. Even today, some of them continue to serve as bonded labourers in stone quarries and brick kilns.

(viii) **Political disabilities:** The untouchables did not enjoy any place in the politics or administration of the country in the centuries gone by. Under the British rule, they were given the right to vote for the first time. However, in free India, they possess equal political rights and opportunities. They are even provided with some special political and other privileges. Recently, they have become an important section of electoral politics and every political party tries to woo them.

The STs suffer from the following disabilities:

(i) **Geographic isolation:** The tribes of India generally live in hilly areas, deep valleys, and dense forests. They are physically separated from the other parts of India and are deprived of the benefits of civilized world.

(ii) **Economic problems:** The tribal people are the poorest people. Their mode of life is primitive. Most of them live in debts. The tribal economy is mainly agriculture, which is highly uneconomic. They are exploited by moneylenders, contractors, and businessmen. Young tribal women are often sold for money who are dumped in brothel houses. There are no industries in tribal areas.

(iii) **Cultural problems:** The tribal people are staunch followers of their customs and traditions, practices and beliefs, attitudes and principles. They are suspicious people and do not allow the entry of an outsider. Their marriage rules are very strict. Any violation is harshly punished. In independent India, efforts are made to bring them to the main stream of Indian culture. Education facilities are being provided. However, the cultural gap between the tribals and non-tribals is very wide creating hindrance, in the way of their assimilation.

(iv) **Social problems:** The tribal people are superstitious, traditional, and custom bound. They are the victims of outmoded beliefs, irrational practices, and harmful habits. Child marriages, infanticide, homicide, animal sacrifice, exchange of wives, black magic, and other harmful practices are still prevalent. They believe in ghosts and spirits.

(v) **Educational and health problems:** The majority of tribal people are illiterate. They have no faith in formal education. They have no concept of education. They are far removed from the fruits of modern civilization.

They are also not very health conscious. They have no concept of sanitation. They believe that diseases are caused by hostile spirits and ghosts. Naturally, they do not visit a doctor for treatment, but go to a magician or use their own traditional means of cure.

CONSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS

The Constitution prescribes protection and safeguards for the SCs and the STs and other weaker sections either especially or by way of insisting on their general rights as citizens, with the object of promoting their educational and economic interests and/or removing the social disabilities. The main safeguards are as follows:

- (i) The abolition of untouchability and the forbidding of its practice in any form (Article 17).
- (ii) The promotion of their educational and economic interests and their protection from social injustice and all forms of exploitation (Article 46).
- (iii) The throwing open of the Hindu religious institutions of a public character to all classes and sections of Hindus [Article 25' (b)].
- (iv) The removal of any disability, liability, restriction, or condition with regard to access to shops, public restaurants, hotels, and places of public entertainment or the use of wells, tanks, bathing ghats, roads, and places of public resort maintained wholly or partially out of state funds or dedicated to the use of the general public [Article 15 (2)].
- (v) The curtailment by law in the interest of any Scheduled Tribes of the general rights of all citizens to move freely, settle in, and acquire property [Article 19 (5)].
- (vi) The forbidding or any denial of admission to educational institutions maintained by the state or receiving grant out of state funds [Article 29 (2)].

(vii) Permitting the state to make reservation for the backward classes in public services in case of inadequate representations and requiring the state to consider the claims of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the making of appointments to public services (Article 16 and 335).

(viii) Special representation in the Lok Sabha and the state Vidhan Sabhas to Scheduled Castes and tribes till 25 January 2010 (Article 330, 332, and 334).

(ix) The setting up of Tribes Advisory Councils and separate departments, in the states and the appointment of a special officer at the centre to promote their welfare and safeguard their interests (Article 164 and 338 and Fifth Schedule).

(x) Special provision for the administration and control of Scheduled Castes and Tribes areas (Article 244 and Fifth and Sixth Schedules).

(xi) Prohibition of traffic in human beings and forced labour (Article 23).

Representation in Legislatures

Under Articles 330 and 332 of the Constitution, seats are reserved for the SCs and the STs in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies in proportion to their population. The concession, initially for a period of 10 years from the commencement of the Constitution, has been extended through amendment up to 25 January 2010.

Reservation in Services

Article 335 of the Constitution provides that the claims of the members of SCs and STs shall be taken into consideration, in making appointments to posts and services, in connection with the affairs of the Union or the states. Article 16 (4) permits reservations in favour of citizens of backward classes, who may not be adequately represented in services. In pursuance of these provisions, the Government has made reservation for the SCs and the STs in the services under their control. Reservation for the SCs and the STs (including vacancies carried forward) is subject to the sealing of 50 per cent of the total number of vacancies. This scheme of reservations is also being followed by the public sector undertakings. The voluntary agencies, which are in receipt of substantial grants-in-aid from the Government, are also required, as a condition, to adopt certain specific features of the reservation scheme in their establishments. The government was examining the feasibility of directing the private sector undertakings to reserve seats for SC/ST.

Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

The commission was set up in 1978 under the Article 338 of the Constitution. It was renamed as National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in 1987. Its functions are as follows:

(i) To study the extent and ramifications of untouchability and social discrimination arising there from and effectiveness of the present measures and recommend further measures to be taken.

(ii) To study socio-economic and other relevant circumstances leading to the commission of offences against persons belonging to SCs and STs; and to recommend appropriate remedial measures to ensure prompt investigation of such offences.

Centrally Sponsored Schemes

- (i) Post-matric scholarship for the SC and ST students.
- (ii) Pre-matric scholarship for the children of those engaged in unclean occupations.
- (iii) Book banks for the SC/ST students studying in medical and engineering colleges.
- (iv) Girls' hostels scheme for the SCs.
- (v) Coaching and allied scheme for the SCs and STs.
- (vi) Aid to voluntary organizations engaged in the welfare of SCs.
- (vii) National overseas scholarships for enabling the candidates belonging to the SCs/STs to go abroad for higher education.

PROTECTION OF CIVIL RIGHTS ACT, 1955

In pursuance of Section 15A of the Protection of Civil Rights (PCR) Act, Government of India provides matching assistance to the states for the strengthening of machinery for the effective enforcement of PCR Act and Liberation of Scavengers by converting dry latrines into water-borne latrines and rehabilitation of liberated scavengers in alternative occupations.

Baba Sahib Ambedkar Birth Anniversary Celebrations

On the birth anniversary celebrations of Dr B. R. Ambedkar, the great son of India, the chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution of India, the greatest champion of the cause of downtrodden, the messiah of the SCs and STs, on April 13 every year, Government of India and State Governments announce a number of programmes for the welfare of SCs and STs. The Government conferred the highest civil award of the country Bharat Ratna on Baba Saheb posthumously and put his portrait in the central hall of Parliament in recognition of his services in nation-building and upliftment of the downtrodden.

SCHEDULED TRIBES

The term scheduled tribes has been used for the first time in the Constitution only. The earlier expressions used in preindependence days were aboriginal tribes, backward tribes, etc. There is no universal definition of a tribe acceptable to all social scientists. But the definition of a tribe given by late Dr D. N. Majumdar has maximum acceptance. He defined a tribe as a social group with territorial affiliation; endogamous; with no specialization of functions; ruled by tribal officers, hereditary or otherwise; united in language or dialect; recognizing social distance from other tribes or castes, but without any stigma attached in the case of a caste structure; following tribal traditions, beliefs, and customs; illiberal of naturalization of ideas from alien sources; above all, conscious of a homogeneity of ethnic and territorial integration. Tribal origin, primitive way of life, habitation in remote and less easily accessible areas, and general backwardness in all respects are the features common to the tribes in various states.

Constitutional Provisions for Tribal Welfare

The Constitution provides various safeguards for promotion and protection of the interests of the STs. Provisions contained in Articles 19, 46, 164, 244, 275, 330, 332, 334, 448, 339, 342, and

the 5th and 6th Schedules of Constitution are relevant in this regard. The Government of India's responsibility in relation to the development of scheduled tribes and scheduled areas extends not only to the provision of funds (Article 275) for their development but also to evolving policies and programmes for their rapid and harmonious development in consultation with and co-operation of the state governments.

20-Point Programme

The importance attached to tribal development is also reflected in the new 20-Point Economic Programme, 1986, which has special emphasis on the development of STs. Being the nodal ministry for overall policy, planning, and co-ordination of programmes for the development of STs, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is concerned with the following points relating to the tribals:

- (a) Point 11: Justice to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- (b) Point 7 (3): Pay special attention to water supply for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- (c) Point 14 (3): Lay special emphasis on construction of houses for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- (d) Point 16 (2): Protect the traditional right of tribal population and local communities of access to firewood and forest produce.

The British Government in India was mainly concerned with the maintenance of law and order rather than with economic and social development in tribal areas. In Assam, the policy of exclusion was followed and no outsiders except missionaries with known antecedents were allowed to go there. Since independence, the chief programmes for the STs have been directed to raising their standard of living, developing agriculture and industry in tribal areas, and providing for their educational, social, and economic development.

Essential Conditions for Scheme for Tribal Welfare

The schemes for tribal welfare must fulfil two essential conditions, namely, conformity to the social values and patterns of the life of the people for whom they are intended and the psychological receptivity and the ability of the tribal population to absorb them. Theoretical perfection of a scheme or its suitability to the people in general must not be regarded as the criterion for tribal people; ignorance of the tribal social values and inability to appreciate them are responsible for the failure of many development schemes. The Third Five Year Plan also held that it would be an error to over administer them in the name of development unless the tribal people are enabled to the above-mentioned two essential conditions, namely, conformity to the social values and patterns of the life of the people for whom they are intended and the psychological receptivity and the ability of the tribal population to absorb them. In facilitating the development, the tribal people should also be enabled to develop along the lines of their own genius, with genuine respect and support for their own traditional arts and culture and without pressure or imposition from outside. In tribal areas, every effort should be made to train and build up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development, the constant aim being to develop local personnel both as official functionaries and as social workers.

Tribal Development and Welfare Strategy

Tribal development has from the beginning been based on a two-pronged policy, viz., (i) protection and promotion of their interests, through legal-administrative support and (ii) implementation of development schemes to raise their level of living. The tribal sub-plan concept evolved and implemented during the Fifth Five Year Plan period continues to be the main instrument for development of tribal people and tribal areas.

Objectives of Tribal Development

The major objectives in tribal development were (i) taking up family-oriented beneficiary programmes through raising productivity levels of the beneficiary families in the fields of agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, small industries, etc.; (ii) elimination of exploitation of tribals in the spheres of alienation of land, money lending, debt-bondage, forest, etc.; (iii) human resources development through education and training programmes; and (iv) infrastructure development.

The tribal sub-plan is funded through resources drawn from (i) state plans, (ii) special central assistance of the ministry of social justice and empowerment, (iii) central and centrally sponsored programmes, and (iv) institutional finance.

Tribal Co-operative Marketing Federation

In order to explore new markets, to improve the marketing of tribal produce, to eliminate intermediaries and obtain better value for tribal produce to augment the income of tribal families, a tribal co-operative marketing development federation (TRIFED) was set up at the national level during 1987–88, and a sum of ₹2 crores was provided as share capital assistance to TRIFED.

Impact of the Programme

Despite the efforts of the government and voluntary organizations for the development and welfare of the STs, it is alleged that the tribal people have experienced nothing but the backlash of development leading to disorganization as a community and destitution as individuals.

The fact of the matter, however, is that the condition of the SCs and the STs continues to be pathetic in spite of the numerous constitutional safeguards and exclusive programmes for their welfare. For millions of those belonging to the weaker sections with small land holdings, as also the landless, escape from the atrocities suffered for centuries is still a distant dream. On the one hand, caste-based inequity is being accentuated despite claim to the contrary and, on the other hand, tribal regions all over the country are simmering with discontent. Technological advances, instead of helping them march towards a better tomorrow, are ravaging them with increased severity. The situation in tribal areas is particularly disturbing, as is evident from the demand for a separate Bodoland. The claims of the state, in utter disregard of their traditional rights and virtual forced displacement for making room for the so-called development projects, have made the tribals restive. Atrocities against the weaker sections have acquired a new economic dimension. With the consolidation of the vested interests, the task of ensuring an equal deal to the under privileged has now become more difficult.

Neither the ban on untouchability nor reservation of jobs has made the harijans lot any better. The indifference of the upper caste Hindus is more or less the same as was many decades earlier. Untouchability continues to be practised in one form or the other, particularly in the rural areas of the country where the non-SCs have not yet overcome the aversion for the SCs and continue to

exploit them. In a few urban pockets also, especially in the states of Bihar, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu there have been instances of discrimination against the SCs. The SCs are not allowed to draw water from the taps/wells used by the upper caste Hindus and are prevented from entering the temples. They are refused service at places commonly used by the upper caste Hindus and are served in separate containers or utensils. In some places, they are denied the services of washerman, barbers, etc. and are still compelled to pursue their age-old unclean occupations due to socio-economic reasons. The late harijan leader, Jagjivan Ram, had remarked that the untouchability offences act, which provides for imprisonment and fine to those who practise discrimination, is mostly on paper, particularly in rural areas. In the words of B. N. Singh, former Assam governor, Dr B. R. Ambedkar fixed the limit of reservation for 10 years in the hope that within this period untouchability would end and a new social order would emerge. But it did not end even 65 years after independence.

Suggestions/Remedies for Improvement of Impasse

It is thus clear that the objective of integrating the SCs into the main stream of society still remains a far cry. The penal provisions of the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 plays but a limited role in dealing with the problem of untouchability. A more concerted effort is, therefore, required to be made in this direction by all government agencies at various levels. Administration/official machinery needs to shed its unusual prejudice in favour of the higher caste Hindus and to feel more responsible to and involved in the task of eradication of practice of untouchability. Above all, the building up of a strong public opinion against the evil of untouchability is essential. The following steps also need to be taken to combat this menace:

- (i) In order to ensure that maximum number of offenders under the provision of the PCR Act are punished, it would be advisable for the states to consider introduction of incentive schemes for police officials and other government functionaries whose performance is considered laudable in matters of proper registration of cases, flawless investigation, and resolute prosecution ending in conviction. Recording of good remarks in the Annual Confidential Reports of the dedicated and conscientious workers could be such incentive.
- (ii) Special drives/campaigns such as observance of fortnight and week for eradication of untouchability could also prove to be useful in this respect.
- (iii) The practice of untouchability in covert or overt form in government departments or educational institutions needs to be dealt with firmness. In addition to departmental action, prompt and strict legal actions also need to be taken up against the offenders.
- (iv) Since the urge to practice untouchability is too deep rooted, it is necessary to find out ways and means of bringing about a change in the mental outlook and social attitudes of the people in general. To achieve this objective, Government will do well involving, besides the voluntary organizations, selected educational and research institutions for carrying out broad-based surveys to locate the areas where untouchability is being practised.
- (v) Necessary changes also need to be introduced in the educational system by incorporating suitable reading material at the primary and middle school levels.
- (vi) Adequate propaganda and publicity should also be organized through mass media, viz., radio, TV, press, and cinema and also through debates, seminars, symposia, prabhat-pheris, and padyatras.

(vii) Community feasts along with members of the SCs and intercaste marriages need to be further encouraged. Government may also consider taking suitable remedial action with regard to objectionable portions, if any, in scriptures, books, or other publications explicitly or implicitly advocating any kind of discrimination on grounds of caste.

(viii) An ironical situation arises when some of the developmental schemes aimed at ameliorating the SCs further segregate them from the rest of the population. For example, house-sites being provided to the SCs under various schemes are generally located away from the main village, which impedes their coming closer to people belonging to the other castes. Similarly, educational institutions and hostels that are being opened exclusively for SCs tend to keep them away from students belonging to other castes. It is desirable that the programmes, meant for economic advancement of the SCs be implemented in such a manner that they in the process, also ensure the absorption of the SCs into the main stream of society.

OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES

The term backward classes is used to include SCs, STs, and other backward classes (OBC's). These sections of the community have laboured under distinct disadvantages in consequence of the rigid caste-ridden hierarchy that prevailed in the past in India's social structure. They have suffered from social and economic disabilities and have come to be known as backward classes. Whereas the SCs and STs are identified as a result of the issue of revised lists under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes List Modification Order, 1956, and the denotified communities are defined under the Criminal Tribes Act, 1924, the precise definition of OBC's has eluded so far.

As regard the socially and educationally backward classes, now popularly called ABC's, the only special provision is under Article 340 of Part XIV of the Constitution regarding the appointment of a Commission by the President of India to investigate the condition of backward classes.

The President of India had accordingly appointed a Backward Classes Commission headed by Shri Kaka Saheb Kalelkar in January 1953 to determine the criteria for treating any sections of the people, other than the SCs and STs, as socially and educationally backward; and in accordance with the criteria thus determined, to prepare a list of such classes. The commission in its report submitted in March 1955 recommended that the basic criterion for identification of the OBC's should be their low social position in the traditional caste hierarchy of the Hindu society and accordingly prepared a list of almost 2700 communities, and estimated that 930 of them would alone account for nearly one-third of the country's population. The commission also considered women, as a class to be backward. While placing the report of the commission before the Parliament in September 1956, the Government of India observed that if the bulk of the country's millions were to be regarded as coming within the category of backward classes, no useful purpose would be served by separate enumeration of such classes. Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru was of the view that it is basically wrong to label any section of the people as backward, even if they were so, when 90 per cent of the people in the country were backward and poor. It is, therefore, clear that the classes to be specified should be distinctly and palpably more backward socially and educationally than the general run of the population. Government also endorsed the view expressed by the chairman of the Commission that acceptance of caste as a criterion of backwardness was not a correct approach and that the remedies suggested on the basis of caste would be worse than the evil of backwardness itself. The report was rightly shelved by Pt. Nehru, as such an approach was bound to lead to compartmentalization of society.

Mandal Commission

It was left to the Janta Government to disturb the hornet's nest in 1978 by again raking up the issue by the appointment of Second Backward Classes Commission headed by Shree B. P. Mandal.

The recommendations of the Mandal Commission are summarized as follows:

- (i) Twenty seven per cent of the posts in public services should be reserved for OBC's. They do make 52 per cent of the total population, yet the reservation quota for them cannot exceed this limit. This is because according to the law, as interpreted by the Supreme Court of India, the total quantum of reservations under Articles 15 (4) and (16) of the Constitution should be below 50 per cent, and at present 22.5 per cent of the government jobs are already reserved for the SCs and STs on pro-rata basis of their share in the population.
- (ii) Welfare programmes specially meant for OBC's should be financed by the Government of India in the same manner and to the same extent already done in the case of SCs and STs.
- (iii) Radical land reforms should be brought about in states to free small land holders from their heavy dependence on rich peasants for their subsistence.
- (iv) OBC's should be encouraged and helped to set up small scale industries.
- (v) Special educational schemes, with emphasis on vocational training should be started for OBC's. They should also be given special coaching in technical and professional institutions to enable them to compete with the students from the open quota.

Announcement for Implementation of the Report

The National Front had promised in its poll manifesto to implement the Mandal Commission Report. But the ruling party leaders had aired conflicting views about it. While both Mr Devi Lal and Mr Chandra Shekhar favoured the idea of imparting an economic basis to reservation in educational institutions and government jobs, Uttar Pradesh chief minister Mulayam Singh Yadav swore by the caste label alone. Prime Minister V. P. Singh announced all of a sudden the acceptance of the Mandal Report on 7 August 1990 in the Parliament without taking into confidence even his own cabinet colleagues, for reasons of political expediency—to offset the political mileage that Mr Devi Lal could gain by convening the Kisan Sammelan at New Delhi on 9 August 1990, immediately after his dismissal from the office of the deputy prime minister. The miscalculated move of Mr V. P. Singh had alienated his senior-most colleagues, provoked the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPM) to denounce publicly this rash decision, antagonized the bureaucracy and upset his sympathetic constituents, academics, journalists, students, and lawyers who were openly demanding his resignation—Mr Vasant Sathe and Dr Karan Singh had vociferously charged that he had plunged the nation in a casteist carnage.

Thus, several plans and schemes are being formulated to improve the economic and social status of the backward classes. However, much is still left undone. Their economic and social problems are complicated as it is not only the question of their economic development but also the question of raising their social status. They live a solitary and segregated life socially despised of a vast population. To change social attitudes is not an easy task. The policy of reservation and special financial assistance has benefited only a fraction of them—the white collar strata among them. The larger majority still lives a life of deprivation and social aloofness. The reservation policy has created a stigma against them. The Dalit card carries a political price. To ameliorate the economic condition and social status

of the backward classes is an uphill task for which vast finances, better integrated plans, and conscientious implementation of development schemes are needed.

Critique of Reservation Policy

Reservation policy has its justification for SCs and STs, and OBCs for the reason that they constitute the underprivileged who have been oppressed, suppressed, exploited, humiliated, and deprived of equality, liberty, and justice in various spheres of life. They have suffered numerous disabilities, and are, therefore, known as downtrodden and deprived classes of the society. The founder fathers of the Republic had therefore rightly devised reservation as a kind of escalator to be used in politics to catch up with others.

But it is doubtful whether the reservation policy has been able to achieve the desired objectives because its advantages are alleged to be outweighed by its disadvantages. It is criticized on the following grounds:

- (i) Reservation has done more harm than good. There has been a disastrous lowering of standards in the civil, medical, engineering, and technical services and in the educational institutions.
- (ii) Reservation was to serve for 10 years. As the underprivileged classes were discriminated against in the earlier social and political orders, stultifying their springs of creativity, reservation was considered necessary to rejuvenate them. Clearly, 10-year period was too short and the Parliament routinely extended it decade after decade and it is still in use. It now looks that it has become a prominent feature of our polity. This has created bad blood and heart burning among others.
- (iii) Reservation policy has been and is being used as vote bank politics. Both the BJP and the Congress governments announce for reservations for these classes at the time of elections to augment their vote banks. Surprisingly, even the Jats, Rajputs, and Brahmans, who are known to belong to the upper classes in terms of their wealth and relationship to royal dynasties, and had perpetuated inhuman indignities on the dalits, have become claimants for reservation.
- (iv) All the parties do not get any tangible benefits from reservation. It is only the elite among them who are enjoying the fruits of reservation. What is worse is the progeny of one or two time users who suffer from no social or educational disability having been brought up as children of the elite are now monopolizing the benefits of reservation, although they do not really need them. They are edging out the really needy and deserving among the dalits.
- (v) Reservation ignores merit when someone is denied admission to an institution or an appointment as the same has been given to a less meritorious dalit.
- (vi) Reservation has not and will not end social discrimination.

It will only perpetuate the vote bank politics. Politicians will not therefore accept its abolition, since reservation policies have become a permanent feature of our political scenario.

(vii) The reservation policy is availed of by one and all SCs and STs, despite the fact that there is hierarchy of castes and subcastes. The degree of social stigma greatly varies among them as in the case of chamars (shoemaking class) and bhangis (scavenging group). The same is true for the STs. The Meena tribe is far more advanced than many forest- and hill-dwelling tribes that are cut off from civilization. It was, therefore, unrealistic and unjust to give them the bulk reservation as SCs and STs. The result is that” lion’s share of the reservation cake has been taken by the Chamars

and Meenas, and a few crumbs have gone to the more disadvantaged among the SCs and STs. Logically, a few homogeneous groups should have been carved out from these broad categories.

(viii) The implementation of Mandal Commission Report by the then prime minister Mr V. P. Singh had dropped a bombshell that created deep cleavage and sharply divided our society. There were demonstrations, riots, and violence resulting in huge losses of property and human lives. Some students had even committed self-immolation. There seemed to be no justification for the OBC's, because unlike the SCs they had not suffered from the severe social disability of untouchability and were marginally handicapped educationally, which was being redressed by a scheme of scholarships and which would have been further fortified.

Hopefully, the reservation for the economically backward class will not repeat the abnormal uprising by various sections of society, since the move has the support of all the political parties.

It has come to be realized that caste-based reservation needs to be dispensed, since it is felt that sectarian approach like reservation for disadvantaged sections for long period of time may stand in the way of social harmony and speedy economic development of the country. It is also being felt that reservation is a favour that weighs down the recipient and stigmatizes him for life. If we are serious about social justice, we should build a network of high-quality schools in the rural areas for dalits, OBCs, and economically poor children and provide them wholesome environment and a dedicated faculty, which gives them ample food for thought. The rest will follow. The quota system has injected a lethal poison in our society and filled hatred in the minds of the people, particularly the youth. If we take the human race development route seriously and invest in it liberally, reservation may not be needed. But it is doubtful whether our politicians will like reservation policies to be done away with, as reservation politics has become a permanent feature of our polity and is being pursued for the promotion of interests of political parties and the individual politicians. Mahatma Gandhi and Dr B. R. Ambedkar were the champions of the interests of the downtrodden and genuine messiahs. The country would be fortunate to be blessed with such selfless politicians instead of the self-seeking ones.

QUESTIONS

1. Briefly enumerate the constitutional safeguards provided for the SCs and STs.
2. What are the problems of the SCs and STs?
3. How far has the reservation policy helped the SCs and STs to raise their economic status?
4. Give your arguments for and against the reservation policy for the SCs and backward classes.

Unit 9 Women and Society

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Women and Society

Women represent almost half of the total population of our country, and their participation in the developmental programmes is considered imperative. No schemes whether in the field of economic development or social development can be successful unless women play their constructive role in such programmes. In spite of the social imbalances existing in the society, there has been considerable improvement in their social status; today women occupy many high positions and their instinctive zest for life and cheerful disposition illumine many homes. Women's role in directing and shaping the density of the society is crucial.

STATUS OF WOMEN IN INDIA: AN OVERVIEW

The status of women in India has been a chequered one, as it has seen many ups and downs. In the Vedic age, they were worshipped as goddesses. In the Muslim age, their status suffered a sharp decline, and in the British regime they were looked down upon as 'slaves of slaves'. Since independence, the tide seems to have gone in their favour. There is no denying the fact that women in India have made some progress, maybe, because of the social legislation, the progress made in the fields of education, health, or economics or as a result of technological developments, or because of a process of evolution. Although in very small numbers, today we have women in almost all spheres of life. They are doctors, engineers, pilots, journalists, teachers, administrators, judges, the State legislators, State governors, ambassadors, members of Parliament, and ministers. We have had a woman prime minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi and a president of the UN Assembly, Mrs Vijay Laxmi Pandit. Ms Sheila Dixit, Ms Vasundhara Raje, Ms Uma Bharti, and Ms Rabri Devi have taken over as chief ministers of Delhi, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar, respectively. Ms Jayalalitha is the

chief minister of Tamil Nadu. Ms Mayawati has been the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh thrice. Ms Rajinder Kaur Bhattal has been the chief minister of Punjab.

The constitution (73rd and 74th) Amendment Act, 1992, provides 33 per cent reservation for women in Panchayati Raj institutions and local bodies, enabling women to take the positions of sarpanch, mayors, councillors, etc. of their respective bodies. Ms Kiran Bedi has become legendary as a model IPS (Indian Police Service) woman officer. Ms Kalpana Chawla is an illustrious example as a woman astronaut.

The situation on the economic front is not better. The women's work in the house that includes collection of firewood, bringing of water from long distances, and helping in the family business or in the fields is not recognized because they are not paid for it. The census report does not take note of it. It is estimated that the average hours of unpaid work done by women outside their home ranges from 6.1 to 7.5 per day with some women working for 10 hours and more. Moreover, 89.5 per cent of the women workers are engaged in the unorganized sector. Of these, 82 per cent are in agriculture and allied occupations. In the organized sector, women form 13.3 per cent of the total number of employees. In the public sector, they account for 11 per cent of the employment force, and in the private sector the percentage is 17.8.

So far as senior management jobs are concerned, women hold 5.8 per cent posts as against men in similar positions in the all India services. There are only 9 per cent women officers in the Indian Police Service. In the Indian Administrative Service, there are 7.5 per cent women. Although concern is being expressed for their emancipation in every field, economic independence is of paramount importance. Efforts are on to ensure that woman is economically not dependent on anyone. But these efforts have hardly been of any help. The woman is now burdened with two kinds of jobs—her work within the house and the job outside. She does not find any free-time to enjoy the fruits of her economic independence. In many cases she is the custodian of her salary till she arrives home. Her salary later becomes a part of the total income of her family. The economic independence is not the final solution. An equal emphasis has to be laid on the total development of the woman, the awareness about her rights and responsibilities, the recognition of her role, and the work that she does at home. If necessary, the social system must change so that the woman does not have to ask for concessions.

The condition in the political arena is no better either. Each political party stands for women's participation in political activities in a big way. But do we see the reflection of their wishes in the Parliament? The percentage of women members of Parliament has been on the decrease. Twenty-three women were elected to the Lok Sabha in the first general election, whereas 19 were elected or nominated to the Rajya Sabha. Today, after 56 years of independence, there are only 24 women members of the Lok Sabha and 24 of the Rajya Sabha.

A dismal picture of the status of women as attempted above is further reflected in their position in the society. As stated earlier, the sex ratio in India is 927 girls per 1000 boys. In some states, it is most alarming. As reported in the census 2001 it is 793 in Punjab, 820 in Haryana, and 897 in Himachal Pradesh. Infant mortality rate is higher for girls with a ratio of 7.8 per cent for girls to that of 6.7 per cent for boys. In 1999, 40 per cent of the women were assaulted by their partners (UNIFEM Biennial Report) and 65.3 per cent women reported of some kind of abuse (UNDP Report). In 2001, the estimated adult literacy was 31.3 per cent for men and 54.6 per cent for women (UN Social Indicators). According to the National Family Health Survey 1998–1999, only 52 per cent of women are consulted for decisions concerning their own health. The percentage of deliveries attended by health professionals in 1998–1999 was 43 per cent, the lowest proportion is 22 per cent in Uttar Pradesh. Women's wage rate is on an average only 75 per cent of that of men and constitutes only one-fourth of the family income.

It is estimated that in India there are 92 million working women. Studies concluded that not only the women form the most impoverished lot but also that the women represent the fastest increasing group of impoverished. Nowhere apart from certain African countries has poverty adopted the female face in such a fantastic manner as in the subcontinent.

Poverty reflects not only in economic terms but also translates into deprivations of several kinds. In poorer households, right from food, work, education, clothing to marriage, women receive the worst of the lot. Nutritious food is reserved for the male members. Alongside unequal food distribution comes unequal provisions for health care facilities. Studies show that females are less likely to receive medical care than males, less likely to be admitted to hospitals, and in some instances less likely to survive than boys. A poor nutritious state of females means that their illness is of longer duration.

Girls are made to leave schools at the smallest of excuses, mainly to act as household assistants or domestic servants, whereas boys are allowed to study relatively more.

For every woman who steps out of the house to work as a domestic keep or as a construction worker or as a farmer, there is her daughter who stays back home babysitting, cooking, and house-keeping. Thus, girls are generally lesser fed, lesser loved, and lesser educated, and they are married off at early age against their will. This leads to premature motherhood and a staggering mortality rate of 410 per 1,00,000 deliveries, giving birth on an average 3.3 times in her life. However, many a time she is not allowed the dignity of marriage, but rather used like a slave.

In most Indian households, females are denied independence in professional, educational, and other essential forms of instruction. She is groomed to subordinate herself to the collective will of the family to ensure that she makes a good life later. Later on, she is denied inheritance on equal footing. There is obviously lack of decision-making power, even of the elementary type. When it comes to higher decisions such as those related to finance, property, and family planning, independence is almost unheard of.

Hard pressed to accommodate the role both of breadwinners and domestic caretakers, women are often forced to make compromises on professional fronts. They accept jobs that pay less, offer minimum economic and social security, where labour laws are difficult to implement and where there are minimum chances of economic growth.

In rural areas, 87 per cent women are employed in agriculture as labourers and cultivators. In urban areas, about 8090 per cent of the women workers are employed in household industries, small trade and services, and in building and construction work. A woman still bears the cost of her traditional domestic chores while the rising cost of living has put on her additional burden of earning and contributing to the total family income.

PROBLEMS OF WOMEN

As explained above, the plight of women, in general, is distressing and their condition in society is deplorable, notwithstanding the fact that there have been some improvements in the lives of a negligible section of women. This improvement has been because of the measures taken for the amelioration of their lot by the governments, voluntary organizations, and social groups. But there still remains a lot to be done to ensure a meaningful life for the womenfolk of our country.

An account of the status of women attempted above highlights the problems of women, which may be enumerated briefly as follows:

- (i) **Gender bias:** Women in India suffer from gender bias of extreme nature. They are discriminated on the basis of their sex. Boys are preferred over girls as is evident from the female foeticide and infanticide, preference to boys in matters of food, nourishment, education, and other necessities of life.

(ii) Absence of freedom: Women do not enjoy as much freedom and liberty as men do. It is rightly observed that women have always to depend on their parents in their childhood and adolescence, on their husbands and parents-in-laws after marriage, and on their children in old age. Lack of freedom does not let their instructive qualities of assertion, leadership, and enterprise develop and blossom.

(iii) Crime against women: Women are victims of crimes of numerous types at the hands of men. They are abused and exploited, physically and mentally tortured, beaten and even burnt for dowry, divorced on flimsy grounds, and compelled to undergo all kinds of hardships of performing the dual tasks of breadwinners and carrying out domestic chores. If employed, abduction, rapes, murders, and harassment at work places has become very common.

(iv) Poverty: As discussed earlier, women are the most impoverished, they live in abject poverty. They are often sold by parents in exchange of money, are forced to adopt prostitution, and sometimes are the object of human traffic to be exported to foreign countries.

(v) Denial of education: Women are ignorant and illiterate. Girls are denied education as the parents, particularly in rural areas, believe that they are destined to household activities and are not supposed to be exposed outside the four walls of the house.

(vi) Inadequate facilities for professional training: Even though girls in the towns go to schools they are not provided adequate facilities and avenues for training for higher education, especially in the rural areas.

(vii) Absence of employment opportunities: There is a dearth of jobs for even educated women. Unemployment is the most serious problem faced by our country. Educated girls get frustrated and are forced to accept jobs at lower wages and on terms and conditions of the employer. They are denied economic and social security available to the regular employees in public services and organized sectors of labour.

(viii) Social evils: Child marriage, expensive marriages involving expenditures way beyond the capacity of some parents, large families, too many children despite the publicity for smaller families, joint family system expecting and forcing the women to be engaged in various household responsibilities, lack of leisure and recreational activities, use of drugs and alcohol among the well-to-do family women, and death of bread earners in riots and wars further augment the problems of women.

(ix) Diseases and other health hazards: Women, being weak for lack of proper nutrition, fall an easy prey to all kinds of diseases, epidemics, stresses and strains, and the recent onslaught of the deadly diseases like AIDS. There does not exist proper facilities for their treatment. There is a lack of proper infrastructure and availability of medicines and treatment in exclusively designed institutes for women patients and, for that matter, in general hospitals.

(x) Absence of proper representation in social, economic, and political institutions: Women are denied proper representation and empowerment in social, economic, and political institutions in the matters of decision-making and implementation of concerned policies and programmes. Although they have been given 33 per cent reservation at the grass root institutions, their struggle for getting the same at State legislatures and the Parliament has not been successful so far. They have not been empowered either in Panchayati Raj or in local government institutions in some states. To solve the problem they have to continue with their struggle more vigorously.

THE CHANGES IN THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Visible and desirable changes in the status of women are evident in great abundance. Gender bias is being removed through legislation and society pressures. More and more girls are going to schools. They outnumber boys in colleges and universities in achieving top positions. They are qualifying the common entrance tests to medical, engineering, management, IIT's, and civil services. Women like Kalpana Chawla, a space scientist and Kiran Bedi, the most celebrated IPS officer are a source of inspiration and models to be followed by the promising young girls. A large number of girls are proving successful as entrepreneurs and are setting up their independent businesses in various fields. Conscious of their political rights, they are aspiring for occupying the coveted posts of the heads of government, chief ministers, and cabinet ministers. All this points out the emergence of a bright status for women.

The factors contributing to the changes in status of women in recent years and the measures adopted for these changes are discussed in detail:

The year 1990 was observed as the year of the 'girl child'. Her well-being and her status in the family, community, and nation were the focal points of concern. Perhaps there may be an increasing awareness that the girl child is also a human being with thoughts, emotions, aspirations, will, and individuality of her own. In fact, the post-independence period, particularly in the case of women, has been a continuation of the pre-independence era of social reforms, economic upliftment, and political recognition. The struggle for equality, justice, and identity continues.

The social reforms, which began in the nineteenth century, set in motion a number of legal measures with a view to improve the conditions of women. The laws thus enacted, among others, related to foeticide, child marriage, widow remarriage, sati, etc. Even though this was a step forward and an enabling factor in the development of women, the law could not achieve the desired results. For in the case of social legislation it is also imperative to have a change in the outlook, in the perception of women's role and support services. All these have been very slow to come by. Consequently, even after more than a century of social reforms, the change, though discernible, is far from being indicative of parity between men and women.

The overview of the situation generally is distressing. Rape, dowry deaths, misuse of the tests to determine the sex of the child in the womb and termination of pregnancy in case of a female foetus give an indication of the horrible behaviour patterns. In recent years, the government has taken a number of steps to set right the wrong that is done to the girl child. We have the report of the committee on the status of women, the women's year followed by the women's decade, women's departments, national perspective plan for women, the inclusion of a separate chapter on women's development in the Seventh Plan, and now the national commission. All these measures show the concern for women.

The women have yet to travel a long way before they can be equated with men.

Achievements of the 'Year of the Girl Child'

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) at its convention at Islamabad in 1989 had agreed on observing 1990 as the year of the girl child. During the year, India hosted many conferences and symposia that deliberated on the age-old trials and tribulations of the girl child. The year witnessed some developments in favour of girl child and others in exploitation of women.

To begin with, a great achievement of the year was in the field of adoption. Statistics compiled by the Voluntary Coordinating Agency, Bombay, under the auspices of the Indian Association for Promotion of Adoption showed that more parents were taking to adoption and they prefer girls. And in the state of Maharashtra, there had been a ten-fold leap, especially in Mumbai, Pune, and Nagpur.

Child marriages and particularly marriage of girls below 18 years of age was another topic well covered by the mass media. A suitable SAARC slogan goes thus: 'Too old for toys, too young for babies'. Amniocentesis with its technique of selective abortion plunged the year into heated debates while adding to the social weaponry used against women. Along with this sex determination technique that put an end to female foetuses, came the feeling that almost everything is stacked against the female child. 'Invest Rs 500 and save Rs. 50,000 later', this is how a doctor in Amritsar advertised his sex determination clinic. Data collected from six hospitals in Mumbai revealed that out of 8000 foetuses aborted early, 7999 were female.

Widespread agitation and protests in the state succeeded in bringing about a legislation banning amniocentesis in Maharashtra. A similar campaign for a central legislation was on. The year also witnessed increasing incidents of violence against women. Ironically, greater awareness had led to more cases being reported, while the number of convictions had gone down. According to police figures, punishments are awarded only in three out of 100 cases. This delay is mainly due to apathy in filing FIRs and issuing challans.

Rise in Crimes Against Women

There has been a constant rise in dowry deaths, bride burning, and other forms of torture against women in the country. Rape, assault, molestation, kidnapping, and illegal confinement are also rampant, both in rural and urban areas. Apart from heinous crimes, there are other offences too which are committed against women in subtler forms and on a wider scale. These are, for instance, abortions on suspicion that the child to be born may be a female, and denying the daughters the same quantity and quality of food as given to the sons.

Reasons for Rise in Crimes Against Women and Suggestions to Mitigate Them

(i) One reason why crimes against women continue to increase is that there is hardly any deterrent and the culprits feel that they can easily get away with anything. In all the cases of dowry deaths in Delhi over the past four years, there has been only one conviction. And according to a social activist, out of the 6500 cases registered with the police on crime against women, there were only 1500 arrests, and all of them were released on bail. Moreover, statistics of the Police Research Bureau have recorded only 3 per cent convictions during the past 10 years, to say the least.

(ii) There have been scores of amendments and inclusion of various laws in the statute book to check this unhealthy trend. The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, has been amended twice to make its provision more punitive. The Indian Penal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code, and the Indian Evidence Act have also been amended simultaneously to deal effectively not only with dowry death cases but also with the cases of cruelty to married women. Similarly, the rape law has also come up to be modified to remove some of its drawbacks. All these measures, however, could not check the crime from further escalating. The objectives of these laws may not be faulted, but what is of crucial importance is their enforcement. A wide gap exists between laws with high social and economic purposes and their implementation on account of police inefficiency and widespread corruption. In this climate, the cutting edge of laws, both as instruments of crime prevention and that of social change, is bound to get blunted.

(iii) Legal remedies alone cannot cope with a regressive socio-economic set-up in the absence of radical structural, social, and economic reforms, which can be implemented only by mass mobilization and mass participation. With the kind of bureaucracy, police, and political set-up that we have, the mere passing of laws will not deliver the goods. A struggle even for the implementation of the existing laws that can help to uphold, protect, and promote the legitimate rights and demands of the women can be of much value.

(iv) It is also a matter of regret that the courts have, of late, begun to treat the accused with what might be described as irresponsible leniency. For instance, the Supreme Court has halved the sentence (from 10 to 5 years) of two constables convicted of raping a woman within the four walls of police station. This was done on the ground that the victim was, 'of questionable character and easy virtue'. This is a definite retreat of the Supreme Court's own bold and socially conscious earlier directive, when it advised the lower judiciary not to hesitate in awarding the maximum penalty prescribed under the law in such cases. Apart from negating the serious view of custodial rape, the decision also nullifies the guidelines issued by the Central government in late eighties to prevent police misbehaving with women.

(v) Long delays in law courts are also responsible for a spurt in crimes. It has been seen that it often takes years together for the cases to reach the final stage of disposal. During the course of pendency, most of the witnesses are either lured/scared away or evidence relevant to the case is destroyed by the offenders. And for want of these, the cases fall flat. To prevent such happenings, cases like dowry deaths and rapes must be summarily tried by special courts to be set up for the purpose. These courts will certainly ensure speedy justice to victims not otherwise possible under the normal process of law that is not only time-consuming but also humiliating. Similarly, family courts, if set up, can also take care of many problems of married women.

(vi) Ironically, public response to violence against women is one of indifference.

In sum, there can be no two opinions about the need for stringent laws, sensitive judiciary, effective enforcement machinery, and vigilant women's groups to deal with such atrocious crimes against women. But what is needed more than anything else is a 'total revolution' in the thinking of society that always blames the women for the crime of which she is the victim, not the perpetrator.

Programme for Women Welfare at the Centre and State Levels

Of late, women all over the world have been agitating and struggling for their rights and privileges and initiating woman liberation movements to achieve their rightful place in their respective societies. The United Nations had declared 1975 as International Women Year and the period 1975–1985 as the International Women Decade. March 8, is observed as Women's Day in our country every year. All these anniversaries and commemorative days are observed to focus the attention and concern of the governments and the society on the needs of women and the efforts required to meet them—on their fundamental right to equality; the equal right to nutrition, health, education and opportunity; beginning with the right to survive. All these components are crucial for the all round development of the women and the community, she lives in. The Centre and State governments and Union Territories administrations launched a number of programmes for improving social and economic status of women. There were intensified efforts to maintain continuity and for the progress and expansion of these programmes during the Women's Decade.

(i) Various state governments, recognizing the role of integrated delivery of early childhood services, took up the centrally sponsored scheme of Integrated Child Development Services for implementation in the states; the impact of the scheme was evident on the lives of children and mothers in several crucial indicators—increased immunization coverage, reduced infant mortality rate and decline in birth and death rates.

(ii) The 20-Point Programme was launched, which lays special emphasis on accelerated programmes for women welfare and nutrition programmes for pregnant women and nursing mothers, especially in tribal, hilly, and backward areas.

(iii) Women and Children Development Corporations were set up.

(iv) Construction of a number of women's hostel buildings by voluntary organizations, with the aid given by the Central and State governments.

(v) Provision of crèches in conjunction with working women's hostels as well as in other establishments.

(vi) Various concessions and facilities for working women such as relaxation on age limit in entering government services, special leave benefits, etc.

(vii) The Central Social Welfare Board, State Social Welfare Advisory Boards, Indian Council for Women Welfare, All India Women's Conference, Bhartiya Grameen Mahila Sangh, Red Cross, Association for Social Health in India and other voluntary organizations were in existence long before the International Women's Decade, but during this decade these organizations geared up their machinery and came up with novel programmes for women's welfare. Celebration of simple marriages and even mass-marriages, settlement of family dispute arising out of demand for more dowry, and matrimonial problems have been receiving greater attention of all such voluntary welfare organizations.

(viii) Social maladies and social imbalances in the society call for providing greater social security to women. Women also have to suffer the backlash effects of growing problems of drug addiction and alcoholism. After the death of the drug-addict husband, the wife has to stand on her own and think of ways and means to steer the family through the crisis. Dowry deaths, bride burning, social improprieties, etc. have prompted these voluntary welfare organizations to work with more zeal and vigour for the eradication of such social evils and for creating social awakening, raising social values, and improving social health so that women should live in complete social harmony.

(ix) The state governments have set up protective homes for the distressed women and those who are in moral danger under the Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act. Due to broken homes and highly individualistic society, the problems of unmarried mothers, orphans, and emotionally disturbed women are quite acute today. In this context, for organizing and strengthening social welfare services on modern lines, consistent with the curative and rehabilitative needs is all the felt. These social obligations continue to receive much of the government attention and the policies and programmes are reviewed and modified in the light of the new social challenges.

Social Legislation for Women

With a view to improve the declining sex ratio and for containing the menace of female foeticide, the Government brought into force the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention

of Misuse) Act, 1994, with effect from 1 January 1996. The amendments to the act made in 2002 brought the technique of pre-conception sex selection and use of ultrasound machines within the ambit of the act; made punishments prescribed under the act more stringent; and empowered the authorities for search, seizure, and sealing of the machines, equipments, and records of violators of the law. The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976, was passed, which provides for (a) the payment of equal remuneration to men and women workers and (b) prevention of discrimination on the ground of sex against women in the matter of employment arid for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, and the Special Marriage Act, 1955, had been amended by the Marriage Laws Amendment Act, 1976, to provide for the right of a girl to repudiate before attaining majority, her marriage as a child, whether the marriage has been consummated or not. The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, was made more stringent. The Child Marriage Restraint Amendment Act, 1978, raises the age of the marriage for girls from 15 to 18 years and for boys from 18 to 21 years. The Factories (Amendment) Act, 1976, provides for establishment of a crèche where 30 women are employed as against one for every 50 hitherto. The Maternity Benefits Act, 1961, was amended in April 1976 to cover women who do not fall within the purview of the Employee's State Insurance Act, 1948. These legislative measures are expected to go a long way in removing social prejudices, social **inequalities, and social stigmas against women.**

The Department of Women and Child Development

The Department of Women and Child Development is charged with the nodal responsibility to implement and co-ordinate programmes of women's welfare and development. It activates different ministries departments both at the centre and state levels dealing with women's welfare and development programmes. It also initiates and intensifies measures to promote voluntary efforts in the field of women's development. The department, besides playing a nodal role, also implements the following schemes for the welfare and development of women:

Hostels for working women: With the progressive change in the economic structure of the country, more and more women are moving from their homes in search of employment. One of the main difficulties faced by them is lack of suitable accommodation in a healthy and wholesome environment. Keeping in view the difficulties faced by such women, Central Scheme of Assistance for Construction of Hostel Buildings for Working Women was started in 1972. The scope of the scheme was widened in 1980 by including a provision for day-care centres for children. Financial assistance to the extent of 50 per cent of the cost of land and 75 per cent of the cost of construction of the hostels is given to voluntary organizations. Assistance on the same pattern is also provided for the purchase of building to start hostels. Besides voluntary organizations, local bodies, women's development corporations, universities and schools/colleges of social work are eligible for financial assistance under this scheme.

Employment and income-generating production programme: This programme was started in 1982–1983 to train women belonging to weaker sections of society and provide them employment on sustained basis. It is implemented through public sector undertakings/corporations/autonomous bodies/voluntary organizations. Assistance for the programme comes from Norwegian Agency for International Development.

Women's training centres/institutes for the rehabilitation of women in distress: Adversities of life arising out of economic, social, psychological, and environmental situations affect women the worst. Young and old widows, unmarried mothers, and victims of kidnapping are some of the vulnerable groups affected. Prolonged illnesses of the bread earner or his being jailed for a crime and desertion by husbands are other reasons for destitution. With the objective of rehabilitating

such women and their dependent children, a scheme was launched in 1977 to provide vocational training-cum-employment and residential area so that these women could become economically independent. The scheme envisages training of short duration, not exceeding a year. The scheme is a centrally sponsored one. The expenditure is shared between the Central government, State government, and the implementing organizations in the ratio of 45:45:10. In the case of Union Territories, expenditure is shared between the Central government and the implementing organization in the ratio of 90:10. Voluntary agencies registered as societies/trusts, district, rural development agencies, panchayats, and other local bodies are eligible for assistance.

Short-stay homes for women and girls: The department gives grant-in-aid to voluntary organizations to establish and run short-stay homes to protect and rehabilitate those women and girls who are facing social and moral danger because of family problems, mental strain, social ostracism, exploitation, or any other cause. Under the scheme services/facilities of medical care; psychiatric treatment; case-work services; occupational therapy; social facilities of adjustment; and education, vocational, and recreational activities are provided.

Family life institute: The Association for Social Health in India runs the Family Life Institute in Delhi. The major functions of this institute are counselling services and family life education for the maladjusted spouses, parents, unmarried youths, teenagers of unsettled and depressed mind, child drop-outs, etc.

Pilot project for mobilizing public opinion against trafficking and elevation of moral standard in general: Under this project, financial assistance is given to enable the Association for Social Health in India to generate public opinion against trafficking and elevation of moral standards in general.

Education work for prevention of atrocities against women: Assistance under this scheme is given to the organizations working with women for their social upliftment and betterment. Prevention of atrocities against women can be carried out through propaganda, publicity, and research work. The different methods to achieve the goal are as follows:

- (i) Production and publication of educative journals, articles, books, and other publicity materials such as pamphlets, booklets, hoardings, posters, and slogans depicting themes of violence against women
- (ii) Carrying out surveys/studies on particular aspects of violence and atrocities against women.
- (iii) Production of films, short plays, short stories, poems, and other creative efforts.
- (iv) Dissemination of information in regional languages.
- (v) Holding of seminars, conferences, meetings, exhibitions, and training camps for social and other workers including government functionaries.
- (vi) Organization of legal literacy training camps, paralegal training, and use of folk media such as street plays, puppetry, and other traditional art forms to raise awareness related to violence against women.

Support to training and employment programme for women (STEP): A new omnibus scheme to render support to women's employment in various sectors such as agriculture, dairy, animal husbandry, fisheries, khadi and village industries, handlooms, handicrafts, and sericulture, where women are preponderantly engaged in work, was formulated at the beginning of the Seventh Plan. The scheme focuses on the poorest, the most marginalized poor assetless women including wage

labourers, unpaid family workers, female-headed households, migrant labourers, tribals, and other dispossessed groups.

National commission on self-employed women: The national commission on self-employed women under the chairmanship of Ela R. Bhatt was set up under the Department of Women and Child Development on 5 January 1987. Its terms of references were to examine the present status of women in the self-employed sector, with special reference to employment, health, education, and social status; to assess the impact of various labour legislations of the self-employed, specially in respect of maternity benefits, health insurance, etc.; to identify the constraints on increase of productivity of self-employed women and the gaps in training, credit, upgradation of skills, marketing, etc.; to survey employment patterns including production relations and assess their impact on the wages of the self-employed women; to undertake a survey of the effects of macroeconomic policies relating to investment, production, technology, etc. on the status of self-employed women; to consider the link between the productive and reproductive roles of the self-employed women, with special reference to their health status; and to suggest measures relating to all sectors for removing the constraints that adversely affect the integration of self-employed women in the national development process.

It strongly recommended that women should be given control over assets, as this would perhaps be an important intervention by the government, to make their economic ventures viable and improve their status. It has also sought reservations in jobs for women.

National commission for women: Many organizations for women, cutting across party lines, have been demanding the setting up of a statutory body for protecting their rights. The demand for a national commission for women had been made in 1976 when the first comprehensive report on the status of women in India was released. There was broad agreement that positive steps were required to give women their due place in the society. In the meantime, mounting instances of bride burning, dowry, practice of sati, all combined to give the matter a new urgency. National Front government introduced the National Commission on Women Bill on the last day of the budget session of Parliament in 1990. But the Bill lapsed on account of the dissolution of Lok Sabha. The Bill was again presented before the newly constituted Parliament and the commission was set up in 1992. The commission has a chairman, five members, and a member secretary all nominated by the Central government. The main activities of the commission are review of legislation, looking into specific individual complaints of atrocities, and remedial action to safeguard the interests of women. In addition, several states have also established 'State Women's Commission.'

The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961: Dowry system has always given rise to innumerable socio-economic problems of far reaching consequences and wide ranging ramifications. Of late, numerous incidents of bride burning, harassment, and physical torture of the young brides and various kinds of pressure tactics being adopted by the husband-in-laws pressuring for more dowry have compelled the social reformers and the intelligentsia to give serious thought to the various aspects connected with the very institution of dowry. Admittedly, legislation by itself cannot normally solve deep-rooted social problems. Nonetheless, legislation is necessary to exercise educative impact besides providing legal sanctions against this social evil of devastating consequences. It is in this context that while the Dowry Prohibition Act was enacted in 1961, the Dowry Prohibition (Amendment) Act, 1984 was passed to further plug some of the loopholes in the original Act, which came into force with effect from 2 October 1985. The act, inter alia, stipulates under the Dowry Prohibition (Maintenance of Lists of Presents to the Bride and Bridegroom) Rules, 1985, that the list of presents which are given at the time of the marriage to the bride/bridegroom shall be maintained by the bride/bridegroom in writing and shall contain a brief description of each present, its approximate value, the name of the person who has given the present, and how the person giving the present is related to the bride or bridegroom, a description of such relationship, and shall be signed by both the bride and the bridegroom.

Women's development corporations: A scheme to set up Women's Development Corporations in all the States and Union Territories was formulated during 1986–1987. The objective of the scheme was to provide better employment avenues for women so that they could become economically independent and self-reliant. Further, the scheme helps to overcome the major obstacles to women's employment sector. In fact, the Women's Corporations set up by the State governments and Union Territories are expected to work as catalytic agent to create sustained income generating activities for women. These corporations promote schemes for women and women's groups belonging to weaker sections of the society with priority to single women. The functions of the corporation include identification of potential areas of employment, assistance for project formulation, and raising required finances, arranging raw material for working women in multiple occupations, and providing training facilities and infrastructure for marketing the products.

Conclusion

It is obvious from the analysis of the measures taken for the development and welfare of women that, partly due to the social upsurge and change in attitudes manifesting themselves into various forms and ways, and partly due to the accompanying social, economic, and legal measures, the woman in independent India has come to acquire a better status in the society. With the march of time and progress since independence, the woman has gradually come to acquire considerable emancipation from the complexities and ills with which she had been suffering for long. Today's woman has come to have better acceptability and respectability, better status of equality with men, better rights and privileges, better opportunities and avenues in all spheres of national life—social, economic, and political.

In the emancipation and liberation of women, in the recognition of the legitimate place in the family and the society, in the recognition and protection of her interests, rights and privileges, and in the gradual enhancement of her status, the law has played great role as an instrument of change.

The Constitution of India did it by declaring in its preamble its desire to have justice—social, economic and political—and to secure equality of status and opportunity. The Constitution did its best to ensure translation of the objective into reality by incorporating provisions, ensuring equality of status and of opportunity in the fields of education, public employment, and political life. Apart from ensuring 'equality before the law' and 'equal protection of laws' in the wider sense of the term, the Constitution took great pains to specifically prohibit the state from discriminating against women on the ground of sex in such areas as education and public employment, and to direct the state to take special care to promote women's welfare, particularly the protection of their health as mothers and their dignity as individuals.

The legislatures in India have also been alive to the ideal set by the Constitution and have not lagged behind in devising legal ways and means to protect the interests and rights of women and to confer upon them special benefits so as to place them as far as possible, at par with men. The legislatures, have, after 1950, enacted a large number of new laws and have modified such laws as were in existence at the time of the commencement of the Constitution to make them suit the new changing demands. The laws passed after 1950 bear testimony to the concern our legislatures have shown towards protection of women.

In addition to the legislative measures, the governments at the Centre, States, and Union Territories have also initiated numerous welfare measures for the development and welfare of women, but much more needs to be done to achieve the desired objectives. New programmes need to be introduced, the existing ones expanded, and the lacuna from which they suffer to be remedied, as per suggestions given below:

SUGGESTIONS FOR AMELIORATION OF WOMEN'S LOT AND IMPROVING THEIR STATUS

(i) Women issues have been analysed, among others, by the two important documents of the Ministry of Human Resource Development—National Perspective Plan for Women 1988–2000 and the Report of the National Commission on self-employed women and women in the informal sector. It is unfortunate that the painstaking work done by Ela Bhatt's Committee has remained in the ministry's archives and no action has been taken on the valuable recommendations. If these recommendations are given the consideration they deserve and implemented, they can certainly contribute to the amelioration of women, especially those working in the informal sector.

(ii) A number of welfare programmes for women had been initiated during the last few years, but their implementation at the grassroots seems to be weak. The focus has, therefore, to be on the implementation and strengthening of machinery at various levels.

(iii) The State governments are slow in taking required action on the guidelines, suggestions, and proposals made by the Central government. For instance, the bill on the family courts was passed in 1984, but until now only six courts have been set up by the State governments.

(iv) The administration, whether it is an IAS officer or any other officer, deals with the issues in a routine manner. The sensitization of administration is, therefore, imperative to ensure speedy implementation of women programmes.

(v) There are some specific priority issues where the focus is on implementation. For instance, the issue of dowry and dowry atrocities. The Central government would like every state to have a special cell for women where the affected women can go. Similarly, there should be more women in the judiciary, particularly the lower courts and also in the police stations. The Home Ministry has launched a campaign for recruiting more and more women, but not enough has been done. The conditions of women in jails are appalling. There is a need to set up jails exclusively for women. The jails do not have adequate women staff, and the keys of women's cells are in the possession of jail superintendents. For violation of law, in most cases, women are arrested by male officials. Unless unavoidable, no women should be arrested between sunset and sunrise, and only female officials above the rank of assistant subinspector should effect the arrest. Once these steps are taken, the entire atmosphere and environment will change for the benefit of women.

(vi) The voluntary agencies that take up the cause of women can do much more than they have already done. Not enough of them exist in the rural areas. Women social workers who have been doing voluntary work so far need to be paid. There is a need for greater co-ordination between the voluntary agencies.

(vii) The feminist movement in India is a very positive movement and that is the reason why it has not met with the type of hostility that it has in other countries. It has been balanced enough not to create a sense of insecurity. Things cannot be changed overnight and one has to take the men along to achieve results.

(viii) The schemes initiated for improving the economic status of rural women seem to have flopped. For example, under the integrated Rural Development Programme, 30 per cent of

beneficiaries were to be women-headed enterprises and the banks were supposed to finance them. But the banks did not fund the schemes, as they thought that women as individual borrowers are non-credit worthy and have no title to their assets, which cannot be hypothecated. Hence, the Ministry of Rural Development floated another scheme called Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), which shifted the focus from individual loaning to group loaning based on women's groups. But according to the banks, women groups are no better than individual women; the loosely organized illiterate women are not legal entities, and loan recoveries would be difficult. Some banks felt that once a woman was married, she would go away and not repay the loan. Organizing women around specific economic activities is, thus, difficult. No wonder the Women's Development Finance Corporations in the states have proved infructuous. They have become subsidy distribution agencies for women, and like other public sector corporations they are surviving on the consolidated fund of India, which is shrinking.

Again there is marketing problem of women's enterprises. Despite the plethora of marketing agencies women's products still do not get the right price. Some districts have set up their own sale outlets managed by district rural development agencies. Some products are sold in local markets. The tendency is to set up exclusive marketing agencies for women products. The government can direct its departments and public sector undertakings to place orders for their requirements with women groups for their products rather than with contractors. What is needed is not much centralized set-up, but decentralized tie-ups with several existing sale and purchase bodies of the state and non-state agencies.

(ix) The whole problem affecting women is not the dearth of laws and regulation, but the administrative will to enforce the existing laws. The present factory inspectors, mostly males, are more concerned with formal compliance of factory laws such as fire extinguishers fixed or not fixed (whether they work or not is immaterial), first aid boxes provided or not provided, display of the names of the factory inspector and the boiler inspector, etc on the factory notice board. These trivial matters get the attention of labour inspectors, but important matters such as provision of a crèche for the children of women workers, provision of proper toilets and drinking water facilities, proper maintenance of muster rolls, and payment of wages on time are neglected.

Even in co-operative cotton ginning, spinning, and pressing factories where women labourers are in a majority, no crèche facilities exist. To ensure better conditions for working women, we do not need separate labour commissioners. Stringent enforcement of existing laws would help women in formal sectors. We have yet to see women factory inspectors. The implementation of the Factories Act, 1948, Mines Act, 1952, and Plantation Labour Act, 1951 would help women a great deal.

(x) Exploitation of women and child labour takes place both in formal and informal sectors, more so in the latter. Even the formal sector employers behave like the employers of the informal sector when it comes to the provision of medical aid and welfare services. Presently, employees state insurance (ESI) hospitals and dispensaries do not cover women in informal sectors. By providing them identity cards they could be brought under the health cover of ESI dispensaries. Many informal sector workers would prefer to pay nominal health insurance fee and get a health check-up rather than be fleeced by private practising doctors.

(xi) Women's development and welfare form a component of the departments of social welfare in the states. They should have separate directorates of women/children, which should be

managed and controlled by women authorities, as they know the problems of women intimately and can motivate and activate them in solving them through the implementation of programmes oriented to their development and welfare.

(xii) Women are ignorant about provisions of law, protecting them against atrocities relating to divorce, bride burning, legal separation, guardianship, early marriage, pension for widows, etc. Some non-government organizations (NGOs) and activist groups functioning in different towns and villages have done exemplary work in organizing legal literacy camps and fighting the cases of socially marginalized women. For example, SUTRA in Himachal Pradesh has succeeded in getting a number of women their old age pension and closing liquor vends in villages. Such institutes of the government and non-government sectors need to be identified, promoted, and developed.

(xiii) Lastly, the ministry and the department of women and child development are the nodal agencies for the development and welfare of women and children, but to pass the buck to them is not fair. It is to be realized that the regulative and promotive measures have to be initiated by several ministries and agencies for the development and welfare of women and every one of them should play its role in the best possible manner.

In the ultimate analysis, it is to be understood that more than pious wishes, legal amendments, and lofty pronouncements, it requires will and dogged perseverance on the part of both government and women to ensure for the latter a place of pride and respectability in the society. With all the concern that is reflected in the policy of the Government and the massive programmes undertaken by it for the development and welfare of women, the future scenario for women is indeed bright.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the status of women in the Indian society? Do you think their status has improved now?
2. Describe the various legislative measures enacted by the Government to protect and promote the welfare of women in India.
3. What are the problems of Indian women? Describe the measures taken for their welfare.
4. What are your suggestions for improving the status of women in India?

Areas and Dimensions of Social Change in India

24

Social change has occurred in all societies and in all periods, but the rate and direction of social change differs from society to society. In one society the rate is rapid, while in another it is slow. In some societies change leads to deterioration, while in others it leads to improvement. In a word, social change may take place in any direction—deterioration, progress, or cyclical.

Social change refers to the changes in the structure and functions of social institutions such as family, religion, property, education, economy, and polity. It also refers to changes in role, relations between persons, persons and groups, and between groups and in the principles of resource allocation. It may also be noted that when we talk of social change, we have in mind a particular period, for example, social change in post-independent India. It may also be kept in mind that social change implies displacement of the old by the new or the old and the new may coexist.

SOURCES OF SOCIAL CHANGE IN INDIA

Social change in India has been brought about by numerous factors. Although it is difficult to enumerate all the factors, the important ones are westernization, planning, legislation, education, and industrialization accompanied by urbanization.

Westernization: India has been under the British rule for about two centuries. During this period numerous changes took place in the Indian society and culture through the process of westernization of education, living standards, life values, and social interaction. The ideas of liberalism and democracy were the consequence of western education.

Planning: The free India adopted the system of planning to bring about the social and economic development of the country. Numerous social and economic laws were enacted in the fields of social

and economic reforms. The system of production and distribution was redesigned, and efforts were made to increase productivity. Educational opportunities were expanded, and special benefits were conferred to the disadvantaged groups of the Indian society for their amelioration. It is however a moot question as to what extent planning has been successful to direct the cause of social change in the direction of social justice, economic equality, national unity, and removal of tensions and conflicts.

Legalisation: An important source of social change is legislation. The most important instrument in this direction is the Indian constitution adopted and enacted by the people on the twenty-sixth day of November 1949 and promulgated on 26 January 1950. The acceptance of the principles of equality, freedom, justice, etc., is a revolutionary step in the background of social structure on the eve of independence. Thereafter, a host of social legislations are enacted for the welfare of workers, women, and the downtrodden to facilitate social and economic development.

Education: The importance of education in any society cannot but be overemphasized. Illiteracy is the greatest cause for concern for a nation. Education not only is a process of transmission of social values, but is itself their creator. It emphasizes values such as rationality, scientific thinking, and inquisitive mentality. The new generation, after imbibing these values, tends to question the existing pattern, the prevalent arrangements and institutions, thus creating tensions and conflicts eventually leading to social change. Further, education is a continuation of socialization process started in the family and as such it is also a source of social stability.

Industrial urbanization: Industrialization and urbanization began in India with western colonialism, and it was held that modern technology would substantially change the Indian society. Industrialization led to the emergence of industrial centres and urban settlements which caused migration of people from rural areas to cities and in consequence the change in their mode of living, habits, and attributes. The family relations were affected thereby. Urbanization led to interaction between persons of differing religions and caste background which lessened social distance and affected the caste character of the Indian society. There was reallocation of roles irrespective of caste determinations. The growth of the rapid means of transport and communication brought the rural and urban dwellers nearer to each other, thereby changing the rural social norms and values.

The above are some of the major sources of social change in India. However, the list is by no means exhaustive. It is only indicative of a variety of sources producing change.

AREAS AND DIMENSIONS OF SOCIAL CHANGE IN INDIA

Social changes may be classified as modifications or replacements. It may be modification of physical goods or social relationships. For example, the form of our breakfast has changed from home cooked to fast food. Although we eat the same basic materials such as wheat, eggs, corn, their form is changed. Ready-to-eat cornflakes, breads, and burgers are substituted for the form in which these same materials were consumed in yester years. There may also be modification of social relationships. The old authoritarian family has become the small equalitarian family; the one-room school has become a multi-storeyed, centralized school. Our ideas about women's rights, social obligations and religion stand modified today.

Change may also take the form of replacement. Horses have been replaced by automobiles. The old ideas have been replaced by new ideas. The germ theory has replaced the older views of the cause of disease. Democracy has replaced aristocracy.

The major fields where changes have taken place in post-independent India are the following:

I. Family: Family is the primary social institution and takes precedence over all other institutions. The following changes have come about in its structure and functions:

- (i) There is disintegration of the joint family system. Many of family rituals at the time of birth, marriage, and death are no longer observed.
- (ii) The women have come out of the four walls and sought jobs in offices and factories, which has changed the form of husband–wife relationships and affected the family structure and functions. The present family is a nuclear family.
- (iii) The women have ceased to be slaves of their husbands and claim equal rights and facilities within the house.
- (iv) Love marriage, integrate marriages, and late marriages are another development in the Indian society.
- (v) The number of divorces has increased while the influence of religion has decreased.
- (vi) The family has lost its socializing role. It is no longer the cradle social virtues. The children have developed an attitude of independence and freedom. They do not care much for family traditions and do not hesitate quitting the parents on slight provocation.
- (vii) The loosening of sex relations has marred the purity of married life. The family is now looked on as a rest-house rather than a bond of lifelong union. Family relations have also lost their sanctity, and family disputes and tensions are on the increase.

Also see the chapters on Family (Chapter 7) and Joint Family System (Chapter 20)

II. Economy: In the economic field, the following changes can be seen:

- (i) Village industries have suffered eclipse. New types of economic organizations such as factories, agencies, stores, and banks have come up. Economy is no longer self-sufficient; it has acquired a global character.
- (ii) There has occurred concentration of industries into huge closed, packed cities, which have caused the problems of congestion and pollution.
- (iii) Due to urbanization, the outgrowth of economic development has affected primary contacts. The city dwellers do not personally know each other. Institutional norms have lost their control in regulating or controlling social behaviour. Socially, the city dwellers are strangers in the midst of numerous institutional organizations.
- (iv) Industrialization has given birth to capitalism and its attendant evils. Along with it trade union movement has taken its roots.
- (v) Division of labour and specialization are the other offshoots of technology.
- (vi) A new class called middle class has taken birth.
- (vii) We have more amenities of life and enjoy a higher standard of living than our forefathers.
- (viii) Economic depression, unemployment, industrial disputes, accidents, and diseases are the other aspects of the present Indian economy.

III. Polity: The polity has been affected in the following ways:

- (i) A large number of functions have been transferred from the family to the state. The idea of the laissez-faire state has been replaced by the idea of the social welfare state. The scope of state activity has increased.

- (ii) The functions earlier performed by the local government have been shifted to the central government.
- (iii) The influence of pressure groups has increased on the state.
- (iv) The barriers of nationalism have been broken and the idea of a world state is gaining ground.
- (v) Democracy has become the common form of government. However, the society suffers from many political ills such as the role of money during elections, electoral drawbacks, bogus voting, politics being made a profession, and criminalization of politics.
- (vi) The state has assumed a secular character and people have been ensured the protection of fundamental rights.
- (vii) The size and power of bureaucracy have increased.
- (viii) The volume of legislation has expanded in order to achieve the goal of socialism.

IV. Caste system: Any study of the Indian society is incomplete without the study of the caste system—a centuries-old system which, despite all the criticism and the evils it has caused, continues to exist and influence the Indian society in numerous ways. In the modern Indian society, the rigidity of the caste system has undergone changes and rigid distinctions are watering down. The various reformist movements, legislations during the British rule, impact of industrial revolution, constitutional measures, and post-independence social legislation have thinned the impact of caste on the Indian society. However, vested interests will never allow its abolition. Among such vested interests the prominent ones are the political and caste leaders who flourish on casteism. Sadly enough, casteism still retains its hold in the land of Mahatma Gandhi—the apostle of non-violence and casteless society.

V. Changes in values: We have described above the broad trends and tendencies of change in contemporary Indian society institutions; we may now look into the ideological tenets of the Indian society. The important values of a traditional society in India are hierarchy, pluralism, and holism. Hierarchy implies the gradation of units constituting the system in a superior–inferior relation. The status in ancient India was ascriptive one (i.e., one was assigned the status by birth). While the ideology of hierarchy institutionalized inequality in society, it allocated a secure and definite place to each individual and caste group.

Pluralism implies tolerance of others' modes of life, beliefs, and traditions while preserving their own. Hinduism is the ancient and dominant religion of India which tolerated the faiths of all those groups who entered India from foreign lands, including the faiths of invaders and exploiters. India is a land of unity in diversity which very explicitly manifests its pluralistic character.

Holism signifies relationship between an individual and a group in which the latter had primary over the former. Individuals were supposed to sacrifice their interests for the interests of the community. They were subservient to collectivity—be it a family, village, or caste.

The ideology, which the Indian society pursues today, is enshrined in the constitution which is embedded in the basic ideals of socialism, secularism, and democracy. The Indian type of socialism is not Marxian socialism which believes in a ruthless dictatorship to wipe out the capitalistic structure of society. It does not attempt collectivization of private property, but only seeks to limit it. The institution of private property continues to be an essential feature of Indian economy. Secularism means tolerance of other religious communities and giving them the right to perform and propagate their religion. Tolerance of diversity is the basic thrust in the Indian ideology of secularism. Indian

democracy like other democracies emphasizes equality of opportunity and right to participation in the decision-making process. It may be noted that in the traditional social system of India individuals have never been an autonomous entity making decisions for them. They are guided and controlled by traditional values and rigid institutional structures.

To what extent are the traditional social values reconcilable with the modern social values? Can they be fused or synthesized? It seems to be no contradiction between the traditional value of pluralism and the modern value of secularism because both imply tolerance of the other's way of life. One basic difference between the two may, however, be understood. While pluralism of the past was associated with the distinct and deep traditions for each of the groups which often provided legitimacy for special privileges and prerogatives as in the case of Brahmans, the secularism of today calls on the privileged groups to understand and appreciate the norms and values of the less-privileged groups called the 'minorities'. For example, the Hindus should appreciate the social values of the Muslims. Under the traditional value of hierarchy, resources are allocated and rewards are distributed on the basis of birth, which is in direct contravention to the principle of need-based distribution implied in socialism. Thus the two are irreconcilable. Likewise, the values of holism and democracy are mutually inimical because while under holism hardly any autonomy is bestowed on the individual who remains encompassed in the current of collective life, democracy, on the other hand, values individual liberty wherein the pursuit of self-interest ignoring collective good is not non-existent. The spirit of individualism, implied in democracy, rebels against the value of socialism as it bestows undue importance on the welfare of individuals and ignores collective welfare. To argue that the welfare of individuals will lead to the welfare of all is fallacious because no system can do it. Any substantial disparity in the distribution of material resources becomes a fertile ground for the emergence of social movements which emphasize equality as their main objective.

SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION

The process of social change in India has given birth to social disorganization. The multifarious changes taking place in Indian society have put it on the crossroads where it is faced with the problem of traditionalism versus modernism or in another sense Indianization versus westernization. The social changes have brought about functional imbalance between the various parts of the social structure which has threatened its harmonious and smooth functioning. The many functions once performed in the family are now performed by outside agencies such as hospitals, kindergartens, creches, nursery homes, and schools. The state has stepped in and taken over the functions of looking after the old and disabled and provides social security, employment, and recreation. Society is the web of social relationships. In an organized society, social relations have some patterns and mechanism. When the relations get disturbed and become disordered, there is social disorder and society loses its functional equilibrium. Social disorganization is social disequilibrium within customs, institutions, groups, and communities. Social disorganization also creates personal disorganization, since a person is a social creation and a social product. In short, the society in India is today affected with disorganization in the family, rural and urban disorganization, and disorganization in the fields of both economic and political structures.

Today, we can see comprehensive changes in the Indian social institution, attitudes, values, and morals for which a heavy price is being paid in the form of social tensions, casteism, religious fundamentalism, family breakdown, marital maladjustment, juvenile delinquency, slums and epidemics, regional imbalance, communalism and violence, decay of moral and social values,

linguistic fanaticism, political degeneration, economic and social exploitation, poverty and unemployment, agrarian unrest, peasant dissatisfactions, and personality disorganization.

QUESTIONS

1. Social change is an inevitable phenomenon. Discuss.
2. Briefly describe the social changes that have taken place in the Indian society.
3. Briefly describe the effects of industrialization and urbanization on the institution of family.
4. What are the major fields where social changes have taken place in post-independent India?
5. Point out the major trends of social change in India.
6. 'Social change is a mixed bag of good and bad'. Discuss with examples.
7. What changes have taken place in the social values of Indian society?
8. Do you find any conflict between the traditional social values and the modern social values in the Indian society?
9. There is widespread discontent in the Indian society. Do you agree? Give reasons.

Unit 10 The Role of Social Legislations Towards Social Change in India

Social Problems in India

25

Every society has one or the other social problem and it would endeavour to solve the same. A social problem is a situation or condition which is regarded by society as a threat to its established ways or its well-being and therefore needs to be eliminated or alleviated.

Whether a particular situation is a problem is largely a matter of subjective judgement. One society may regard a situation as a problem, while another may not. In the same society, what is regarded a problem today may not be regarded the problem tomorrow because of change in conditions and attitudes. In ancient India, the caste system was no problem. The several castes accepted their hereditary status as fixed from the beginning, and their religion sanctioned their acceptance of heredity. Slavery in America would have never become a social problem if it had not been challenged.

It may also be noted that a situation becomes a problem only when the people become aware that certain cherished values are threatened by conditions which have become acute. Untouchability became a social problem in India only when people realized that it constitutes a threat to the social unity and something should be done to abolish it.

There are some social problems which are universal and permanent. War, crime, unemployment, and poverty have always been regarded as major social problems in all societies and in all times. We have discussed some social problems in the previous chapters, dealing with family, education, religion, and other institutions of social life. Among the various social problems being faced in our country, we shall focus on only a few of them. They are poverty, unemployment, and dowry.

POVERTY

Poverty is one of the foremost social problems facing India and other countries. According to John L. Gillin, poverty may be regarded as 'that condition in which a person either because of inadequate income or unwise expenditures, does not maintain a scale of living high enough to provide for his physical and mental efficiency and to enable him and his natural dependents to function usually according to the standards of society of which he is a member'. Poverty exists when one is not able to get sufficient food and necessities of life. According to J. G. Goddard, 'poverty is the insufficient supply of those things which are requisite for an individual to maintain himself and those dependent upon him in health and vigour'. The rich and the poor have always existed in society, but historically the existence of poverty did not constitute an important social problem until the exchange system and a scale of values came into existence. When trade expanded, some people began to amass wealth, leading to its uneven distribution. They started living a luxurious life, depriving others of comforts. The members of society began to compare the differences in the economic status and look upon themselves as either poor or rich in accordance with the prevailing living standards. So, poverty is considered a problem only when obvious differences in economic status among members of a society are established and comparisons and evaluations of those differences are made. In the absence of these differences, poverty does not exist, even though life may be most precarious. Thus, poverty was no problem in the middle age, even though by modern standards the level of living at that time was incredibly low—poverty was simply accepted as inevitable. Poverty is relative to richness. It is only when people feel resentment at their lot as compared with that of others that they feel the sting of poverty. In case of extreme privation too, they may feel this sting without comparing their lot with that of others. They fail to achieve more than what they have, and the awareness of this failure causes resentment of poverty among them. Therefore, it is the attitude of resentment which brings the problem of poverty to the forefront. The primitive people lived a more precarious life, but they considered their discomfort as a natural condition, rather than as a problem calling for solution, and hence accepted it without being resentful. People are poor not because of an increase in misery but because of the attitude of resentment at what they do not possess and what others possess. They regard themselves as poor when they feel deprived of what others possess and enjoy. It is then that poverty becomes a social problem.

No Uniform Standards

The standards of poverty judgement are not uniform throughout. According to Adam Smith, 'man is rich or poor according to the degree in which he can afford to enjoy the necessities, the conveniences and the amusements of life'. In the western societies, people are not poor because they lack the necessities of life, such as food, clothing, and shelter, but only because their possessions are considered insufficient according to the prevailing standards. Thus, the inability to own a radio, a computer, or an automobile may be and often is taken as an indication of poverty. In India, on the other hand, deprivation of the necessities of life constitutes poverty. The possession of radio, TV, or automobile is a sign of richness. A vast majority of India's population lives below the subsistence level. Many do not get two meals a day; they spend their nights on pavements and live half-clothed.

How poor we are! In India, poverty is a foremost social problem. Nothing to speak of comforts, the here people are deprived even of the basic necessities of life. According to the United Nations Human Development Report of 1990, 48 per cent of the country's population lived below the poverty line, though as per Planning Commission, 29.9 per cent of the population was below the

poverty line. (According to the Economic Survey 2001–2004, it had declined to 26 per cent in 1999–2000.) The poverty line is drawn at ₹ 49.9 per capita per month (1973–1975 prices) in the rural area and an income of ₹ 56.44 per capita per month in the urban area. In the United States of America, the average income is ₹ 9196, in the United Kingdom ₹ 3858, and in Australia it is ₹ 4207. Thus, an American earns thirty-three times more than an Indian. Each year India adds about 5 million people to the growing multitude of poor. Poverty is more pronounced among the lower classes and in the rural areas. At present 1.6 million Americans are living below the poverty line as per the Census Bureau's annual report. A family of four with two children was considered to be living in poverty with an income of US\$18,244 in 2002–2003.

Causes of Poverty

What are the causes of poverty? According to Henry George, the main cause of poverty is the personal ownership and monopoly of the individual on the land. He writes, 'In the great cities, where land is so valuable that it is measured by the foot, you will find the extremes of poverty and of luxury. And this disparity in condition between the two extremes of the social scale may always be measured by the price of land'. According to Marx, the main cause of poverty is the exploitation of the workers by the capitalists. According to Malthus, increasing population is the cause of poverty. These thinkers however laid emphasis on one particular cause of poverty. As a matter of fact the causes of poverty are numerous and complex. Some of the causes are personal, while others are geographical, economic, and social. It is the task of an economist to analyse them in detail. We shall not make any attempt to analyse them. The Gillins listed three factors as primarily responsible for poverty:

- (i) Incapacity of the individual, which may be due to a faulty heredity or to the environment
- (ii) Unfavourable physical conditions, such as poor natural resources, bad climate and weather, natural calamities, floods, earthquakes and epidemics
- (iii) Maldistribution of wealth and income and the imperfect functioning of our economic institutions

Of these three factors, the last two factors are principally responsible for poverty in India. Ours is a country rich in natural resources, but we have not yet adequately exploited them. A vast area of land remains uncultivated. Our means of cultivation are old styled, resulting in less production. Industries are not well-developed, and a vast portion of population depends on agriculture. In addition to it, wealth is unevenly distributed due to bad economic planning which even leads to wastage.

A lot of the poor people cannot improve except through economic development. There is imperative need for drastic economic reforms. The progress we have made has fallen short of our plan targets. The maladies are many. The over-bureaucratization, excessive control over industrial sector, and undue importance given to public sector without ensuring its profitability, and now the lack of firm political leadership due to a fractured mandate have pushed the country back compared to many emerging nations.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Closely associated with the problem of poverty is the problem of unemployment because when people remain idle they become poor. If there are needs to be satisfied, then people must be employed to satisfy them. Unemployment not only leads to suffering and privation but also adversely affects the

social organization which is the main interest of sociologists. Defining unemployment, Karl Pribram has written, 'Unemployment is a condition of the labour market in which the supply of labour is greater than the number of available openings'. According to Fairchild, 'unemployment is forced and involuntary separation from remunerative work or the part of the normal working force during normal working time, at normal wages and under normal conditions'.

According to Chapman, unemployment is of two kinds:

- (i) Subjective unemployment
- (ii) Objective unemployment

Subjective unemployment is caused by physical and mental diseases of the individual. Objective unemployment is of four types:

- (i) Seasonal unemployment
- (ii) Cyclical unemployment
- (iii) Structural unemployment
- (iv) Normal unemployment

In addition to these forms of unemployment, there may also be agricultural unemployment, technological unemployment, and educational unemployment.

Although unemployment is universal, in India it is more marked. The number of total unemployed youths with at least matriculation qualification is put about at 5 million. This includes about 1.5 million unemployed graduates. A study undertaken by the Manpower Division of the Directorate of Employment Exchange, Ministry of Labour and Employment of the pattern of unemployment among graduates showed that about 93 per cent of the unemployed graduates seeking employment were men and about 7 per cent women. About 48.5 per cent of the unemployed graduates were BA's, 22.7 per cent BSc's, and 12.8 per cent BCom's. Unemployment is also widespread among the professionally trained people such as engineers, doctors, and other technically qualified people. No reliable figures are available about unemployment among the illiterate people—those who earn their bread through daily wages. The statistics maintained by the employment exchanges do not give any exact idea of the level of unemployment because (i) the employment exchanges mainly cover urban areas, (ii) all the unemployed people do not get themselves registered, and (iii) some of the registrants are already employed and seek better jobs.

Causes of Unemployment

Economists have explained the causes of unemployment and its cumulative tendencies. They have distinguished between the 'frictional' unemployment due to a changeover from one job to another and the immobility of those who do not feel inclined to move away to a strange district to find work on the one hand and unemployment due to more profound economic dislocation on the other. New inventions take jobs away from people before new jobs are created. Also, much unemployment is caused by business depressions which arise because production moves faster than purchasing power. Unemployment then represents changes in business conditions which come more quickly than changes in population.

In India, the problem of unemployment among the educated youth is assuming serious proportions. As discussed earlier, the faulty system of our education has been responsible for it. We are

admitting thousands of young boys and girls to the institutions of higher learning without any prospects of employment for them. Even the technical people such as engineers, doctors, and those trained in specialized jobs are without employment. Unemployment is a great cause of social disorganization. The crisis in the Indian society today is largely a crisis of finding suitable jobs for the millions who join institutions aimlessly and come out of them only to suffer frustration outside and become deviant. Unless and until employment opportunities increase fast enough, poverty cannot be removed.

The number of unemployed in the country had increased to 26.58 million in 1999–2000 from 20.13 million in 1993–1994. Their number is increasing every year because the government has banned the recruitments on the plea that it suffers from financial crunch. The colleges and universities and technical institutions including those of computers and information technology are turning out millions of graduates, but they have little prospects of employment. The former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had declared that one crore jobs should be created every year, which remained only an announcement. Unemployment is a serious problem, and if it is not tackled, it will cause havoc of the worst type.

DOWRY

The practice of dowry has been prevalent in our country since ancient times.

The Committee on the Status of Women defined dowry as what is given to the bride, and often settled beforehand and announced openly or discreetly. The settlement often includes the enormous expenses incurred on travel and entertainment of the bridegroom's party.

According to the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, dowry has been defined as follows: Any property or valuable security given or agreed to be given either directly or indirectly (a) by one party to a marriage to the other party to the marriage; or (b) by the parents or either party to the marriage or by any other person, to either party to the marriage or any other person; at or before or after the marriage as consideration for the marriage of the aforesaid parties; but does not include dowry or mehr in the case of persons to whom the Muslim personal law (shariat) applies (Section 2).

Following the above definition, the constituents of 'dowry' are as follows:

- (i) Giving or taking some property or valuable security by one party to the marriage to the other party
- (ii) Giving or taking the property by the parents of either party
- (iii) Giving or taking property, in respect of any marriage from either party to marriage by any other person
- (iv) Giving any property or valuable security not only at the time of marriage but also before or after the marriage has been celebrated

It is interesting to note that Haryana Dowry Prohibition Act has included the following in dowry, besides the property or valuable security marriage expenses incurred during ceremonies connected with marriage; Thakka, Sagai, Tikka Shagan, and Milni; illuminations, gifts to either party in the form of cash, ornaments, clothes, or other articles, expenses on arrangements for food and other incidentals.

Evolution of the System

The system of dowry prevalent in India is not of a recent origin. This social evil has plagued the society since ancient times.

Ancient scriptures approved of wealth given to a bride at the time of her wedding. It was her parent's gift of love to ensure that she was provided with financial security when she left her parental home. Theoretically, she was free to do what she wanted with her wealth but in practice the actual control shifted to her husband and his family. Slowly this wealth given to a woman for her personal security and enjoyment turned into an instrument of her exploitation.

The amount of dowry is generally regulated by the social and economic status of the bridegroom's father, the social prestige of his family, and the educational qualifications of the bridegroom and is based on the expectation in life of the bridegroom. If he is highly settled in life, the demand on his behalf, made by his parents, is greater.

The main reasons for the giving dowry are the following:

- (i) It has become a matter of status or prestige.
- (ii) It has been recognized as a religious system.
- (iii) People believe that a good dowry hoops a good 'catch'.
- (iv) Parents desire to see that their daughter is well settled in life and gets due affection from her in-laws.

Dowry and Methods of Extraction

Devious methods are used for extracting dowries from girl's parents. For instance, the boy's parents may try to show that their families are used to live a high standard of living and therefore want girls whose parents are prepared to set themselves and their sons up in the standard they are all used. Or they would advertise for a convent educated and a working girl for their son, who may prove a hen giving golden eggs throughout the life. Accordingly, their choice of girls may be set:

1. Working girls would be just fine, for she shall be a 'feather' in the family's cap.
2. If the girl's family is 'well connected and highly placed', this would be a continuing source of strength in the uncertainties of modern living. Further, an ideal connection would pour into the receiving family an unending flow of modern luxuries, depending on how high up the social ladder they aspire to ascend.

Evils of Dowry System

The parents have to work hard to provide their prospective son-in-law with good dowries, otherwise the girl would not ever get married. Before the marriage is finalized, the groom's parents demand large sums of money in hard cash besides the demand for cars, scooters, fridge, radio, stereos, sophisticated furniture, pedestal fans, electrical household gadgets, wedding suits for the groom of best quality, requisite number of saris for the female relatives of the groom, trinkets of gold and silver, huge party at one of the biggest hotels of the city, and travelling expenses. Such huge is the demand that many a father can ill afford to meet. The result is that the girl should either remain spinster or earn money for her dowry by working in some gainful employment.

The dowry system is a pernicious evil. It has drawn many girls to suicide, to save their parents from economic drudgery. Many are duped into the brothels or service of doubtful nature or resort to prostitution.

If, however, marriage is solemnized with certain higgling and bargaining, the matter does not end there. Soon after the marriage, the torture of the girl begins at the hands of the husband in connivance with her in-laws. The torture may involve the use of brutal methods like beating severely, throwing out of the house, denying food for days together, and giving all sorts of mental tortures, such as accusation, taunts, abusing, and even burning to death.

Hardly a day passes, when suicide or murder news for dowry are not flashed in the dailies in some or the other part of the country. Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, and Rajasthan are often in the news for this heinous crime.

The dowry system has reduced a father to penury and driven many a desperate girl to suicide as a relief from ignominious virginity. Instances could be given of scores of strong, intelligent, and remarkable boys chained to ugly and totally unfit girls because the latter brought with them fat dowries and the boys' parents had their eyes on nothing else. And equally common are cases of lovely and bright girls mated with the very drags of society because their parents are poor.

Efforts at Regulating the System

With the advent of the British and the impact of the western thought, Indian scholars and reformers began to bring about reforms in social values. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Keshab Chandra Sen, Pandita Ramabai, Jyotiba Phule, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, and Mahatma Gandhi had condemned the dowry system.

Mahatma Gandhi said, 'Any young man who makes dowry a condition for marriage discredits his education and his country and dishonours womanhood. Young men who soil their fingers with such ill-gotten gold should be excommunicated from society'.

Jawahar Lal Nehru had appealed to the college girls: 'Our marriage laws and many of our out-of-date customs which hold us back and specially crush our women folk—will you not combat them and bring them in line with modern condition? ... I charge you to keep that torch of freedom burning brightly till it spreads its lustre all over this ancient and dearly loved land of ours'.

Dowry Regulation Prohibition Acts

Dowry has been regarded as one of the greatest social evils. Hence, legislative measures were taken by the state governments from time to time such as the Andhra Pradesh Dowry Prohibition Act, passed in 1958, and the Bihar Dowry Restraint Act, in 1958. These enactments have been repealed by the Dowry Prohibition Act 1961, passed by the Central Government, which made the giving or taking of dowry an offence. Other enactments are the Jammu and Kashmir Dowry Prohibition Act, 1960, the West Bengal Act of 1975, the Punjab Act of 1976, the Himachal Pradesh Act of 1976; the Haryana Act of 1976, and the Orissa Act of 1976.

The Dowry Prohibition Act was enacted in 1961 with a view to 'do away with the practice of giving or taking dowry and to make such practice an offence'.

Under the Act (Section 6), the interests of the wife are protected by providing the following:

- (a) The dowry received by any person shall be transferred to the bride.
- (b) If the dowry was received before the marriage, it shall be transferred to the woman within one year after the date of marriage.
- (c) If the dowry was received when the wife was a minor, then the dowry should be transferred soon after she attains the age 18 years.

If any person fails to transfer any property that he has received by way of dowry, he shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to six months or with fine which may extend to five thousand rupees or both.

Further, if the woman, who is entitled to any property, dies before receiving it, the heirs of the woman shall be entitled to claim it from the person holding it.

The Act provides that a court inferior to that of a presidency magistrate or magistrate of first class cannot try an offence. Further, no court can take cognizance of any offence under the Act unless a complaint is made. Such a complaint has to be made to the court within one year from the date of the offence.

All offences under the Act are declared to be non-cognizable, available and non-compoundable.

Other Suggestions for Combating the Evil of Dowry

The evil of dowry can be mitigated by taking the following steps in addition to the strict implementation of the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961:

(i) There should be expeditious disposal of dowry cases and the award of exemplary punishments to the participants of the crime of committing atrocities on the brides for bringing in more dowry.

(ii) Ms Nisha Sharma of Delhi had shown appreciable courage in getting her would-be husband arrested by the police by informing that her would-be in-laws were not satisfied with the double set of cars, TVs, refrigerators, etc., and were demanding ₹ 50 lakh in cash. This heroic role of her was appreciated not only in India but also in other countries. The young brides should follow her example and refuse to the demands of the greedy people.

(iii) Young boys and girls should start a campaign against dowry and plead that they will never like their parents to ask for dowry.

(iv) Voluntary organizations should highlight the evils of dowry causing immense amount of mental torture to the parents of the bride. The slogan 'dulhan hi dahej hai' (bride is the dowry) should be propagated vigorously, and the people asking for dowry should be socially boycotted.

(v) A popular movement against dowry should be supported by our political and religious leaders and the incalculable harm of this practice should be brought home to all the sections of community.

(vi) Simple, inexpensive marriages should be encouraged so that enormous expenses incurred as a part of dowry are avoided. The intrinsic qualities of the partners should be the deciding factor between the would-be wife and husband, not the material gains that should accrue from their entering into wedlock.

Hopefully, the evil of dowry will disappear if the above suggestions are seriously implemented and the rich people and political leaders set an example in that direction by avoiding ostentatious marriage for their sons and daughters.

POPULATION GROWTH

India is the world's second most populous country, the first place being held by China. According to the 2001 census, India's population was 102,70,15,247 (i.e., one hundred two crore seventy lakh fifteen thousand two hundred forty-seven)—an increase of 21.34 per cent over the 1991 population of 84.39 crore. According to projections made in a World Bank report, India's estimated population

by 2150 will be over 1756 million against China's 1686 million. India will thereby overtake China and become the most populous country of the world.

Causes of Population Growth in India

The three factors influencing population growth are fertility, mortality, and migration. All these three factors are socially determined and socially determining. Society is both a necessary and sufficient cause of population trends. The main factors contributing to the growth of population in India are the following:

(i) **Excess of birth over death rate:** Birth rate means the number of children born per thousand of living population. At present it stands at 26.1 compared to 30.9 in 1991 census. Thus, there has been a fall in birth rate, but along with it the death rate has also fallen, which came down to 10.8 per thousand. The achievement in reducing death rate has been due to the development of medical and health facilities accompanied by vaccination programmes. The TV channels are showing health programmes and educating the people about medical knowledge which have contributed to better health and lesser deaths. There is a sharp reduction in infant mortality rate because the government is providing pre-natal and post-natal services. Although it may be argued that since the birth rate fell, it should not have led to the phenomenal increase in population. But this is a wrong argument. The decline of birth has only lessened the rate of increase in population, but the total numbers continue to increase because the lower birth rate is maintained by a large population with a low death rate. If the decrease in birth rate is not accompanied by a lesser decrease in death rate, population will go up. Population can decrease only if birth rate is lower and death rate is higher. In India both the birth rate and the death rate have decreased, so the effects of lower birth rate are negative by lower death rate. Formerly the average lifespan was only 27 years which has now increased to 70 years, which means that there are more old people in India than ever before. The old people due to their declining health are not sufficiently productive and need economic support which amounts to greater burden on the country's productive resources.

(ii) **Social factors:** Some social factors such as attitudes of conservatism, religious obligation to procreate a male child, regarding marriage an inescapable obligation with the desire to produce children, looking down bachelorship and denial of certain privileges to the unmarried, marriage at lower age compared to the western countries, poverty and illiteracy, and feeling of dependence on God have also contributed to the growth of population in India.

(iii) **Climatic conditions:** Climatic conditions of India are very conducive to the growth of population. The tropical climate stimulates sex urge. The girls attain puberty at an early age, ranging from 12 to 15 years of age. Childbearing capacity of Indian women is greater and lasts longer.

(iv) **Poor publicity to family planning programme:** The family planning programme, which in the 1970s had been vigorously launched and people of all religions and faiths, high or low, rich or poor were forced to adopt, during the last few years has become almost non-existent. It has now been left to the good sense of the people to adopt family planning, and in India good sense is rare.

Effects of Population Growth

If the population of a country does not exceed the optimum level, the number of people sustainable by the available national resources, it does not create any problem. Population growth is a problem

in relation to the available resources. In other words, it is a problem if the country's wealth cannot adequately support it. Some of the main effects of population growth are the following:

(i) Low standard of living: A large population usually means a low standard of living. Food supply being limited, people do not get enough to eat, even to survive. In different parts of India, particularly in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Maharashtra, starvation deaths are not uncommon. The government calls them death caused by malnutrition and not by hunger. About 40 per cent of the people live below the poverty line.

(ii) Heavy pressure on land: India is an agricultural country. About 70% of the population lives in villages. Every child born in the village causes a pressure on land because he will get a share in the land owned by the family. The size of the land is narrowed thereby. In India, at present the average size of the agricultural land that each person could get is less than an acre.

(iii) Pressure on urban areas: The villages being unable to support the growing village population, the rural folk migrate to cities in search of employment thereby bringing pressure on the urban living space. These rural migrants settle themselves in slums and dingy places. There are not enough houses to give shelter to all the people. Acute shortage of houses has led to overcrowding, congestion, inadequate sanitary conditions, ill health, and many other civic problems. Thus, both the rural and urban areas suffer from the effects of population.

(iv) Unemployment and poverty: India already suffers from underemployment coupled with unemployment. Job opportunities are not enough to provide job to each and every jobseeker. It is not only the illiterate and rural people who fail to get any job, even the educated urban dwellers are devoid of it. Unemployment is widespread among the professionally trained people. The statistics maintained by the employment exchanges do not give any exact idea of the level of unemployment in the country because there are no authentic and properly maintained records for this purpose. There are no reliable figures available about unemployment among the illiterate people, those who earn their bread through daily wages. While many people suffer from unemployment, a large number of them suffer from underemployment or semi-employment. The unemployment problem is indeed grave in India which has even led to violence and crime, terrorism, and insurgency.

Poverty is the consequence of unemployment. Nothing to speak of comforts, the people are deprived even of the basic necessities of life. Per capita income in India is the lowest in the world.

India is faced with the problem of population growth. Overpopulation has shaken the very foundations of Indian polity, causing popular discontentment, terrorism, violence, political instability, economic uncertainties, and social tensions. Sound economic foundation is the basis for national security and prosperity. Overpopulation has adversely affected economic growth. Low income and low-saving capacity of Indian people have left little for capital formation and investment. Whatever little is produced is eaten by the growing population. Even that is less to ensure two meals a day to each and every citizen. Driven by acute poverty, poorer parents are committing suicides, including the killing of their children, which presents a horrible scene. Overpopulation is never in national interests.

Population Control

Obviously, there is imperative need for controlling the growth of population. We cannot destroy or kill our large population to decrease its number. We can only control it, and for this purpose the state

will have to devise a positive population policy. Before such a policy is devised, let us be clear about the difficulties involved in family planning:

- (i) Birth control is associated with a high standard of living which is very low in India.
- (ii) Contraceptives are not safe, cheap, and easily available.
- (iii) The message of family planning has not reached the remotest corners of the country—the villages which do not have accessible roads and fast means of communication.
- (iv) The illiterate and backward people have failed to understand the benefits of the programme for themselves.
- (v) The orthodox and fundamentalist people disfavour artificial methods of birth control. They propagate self-control in place of forcible means of control.
- (vi) The officials engaged in the programme have not sincerely and seriously operated it. They have indulged more in exhibitionism than in conscientious implementation.

The Swaminathan Committee on population policy appointed by the Narsimha Rao government prepared a draft of population policy which was tabled in Parliament in July 1994, but since then, the policy has neither been debated nor discussed in Parliament. In August 1997, during the 50th freedom anniversary debate, a lot of concern was shown by MPs about population growth but nothing concrete came out. The population problem in India cannot be solved simply by food relief. If people are given plenty of food and nothing else in their lives is changed, they will build their population up to new food supply and start starving all over again, with more people to starve this time. The problem can only be solved by reducing fertility. If fertility is high, then in the long run mortality must also be high. As said, to reduce mortality without reducing fertility is at best a temporary and hazardous expedient. Even the whole of the world will not be able to feed India unless the people control fertility. The rate at which population of India is growing would bring the country to a situation where the people would not even have sufficient space to stand. And if relief is suddenly withdrawn by other countries because of their dissatisfaction against our foreign policy pursued in respect of some important world matters, millions of us will starve. Therefore, food relief from other countries is no solution to our population problem. We have to bring about fundamental changes in the economic and social organization of the country.

In India, the social attitudes of the people towards birth control need to be changed. The change in human attitudes for acceptance of fertility control programme cannot be achieved solely through target-oriented approach. It should be brought about by persistent and widespread information, education and communication activities, and provision of basic health and family welfare services. So far, it has been mostly the urban people, the well-to-do, who could most afford children, who have most rapidly adopted the use of contraceptives. There is strong sense of indifference among the poor, who could least afford to have children, to the techniques of contraception. In the villages, the hold of traditional attitude is so deep-rooted that it offers powerful obstacles to the easy success of birth control propaganda. There is need for 'moral rationalization' of contraception due to the strong traditional hold in villages. The lack of knowledge on birth control and the illiteracy of the people also stand in the way of successful birth control movement. The technical problem of birth control is also far from solved. At the present time, no methods of birth control exist which are simple enough and effective enough to meet the need. It is also difficult for the state to open birth control clinics in lakhs of Indian villages. Although the state has recently

realized the importance of popularizing ideas of birth control among the people and has also been trying to provide them with more and more incentives at the family planning clinics, there is need to take bold steps with a firm political will and spend more for the success of the birth control movement. It may also be emphasized that in the light of the recent experience any family planning programme should be intelligently devised and judiciously implemented. Considering that the very future of the nation is at stake, any soft approach towards the population problem should be avoided.

BEGGARY

Associated with the problems of poverty and unemployment is the problem of beggary which is a social problem of great magnitude and grave concern in developing and underdeveloped countries where it exists in a crude form, but the developed countries are also not immune from it where it exists in the less degree. Begging is a curse both for the beggar and the society. The beggar suffers from a sense of humiliation and shame and leads a life of squalor and filth. Beggary is a problem for children beggars. For them it is an undesirable environment in which to grow up. It implies undernourishment and inadequate opportunities for education. It means idleness, bad company, and delinquency. Begging is a problem for society—a large number of beggars mean non-utilization of available human resources and a drag on the existing resources of the society. Beggars are also a public health hazard. They are often carriers of infection and disease. They are marginal social groups and have been found to be associated with activities of the underworld.

Probably, India is the only country in the world where lakhs of its population wander about streets, public places, markets, temples, bus stands, railway stations, and even in moving trains with perfect freedom, living on the spontaneous unorganized charity of the individual citizen. Although beggars may be found in other parts of the civilized world, here the public tolerates persistent, open, and methodical begging in public places without hindrance. While in the west beggars beg on the sly and the citizen gives alms with a feeling of remorse, in India beggars beg importunately with the attitude of demanding their daily wages or with the contentment of proudly carrying on their parental profession. The citizens, in turn, dole out their charity with religious sanction and the self-satisfaction of doing a good deed.

Definition of Beggars

It may not be possible to give a precise definition of the beggar. In England the beggar is described as any person wandering abroad or placing himself or herself in any public place, street, highway, court or passage, to beg or gather alms, or causing or procuring any child or children (under 16) to do so. In India a person who has no ostensible means of subsistence or who cannot give a satisfactory account of himself or herself is regarded as a destitute, a vagrant, or a beggar. (Criminal Procedure Code, Section 55(1))

The definition of beggary can be found in the vagrancy Acts of some of the states of India. On the basis of the provisions of these acts, the persons to be labelled as a beggar should satisfy these conditions:

- (i) They live by soliciting 31 m in any public place, temple or mosque, private premises, public street, road, or thoroughfare, or place of public resort, hotels, bus stops, pavements, markets, etc., for the maintenance of themselves or their family.

(ii) They wander from door to door, exhibit or expose sores, wounds, bodily ailments, or deformities or make fraudulent pretences of them or allow themselves to be used as an exhibit for exciting pity for seeking alms.

(iii) They are without any visible means of subsistence.

Types of Beggars

Beggars have been classified into various categories. According to Dr. Kumarappa, beggars can be classified as follows:

- (i) The child beggar, who may be a paid or an unpaid assistant of the adult beggar.
- (ii) The physically defectives, including the blind, the deaf, the mute, the crippled, the maimed, and the deformed. Besides these, they are the chronically undernourished and afflicted with various organic troubles, or weakness of the vital organs.
- (iii) The mentally defectives, including a large proportion of the destitute, immoral, delinquent, and criminal population.
- (iv) The diseased persons, suffering from infections, diseases such as leprosy, epilepsy, TB, venereal diseases, and skin diseases, with sores and ulcers covered with plasters on which myriads of flies settle and feed.
- (v) The able-bodied, who consider begging as their birth right and bully, harass, and trouble the public into giving them alms, and who are lazy and roam cities. They beg by day and turn into thieves and robbers by night.
- (vi) The religious mendicant, so familiar is the figure of the sanyasi, the yogi, the sadhu, the bairagi, the fakir, and the darvesh with all the paraphernalia of saffron robe, woodbead necklace, and bowl in hand.
- (vii) The bogus mendicants, who are able-bodied laymen and who have no affiliation with any religious order whatsoever, but like to get on without work, don the grab of a fakir or a sadhu and profit by the generosity of the unsuspecting and religious-minded orthodox people.
- (viii) The tribal beggars, who move about from place to place singing and reciting local songs and begging. Among this class may be included the seasonal vagrant and the permanent vagrant. The seasonal vagrants comprise those migratory casual labourers who work on the fields or on some trade or craft in their native village during the season and in the offseason migrate to larger cities where they live on footpaths or open maidans and maintain themselves by begging or stealing. The permanent vagrants are the migratory non-workers. They are purposeless wanderers who beat their way from place to place, begging for food, getting in any way they can, and carefully avoiding rendering any useful service to the society.
- (ix) The employed beggars are the persons who work in the night shifts in mills and factories and go out begging during the day.

Causes of Beggary

Beggary constitutes a very complex social problem at the root of which can be traced a multitude of causes that conspire to produce the individual beggar. It is also intimately related with other social

problems such as unemployment, intemperance, poverty, crippling diseases, leprosy, lack of provision of old age, security, disruption of joint family, and mental derangement. Furthermore, in a country like India, where religion sanctions the formation of mendicant orders and also prescribes charity and public sympathy for mankind for one's own elevation, the problem of beggary assumes greater complications.

In a survey of the Beggar Problem in Greater Mumbai, Dr. Moorthy has mentioned the following causes, giving rise to beggary: overpopulation with consequent pressure on land and inability of land to support the people; system of land tenure; tyrannical landlordism; subdivision of holding coupled with large families and unprofitable methods of farming; debt; famines, floods, and epidemics which weaken the community or impose hardships; family breakdown; economic and emotional disabilities imposed on a man or woman after desertion; chronic and pernicious diseases; physical and mental handicraft; truancy and delinquency; inability to secure a job; unwillingness to work; religious bias and vow binding one to the mendicant order; antisocial attitudes and child lifting; lack of facilities for the welfare of the unattached, abandoned, and disabled; lack of facilities for training for employment; lack of social security and absence of social responsibility; attractions of city life, linked with the possibility of easy and ticketless travel; and the general outlook on life which inclines one to believe in destiny.

Measures to Combat Beggary

Most of the civilized countries of the world have long prohibited begging in public and declared it an offence under the law. Whereas England began Poor Law Relief as early as the reign of Queen Elizabeth from the beginning of the seventeenth century, Japan has enacted social laws to care for the aged and infirm in state and municipal homes, and begging in Japan is scarce as is in countries like Great Britain and Germany. But beggars still stalk the streets of China, India, Pakistan and other countries of the Middle and Far East and even some of the smaller eastern European countries though all have realized the fact that the beggar problem can never be solved by private charity however profuse and that state intervention and legislation are necessary if the allied problems of begging, destitution, and vagrancy are to be effectively tackled.

Special Acts have been passed by most of the states in India to prohibit beggary in public places. To deal effectively with persons who kidnap children for the purpose of exploiting them for begging, the Indian Penal Code (Section 263A) makes kidnapping or obtaining custody of a minor and maintaining of a minor for the purpose of begging specific offences and provides for deterrent punishment which may extend to life imprisonment where children are maimed.

These laws follow a more or less uniform pattern:

- (i) They prohibit and penalize begging in public places.
- (ii) Most of them distinguish juveniles from able-bodied and disabled beggars, and commit juveniles to the jurisdiction of the Children Act and the able-bodied to workhouses and the disabled to special homes, if available.
- (iii) Most of them are operative in areas on notification by the government, and some of them operate only if there are special homes and workhouses.
- (iv) All of them penalize escape or violation of discipline with imprisonment.

There are institutions in the states for the custody and assistance of the beggars in their rehabilitation. The inmates of these homes are provided with food, clothing, education, and facilities for physical, cultural, and vocational training.

Mere legislative enactments would not stop the evil. Other measures need to be taken to root out and lessen this menace:

- (i) The old attitude that charity blesses who gives and who takes should be abandoned, for it demoralizes both.
- (ii) As begging is an offence, the giver of the charity is a part of it and should be equally liable to punishment, even as the bribe giver is as guilty as the bribe taker.
- (iii) When begging is declared prohibited, it is necessary to guarantee the beggars and their dependents an alternative and equally paying employment.
- (iv) Social security services should be developed to look after the innocent dependents. At present the criminal law seems to reward the criminal with social security and penalizes the innocent with social insecurity.
- (v) As there are different causes and situations of beggary, the institutional treatment has to be adjusted to the different categories of beggars. Poor houses should have an infirmary for the disabled and diseased and other suffering from non-infectious diseases. Child beggars should have a department where they may be taught to read and write and become self-supporting. There should be a workhouse or an agricultural colony for the able-bodied never-do-wells who live by lying and blackmailing.
- (vi) Provision of aftercare and follow-up should be a legal obligation. Development of placement agencies and aftercare hostels, marriage guidance bureau in case of female beggars, and setting up of establishments for the deformed and physically handicapped and leprosy patients should be the first duty of the social welfare departments and social welfare agencies.
- (vii) Considering the fact that among the large population of beggars in India good men suffer from hereditary defects as are likely to be transmitted to their children, it would be desirable to provide for the sterilization of such persons.

Conclusion

It may be concluded that in spite of a plethora of enactments adopted by different states—the Police Acts, Municipal Acts, and the Indian Railways Act—beggary goes on unchecked, assuming serious dimensions, leading to immeasurable crimes. The solutions to the problems call for a comprehensive programme and reorientation of the existing programmes. Philanthropic approach to beggar problem should be replaced by therapeutic and rehabilitative work, and a positive attitude towards work should be developed among the able-bodied beggars.

CRIME

Crime or delinquency is a great social problem facing every society. Crime is an act forbidden by the law of the land and for which penalty is prescribed. Crime is the omission of an act which the law of the land asks to do or commission of an act which it forbids to do. The law may be written or unwritten. When the law is not written then crime is generally recognized as transgressions against the traditions or mores of the community. Crime, therefore, may be regarded as behaviour of individuals which the group strongly disapproves. And since societies do not have uniform standards of

right and wrong and since these standards change in a society from time to time, criminal behaviour is relative and not absolute.

Crime is said to be a major social phenomenon of modern civilized and advanced societies. Although there was crime in primitive societies too, but therein it was not a major social problem. In primitive societies, the mores are strong enough to control the individual behaviour effectively, and the few who disobey the rules do not constitute a threat to the community. In modern civilized societies, influence of mores has lessened and it is difficult to compel universal observance of mores. The modern societies have a population which is heterogeneous in race and cultural background and is differentiated into various classes. They have several norms of conduct which often clash with one another, and have limited control over the behaviour of their members. In primitive societies called backward, there was a single code of beliefs and customs, the culture was static and homogeneous, and there was little institutional disorganization and a minimum class differentiation. Naturally, there was little crime among primitive tribes and in simple folk societies. But like many other social problems of our modern society, crime is also the price we have to pay for the advantages of civilization.

Crime in India

In India, there are no dependable figures on crime. The available statistics cover only those arrested and convicted, or the crime known to the police, and even these figures are not reliable. What is more serious is the white collar crime which amounts several times more than the conventional type of crime. By white collar crimes we mean the crimes committed by the upper strata of society in their business and professional practices. The securities scam, the sugar scam, the telecom scam, and the fodder scam are the recent examples. Racketeering, black marketing, tax evasion, adulteration, and corruption are some of the crimes committed frequently by the white collar men which have assumed serious proportions, threatening the entire social fabric. A more sorry state of affairs is that the racketeers, black marketers, smugglers, tax evaders, and bribe takers exert considerable political influence and have entered the legislation. Our moral sense is at a low ebb. From the crime statistics or from newspaper reports, we can obtain only a slight idea of the prevalence of crime in the country. In India crime has increased steadily in recent years. Moreover, the data from the penal institutions show that a large percentage of inmates are repeaters, reflecting the failure of our society to rehabilitate the criminal. The country spends several crores of rupees in detecting, convicting, and guarding the criminals, yet crime goes on increasing day by day. If we in India place a high value on wealth, prestige, and political power regardless of the way in which they are acquired and if the leaders refuse to abide by laws which they wish to be enforced against other persons, then, of course, we cannot expect the incidence of crime to go down.

Causes of Crime and How to Combat It

The sociologists are not unanimous on the point. The most accepted view is that the causes of crime are multiple and no single theory can explain all the causes. These causes are biological, psychological, social, and economic. Among the biological causes, we may include insanity, physical disability, and defective glandular and nervous system. The psychological causes may be neurosis, psychopathy, and emotional instability. The social causes are social disorganization, social competition, social mobility, conflict, defective social institutions, lack of education, sexual literature, cultural lag, and war. The economic causes are economic competition, poverty, unemployment, desire for more wealth, unlimited desires, industrialization, poor natural resources, inflation, etc. The reasons for the persons

having committed a crime can be discovered only after investigating their personality and environment. Some criminologists believe that only a completely renovated society, one in which there is no capitalism, can solve the problem of crime. Others, who do not go to this extreme, advocate reformatory rather than retaliative or deterrent treatment of the criminals. Ostensibly, the reform of the criminals is the main motive in their treatment today. In India various means are being explored for giving a better treatment to the criminals inside the jail. They are being provided with more and better amenities of life. Besides sufficient food, bedding, and clothing, they are provided with recreational facilities. Indoor and outdoor games are played, and tournaments are arranged in which teams from outside often participate. Even radios and televisions have been installed in some of the penal institutions. The present prison administration in the country guarantees a prisoner better food, clothing, medical attention, and recreational facilities than what are available to a poor honest person outside.

On the success of these measures, it is impossible to speak with any certainty. We cannot say whether these measures have been responsible for the cure of such criminals who do not reappear before the court or they have simply given up crime by a process of social maturation. However, it is universally recognized that punishment does not reform the criminal.

PROSTITUTION

Prostitution constitutes one of the major social problems and is a great social evil or vice. It is practised all over the world, both in developed and developing countries, rich and poor societies, and in all the communities. Their magnitude may however differ from country to country and society to society. It is as much prevalent in the west as in the east. Once it was the privilege of the rulers, kings, and the aristocrats to indulge in this sexual pleasure on the strength of their riches, but at present it is sought after even among the middle classes and the poor inhabitants of a country. In India during the 1990s, there were 17,50,000 prostitutes and their number has been increasing by 3 lakh every year. At present in 2004, as per the figures given by the Bhartiya Patit Udhar Sabha (a well-known voluntary organization), their number is 23 lakh. The profession of sex workers or those carrying on the trade of flesh has become so lucrative and money spinning that the women and girls from foreign countries also visit India to venture into this trade. They do this even at the risk of being prosecuted by the police when indulging in this trade secretly in five-star hotels and posh localities in metropolitan cities such as Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, and other big cities.

Causes of Prostitution

The causes compelling women and girls to enter into the profession of prostitution may be analysed as follows:

- (i) **Heredity:** Girls born of prostitutes inherit this profession from their mothers. The atmosphere and environment they live in contribute to their taking up this profession, which has been practised by numerous generations.
- (ii) **Poverty:** Due to abject poverty and no other means of livelihood, women and girls are compelled to adopt this profession.
- (iii) **Exploitation:** Some women and girls are made to take up this profession, as they become victims of exploitation by the members of this trade. They induce the innocent women folk with temptations of growing rich in no time. Once they have fallen a prey to the tactics of pimps, they are doomed to continue in this profession with no chance of escape.

(iv) **Marriages by force and sale:** Sometimes girls are married by their parents due to their inability to support them in the family, especially where a family has a number of girls. They are married to men who are no match for them for a paltry amount of money or even sold without the marital ceremonies. Such so-called husbands use their wives as prostitutes to earn for them and recover the amount spent on their purchase.

(v) **Illegal immigration:** People entering our country through illegal means, especially from Bangladesh and other south Asian countries, forced by their adverse circumstances in the matter of earning their livelihood, mostly resort to prostitution of their women folk. That is why perhaps Kolkata is said to be having the largest number of red light areas in the country.

(vi) **Interstate migration:** Prostitution thrives more in some states of our country as compared to other states. Uttar Pradesh is the most notorious in this regard. Metropolitan cities are the den of prostitutes. Therefore, women and girls opting for this profession seek to migrate to the places where they find the trade of flesh more lucrative financially.

(vii) **Sexual bliss:** Prostitutes and their customers indulge in this trade to achieve sexual bliss—satisfaction of their human lust. Besides there are prospects of enjoyment of music and dance, which constitutes conspicuous accompaniment of a prostitute, promising to exhibit the contours of beauty of a female body with glittering and tinkling ornaments.

Problems/Evils of Prostitution

The profession of prostitution is disapproved, detested, criticized, and condemned in our society because of the various evils and problems that it suffers from. Some of them may be mentioned as follows:

(i) **Social stigma:** Prostitution is viewed as a social curse and those practising it earn social stigma, shunned by society and community they live in. They are socially boycotted and are not welcome in social functions.

(ii) **Unhealthy and unhygienic domestic atmosphere:** Families wherein prostitution is practised suffer from unhealthy and unhygienic family atmosphere and environment, having adverse effect on the upbringing of their children. These children are rendered unable to conceive ambition of leading a healthy life pattern and realize their dreams of achieving something worthwhile in their lives.

(iii) **Responsible for numerous diseases:** Prostitution gives rise to numerous ailments and diseases to both the prostitutes and the men indulging in it. Most dangerous of these is AIDS, which is considered to erupt among those indulging in sex with women/girls besides their wives. AIDS is an incurable disease and thousands of people die in the world because of this deadly disease. It is therefore recommended by the health authorities all over the world that sex should be avoided with multiple numbers of women and one should exhibit loyalty to one's wife to be safe from this mortal disease.

(iv) **Harassment by police:** Since prostitution is an illegal profession, police personnel harass those indulging in it in more than one way. They visit the brothels at odd hours, have sex with the prostitutes, and even share a percentage of their earnings through this profession.

(v) **Illegitimate children:** The greatest conceivable evil of this profession is the birth of children to prostitutes whose father being not known, termed as illegitimate children. The problem is how

to take care of them and to rehabilitate them in a proper way. There were 50 lakh such children in our country at the end of the twentieth century. Now, their number has grown to 52 lakh in the red light areas of the country.

(vi) **Deprived of the right of franchise:** It may sound strange, but the sex workers and their adult children are not provided photo identity cards in most places despite the instructions of the election commission.

Remedial Measures

Proper measures need to be taken by the community, the government, and the voluntary organizations to solve the problems of this unfortunate and condemned section of the society. The community needs to initiate programmes of awareness of the ill effects of this profession and help those indulging in it to give it up for their personal hygiene and to avoid various diseases especially that of AIDS.

National Institute of Social Defence under the ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is engaged in combating this menace by formulating plans, policies, and programmes for the welfare of the prostitutes and their offspring. The ministry is giving financial assistance in the form of grants to numerous voluntary organizations engaged in the amelioration of this unfortunate section of society.

The Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act was passed by Parliament in 1956 and enforced throughout the country, replacing all the state acts on the subject. The main purpose of the Act is to inhibit the commercialized form of prostitution as an organized means of living. The Act provides penalties for the offence of keeping a brothel; living on the earnings of prostitution; prodding, inducing or taking women and girls in premises where prostitution is carried on; prostitution in and in the vicinity of public places; and seducing or soliciting for the purpose of prostitution. The Act also provides the appointment of special police officers and non-official advisory bodies to implement its provisions. The Act was amended in 1978 as suggested by the Law Commission to remove the lacuna it suffered from and to make it more effective.

Protective homes have been set up for the care, protection, and rehabilitation of women and girls rescued from this vice. Inmates are imparted training in various trades in these homes and are subjected to such disciplinary and moral influences as are likely to promote the prospect of their reformation and rehabilitation.

Cooperation of the community is most essential to combat this evil. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment assists voluntary organizations in undertaking a variety of preventive services for moral and social hygiene.

Care of Illegitimate Children

There are millions of children in India who are denied parental care in their formative years. The state cannot fill the void, but in recent years both government agencies and voluntary organizations have been doing their best within their limited means to provide these unfortunate children 'a home away from home'. But thus far no organization had ever thought of providing a healthy environment to the countless number of illegitimate children. Delhi administration's decision to adopt children born to prostitutes is bold and revolutionary and deserves praise. The Directorate of Social Welfare adopted 23 such children in 1989. It is a small beginning, but the mothers of these children deserve to be congratulated 'for taking this bold step towards making their children good citizens, by taking them out of the atmosphere in which they were born and brought up'.

According to the President of the Bharatiya Patita Uddhar, the effort is unsuccessful because the mothers are afraid to part with their offspring. They are afraid because the ‘madams’ of the brothels and the pimps threaten them with dire consequences.

Even now the Delhi administration has a long way to go to secure the future of at least 5000 such children. For the time being, it has identified 113 more children whose mothers are willing to part with them. To win the confidence of the victims of human lust, it is absolutely necessary for the Delhi administration to make the experiment a success. And it seems to have done its homework. For instance, the administration is keeping the name and place of the institution where these children will be housed a closely guarded secret. The objective is to prevent the pimps from establishing contact with them. Besides, such secrecy will help the administration in the task of rehabilitating them without any social stigma. It is to be hoped that other states would emulate the Delhi model and introduce similar schemes. The task is indeed stupendous. However, one can expect a better tomorrow at least for the children, particularly in view of the Supreme Court directive to the Union of India and the state governments to open separate hostels for the rehabilitation of the children of prostitutes in an ‘open and healthy environment’.

In conclusion, the ignoble profession of prostitution is assuming large proportions as is evident from the increasing number of women and girls entering this profession every year. These unfortunate women and girls are compelled to adopt this profession driven by factors such as heredity, poverty, domestic atmosphere and environment, sensual and sexual pleasures, blissful entertainment, illegal immigration, and interstate immigration. The problems faced by the prostitutes are harassment by police, exploitation, and contracting of numerous diseases especially the deadly disease of AIDS.

The steps taken by the government are mainly in the form of legislations, especially of suppression of immoral traffic in women and girls, providing protection and homes for those rescued from this vice, training for their rehabilitation, financial assistance by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to the voluntary organizations to help them in their efforts to combat this evil, and arrangements for the care of the illegitimate children; all this will go a long way in minimizing, if not completely eliminating, this degrading trade of flesh.

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Juvenile delinquency denotes crimes among children below the age of 18 years. The crimes committed by children vary in types, degrees, and dimensions and range from petty thefts, stealing, pick-pocketing, dacoities and robberies, causing injuries from simple to grievous and to the extremes of committing murders, notwithstanding rapes, looting, and arsons. The victims of the crimes lodge reports with the police or other immediate authorities; cases are registered against the culprits, investigated and tried by the concerned courts. If the accused persons are found guilty, they are punished, and their punishment may vary from admonishment and fine, to simple or rigorous imprisonment, determined by the nature of the crime.

We come across cases of crimes by boys and girls in all societies—backward and advanced, poor and rich, illiterate and educated—that can be attributed to a number of reasons such as the following:

- (i) **Poverty:** Thirty per cent of people in India are living below the line of poverty. Most of them do not even get two square meals a day. They go to sleep hungry on the footpaths without any roof over their heads. Children of such families are obliged to take to criminal acts to support their living.

(ii) **Abandonment or loss of family:** Sometimes children are abandoned by their families, or they suffer the loss of their families and have nobody to support them. They therefore have to take up to one or the other kind of crimes for their existence.

(iii) **Breakdown of homes and values:** Breakdown of homes is a common phenomenon because of disputes between the parents, leaving the children to fend for themselves. There has been erosion of values as well, one of them being sense of responsibility of parents to provide healthy atmosphere to their children to grow into responsible citizens, thus compelling the children to take to a life of crimes.

(iv) **Adverse effect of media:** Children are adversely affected by the reports in media, especially the electronic media, about crimes of various magnitudes, prompting them to similar means and methods in their lives. The evil effects of television and cinema are conspicuous in moulding the lives of children who learn various methods of committing crimes and try to practise these in their own lives.

(v) **Antisocial elements:** These exploit the innocent children by luring them to acquire wealth and pleasures by resorting to acts of crimes.

(vi) **Drugs and alcohol:** The stress of modern living and increasing isolation is gradually increasing the number of people dependent on drugs and alcohol. Children of these parents find it difficult to resist from such intoxicants and fall a prey to these vices, leading to crimes.

(vii) **Breakdown of joint family system:** Children feel safe and secured in a joint family where all members of the family provide care and protection, showering on them abundant love, affection, and care. But now with the replacement of joint families by nuclear families, children are devoid of proper guidance because their parents are extremely busy, resulting in neglecting the children which results in children forming bad habits including that of criminal nature.

(viii) **Urban migration:** Urban migration and conversion to market economy are also leading to emergence of vulnerable groups especially of children.

(ix) **Child labour:** The International Labour Organization reports that India has 44 million working children, the highest in the world, accounting to one-third of child labour in Asia and one-fourth of the world's working children. Lakhs of children of the primary school age, who are working in humiliating and often cruel circumstances in the households and some thousands being kept in virtual captivity in subhuman conditions by the owners of wayside street shops, do not figure in general surveys or census. Fed-up with the atrocities committed on them at their workplaces and inadequate wages, children take up crime in pursuit of better living.

(x) **Illegitimate children:** There are millions of children in India who are denied parental care in their childhood. Most unfortunate of such children are the illegitimate ones mostly born of prostitutes. According to rough estimates, there are 50 lakh illegitimate children and 1 lakh 75 thousand prostitutes in the country. Such children are bound to adopt crime as their profession unless alternate means are provided for their proper rehabilitation.

Remedial Measures

It is unfortunate that budding children aspiring to blossom in their youth should be condemned to life of crimes, bringing a blot to themselves, their parents, community, and the country. It is

therefore desirable that necessary measures should be taken to ensure the children a life free of crimes, to enable them to grow into a happy, healthy, and useful citizen. The following remedial measures can be suggested to meet the challenges of crime among children:

(i) **Alleviation of poverty:** Poverty being the root cause of crime among children needs to be eradicated. Various governments have been campaigning for 'Garibi Hatao' (remove poverty), but there has been no marked improvement. Children in cities and towns especially in slum areas are exposed to living conditions, urging them to resort to criminal activities to rid themselves from the evils of poverty. City life therefore needs to be free from temptations to crime, especially the slums, in order to erase this evil.

(ii) **Provision of free and compulsory education:** Article 45 of our constitution states that the state shall provide, within a period of 10 years from the commencement of the constitution, free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years. It is regrettable that this provision of the constitution has not been enforced.

With the passing of the 86th amendment to the constitution, universal education for all the children up to the age of 14 years has become mandatory. This has made all the more necessary for the concerned ministers/departments to strive for universal education with a great sense of urgency.

Moreover, there are dropouts from schools for various reasons, primarily that of poverty. The governments are providing midday meals or free food in the form of wheat and rice to the students in lieu of cooked food to ensure their continuation in studies. Provisions like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan have encouraged children to attend school. This will help the children to lead a life free of crimes.

(iii) **Education about moral values:** In their formative age, children should be taught the moral values of honesty, integrity, truth, mutual help, character building, etc., in their schools as a part of their curriculum. The religious institutions and voluntary organizations should also devote themselves to this aspect of education of children to instil a spirit of confidence in them. The publicity of hymns like 'Mera Vishwas Men Pehchan' (my confidence my identity), through television and other media these days, will create enviable virtue among children and inspire them to shun from the acts of crime.

(iv) **Abolition of child labour:** In Article 24, our constitution specifically makes provisions that no child before the age of 14 years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or engaged in another hazardous employment. Article 39 of the constitution further stipulates that the health and strength of workers, men and women, and the tender age of the children are not abused and the citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age or strength.

Strict enforcement of these provisions of the constitution will go a long way in preventing the children to resort to acts of crimes which they are forced to adopt, being aggrieved by the atrocities committed against them while engaged in child labour.

(v) **Abolition of jails for children:** The Supreme Court has many a time observed that jail is hardly a place where a child should be kept. Even whether the children are accused of offences, they must not be kept in the jail. Justice V. K. Krishna Iyer had remarked, 'Jail for juvenile should be outlawed'. Former Chief Justice of India, Justice P. N. Bhagwati, had held, 'It is an elementary requirement of any civilized society that children should not be confined in jails because incarceration has a dehumanising effect and it is harmful to the growth and development of children'.

It is regrettable that children are kept in jails of matured criminals where they are abused and exploited. They live in inhuman conditions and are used as helpers to prepare food, clean and sweep rooms, wash clothes, and fetch water for jail inmates. Moreover, they would turn into hard-core criminals staying in their company. The Supreme Court has therefore indicted the states for not providing separate facilities for children in jails and for not opening reformatory institutions, borstal schools, remand homes, or observation homes where children can be kept. The atmosphere of the jail has highly injurious effect on the mind of a child estranging him from the society and breeding in him aversion, bordering on hatred against a system that keeps him in the jail. The government has not got sufficient accommodation in its remand or observation homes; therefore, the children should be released on bail instead of being subjected to incarceration of jails.

(vi) Care and protection of children: There is no doubt that primary responsibility of providing care and protection to children and to wean them away from crimes is that of a family. But the central and the state governments have yet to make their constitutions in this regard. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment under its Social Defence Programmes makes efforts towards rehabilitation through adoption, foster care, sponsorship, and sending the children to an aftercare organization to protect them against crimes.

(vii) Integrated programmes for street children: The purpose of this scheme launched by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is to provide adequate facilities for withdrawal from life of vagrancy (which promotes crime among children) on the streets and towards reintegration with families. The programme provides shelter, nutrition, health care, education, and recreational facilities to street children and seeks to save them against abuse and exploitation.

State governments, union territories, administrative local bodies, educational institutes, and voluntary organizations are eligible for financial assistance under the programme. The programme components under the scheme are establishment of 24-hour drop-in shelters, non-formal education, vocational training and placement, health care and treatment programmes, counselling, guidance, referral services, etc. These measures will certainly be of great help to children to avoid embarking on a life of crime and instead adopt a life of which all the concerned may be proud.

(viii) Childline services: Childline having a dedicated number 1098 is a 24-hour toll-free telephone service available to children in distress or adults on their behalf. The basic objectives of Childline are to respond to the emergency needs of the children in difficulty and refer them to such services as they are in need of, to sensitize hospitals, medical personnel, police, etc., towards needs of children, to ensure protection of their rights, and to provide an awareness to the communities to respond to the needs of the children in difficult circumstances.

(ix) Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000: This recognizes the legal necessity of care and protection of children who are below the age of 18 years. It is an act to consolidate and amend the law relating to juveniles, and children in need of care and protection. They do this by providing them with proper care, protection, and treatment and adopting a child-friendly approach in the adjudication and disposing of matters in the best interest of children and for their ultimate rehabilitation through various institutions.

(x) Programme for juvenile justice: The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is implementing a scheme called, the Programme for Juvenile Justice. Its main objectives are to extend help to the state governments to bear the cost of development of infrastructure and services under the Juvenile Justice Act. The purpose is to see that in no circumstances a child in

conflict with law is lodged in a regular prison, to ensure maximum quality standards in juvenile justice service, to provide adequate services for prevention of social maladjustment, and to provide rehabilitation of socially maladjusted juveniles.

The means and measures, referred to above, aim at the protection of juvenile delinquency and help to overcome circumstances and conditions responsible for taking these children on the route of crime.

CORRUPTION

Under the heading 'adoption of unfair means to hoodwink the society' we may include the study of corruption.

Corruption is a universal phenomenon. It is unfortunate that India is ranked among the most corrupt countries in the world. Corruption is defined in the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, as 'whenever a public servant, accepts or obtains or agrees to accept or attempts to obtain from any person, for himself or for any other person, any gratification whatever, other than legal remuneration, as a motive or reward for doing or forbearing to do any official act or for showing or forbearing to show, in the exercise of his official functions, favour or disfavour to any person or for rendering or attempting to render any service or disservice to any person, with the central government or any state government or Parliament or the legislature of any state or with any local Authority, Corporation or Government Company'.

Corruption is rampant in India which is acclaimed as a land of seers, sages, and saints and of high moral values of truth, honesty, and integrity. Not a day passes when we do not hear/read about a scam or a scandal taking place in different parts of the country. In recent times, most important scandals have been Bofors payoff, fodder scandal, telecom scandal, petrol stations and house allotment scandals, urea scandal, and paper leakage scandal. There are corruption cases, such as the recent one in Punjab, of the chairman of the Public Service Commission, Ravi Sidhu, amassing enormous wealth. Every job in the commission had a price tag attached to it ranging in thousands, lakhs and crores of rupees depending on the importance and prestige of the job. In Haryana, appointments of police inspectors and teachers have been alleged to have been sold to the undeserving candidates. The most sensational corruption case is the scam of ₹ 30,000 crore of fake stamp papers by Telgi. Corruption is prevalent among the functionaries of government departments and public sector undertakings, right from the lowest official to the highest officer. Ministers, MLAs, and politicians—all are involved in it. No file can move from one desk to the other unless the official concerned has been bribed.

Anticorruption campaign has been going on in Punjab since the Congress government has come into power. Akali MLAs have been booked though they claim that it is a political vendetta. Three congress ministers were found guilty of corruption by the Lok Pal of Punjab, but they were not permitted to proceed against by the then Governor of Punjab.

Most of the public servants from the lowest official to the highest officer indulge in corruption as they are alleged to possess properties disproportionate to their known sources of income. Ministers and members of legislature (centre and states) have multiplied their wealth after occupying their positions.

It is a pity that the judiciary which is the custodian of the rights of the people and is expected to be honest has also been tempted by corruption, and not only petty judicial officials but High Court judges have also been charge sheeted for corruption.

Corruption scandals do not seem to be diminishing. There have been reports of corruption being indulged in by various Public Service Commissions and recruitment agencies. Money plays a great

role in appointments, promotions, and transfers. Cases of corruption among ministers and bureaucrats are also not declining.

Causes of Corruption

The various causes of rising corruption may be discussed as follows:

- (i) **Rising cost of living:** During the past four decades, inflation has been causing abnormal rise in the prices of the articles of consumption and goods of luxury. The employees are said to be obliged to resort to corrupt means to increase their income to meet the ever-increasing cost of living.
- (ii) **Large size of families:** Despite the government policy to encourage family planning and limit the size of a family to two children, families are growing in size; some of the employees have to support half a dozen children and their old parents. They require substantial increase in their income to support their families and are obliged to increase their income through corruption.
- (iii) **Erosion of moral values:** The ethical values of honesty, integrity, and right means of earning have eroded. People therefore do not hesitate to accept bribes to augment their incomes.
- (iv) **Competitive race to excel others:** The feeling of jealousy against people possessing more wealth urges employees not only to reach their standards but also to excel them, and hence they use any means including foul ones to achieve this objective. If a person possesses a Maruti car and the neighbour an Indica or other cars of greater value, he will not rest until he has got one like that and perhaps a better one.
- (v) **Riches the symbol of status and power:** Wealth determines the status and power of individuals and families. People will therefore attempt to attain and amass maximum amount of wealth to surpass others.
- (vi) **Complicated and rigid procedures and rules of government offices and transactions:** People have to suffer delays and inconveniences to get their requests processed and accepted because of complicated rules, papers passing through various channels, resulting in indefinite delays. They therefore prefer to indulge in giving bribe to get their work expedited.
- (vii) **Delay in disposal of corruption cases:** The corruption cases are not decided expeditiously. Some of them take years to be investigated and tried. The scandals and scams referred to above have been pending for indefinite periods, thus encouraging the corrupt employees not to bother much if they are charged with corruption.
- (viii) **Nexus between politicians/bureaucrats and criminals:** It is often revealed that politicians, bureaucrats, and underworld elements are corroborators in cases of high corruption. They escape because of their links with the high ups and the authorities.
- (ix) **Lack of deterrent punishments:** Persons found guilty of indulging in corrupt practices are seldom awarded deterrent punishments to ensure the elimination of corruption. Moreover, it is the small functionaries who are charged of corruption and are let off with minor punishments and the big fish are seldom booked and punished severely.
- (x) **Difficulties in unearthing ill-gotten wealth and arresting the culprits:** The persons charged with corruption evade arrest and go underground and are declared as proclaimed offenders, thus delaying their prosecution. They manage to get their wealth deposited in foreign countries

or invest in benami properties. Banks in Switzerland are committed not to disclose the accounts of the foreigners. It is a difficult procedure to get the criminals extradited if they have fled to a foreign country and we have no extradition agreements with such countries.

Measures to Combat Corruption

Corruption has assumed menacing proportions in our country. Black money is causing great damage to our economy. It is bringing bad name to our old traditions of moral values. It is therefore urgent to take necessary measures to eradicate corruption or at least to minimize it for the welfare of our people. The following measures can be suggested in this regard:

(i) It is desirable that the salaries, allowances, and other perks of the employees should be automatically increased with the rise in inflation to compensate them for increase in the cost of living.

(ii) Our religious and spiritual leaders should impress on the employees and the public the teachings of our scripture in respect of truthful living and merits of honesty and integrity and the evils of ill-gotten money and exhort them to put these principles into practice in their day-to-day living.

The instruction of these values should also be imparted in educational institutions so that our younger generations grow into honest citizens.

(iii) A discontented life, greed, avarice, jealousy, and the desire to become rich overnight through illegal means and practices needs to be discouraged, as life of contentment brings bliss and happiness, removes tension of mind, and contributes to a healthy living.

(iv) Procedures of functioning of the government offices and agencies and their rules and regulations need to be simplified to avoid unnecessary harassment to the citizens.

(v) Officers, ministers, and MLAs should be easily accessible to the public to enable the latter to bring their grievances to the notice of the former and seek their redressal against the callousness and demands of the lower officials.

(vi) Complicated procedures and numerous bottlenecks including corruption deter NRIs and foreign companies to invest in our country. If one window system, where the enquires of the investors are responded and the formalities are completed, is introduced, much of the inconvenience and harassment and delays can be reduced to attract foreign investment.

(vii) Corruption cases are generally instituted against the officials at the lower ranges of administration as against those at higher ranges. The former are punished whereas the latter go scot free. It is the politicians and officers at the higher echelon of administration against whom charge sheets of corruption should be levied and expeditiously decided.

(viii) The judicial process including prosecution, investigation, and trial needs to be expedited and judicial pronouncements need to be made within the minimum possible period, to make the corrupt people realize that the cases against them cannot be prolonged for indefinite periods, stretching over years and years. The corruption cases against political leaders are deliberately prolonged for years together.

(ix) Persons found guilty of corruption should be awarded maximum punishments including death sentence to deter persons from indulging in corruption.

(x) The central government agencies such as Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), and State Bureaus of Vigilance should function independently and not succumb to any political pressure and get the culprits expeditiously punished in the court of law.

(xi) It is surprising that institution of Lok Pal to check corruption among politicians and public servants has not been set up at the centre despite the fact that the bill to this effect had been presented in the Lok Sabha for six times. This confirms the lack of political will on the part of the government and other political parties to accept this watchdog against corruption. Again though Lok Pal/Lok Ayukts have been functioning in some states, it is regrettable that no Lok Pal has been appointed in Punjab after the demise of the erstwhile incumbent and the office has been abolished in the state of Haryana.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the cause of population growth in India.
2. Is India overpopulated? Give reasons.
3. What is meant by 'over population of a country'? Is India over populated?
4. Describe the effects of population growth on society.
5. 'A large population means a low standard of living'. Describe the relation between standard of living and population.
6. Write your views on birth control.
7. What would be the best population policy for India to control the growth of population?

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