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# Introduction to Sociology - 2

BASCC201

**CENTRE FOR DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION**



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**12-B Status from UGC**

**INTRODUCTION TO  
SOCIOLOGY - 2  
(BASCC201)**

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## **REVIEW COMMITTEE**

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Prof. Dr. Manjula Jain  
Dean (Academics)  
Teerthanker Mahaveer University (TMU)

Prof. Dr. Vipin Jain  
Director, CDOE  
Teerthanker Mahaveer University (TMU)

Prof. Amit Kansal  
Associate Dean (Academics)  
Teerthanker Mahaveer University (TMU)

Prof. Dr. Manoj Rana  
Jt - Director, CDOE  
Teerthanker Mahaveer University (TMU)

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## **PROGRAMME COORDINATOR**

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Dr. Manish Tyagi  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Humanities  
Centre for Distance and Online Education (CDOE)  
Teerthanker Mahaveer University (TMU)

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## **BLOCK PREPARATION**

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Ms. Ankita Singh  
Department of Management and Commerce  
Centre for Distance and Online Education (CDOE)  
Teerthanker Mahaveer University (TMU)

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### **Secretarial Assistance and Composed By:**

Mr. Namit Bhatnagar

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## - INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY-2

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The course 'Introduction to Sociology-2' intends to provide some additional knowledge on the interrelationship between individual and society, the types of societies and the various social processes that contribute to sustain the society over a period of time. The course comprises of three Blocks with 12 Units. **Block-1** begins with the meaning and characteristics of social structure. Various kinds of societies like primitive, agrarian and industrial societies are also discussed in this Block. It also explains the relationship between individual and society, culture and personality. **Block 2** discusses the meaning of socialization, forms of socialization, stages and agencies of socialization and explains Cooley's Looking-Glass Self theory, Mead's theory of 'Self', and Freud's theory of socialization. This Block also explicates the concept of social control. It also discusses about direct and indirect forms of social control and agencies of social control. **Block 3** tries to explain the concept of social processes, types of social processes-associative and dissociative and describes the interrelationship between different forms of social interaction i.e. cooperation, conflict and competition.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this course, you will be able to;

- Develop knowledge about the society and social structure and also get a clear picture about the relationship between the individual and society.
- Learn other basic concepts like socialization and social control.
- Generate ideas about various forms of social processes.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course is expected to elucidate and expand your ideas about the social structure, the concept of socialization, social control and social processes.

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## **BLOCK-1 INDIVIDUAL, SOCIETY AND CULTURE**

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According to Ginsberg, social structure is concerned with the principle forms of social organization i.e. types of groups, associations and institutions and the complex of those which constitute societies. A society is made up of people in social relationship with each other. It passes through different phases and categories of societies from primitive to industrial and post-industrial society where people with a common culture share life based on their interdependence. This present Block constitutes four Units. Unit 1 explains the concept of social structure and how different structuralists define society according their point of view. The next Unit i.e. Unit 2 describes different types of societies passes through from primitive to industrial and post-industrial society. How the society is evolved and the relationship between the individual and society is discussed in Unit 3. The last and fourth Unit outlines the relationship between culture and personality. The theories of self by the sociologists C. H. Cooley and G. H. Mead are also discussed in the last Unit.

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# UNIT 1 SOCIAL STRUCTURE

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## Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Objectives
- 1.3 The Concept of Social Structure
  - 1.3.1 Social Structure and social Organisation
  - 1.3.2 Social Structure and Social Groups
  - 1.3.3 Social Structure and the Concept of Social Roles
- 1.4 Three Major Views of Social Structure
  - 1.4.1 The Structural Functionalist Point of View
  - 1.4.2 The Structuralist Point of View
  - 1.4.3 The Marxist Point of View
- 1.5 Social Structure and Social Change
  - 1.5.1 Social Differentiation in Societies
  - 1.5.2 Evolution versus Revolution
  - 1.5.3 Social Structure and Anomie
- 1.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.7 Glossary
- 1.8 Check Your Progress: Answer Keys
- 1.9 References

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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

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In this unit we will discuss about social structure. This is a broader and more general concept than other concepts discussed in this block. Generally speaking, anything whether an object or an idea has a structure. It is only through the enduring aspects of a structure that we comprehend its existence. Similarly, we can say that each society in the world has a structure, which can be called its social structure. We can understand a society through the permanent and enduring aspects of its structure. Put in this way, social structure appears to be a very broad and simple concept. But, while studying a particular social structure, sociologists have differed widely in their interpretation and use of this concept.

It is due to these disparities in perspectives, that discussion on social structure has become conceptually complex and confusing. This need not be so. We maintain that at a simple level, the idea of social structure is basically quite elementary. It helps us to describe the permanent and enduring aspects of social relationships. As such it is a very useful tool to understand social reality.

In this unit you will learn about various interpretations and uses, of this basic concept

in sociological thought. We begin with a broad definition of the concept. It has, generally, been understood by the structural—functionalist school of thought as the network of permanent and enduring aspects of social relationships. These relationships are distinct from individual relationships.

When two individuals have a relationship where each expects something from the other, their behaviour is predictable and social. Social behaviour is, thus, an expected and organized behaviour. It is defined by the social norms and given sanction by society. Different sociologists and social anthropologists have defined this concept in various ways. Its use and applicability, this concept is understood in different ways in Britain, France, and in North America. There may be some exceptions, but generally in North America the “Culture” aspect of social structure is given more emphasis. British sociologists like Radcliffe-Brown and his followers give more emphasis to the ‘relational’ aspect. In France, the concept is understood in terms of models, discussed by Levi Strauss. We will discuss more elaborately about these distinctions, as well as, the development of this concept in the next section.

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## **1.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

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After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- distinguish social structure from social organisation;
- state and describe the meaning of the concept of social structure put forward by the structural-functionalists;
- describe the structuralists’ point of view regarding social structure;
- explain the Marxist understanding of social structure; and
- establish the relationship between social structure and social change.

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## **1.3 THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL STRUCTURE**

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The word structure meant originally, the construction of a building. Gradually, structure began to imply inter-relationships between the parts of any whole. It also began to be used in anatomical studies. The concept of social structure became popular amongst the sociologists and social anthropologists, in the decade following World War II. During that period it became so fashionable to use this term, that it came to be applied to “almost any ordered arrangement of social phenomenon” (see Leach 1968 : 482).

It is essential to look at the different ways, in which sociologists and social anthropologists, have applied this concept. In this process you will learn how it was understood by the structural-functionalists, the structuralists, and the Marxists – the three main schools of sociological thought. But before proceeding to these three views of social structure, let us also look at the difference between social structure and social organisation. We also briefly mention how some scholars used the notion of social structure in terms of social groups and roles.

### 1.3.1 Social Structure and Social Organisation

The term “social organisation” has often been used interchangeably for “social structure”. Some scholars, like Raymond Firth, have clearly distinguished between both these terms. In his book, *Elements of Social Organisation* (1956), Firth has made this distinction very clear. He regards both these terms as only heuristic devices or tools rather than precise concepts. According to him, social organisation is concerned with the choices and decisions involved in actual social relations; while the concept of social structure deals with the more fundamental social relations, which give a society its basic form, and which provide limits to the range of action organizationally possible within it.

Firth says that in the aspect of structure, the continuity principle of society is found, while in the aspect of organisation is to be found the variation, or change principle. The latter aspect allows evaluation of situations with the scope for individual choice.

He studied the social structure, and organisation of small communities, such as the Tikopians of Solomon Islands. He described a human community as “a body of people sharing in common activities and bound by multiple relationships in such a way that the aims of any individual can be achieved only by participation in action with others”. This definition of the term “community” subsumes the *spatial* aspect, which is that the people who form the community generally occupy a common territory. Therefore, they are in direct contact with each other, and their relationship is of more emotional and intimate nature, than those found in the complex societies.

According to Firth (1956:41) the structure and organisation of the community life possess certain constituents which are essential for social existence within a community. These constituents are: social alignment, social controls, social media, and social standards.

### 1.3.2 Social Structure and Social Groups

There are some scholars who use the term social structure for only persistent social groups in society like nation, tribe, clan, etc. One of them is E.E. Evans-Pritchard. His theory of social structure arose as a reaction to Radcliffe-Brown’s understanding of social structure. In fact, it was Evans-Pritchard who first brought about the shift from pure structure-functionalism to structuralism in social anthropological studies of societies.

In his book, *The Nuer* (1940), he has dealt with these persistent and permanent groups, whose individual membership keeps on changing, but whose structural form remains approximately the same throughout time. His definition of social structure differs from Radcliffe-Brown’s, in the sense that he is not concerned with the social behaviour of person to person. He has concentrated his attention in his study of the Nuer of Sudan, on the relationship of the homestead with the wider group of the village. The village he studies in relation to the tertiary group-composed of few villages; the tertiary group with the secondary group-composed of several tertiary groups, the secondary group with the primary group-composed of several tertiary groups, the secondary group with



the primary group-composed of several secondary groups; and so on, till the whole tribe is included. In this segmental social structure, clans, lineages, consanguine and affinal kins, etc. form major components.

Thus, Evans-Pritchard's conception of social structure has the family or the homestead (as in the case of the Nuer society) as its basic unit, rather than the individuals.

### 1.3.3 Social Structure and the Concept of Social Roles

Fred Eggan, an American anthropologist, describes that the component or units of social structure, are around the interpersonal relations which 'become part of the social structure in the form of status positions' occupied by individuals. He was not the only one who has defined social structure in terms of social status and position occupied by individuals in society.

One of the major theories of social structure has been outlined by Nadel in his book, *The Theory of Social Structure (1969)*. He, too, has defined social structure in terms of the roles played by the individual actors in society and their consequent social status. Nadel (1969: 5) says, "We arrive at the structure of a society through abstracting from the concrete population and its behaviour the pattern or network (or "system") of relationships obtaining between actors in their capacity of playing roles relative to one another". His definition of roles is far more specific than the one given by most other sociologists.

#### Check Your Progress Exercise 1.1

**Note:**

- I. Use the space given below for your answer.
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Q.1** What is the main difference, according to Firth between social organisation and social structure? Use five lines for your answer.

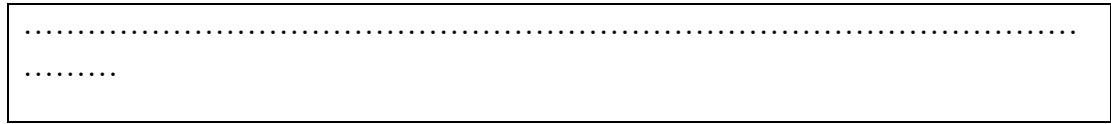
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**Q.2** What is the basic unit of social structure in the study of the Nuer tribes by E. Evans-Pritchard? Use one line for your answer.

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**Q.3** Who defined social structure in terms of social status and position occupied by individuals in society? Use one line for your answer.

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## 1.4 THREE MAJOR VIEWS OF SOCIAL STRUCTURE

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Now, we look at the three major views of social structure, as propounded by structural-functional school, structuralist school and Marxist school.

### 1.4.1 The Structural Functionalist Point of View

Social structure is one of the core concepts, in the structural-functionalist approach, to the study of society. This approach is founded on the analogy between a society and an organism, which gained credence when it was presented in a scientific way, modelled on the natural science methods of biology. We will discuss here three sociologists from this school.

- i) Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) was one of the initiators of this approach, and was also one of the first sociologists to use the term. He was quite fascinated by the biological analogy: between society and organism, and between social evolution and biological evolution. But in spite of this fascination, he did not make the term “structure of society” very clear.

For him, a society is made up of different parts, all of which have to work in order to remain healthy, meet the demands of the environment and to survive. Just like an organism, the society adjusts and adapts itself to the demands and pressures of social change in order to survive. Unlike the case of animals the “parts” in society are not eyes, ears or a nose but certain social arrangements which are indispensable to the life of the society, since they ensure the discharge of vital functions in society.

Spencer introduced the concept of social structure but did not develop it further. Many of his ideas regarding the study of society have become redundant, yet his ideas on concepts like “structure” and “function” are still popular (see Cuff and Payne 1984: 28-30)

- ii) Although Durkheim has not directly talked about the term social structure, the understanding of some sort of a social structure is implicit in his writings. He applied the natural science methods, especially of biology, to the study of society. In his book, *The Rules of Sociological Method*, he has clearly stated that “social facts”, are distinct from individual facts. They are, external to the individual and exercise constraint over his or her conduct. For example, laws of a society are “social facts” or the coinage of society is a “social fact”. These are external to all the individual members of the society and at the same time exercise constraint on them.

For Durkheim, social order is a moral order. Society is not just the sum total of all its members but it is a reality *sui generis*, i.e., an emergent reality. It includes the collective values shared by the members of the society in general. According to him all social relationships give rise to expectations of patterns of conduct. In the process of developing the social relationships human beings develop common ways of looking at reality, of evaluating, feeling, thinking

and behaving in society. This common way of behaving, acting and perceiving reality leads to the development of a common pattern of values and norms. It gives rise to certain expectations from members of the society and puts constraint on them. The result of this common way of social behaviour, of sharing the collective values, etc. leads to the emergence of the “collective consciousness” in society. We may say that for Durkheim to study the collective consciousness in a society was akin to discussing its social structure. But like Herbert Spencer, he too, did not clearly spell out this concept.

- iii) Radcliffe-Brown defined social structure far more precisely than Durkheim, who was the source of many of his major ideas. However, it was from Herbert Spencer that he borrowed the organic analogy which has shaped his ideas on social structure and his structure-functionalist approach to the study of society.

Radcliffe-Brown (1952: 11) defined social structure as “an arrangement of parts of components related to one another in some sort of a larger unity”. It is “an arrangement of persons in relationships institutionally defined and regulated”. He has described the “institutionally defined and regulated” relationship as that between the King and his subject, between husband and wife, etc. Thus relationships within society are ordered by various mores and norms.

#### **a) Social Morphology and Social Physiology**

He has related the concept of social structure to the concept of social function. Concept of function, according to him is the “contribution which a partial activity makes to the total activity of which it is a part” (Radcliffe-Brown 1952: 181). This concept involves the notion of a structure consisting of a set of relations amongst unit entities. The continuity of the structure is maintained by a life-process made up of the activities of the constituent units. He called the structural aspect of society Social Morphology, and the functional aspect of society Social Physiology. Thus, for Radcliffe-Brown social structure consists of a network, of person to person relations, and when we study social structure we are concerned with the set of actually existing relations at a given point of time.

#### **b) Dyadic Relations and Social Structure**

Radcliffe-Brown’s definition (1952 : 191) deals with all social relations of person to person which he calls dyadic relations, such as, between a father and son, or a mother’s brother and his sister’s son. He says that in an Australian tribe the whole social structure, is based on a network of person to person type of relations, which are established through genealogical connections. He includes under social structure, the differentiation of individuals and classes by their social role, for example, the differential social positions of master and servant, of ruler and the ruled, etc.

He distinguished between structure as an actually existing concrete reality empirically given and structural form. Just like the cells of an organism die out and are renewed, so also the individual members of society die and are replaced by new people born. Yet, the form of body remains same and so does the form of the social structure. Even during wars and revolutions, not all the framework

of society is destroyed. For example, family institution is not only found universally but persists in all societies in spite of all changes.

**c) Spatial Aspect of Social Structure**

Society as an object of study is difficult to conceive of. According to Radcliffe-Brown (1952: 193), we do not often find a society or community which is absolutely isolated and having no contact with the outside world. In the contemporary period, we find the network of social relations extending throughout the world, having no clear-cut boundary as such. Thus, for example in the case of India we do not know whether India as a whole is “a society” or whether the several religious groups, linguistic groups, tribal groups, etc. are distinct societies. Therefore, we have to define, first of all, the unit of study and compare it with other units of suitable size to study the structural system as it appears in and around that region. This is the spatial aspect of social structure which can vary from a village or family to a whole nation or the world, depending upon the unit of study.

**d) Social Structure and Social Laws**

Law, economic institution, education, moral ideas, values, etc. are the complex mechanisms by which a social structure exists and persists. Most of the primitive institutions, values and belief appear in quite a new light if seen in relations to the social structure. For example, the ‘Potlach’ system of the Indians of the north-west America, appeared to the Canadian politicians as a wasteful foolishness. But for the social anthropologist it was a machinery for maintaining the social structure of lineages, clans and moieties, with which was combined an arrangement of rank defined by privileges. There are many other customs which appear ridiculous, but which perform tension removing functions in simple societies.

Law is the mechanism by which the social structure is maintained, social relations between persons and social groups are defined, restored and maintained. The system of law of a society can only be fully understood if it is studied in relation to the social structure and vice versa.

**e) Interests and Values in Society**

The study of social structure leads immediately to the study of interests or values in terms of which social relations are defined. “A social relation”, according to Radcliffe-Brown (1952: 194) “exists between two or more individuals when there is some adjustment of their respective interests by convergence of interests, or by limitation of conflicts that might arise from divergence of interests”.

A social relation is not just similarity of interests, but is also based on mutual interests of persons in one another. The social solidarity results when two or more people have same goals and they cooperate with each other to achieve those goals.

**f) Social Structure and Social Institutions**

The study of social structure leads to the understanding of the network of social roles and, therefore, of social behaviour. Society reacts through its sanctions, in a positive or a negative way, to social behaviour. Sanctions maintain a given standard of social life. This include social laws, besides the norms, values, customs etc. of the society. The norms of society function through the social institutions of the society. Radcliffe Brown (1952: 10) has defined social institution as a social group which observes certain norms of conduct. The institution of a society, therefore, provides social ordering to interactions of persons in social relationship. This has two aspects, one is in terms of the social structure where it provides the norms to relationships, as within a family. The other aspect is the group or class, in which persons interact briefly or casually. An example of the first case, is the behaviour of a father in the family, of a doctor in the clinic, etc. The second case is that of the behaviour of a neighbor, a friend, etc.

Thus, according to Radcliffe-Brown, institutions, being standardized modes of behavior, constitute the machinery by which a social structure maintains its existence and continuity.

In spite of his extensive explanations regarding the concept of social structure, Radcliffe-Brown has been accused of being too general. Amongst others, Raymond Firth criticized his analysis of social structure “for not making a distinction between the ephemeral, i.e., short-lived and enduring elements in social activity and also for making it impossible to distinguish the idea of the structure of the society from that of the totality of the society itself” (see Bottomore 1962: 109).

Other major contributions within the structural-functionalist school to the theory of social structure have been given by such sociologists and anthropologists as P.G. Murdock, Talcott Parsons and Robert K. Metton. Murdock used the term “social structure” as the very title of his book in which he has studied the institution of family in several tribes by using Human Relations Area Files, located at Yale University in the USA. He was the first person to collect these files and they remained his principal research tool in all his other works, as well.

Talcott Parsons defines social structure as a natural persistent system which maintains its continuity despite internal changes from time to time, in the same way as the organism does in reality. By natural persistent system, we mean that it has a life of its own. For him, social system is a much wider concept, including both the functional and structural aspect than just social structure.

Merton has also talked about the concept of social structure. Like many structural functionalists social structure for him is the interrelation of social positions and roles.

### **1.4.2 The Structuralist Point of View**

Claude Levi-Strauss of France is one of the major structuralists, who has given a distinct meaning to the concept of social structure. According to him the term “social structure” has nothing to do with empirical reality but it should deal with models which are built after it. Thus, Levi-Strauss (1953: 524) says that social structure “can by no means be reduced to the ensemble of social relations to be described in a given society.”

This model building on the basis of existing social relations will help one to clarify the difference between the two closely-related concepts of *social structure and social relations*.

He says that it will be enough to state that social relations, consist of the raw materials out of which the models making up the social structure are built. Therefore, he believes that social structure cannot claim a field of its own among others, in the study of societies. It is rather a method to be applied to any kind of social studies. It is similar to the structural analysis which is current in other disciplines like linguistics, literature; political science, etc. (see Levi-Strauss 1953: 525-553).

Applying the structuralist method, Louis Dumont (1970) in the study of caste system in India, shows that it is based on the fundamental social principle of hierarchy. He says that the principle of hierarchy, is the core of the caste system, and is opposed to the principle of equality. In this system, man as the member of society is given more importance than the individual. Here the concepts of the individual, freedom, and equality of mankind are relatively less important.

These ideals of individualism, freedom and equality are negated by the three basic features of caste system, such as heredity, hierarchy and endogamy. Like Levi Strauss, Louis Dumont too has used the kinship system, to explain many of his views regarding the structuralist approach.

### **1.4.3 The Marxist Point of View**

The Marxist theories regarding the concept of social structure are free from the bias of organic analogy of the structure functionalists Karl Marx (1877) has written about the relations of production as constituting “the economic structure, the real basis on which is erected a judicial and political super-structure and to which correspond the forms of the determined social conscience”. In this explanation Marx has used the term structure, not in the biological sense, but in the sense of a building or construction. But his notion of structure cannot be clearly distinguished from the other related concepts.

Edmund Leach (1968: 482-88) a British social anthropologist, says that “in Marx’s work there are references made to political, juridical, religious, and philosophical system. But here the term “system” is almost indistinguishable from the above uses of “structure”, “superstructure”, and “form”. In both Marxist and non-Marxist literature, lately, sociologists have added such variants as “infrastructure”, “macrostructure”, “microstructure” etc.

Marx had viewed the historical development of societies in terms of stages such as the

primitive, ancient, feudal, capitalist and, finally communist according to their distinctive modes of production. This historical development is governed by the law of “dialectical materialism” about which you will learn more in elective course 3. In each stage of social development, society is divided into social classes on the basis of ownership or non-ownership of property. The owners as a class, have a dominant position in society and they exploit the class of non-owners. The owners are in minority in all societies while the non-owners are in majority. Yet the owners as a class are able to exploit the masses by extracting surplus value of their labour. This exploitation goes on till the masses become united and the ‘seeds of revolution’ becomes ripe. When a revolution occurs, the mode of production changes.

According to Marx, societies will develop till the stage of communism where there will not be any classes; where society will be based on equality in all respects. This view gives an ideal picture of society and is not yet found in reality. Even the Russian and Chinese societies, which are generally referred to as socialist societies, do not reach up to this ideal.

Most of the Marxist sociologists, both in India and abroad, use the concept of class in studying the structure and process of a society.

### Check Your Progress Exercise 1.2

**Note:**

- I. Use the space given for your answer.
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Q.4** Define Radcliffe-Brown’s concept of social structure. Give an example. Use about five lines.

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**Q.5** What is the spatial aspect of social structure? Explain in about five lines.

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**Q.6** According to Levi-Strauss, social structure can be reduced to the ensemble of social relations in a given society. Tick the correct box.

True

False

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## 1.5 SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND SOCIAL CHANGE

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Social structure, in all societies and at all times, experiences change. Change is an essential aspect of all societies, and it is brought about by the process of social evolution, in all societies. Several social anthropologists and sociologists have attempted to study the process of social evolution in societies, which brings about change in the structure and the functioning of societies. Here we are going to discuss some of these processes of change, as explained by some sociological thinkers.

### 1.5.1 Social Differentiation in Societies

There have been many ways in which social thinkers have explained social differentiation in societies. Social differentiation means the process in which the various parts; i.e., social groups and institutions of society become more complex, and each of them performs some specialized tasks. Some of these thinkers are:

- i) **Henry Maine** has made a distinction between the societies based on *social status* and those based on *social contract*. According to him traditional societies, like Indian society, were based on the relations of social status, where the prestige and ascriptive criteria, determine the status of the person in society. The caste system, especially the *jajmani system*, found within the caste system in India, depicts the relations of social status. Jajmani system in India was based on the patron-client relationship, where each caste had certain rights and obligations towards the other. In this relationship prestige element, and a sense of obligation of the patron to protect his clients; formed a significant feature. It was above all an economic system which took care of the distribution of agricultural and material goods produced within the society and exchange of services rendered.

In contrast to this society, the society having social contract type of relationship, gives, importance to the role of the individual. Here achievement is more important than ascriptive criteria. All exchanges of goods and services are based on rational grounds of profit. Social values of prestige, of obligations, etc. do not count in this type of relationship. This type of relationship is found in modern, complex societies where all formal exchange is contractual.

- ii) **Emile Durkheim** (1964) has described the nature of social solidarity in two types of societies, depending on the division of labour present in it. Thus, he says that mechanical solidarity is found in pre-industrial societies. In these societies there are relatively little social differentiation in the sense that division of labour in these societies is based on criteria of age, sex, etc. rather than specialized skills. Here solidarity is based on similarities between the members of society. They have more scope for face-to-face contact and share values, beliefs and social norms. Even the roles performed within the society are shared to a great degree. In these societies the “collective conscience” which includes the moral values and belief aspect of society is very strong. Therefore, in these societies, according to Durkheim laws of repressive kind are practised which



are based on the idea of punishing the criminal for hurting the “collective conscience”.

In the industrial societies based on *organic solidarity* society is based on differences. All the parts of the society performs a different function which contributes to the life of the total society. Thus, division of labour in these societies is more complicated. Unlike the societies having “mechanical solidarity” these societies are based on restitutive laws which emphasize the reform of the criminal. Here we find numerous occupational roles and social differentiation is based on several criteria’s of occupation, income, power, prestige, age, sex, etc.

### **1.5.2 Evolution versus Revolution**

The concept of social evolution is derived from Darwins’ theory of biological evolution. It implies order, change and progress. It has been used to refer to certain definite stages, through which all societies were supposed to have passed, from a simple to a more complex form. Thus, social evolution like biological evolution, refers to gradual change in which change is measured in terms of greater complex, refers to gradual change in which change is measured in terms of greater complexity of structure. Evolution is a one way process; but in societies we find that sometimes change can be from complex to simple, as well. For example, it has been seen in some places, that a major trading centre or city became a small village, within a period of time, due to economic and political factors. Some of the major social evolutionists are Morgan, Spencer, Henry Maine, etc.

Social revolution implies total transformation of the structure of society, as has been explicated by Karl Marx. According to him the mode of production of a society changes after a revolution, and with it the “super-structure”, (which includes all values, beliefs, all socio-political institutions etc.) also changes. Unlike evolution, revolution is quick and often violent. It could be a non- violent revolution also; such as the one brought about by Mahatma Gandhi during the Nationalist Movement in India. But revolution is never gradual. It is immediately perceptible to the members of the society.

However, the functionalists believe that no society can be totally transformed. Some institutions, like marriage, family, etc. survive all social transformations. These are some of the views regarding evolution, as against revolution, in relation to the structure of society.

### **1.5.3 Social Structure and Anomie**

Emile Durkheim for the first time used the concept of anomie in his book. *The Division of Labour in Society* (1964). He defined anomie as the state of normlessness in society. He said that members of society need certain social conditions for social participation, in which they can attain happiness. If these social conditions are not present the members of that society loose the necessary social integration and become anomie. These necessary social conditions are those where the conduct of men and women is governed by norms, which are integrated and not conflicting in the society. The

individual members of the society, should be morally involved with other people in the society.

Robert K. Merton's use of the term anomie varies from Durkheim's, in the sense that he has defined anomie, on the basis of the gap between the cultural goals in society, and the norms or the available institutional means to attain them. He says that conformity in society is achieved when both the cultural goals and available norms are accepted by the members of the society.

**Check Your Progress Exercise 1.3**

**Note:**

- I. Use the space given for your answer.
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Q.7** Describe mechanical solidarity. Use about six lines.

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**Q.8** Give an example to show the difference between social evolution and revolution. Use about two lines.

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**Q.9** What is anomie? Distinguish between Durkheim's definition and Robert K. Merton's definition of anomie. Use about seven lines.

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**1.6 LET US SUM UP**

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In this unit we have explained the history and development of the concept of social structure amongst some of the major schools of sociological thought. We have first discussed the structural-functionalist's view of social structure as described by Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, Radcliffe-Brown, etc. It has been shown that the concept of social structure is at the core of their understanding of society.

We have discussed the structuralists point of view. The way Claude Levi-Strauss has

defined social structure and made a distinction between this concept and the concept of social relations. His concept is only a model of the actually existing social relations in a society. We have also discussed here the application of structuralist approach by Louis Dumont to study the caste system in India.

We have described the Marxist point of view of social structure which is implicit in the terminology used like “superstructure”, “infrastructure” etc. In this unit we have also described the relations between social structure and social change, including the process of social differentiation in society. We have also discussed here the relationship between social structure and anomie.

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## 1.7 GLOSSARY

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- Affinal** : The relationships which are acquired through marriage, such as, wife’s brother, husband’s sister, etc.
- Analogy** : Similarity or correspondence between two things or ideas.
- Consanguine** : The relationships which one has through the blood ties, such as, of mother and child, or brothers and sisters, etc.
- Constraint** : Any kind of restraint or compulsion felt by an individual.
- Genealogical** : Any link which corresponds to the descent traced continuously from an ancestor.
- Heuristic devices** : The means to provide aid in solving problems.
- Indispensable** : Something which is essential and cannot be substituted.
- Methodology** : It is the body of methods, tools and techniques of studying society, as in the case of a student of sociology.
- Morphology** : It is the study of forms or structure of animals, plants or the society as in our case.
- Physiology** : It is the study of the life-process or functioning of animals, plants or the society. Potlatch : The practice of holding feasts among the American Northwest tribals was known as the institution of potlatch, which is cited as an example of to show how giving of goods to the extent of physically destroying them was linked with the particular tribal group’s claims to a higher status.
- Segmental** : Anything which is divided into different parts or sections.

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## 1.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: ANSWER KEYS

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- Ans to Q.1** According to Firth, social structure is concerned with the more basic social relations which give a society its basic structure, while social organisation deals with the choices and decisions

involved in actual relations.

- Ans to Q.2** The homestead is the basic unit of social structure in Evans-Pritchard's study of the Nuer tribe.
- Ans to Q.3** Both Fred Eggan and S.F. Nadel defined social structure in terms of social status and roles of the individuals in society.
- Ans to Q.4** Radcliffe-Brown has defined social structure as "an arrangement of persons, in relationships institutionally defined and regulated". These institutionally defined and regulated network of relationships are of the kind, such as, of mother and father in a family; of a judge in the court, etc.
- Ans to Q.5** The spatial aspect of social structure defines the limit or the size of the society to be studied. It provides the unit of study which can be compared with other units of similar size to arrive at the structural system of that society.
- Ans to Q.6** False
- Ans to Q.7** Mechanical solidarity is the solidarity found in pre-industrial societies. It is the solidarity of likeness or similarities. In such societies social differentiation is minimal and division of labour is based on criteria's of age, sex, etc. Here the collective conscience of the society is very strong.
- Ans to Q.8** Social evolution is a gradual, slow progress while revolution is relatively short and swift change in the structure of society.
- Ans to Q.9** Anomie is the virtual normlessness in society. According to Durkheim when the normative structure of the society breaks down the integration of the individual in the society becomes weak. This leads to anomie in society. For Merton, anomie occurs when there is a gap between the culturally defined goals and the socially available means to acquire them.

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## 1.9 REFERENCES

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## **UNIT 2 TYPES OF SOCIETY: PRIMITIVE, AGRARIAN AND INDUSTRIAL**

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### **Structure**

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Objective
- 2.3 The World We Live In
- 2.4 Structure of Human History
- 2.5 Primitive Society (Hunting and Gathering Society)
- 2.6 Agrarian Society
- 2.7 The Big Transformation
- 2.8 Beginnings of the Industrial Order
  - 2.8.1 The Factory System
  - 2.8.2 Industrialization of the Textile Sector
  - 2.8.3 James Watt's Steam Engine
  - 2.8.4 Railway and Steam Shipping
- 2.9 Post-Industrial Society
- 2.10 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.11 Glossary
- 2.12 Check Your Progress: Answer Keys
- 2.13 References

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### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

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In this unit we intend to give you the broadest possible survey of human history. You will appreciate that this is a very large topic. For your easy reading and understanding, we will be presenting a three-stage division of human life on earth. We will describe the principal activities of each stage and its relationship with the other stages. The idea behind this exercise is to make you aware of the enormous diversity that has accompanied human life throughout the course of history in different places and in different periods of time. It is important to recognize that human life has changed with time and at any given time human life has accommodated a diversity of patterns. We will begin the unit by giving you a sense of human life as it exists today. This would enable you to appreciate the changes that have come about in human life over the past few centuries.

The human life as it exists today can be understood better through three simple but significant categories: economic, political and social. This is so say, the totality of human life today can be seen as the aggregate of these three dimensions: economic,

political and social. Important changes have, of course, come about in all the three dimensions over time.

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## **2.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

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

- explain the different stages that the history of humankind has gone through;
- describe the ways in which these stage were different from one another; and
- discuss the principal activities that characterized each of these stages.

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## **2.3 THE WORLD WE LIVE IN**

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Human life on earth may be said to be roughly one million years old. This is to say that since one million years ago, humankind started living a life that can be broadly identified with the kind of life we live today. The life we now live has certain important characteristics, which may seem obvious and natural (because of being self-evident). It is nonetheless useful to highlight some of these characteristics and to recognize that there is nothing 'obvious' about them; that they were not always there; and therefore their presence needs to be explained and not taken for granted.

Broadly speaking, following are some of the features of the world we now live in:

- i) Politically it is much more integrated, although it is divided into a number of nation-states. These nation-states may be big or small, weak or powerful, but internally they all resemble one another in terms of their institutions and resources (bureaucracy, army, police, political leaders etc.)
- ii) Economically the world is less integrated and more diverse. Productive activities of the world have a certain range (agriculture, manufacturing, trade, industry, buying and selling, use of currency to facilitate exchange). Yet they are all connected with one another. Countries can be identified on the economic scale as industrial, semi- industrial, agricultural, countries in transition and so on. Using other indicators countries can actually be ranked in terms of their economic performance.

Socially and culturally the modern world is integrated and diverse at the same time. We are similar in the sense that we have evolved the same parameters for measuring culture (a shared style of communication, body language, style of clothing, preparation and consumption of food, among other things) and social life (family, relationships, religion etc.). But we are diverse in the sense that the internal content of culture and social life varies a great deal. Most of us feel the need to relate ourselves to the re& of faith. To take an example, an individual's relationship with religion can be measured on a number of scales. On one scale, he/she can be deeply religious, superficially ritualistic,

religious only in the cultural sense, externally secular and internally religious, secular in life-style and religious in faith, or religious in lifestyle and secular in faith, or simply irreligious or non-believer in god. However, on another scale he/she can be a Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist or Jew. Our collective political, economic and social life follows distinctive patterns. But the important thing is that it is now possible to consider human life as one. Over the last three centuries the diversities have been giving way to recognizable similarities. It will be interesting to trace the evolution of human history that has led to this condition.

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## 2.4 STRUCTURE OF HUMAN HISTORY

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We now appreciate that there is diversity of human life in both time and scale. Is it possible to construct a structure of human history that would be broadly applicable to all societies at a given time, and to each society, at various points in time, during the last one million years? The following is an attempt to construct a structure of the entire human history.

The history of humankind may be said to have passed through three stages: (i) hunting-gathering, (ii) agrarian, and (iii) industrial. Each of these is characterized by a distinct type of society. But it is important to recognize that a great deal of diversity also prevails within each of these societies. To take an example, agrarian society may be defined as one in which food production constitutes the major activity. In this sense the agrarian society is distinguishable from, the hunting and gathering society (in which agriculture did not exist) and the industrial society in which food production ceased to be the most important occupation. But the agrarian society itself can be divided into various types. There were small-scale agrarian societies employing a low level of technology. There were large empires with a degree of political centralization and a comprehensive division of labour. There were feudal societies in which the production was controlled by a class of landlords who hired labourers. There is no doubt there can be other types of agricultural societies also.

Likewise, the industrial society that has been with us for barely three centuries has also developed important variants: (a) capitalist industrial society (in which the production process is controlled by the market); and (b) the socialist industrial society (also called the command economy, in which the production process is planned and controlled by the political institutions) can be two such variants. No doubt with time other types of industrial societies will emerge. It has been claimed recently that a new type of 'post-industrial society' too has emerged in the world. However only time will tell whether it is a new type of 'industrial society', or a new type of 'society', altogether to add one more to our three-stage division of human society.

Three types of activities have remained central to all the three stages with varying levels of emphasis-production, coercion and cognition. The degree of importance that the3 enjoy in each stage varies. For example, in the first stage (hunting and gathering) activity two and three (coercion and cognition) have no meaning and simply do not exist. The major burden of human activity in this stage is exhausted by food procurement. In that sense there is also no production; but food gathering is an activity that can be likened to production. Coercion as an activity is dependent upon a division

of labour. Since there is no (or not much) division of labour at this stage, there is no coercion. Likewise cognition as an activity is dependent upon the existence of written words or the existence of a class of people (clergy, Ulema, Brahmin) committed to the generation and dissemination of ideas.

We have a three-stage structure of human society (hunting-gathering, agrarian and industrial) in which three types of activities have remained crucial and central (production, coercion and cognition). But how did one stage give way to the other? How and why did the hunting-gathering stage of human society, after having been in existence for almost a million years, lead to agrarian stage? How did the agrarian stage, after having been in existence for almost ten thousand years, lead to the industrial stage? We still do not have a satisfactory theory of how and why farming began. Can we say that the preceding stage (hunting and gathering) contained seeds for the stage that followed? or, did it just happen. We may never have satisfactory answers to the question of how and why the transitions from one stage to the other took place, but we know for sure that these transitions did take place. The transition from stage one to stage two is generally understood as the ~eolithic Revolution and that from stage two to stage three is known as the Industrial Revolution.

A survey of human history in terms of an evolution of human life from one stage to another can easily create two misunderstandings. One, this transition has proceeded along a straight evolutionary curve and has generally been unilinear and unidirectional. Two, the transition in human life and organization has somehow been from inferior to superior. Both these conclusions would be simplistic and misleading. Understanding human history in terms of progression was the dominant way in which many thinkers and philosophers from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards began looking at human history. However these categories of 'progress' are increasingly being questioned by new approaches. Moreover it is very difficult to construct satisfactory yardsticks with which to assess progress and superiority. Therefore all we can say is that the trajectory of human history has generally proceeded from simple and elementary societies to more and more complex ones. Complexity may be defined in terms of size and a comprehensive division of labour. However the terms 'simple' and 'complex' should be treated as descriptive and not prescriptive. From our account of the stages of human history we cannot and should not infer that the complex societies that came later were in any meaningful way superior to the simple societies of the earlier times. Later did not necessarily mean better.

**Check Your Progress Exercise 2.1**

**Note:**

- I. Use the space given for your answer.
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Q.1** What are the economic, political and social features of the world we live in?

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**Q.2** What are the main stages of human history and the principal activities in those stages?

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## **2.5 PRIMITIVE SOCIETY (HUNTING AND GATHERING SOCIETY)**

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The hunting and gathering stage was the longest. It may be said to have started around 1 one million years ago and continued till about ten thousand years ago. This stage is called so because hunting animals and gathering food constituted the primary activities. The early man is also called foraging man or the Paleolithic (meaning stone) man. This age has been called the Stone Age because the major tools employed by man for his activities were made of stone.

The Stone Age, through its entire stretch did not undergo any big and fundamental changes and was marked by continuity. The biggest change that occurred within the Stone Age was in man's capacity from a 'tool-using' animal to a 'tool-making' animal. Man could be distinguished from other species by his capacity for using tools. These tools, made of stone, were supplied by nature. Later man also learnt to make tools. Initially man made crude hand axe and scrappers. Soon he graduated to using wooden spears and sticks for throwing and digging. Finally knife blades, pointed stones, spears and darts, harpoons, fishhooks and needles, chisels and boring tools for engravings were also used. Needles were used for making animal skin into clothing. Other tools were used for making houses to live in. Thus, making of tools, use of fire, use of clothes for covering and the ability to build the houses constituted important milestones in human life during the stone stage.

Around the end of the Stone Age bow and arrow too were present in some parts. And in the final stage, man also learnt to exploit the food sources supplied by rivers, with the help of rafts and boats. Towards the end of the Stone Age, around ten thousand years ago, some parts of African continent witnessed population increase and also the beginnings of sedentary or settled form of life. Likewise in southwest Asia some groups began to live a type of life that resembled their peasant successors. They had their chief i. They lived in circular huts and they used to bury their dead beneath the floor. A life such as this might have formed the base for the development of cultivation and animal domestication, in other words the beginning of the next stage of human life.

The transition to the next stage did not however imply that hunting and gathering as a form of life came to an end. In fact some hunting and gathering groups can still be found in Africa Australia and Latin America. In India some specimen of hunting and

gathering groups can be found in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

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## **2.6 AGRARIAN SOCIETY**

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The transition from hunting-gathering man to the agricultural man is an important stage in the history of humankind and has been given the name of Neolithic Revolution. It was believed till about 50 years ago that agriculture and stock rearing was invented as a single event and in a single region of south-west Asia, from where it spread to Europe, Africa and other parts of Asia. We now know that food production began in several regions independent of each other, even though the timing of the arrival of agriculture varied a great deal from one area to another. The Neolithic Age began in South-west Asia around 12000 years ago. In Europe the first farming communities could be seen as far back as 9000 years ago.

The beginning of agriculture brought about a revolutionary transformation in human life. It stabilized human life. The hunting-gathering man was mobile, moving from one place to another in search of food. Now the food production required a settled life. Agriculture also enhanced man's capacity for food production. This meant that now some people could produce food for everybody unlike the earlier times when everybody had to be involved in the search for food. Now those people who were liberated from the need for food production could do other things. Thus a division of labour was created which was to have far reaching consequences in future. The earliest division of labour was between hunting man and gathering woman. In the agrarian age it became more complex. Along with a division of labour, the concept of surplus also came into being. The early man could not store his food and had to be constantly involved in the search for food. The agricultural man acquired the capacity for food storage that could be used in future. So during the beginning of a settled life, division of labour, beginning of surplus food storage were some of the features that were missing in the hunting-gathering stage and were characteristic of all agrarian societies. With the beginning of settled life the size of groups and communities also became much larger. With increased size came the diversity of agrarian societies.

There was enormous diversity of the agrarian societies in terms of size and internal attributes. Can we then provide a single basic definition that would apply to all agrarian societies? An agrarian society is based on (i) the capacity for food production and storage, and (ii) a relatively stable technology.

These two features virtually define the entire agrarian world. They can be seen operating in all agrarian societies. The first feature distinguishes the agrarian society from its predecessor: the hunter-gatherers can neither produce nor store. The second feature distinguishes it from its successor, the industrial society, which will be taken up later in this unit. In the agrarian society, other than the discovery of farming, not many technological breakthroughs occurred. Discoveries and innovations have not usually been sustained and continuous. This is one major difference between the agrarian age and the industrial age. In the agrarian age discoveries and innovations have come as rare occurrences. By contrast, under industrialism constant innovations become the norm. Industrial society is not based upon any single major discovery. It engages in generic and systematic investigation of nature and in the application of

findings for the purpose of increased output.

The agrarian societies are said to have been in existence for about ten thousand years. A remarkable feature of these societies is their continuity and internal similarity. Both these features become clear when we compare the agrarian world as a whole with the last three centuries that may be characterized as dominated by the industrial age. The last three hundred years have produced far more fundamental changes than the ten thousand years of the agrarian stage. However on the question of change, the agrarian societies can broadly be divided between those that had a State and those that did not. In other words not all agrarian societies were characterized by political centralization.

The early agrarian societies were small and the decision of labour (extremely essential for the existence of a state) was so elementary that it could be maintained without a centralized agency. However the agrarian societies became more developed and complex, the State had also come into being. The other major difference within the agrarian world is between societies that had access to written word (in other words a script) and those that did not. The former type may be called agro-literate societies. The written word distinguished them from the non-literate agrarian societies.

These two differences (existence of State and of literacy) act as crucial markers within the agrarian world that may otherwise be treated as reasonably uniform and homogenous. The tremendous cultural diversity that did exist within the agrarian world is very similar in essence though dissimilar in details. Similar features and forces can be seen operating in all agrarian societies.

Following are the implications of the two features, mentioned above (capacity for food production and storage, and a stable technology):

- i) Because there are no sustained innovations, food production and output can only be increased by cultivating more areas by more men. Hence agrarian society places tremendous value on offspring, preferably male offspring. They are useful for both production and warfare, the other important occupation in the advance agrarian societies.
- ii) The tendency to produce more men often takes the society to the brink, to the threshold point. At this point of brink people must die, either through famine or through war. Famines do not represent a crisis but a regular routine phenomenon. Because there is a limit on possible production, but not on population grown, agrarian societies soon reach a point at which their populations cannot be supported by food production. In such situations famines restore the population- production equilibrium. Agrarian societies are Malthusian (Malthus was a famous 18<sup>th</sup> century demographer who linked the trends in population to the available production limit). The capacity of population growth is constrained by production and vice-versa. As a result, even though agrarian society produces more people, population remains stable and does not increase very significantly through the centuries. It moves in a circle and never exceeds the threshold. There is a strong connection between population and production in the agrarian society. This connection breaks down

in the industrial society in which the population stabilizes but the production keeps growing.

- iii) The capacity for food storage allows for large human organizations and also a division of labour. Along with the food producers, the craftsmen, manufacturers and traders were also emerged. Along with the division of labour, a certain complexity and with complexity, came with hierarchy. We can actually say that in the agrarian age complexity and hierarchy go together. Hierarchy in the agrarian age means the presence of specialists. These specialists are of two types - specialists of coercion (in other words rulers) and specialists of legitimating who are men of ideas, specialists of rituals lending support to 'rule'.
- iv) Some form of coercion (forcing people to do something they do not want) and legitimating (convincing people that what they are being made to do is the best) is inherent in all human societies. In the agrarian world however these two emerge in an institutionalized form. A specialized ruling class (State, specialist in coercion) and a specialized clergy (Priest, Brahmin, Ulema, specialist in legitimating) emerge in the agrarian society as extremely powerful institutions. It is to these institutions, or to one of these, that the surplus produce goes. The producer has no incentive in producing more because it is likely to be taken away by either the State or the Church. The Church takes the surplus and affirms that in return, they would get salvation (i.e., freedom from the cycle of birth and re-birth which is believed to be the culmination of spiritual discipline). The State takes the surplus in return for a promise of providing protection.

On the crucial issue of wealth and power (both of which are in abundance in the agrarian world compared to its predecessor), the normal shift in emphasis is from power to wealth rather than the other way round. Wealth does not lead to power; power leads to wealth. The distribution of wealth is on the basis of power, not the other way round. There was a saying in Medieval Spain that warfare was a more effective route to wealth than trade. This point can be generalized about the entire agrarian world. Therefore, it is more important for an individual to acquire power than wealth.

- v) However the possibility of acquiring power is blocked by the presence of a fundamental division between the political, ritual and military elite on the one hand and the food producers on the other. The tasks in agrarian society are allotted through heredity. Any other method (a competitive examination) of allocating roles and responsibilities would upset the balance and the stability of the agrarian world. Agrarian world is stable and it values stability.

Before concluding this section, some important points can be added to our discussion so far:

- It is not mandatory for each society to pass through every stage. Societies can and do remain stuck in any one stage. It is possible to find a hunting gathering society in the midst of an agrarian one or an agrarian one in the industrial stage.

It is possible for old types of societies to survive and persist even as the new ones come into being.

- Division of labour, availability of surplus, and the uneven distribution of power play a great role in the internal constitution of any society.
- Our broad classification of human activities (production, coercion and cognition) has been crucially dependent upon two major developments both of which happened in the agrarian stage: political centralization (state formation) and the beginning of literacy. These two developments contained the key to the emergence of a whole range of human activities in the future.

### Check Your Progress Exercise 2.2

**Note:**

- I. Use the space given for your answer.
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Q.3** What were the types of tools used in the hunting and gathering stage?

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**Q.4** In what ways did the agrarian societies differ from the hunting-gathering ones?

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**Q.5** Why was there no significant increase in the population in the agrarian societies?

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## 2.7 THE BIG TRANSFORMATION

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The agrarian society, described above, was a closed system. All the changes that took place, or could take place, were quantitative, not qualitative. That is to say those changes were in degree, not in kind. Indeed it was difficult to imagine how, in a system like that, any basic, qualitative, fundamental, structural change could take place. In other words it was virtually impossible to believe till about three centuries ago, that the continuity of the agrarian world could break down and give way to an entirely different order. But now we know that the long 10000-year-old continuity of the agrarian world did break down and another transformation occurred in the human society. This was

the unique, unprecedented transformation from the agrarian society to the industrial one. The consequence: we live today in an industrial world.

Two questions arise. What is an industrial order? And how did it come about? Broadly speaking, an industrial order can be identified by three features:

- i) Building of large-scale units of production and manufacture and the application of technology to production process;
- ii) The utilization of large chunks of human population into the production process. Since the production process is increasingly centralized, it involves displacements of people from their natural habitat and their being herded together at new places;
- iii) Constant innovation and growth and the application of the new knowledge and discovery to the production process.

The three developments, mentioned above, occurred in the last three centuries. Let us see how it happened.

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## **2.8 BEGINNINGS OF THE INDUSTRIAL ORDER**

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Around the 18<sup>th</sup> century, certain important changes began to take place that were to eventually and cumulatively shake up the stability of the agrarian world and contribute to the making of the new industrial world. The changes that occurred were of relatively trivial nature but they produced the biggest transformation known to humankind. These changes were primarily in the productive sector and were related to one another. We may list them as following:

- i) The development of factory system
- ii) Revolution in weaving and spinning
- iii) James Watt's steam engine, and
- iv) Railway and Steam Shipping

### **2.8.1 The Factory System**

The term implies a system in which various resources (both human and other) are utilized together for increased output. Land, labour and capital may be understood as the three principal 'factors' that went into the factory system. This system was put to use in a big way in the textile sector, which was the first to undergo 'industrialization'. Under this arrangement workers were concentrated under one roof under the close control of the employers. The factory system also promoted a division of labour with different workers performing specialized tasks.

### **2.8.2 Industrialization of the Textile Sector**

At the most elementary level making of textile involves a combination of spinning and weaving and thus transforming raw cotton into cloth. It was this simple activity that witnessed the first mechanical revolution and a complete transformation from fully manual to semi-automatic to fully automatic enterprise. As in other cases it was not one big technological innovation but a series of them that brought about this transformation

from manual to automatic. It all started with John Kay's 'flying shuttle' (1737) that threw the weaving shuttle more quickly than could be done by hand. It was followed by James Hargreaves' 'spinning jenny' (1764-69) that mechanically reproduced the action of the hand-spinner. Then Richard Arkwright made the water frame in 1769 that mechanically produced superior quality of yarn using the flow of water as the energy. In 1785 came the power loom that applied mechanical power to weaving.

All these innovations led to superior yam being made much faster than before. Spinning and weaving thus got mechanized. This meant that the raw cotton (procured from India and America) was being transformed into cloth at an extremely rapid rate. The immediate result was a big gap between the demand and supply of raw cotton. The supply of raw cotton was not able to keep pace with its demand. The picking of cotton from the field and separating the seeds was still a manual activity and therefore slow. This problem too was solved in 1793 by the innovation of yet another device in America called 'cotton gin'. With the help of this device a man could pick three times more cotton than earlier. As a result the annual output from cotton crops in America increased manifold, from 1.5 million pounds in 1790 to 85 million pounds in 1810.

The developments in other fields followed the textile example. Not only was one invention quickly followed by another, but invention in one area (e.g. spinning) necessitated similar inventions in other areas (weaving, picking of cotton, growing of cotton). This created a certain chain of quick but fundamental changes, which continues even today.

### **2.8.3 James Watt's Steam Engine**

By 1800 the main inventions of the textile industry had been devised. The factory system too had been established. Water had been the main motive force. The discovery of the steam engine by James Watt replaced water with steam and thus hastened the industrial revolution. James Watt's discovery established the industrial pattern for the future. Watt's discovery got the necessary support from a British industrialist Mathew Boulton who provided the capital for the manufacture of the engine. By 1800, the firm of Boulton and Watt had built and sold more than 500 steam engines both in England and abroad. It was for the first time that mechanical power became independent of the movement of wind and water. It could now be used wherever needed. In later years the steam engine was to become the symbol of the Industrial Revolution.

### **2.8.4 Railway and Steam Shipping**

The steam had initially been used for pumping purposes in coal mines. Its application as a motive power (in railways and ships) was the next major development. Till then the transportation of raw materials to factories and of finished products to the markets was dependent upon roads and canals and animal energy was the only source of power available. Steam locomotive changed all that.

As invention proceeded and the industrial machinery became more complex, a need was felt for more technical knowledge. The new demands gave rise to a new professional group called the engineers (a specialist on the functioning of industrial

machinery). With time specialization occurred among engineers also. There were separate groups of mechanical engineers, mining engineers and so on. Engineers were not born as engineers. They had to be trained. Their education in science and technology assumed importance. Thus then opened up a whole network of universities and industrial laboratories. In this process the fundamental (or pure) sciences taught in the universities and the applied sciences practiced in the industrial laboratories got linked with each other and they fed into each other.

As the 19<sup>th</sup> century advanced further developments took place. Of particular importance was the development of new steel making methods in 1856. Many more activities like shoe making, flour milling and brewing were mechanized in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At the same time completely new industries were also born - electrical, photographic, food canning, gas lighting, rubber and petroleum.

Agriculture continued to be an important area of activity but it began to be done in new ways. Agriculture was mechanized. In other words agriculture too became an industry. All the principles of industry (putting together of various resources, complex investment pattern, application of new knowledge and technology to cultivation, creation of large-scale units of manufacture) were applied to agriculture. Thus agriculture was no longer characteristic of the agrarian age. It was an integral part of the industrial age.

The new changes were not confined only to the economic zone. Every area of human life came under the spell of industrialism. Indeed a new type of social order was born which was different from the agrarian society in fundamental respects. (new type of state system, big cities, working class movements, new classes etc.)

Let us recall some of the basic features of the industrial society:

- a) It was marked by the use of new type of raw material (iron and steel) and also new sources of energy (both as fuel and as motive power) - coal, steam engine, electricity, petroleum etc.
- b) It was based on the invention of new machines like spinning jenny and power loom that permitted increased production with less human energy.
- c) It was based on the new organization of work such as the factory system, which entailed increased division of labour and specialization of functions.
- d) Important developments in transportation and communication (steam locomotives, steamships, automobile, airplane, telegraph, and radio) provided the industrial revolution initial impetus.
- e) It was based on the increasing application of science and technology to industry.

It is important to remember that with the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the process of industrialism (also known as the Industrial Revolution) reached new heights. But what happened was the acceleration of the same process, not the beginning of a new process. It has argued that the first few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed more innovations than the whole of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. New advances were made in the fields of communication, medicines, warfare and information technology. The industrial revolution is a continuous revolution and is still going on in different and innovative



forms such as use of atomic energy, the rise of computer-based information and communication technology etc.

### Check Your Progress Exercise 2.3

**Note:**

- I. Use the space given for your answer.
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Q.6** What are the kinds of changes associated with the Industrial Revolution?

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**Q.7** Write a note on the industrialization of the textile sector?

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**Q.8** In what ways was the industrial age different from the two preceding ages?

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## 2.9 POST-INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

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The agrarian stage of human society had a long life. It existed for almost ten thousand years before giving way to the industrial stage. During this period a whole range of agrarian societies emerged. The industrial society, by comparison, has been with us only for the last three centuries. But even in this small period different types of industrial societies have appeared. This range is visible both in time and space, i.e., the nature of industrial society has changed dramatically from what it was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to what it became in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, particularly after the second world war. The model of the 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial society was characterized by misery, brutality, dislocation and alienation. This model of industrial society could generally be called the Mam-Dickens model (after the comments of philosopher Karl Marx and novelist Charles Dickens who wrote on the inhuman conditions prevalent in 19<sup>th</sup> century England). However the dominant understanding of the industrial society that emerged in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, particularly after the second world war, was that of prosperity and affluence. Likewise at a given time different models of a capitalist industrial society and socialist industrial society have been available to us.

It is important to recognize that we are discussing two different types of changes. First is the change from one stage to the other. In their long history, human societies have made a transition from one stage to the other, and these different stages can be identified by fundamentally different internal attributes. But it is equally important to recognize that considerable diversity has also prevailed within each stage. To put it simply, all industrial societies are different from all agrarian societies in very fundamental ways. But different types of industrial societies also vary from one another. The two types of differences (from one stage to the other and within a stage) are different from each other and should not be confused. It is in this context that we need to discuss some of the features of what is now being called a post-industrial society.

It has been argued by some scholars that since the 1970s a new type of society has emerged and begun to replace the industrial society. This is called the post-industrial society. Following are some of its features as different from the industrial society:

- Rise of new technologies in the sphere of information and communication have resulted in greater global integration.
- New patterns of consumption have emerged and there has been a shift from a production driven economy to a consumption driven economy.
- The dominant manufacturing sector has been replaced by a service sector. Just like land was the most important 'factor' in the agrarian stage and mass-manufacturing in the industrial stage; likewise the service sector may be treated as the most dominant one in the post-industrial society.
- Knowledge has become an extremely important component of the economic activity.
- The concentration of workers, managers and implements at one place, so characteristic of the industrial stage, has now been replaced by a decentralization of production and manufacturing. The new communication technologies enable people to work from their places. As a result there has been a greater flexibility in management and employment.

All these changes, operative especially in the advanced industrial societies of Europe and North America, have led various scholars to declare the arrival of a new kind of society representing a break from the earlier industrial society. Should we therefore start taking as a four-stage division of human society replacing the three-stage (hunting-gathering, agrarian, industrial) one? The answer to the question would depend on how we characterize the new changes mentioned above. Do these changes represent a transition from one stage to the other or merely differences within a stage? In other words, is the post-industrial society a new type of society altogether or merely a variant of industrial society? This is an extremely important question and there does not appear to be much of a consensus on it at this stage of our collective knowledge.

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## 2.10 LET US SUM UP

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We hope that, after going through this unit, you would have got a sense of the main stages of human history. The hunting-gathering stage lasted for nearly a million years and the agrarian age for around ten thousand years. The industrial age has been with us only for the last three centuries. We are now in the post-industrial stage. The arrival of one stage did not mean the total elimination of the previous stage. So, hunting-gathering groups survived in the agrarian age and some of them survive even today. Likewise agriculture as an activity has continued to be dominant and widespread even in the industrial age. But the arrival of a new stage has brought about profound and irreversible changes in society. None of these stages have been internally homogenous and considerable diversity has prevailed within each of the stages. There were various kinds of hunting-gathering societies. Likewise different types of agrarian societies flourished in the agrarian age. In modern times too there have been different variants of industrial societies. It is important to keep in mind the differences between the two stages as well as those with each stage. Three types of activities - production, coercion and cognition, have marked all the stages. In the earliest stage only production as an activity (in the form of food procurement) was dominant. The other two (coercion and cognition) made their presence only in the next stage. The emergence of a State representing political centralization marked the beginning of specialized coercion. Similarly the beginning of the written word heralded the arrival of the specialists in cognition. However it was only in the industrial stage that all the three activities reach unprecedented heights. The general trajectory of the human societies has been to move from simple to complex. In this transition, from simple to complex, the extent of the availability of surplus and the division of labour has played a crucial role. The hunting-gathering societies were very simple as they had virtually no surplus and a very elementary division of labour. The agrarian societies by contrast acquired both surplus and a division of labour and thus moved towards complexity. Along with complexity came hierarchy. However, in the industrial age, both - surplus and a division of labour - increased manifold, making the industrial society the most complex of all the three.

In this unit we have covered a large span of time of around one million years. However it was only in the last few centuries that the world, as we see it today, began to emerge. This process may be called the emergence of Modern World. The next Unit will be devoted to this theme.

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## 2.11 GLOSSARY

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- Clerisy** : The word clerisy means 'a group of learned people'.
- Cognition** : The process of the generation and codification of ideas in the society is referred to as cognition. Cognition as a major human activity may have started a long time ago but received a major impetus with the arrival of the written word. With the help of the written word, it became easier to store, codify and perpetuate ideas. We are still not very sure about the extent to which ideas play a role in the maintenance of a social order or in the transition from one given order

to the other. The point has been argued both ways by philosophers. Some have argued that the ideas make and change the world. Some others have held that ideas themselves are produced by the material conditions. Whatever be the truth, the point is incontestable that ideas constitute an important part of human history and also of any given social order.

**Coercion** : By coercion is implied a certain hierarchy and political centralization, in other words the existence of a State. After its arrival, the State has emerged as the most important institution of coercion. In the agrarian and industrial stages, the human societies have differed from each other in terms of the nature of the institutions of coercion.

**Division of Labour** : In its simplest sense, division of labour refers to different kinds of activities that are carried out by specific individuals or groups as a part of a stable organization or set-up. Consider the example of manufacture of shoes in a factory set-up. One could easily find a group of workers who make soles, another group of workers who make shoe-tops, and yet another group of workers who stick the soles with the shoe-tops. This doing of different tasks by groups of workers may be understood as division of labour. In families we find men and women performing different tasks. This is also an example of division of labour.

**Ulema** : Muslim scholars who specialize in different aspects of Islamic studies are referred to as ulema.

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## 2.12 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: ANSWER KEYS

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**Ans to Q.1** politically our world is divided into a number of nation-states that are very similar in their internal attributes. Economically our world is diverse, divided among societies that may be considered industrial, semi-industrial, agrarian, or societies in transition. Socially our world is both integrated and diverse at the same time.

**Ans to Q.2** See Section 2.4

**Ans to Q.3** See Section 2.5

**Ans to Q.4** With the capacity for food production and storage, the agrarian societies acquired surplus and also a division of labour. Both these features were missing in the hunting-gathering societies.

**Ans to Q.5** The absence of any major technological breakthrough during the agrarian stage put a ceiling on the maximum output available. At the same time there was no such ceiling on the creation of human population. The increase in human population without any

corresponding increase in the availability of food implied that the agrarian societies were never very far off from a famine like situation. As a result famines occurred very regularly wiping away the excess population. Therefore there was no significant increase in population during the agrarian stage.

**Ans to Q.6** The Industrial Revolution is generally associated with the factory system, mechanization of the textile industries, invention of steam and the beginning of railway and steam shipping.

**Ans to Q.7** See Sub-section 2.8.2

**Ans to Q.8** See Sections 2.7 and 2.8

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## **UNIT 3 EVOLUTION OF HUMAN SOCIETY AND RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY**

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### **Structure**

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Objectives
- 3.3 Evolution of Society
  - 3.3.1 Evolution Theory According to Herbert Spencer
  - 3.3.2 Development of Society According to August Comte
- 3.4 Society as a System of Relationship
  - 3.4.1 Definition of Society
  - 3.4.2 Society as a Web of Social Relationships
- 3.5 Individual and the Society
  - 3.5.1 Human Beings are Social by Nature
  - 3.5.2 Necessity Makes Human Beings Social
  - 3.5.3 Society Determines Personality
  - 3.5.4 Theories on the Relationship between Man and Society
- 3.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.7 Glossary
- 3.8 Check Your Progress: Answer Keys
- 3.9 References

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### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

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

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## 3.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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This chapter aims at creating a fair comprehension of the society and to give an orientation to the social perspective. The chapter will also deal with the close relationship that exists between individuals and society.

After completing this unit you should be able to know:

- gradual development of human society;
- society and its nature and meaning;
- social relationships and their nature;
- the relationship between individual and society;

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## 3.3 EVOLUTION OF HUMAN SOCIETY

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

### 3.3.1 Evolution Theory According to Herbert Spencer

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

As we know, the evolution theory says that simple organisms developed into complex organisms through a process that consumed hundreds of centuries. Similarly, the evolutionary approach explicates that society also passed through many stages before assuming the present complex state. Since the evolutionary theory of society was woven around the concept that society resembles organism, a mention of the Organismic theory is essential. Organismic theory conceives society as a biological system, a greater organism, alike in its structure and function, exhibiting the same kind of unit as the individual organism and subject to similar laws of development, maturation and decline. Society's cells are individual persons; its organs and systems are associations and institutions. Herbert Spencer said that society has its youth, its prime, its old age and death.

According to Spencer, the principles of evolution are: (a) that forces tend to persist; (b) that matter is indestructible; and (c) that everything moves along the lines of least resistance or greatest attraction, impelled by some source, matter, accompanied by a

concomitant dissipation of motion, tends to integrate. Spencer said, "Evolution is the integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion during which matter passes from an indefinite incoherent homogeneity to definite, coherent heterogeneity." For Spencer, society is also subject to a similar process of evolution that is changing from a state of 'incoherent homogeneity' to a state of 'coherent heterogeneity'. Evolution is, thus, a gradual growth or development from simple to complex existence.

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

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

### 3.3.2 Development of Society According to August Comte

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

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

Comte traced a direct relationship between the stages of human thinking and social



organization. In other words, Comte's contention is that each type of human thinking represents a particular type of social organization.

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

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

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

### **Characteristics of the Evolution of Society**

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

It is unambiguous that society, as it exists today, has come a long way by registering gradual but continuous changes and modifying itself. Change in any aspect of society was not introduced abruptly. All the same, social change has been incessant and the society is an ever-changing phenomenon, which grows, decays, renews itself and accommodates itself to changing conditions and undergoing vast modifications in the course of time.

### **Check Your Progress Exercise 3.1**

**Note:**

- I. Use the space given for your answer.
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Q.1** What do you understand by the evolution of society?

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**Q.2** According to Comte, the present society is in which stage of development.

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### **3.4 SOCIETY AS A SYSTEM OF RELATIONSHIP**

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

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

#### **3.4.1 Definition of Society**

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

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

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

- 1) **Functional approach:** Society is defined as a complex of groups in reciprocal relationship, interacting upon one another, enabling human organisms to carry on their life-activities and helping each person to fulfill his wishes and accomplish his interests in association with other members of the group. The approach takes social relationship as a tool for a certain end.
- 2) **Structural approach:** According to this approach, society is the total social

heritage of folkways, mores and institutions, of habits, sentiments and ideals. In other words, the entire society could be divided into systems of social relationships, which are closely related to one another.

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

Besides, physical proximity is not the sole parameter for the social relationship. By comparing the relationships of inanimate objects like sun and earth, fire and smoke and typewriter and desk we can establish that there is a distinguishable difference between the relationships of inanimate objects and human beings. The typewriter and the desk are in no intelligible sense aware of the presence of one another. Their relationship is not in any way determined by mutual awareness. Without this recognition there is no social relationship and society. Society exists only when individuals have psychical awareness of the presence of one another. This is why we call social relationship as 'reciprocal awareness'. To further clarify the meaning and the nature of social relationships it could be said that society exists only where social beings behave towards one another in ways determined by their recognition of one another. Any relations so determined, we may broadly call 'social'.

### **3.4.2 Society as a Web of Social Relationships**

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

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

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

All societies involve a certain level of association. Similarly, society involves more a state or quality of mind than a mere structure. The beings who constitute society must

realize their likeness and their interdependence. The relationships between individuals must be in accordance with the norms of the society and therefore, society is not just a collection of people but is the system of relationships that exists between the members of that group.

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

### **Characteristics of Society**

- 1) ***Society involves Likeness:*** Without likeness and the sense of likeness there could be no mutual recognition of "belonging together" and, therefore, no society. Society exists among those who resemble one another in some degree, in body and in mind and who are near enough or intelligent enough to appreciate the fact.
- 2) ***Society involves Difference:*** Though likeness serves as the basis, society also depends on differences. If people were all alike, their social relationships would be as limited as those of the biological organisms like ants and bees. Groups of ants and bees do not have reciprocity, as every member of is uniquely similar. In human society, different individuals complement one another and there is meaningful social interaction. In our society there is an indefinite interplay of likenesses and differences. The reciprocal relationship of differences is seen at every level of society. For example, family rests on the biological difference between sexes. There are also natural differences of aptitude, capacity and of interest in the society.
- 3) ***Difference Subordinate to Likeness:*** Society needs likeness and differences or similarities and dissimilarities. While difference is necessary to society, difference by itself does not create society. Difference is subordinate to likeness or likeness gets precedence while difference or dissimilarity works as the basis for the reciprocity among the members of the society. As MacIver observes, "Primary likeness and secondary difference create the greatest of all social institutions - the division of labour." The division of labour which works on the principle of difference is basically cooperation before it is division. Or, this is a deliberate attempt to utilize the diverse abilities of individuals for a common objective.
- 4) ***Inter-dependence in the Society:*** In addition to likeness, interdependence based on cooperation is yet another essential element to constitute the society. No society can exist without the interdependence of its units. Members of society should be inter-dependent and should cooperate with each other for the smooth running of the society. Individuals cannot live a secluded life in society as society is a necessity for them. Therefore, there has to be interdependence among the members of society.
- 5) ***Multiplicity of Relationships:*** Society consists of numerous social relationships, which may be hundreds or thousands of types. There are as many

as fifteen relationships based on age, sex and generation in a family alone. Outside the family there is no limit to the number of possible social relationships. Social relationships are as varied as society is complex. The relations of voter to candidate, mother to child, employee to employer, friend to friend, teacher to student, student to student etc are some of the social relationships to name a few. These social relationships can be categorized into "economic", "political", "personal", "impersonal", "friendly", "antagonistic" and so on.

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

### **Check Your Progress Exercise 3.2**

**Note:**

- I. Use the space given for your answer.
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Q.3** Society is not a group of people; it is ..... that exists between the individuals of the group.

**Q.4** Society exists only when individuals have.....awareness of the presence of one another.

**Q.5** Explain how human relationships are social.

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## **3.5 INDIVIDUAL AND THE SOCIETY**

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

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

individual, to the group and to the social system. The following sections will help us answer the aforesaid fundamental questions.

### **3.5.1 Human Beings are Social by Nature**

Man is social animal by nature and he cannot afford to live alone. No human being is known to have developed normally in isolation. Individuals learn social habits and acquire social qualities by living in the presence of others. There are cases, to show that the normal development of an individual's personality is hindered whenever the individual is secluded from society. MacIver cited a case in which two Hindu children who were discovered in a wolf-den in 1920 and who had their abilities seriously retarded. The younger one aged less than two years died immediately after retrieval from the wolf-den. The other child, aged eight, could walk only on all fours, possessed no language except wolf-like growls. She was shy of human beings and felt scared in the presence of human beings. It took strenuous, sympathetic and extensive training for making her learn some social habits. Human nature develops in man only when he lives in society, only when he shares common life with his fellow beings. Human traits that are present in the child could only be developed in the company of human contacts. Society fulfills a vital need in every individual's constitution and the social aspect of human life is a necessity.

### **3.5.2 Necessity Makes Human Beings Social**

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

### **3.5.3 Society Determines Personality**

It is not just for the survival and fulfillment of needs that man lives in society, but he lives in society for his all-around mental and intellectual development. Society preserves our culture and transmits it to succeeding generations. It liberates and limits our potentialities as individuals and moulds our attitudes, beliefs, morals and ideals.

The mind of a man who would live outside a society would be the mind of an infant even at the age of adulthood. The cultural heritage, which an individual imbibes by living as the member of the society, directs the personality and thus determines the mental equipment of that individual.

### **3.5.4 Theories on the Relationship between Man and Society**

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

#### **1) *Social Contract Theory:***

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

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

#### **2) *The Organismic Theory of Society:***

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

In the human society the units are not fixed in their respective positions while in the case of an organism its parts are fixed to the body. Yet another criticism is that the units of a society are dispersed persons and are not physically contiguous like cells of an individual or organism.

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

**Check Your Progress Exercise 3.3**

**Note:**

- I. Use the space given for your answer.
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Q.6** Explain Organismic theory on the relationship between individual and society.

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**3.6 LET US SUM UP**

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

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**3.7 GLOSSARY**

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



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### 3.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: ANSWER KEYS

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**Ans to Q.1** Evolution is a gradual growth or development from simple to complex form of existence. It is the movement from simple societies to various levels of compound societies.

**Ans to Q.2** The Positive or Scientific stage

**Ans to Q.3** System of relationships

**Ans to Q.4** Psychical

**Ans to Q.5** Society consists of mutual interactions and mutual interrelations of the individuals and it is a structure formed by social relationships. Relationships between individuals of a society are 'social' since they behave toward one another in ways determined by their recognition of one another. There is a reciprocal awareness among the members of society and, therefore, we can call human relationships as social relationships.

**Ans to Q.6** This theory describes society as a biological system, a greater organism, alike in its structure and function, with the same kind of unit as the biological organism and subject to similar laws of development, maturation and decline. Organismic theory considers individuals as the cells of society while associations and institutions are the organs and systems of society. Society has its infancy, maturation, prime and decline as organisms have.

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### 3.9 REFERENCES

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## UNIT 4 CULTURE AND PERSONALITY

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### Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Objectives
- 4.3 Meaning and Determinants of Culture and Personality
- 4.4 Culture and Personality School of Thought
  - 4.4.1 Impact of Personality on Culture
  - 4.4.2 Impact of Culture on Personality Formation
  - 4.4.3 Impact of Culture on Personality and Vice-versa
- 4.5 Criticisms of Culture and Personality Theory
- 4.6 Sociological Theories of Self: The Development of the Self
  - 4.6.1 Charles Horton Cooley: *The Looking-Glass Self*
  - 4.6.2 George Herbert Mead: *The Self*
- 4.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.8 Glossary
- 4.9 References

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### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

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The culture personality school of thought began principally in the United States in the 1930s. The above school explained relationships between childrearing customs and human behaviors in different societies. The culture personality theory combined elements of psychology, anthropology, and sociology, but principally the theory involved the application of psychoanalytic principles to ethnographic data. This unit deals with different sociological writings surrounding this theme.

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### 4.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain how personality play significant role in the formation of cultural pattern;
- understand the impact of culture on personality formation; and
- know the impact of both culture and personality on each other in the formation of cultural group.
- Discuss the sociological theories of self

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### 4.3 MEANING AND DETERMINANTS OF CULTURE AND PERSONALITY

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The term culture and personality has been used in several senses, both popularly and psychologically. Before going into discussion of theory let us first discuss the meaning and determinants of culture and personality. Culture is a term practically used in everyday life. Anthropological meaning of culture is different from its popular meaning. Defining culture has never been as simple for anthropologists. It is no wonder in anthropology; culture has over 300 definitions of this concept. For the convenience of learners culture herein is used to mean any knowledge that a person/individual has acquired as a member of his/her society. Such knowledge is important because it subsequently influences the shaping of his/her personality. It was widely believed that early enculturation in particular has very important bearing on personality development of the child as he/she grows into adulthood. The conceptualization of culture is by no means a simple matter. One possible way to think about culture is that “culture is to society what memory is to individuals” (Kluckhohn 1954). It includes what has worked in the experience of a society, so that it was worth transmitting to future generations.

The term personality is derived from the Latin word *persona* meaning a mask or character. Personality is a patterned body of habits, traits, attitudes and ideas of an individual as these are organized externally into roles and statuses and as they relate internally to motivation, goals and various aspects of selfhood. It is a term used in routine life as the distinctive way a person thinks, feels and behaves. But in anthropology, the term is used in a different sense. Funder (1997) defined personality as “an individual’s characteristic patterns of thought, emotion, and behaviour, together with the psychological mechanisms—hidden or not-behind those patterns”. Whereas Ralph Linton (1945) defines personality as the individual’s mental qualities the sum total of his rational faculties, perceptions, ideas, habits and conditional emotional responses. He states that there is a close relation between personality and culture of the society to which the individual belongs. The personality of every individual within the society develops and functions in constant association with its culture. Personality affects culture and culture affects personality. In short he says personality embraces the total organized aggregate of psychological processes and status pertaining to the individual.

There are four main factors or determinants, which affect the personality formation. They are environment, heredity, culture and peculiar experiences. The influence of geographical or physical environment plays very important role to determine the variation in personality construction of members of a group. According to physical environment humans comes to form ideas and attitudes where he/she lives in. A close relationship exists between environment, culture and personality. To the amount that the environment determines cultural development and to the extent that culture in turn determines personality. In the 18th century Montesquieu claimed that the bravery of those blessed by a cold climate enables them to maintain their liberties. Great heat weakens courage while cold causes certain vigor of body and mind. The people those who live in mountain as well as deserts areas are usually bold, hard and powerful. Nevertheless physical conditions are more permissive and limiting factors than

causative factors. People who live in mountain as well as in deserts areas set the limits within which the personality develops. For example Andaman tribes have different cultural personality than Fiji tribes because of the fact that the above two cultural groups develop in two different geographical environments.

Heredity is another factor which determines the traits of human personality. Some of the similarities in individual/group personality are said to be due to his common heredity. Some set of biological needs and capacities are inherited by human group in every society. These common biological needs and capacities explain some of the similarities in personality of the particular group. For example humankind tends to resemble his/her parents in physical appearance and intelligence. However, human heredity does not mould human personality alone and independently. There is assumption that functioning of human life in human beings there are genes for normal personality traits as well as there are genes for other aspects. Heredity is one of determinants that provide the materials out of which experience will mould the personality. Experience determines the way these materials will be used. Because of his/her heredity an individual may be energetic but whether he is active on his own belief or on behalf of others is a matter of his training.

Culture plays a valuable role in personality development. In many countries all over the world, the influence of culture on personality formation can be seen in different cultural groups. According to some anthropologists and sociologists personality is the subjective aspect of culture. They look at personality and culture as two sides of same coin. Spiro had perceived that the development of personality and the acquisition of culture are not different processes but one and the same learning process. He considered Personality as an individual aspect of culture while culture is a collective aspect of personality. In every culture particular type of personality developed. Certain cultural environment sets its participant members off from other human beings operating under different cultural environments. According to Frank culture is a coercive influence dominating the individual and molding his personality by virtue of the ideas, conceptions and beliefs which had brought to bear on him through communal life. The culture furnishes the raw material of out of which the individual makes his life. The social institutions of the particular society affect the personality of the group members. In every society from the moment of birth, the child is treated in such ways which shape his personality. Every culture applies a series of general influences upon the individuals who grow up under it. It can be summed up that culture greatly moulds personality of individual or group. The ideas and behaviour of the individuals are largely the results of cultural background. However, it should not be concluded that culture is a massive dye that shapes all that come under it with an identical pattern. Personality traits differ within culture. Personality is not totally determined by culture even though no personality escapes its influence. It is only one determinant among others.

Last but not the least personality is also determined by another factor, namely situational experiences. In this there are two types of experiences one those that stem from continuous association with one's group, second those that arise suddenly and are not likely to recur. In type one people who interact with the child daily has a major influence on his personality. For example the personality of parents does more to affect

a child's personality. The overall process of socialization; ranging from social rituals to table manners to getting along with others are consciously inculcated in the child by the parents. The child learns everything from his parents' language to behaviour. In the type situational experiences the relationship of the child with the mother, father and siblings affect profoundly the organisation of his drives and emotions, the deeper and subconscious aspects of his personality. In the second type group influence is relatively greater in early childhood. Child's personality moulds by group interaction. Personality may also be inferred by social situations. According to social researchers an individual may show honesty in one situation and not in another. The same is true for other personality traits also. Personality traits tend to be specific responses to particular situations rather than general behaviour patterns. It is a dynamic unity with a creative potential.

The above various determinant factors are responsible for personality formation, development and maintenance. Further than the combined influence of these factors however the relative contribution of each factor to the development of personality varies with the characteristic or personality process involved and perhaps with the individual concerned. However, there is no way yet known to measure the effect of each determinant factor or to state how the factors combine to produce a given result. For example, the behaviour of juvenile delinquent is affected by his heredity and by his family. But how much is contributed by each factor cannot be measured in exact terms.

The term personality, character and temperament have been used synonymously by many scholars in various disciplines. Many disciplines like biology, psychology, sociology and anthropology have taken keen interest in the study of personality. It is because of the interdisciplinary approach the term personality has been used to denote various meanings. A holistic study of personality can be done only by multidisciplinary approach like biologists deal with physiological characteristics, sociologists can attempt to know with the influence of social environment, Psychologists with mental attributes, whereas anthropologists are concerned with the relationship between culture and personality.

Psychological and anthropological aspect is the final aspect to the study of culture and personality. In this particular aspect we can include cultural background, interest, sentiment, attitudes, values, temperament, impulse, aptitude, and motivation of an individual.

**Activity 4.1**

Try to assess different cultures and their personalities in your area from anthropological perspective.

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#### 4.4 CULTURE AND PERSONALITY SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

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The culture personality school of thought began principally in the United States in the 1930s. The above school explained relationships between childrearing customs and human behaviours in different societies. The culture personality theory combined elements of psychology, anthropology, and sociology, but principally theory involved the application of psychoanalytic principles to ethnographic data. The school emphasized the cultural moulding of the personality and focused on the development of the individual. Culture-and-personality theorists argued that personality types were created in socialization, and they placed particular emphasis on child-rearing practices such as feeding, weaning, and toilet training. The pioneers of this school of thought were students of Franz Boas and Kroeber. They include American anthropologists like Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, Linton, Kardiner and Cora Dubois.

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) was one of the first psychologists to break the barrier between anthropology and psychology. His best known anthropological work is *Totem and Taboo*. In his book, Freud provides an insightful description to taboos and their origination; yet his theory on the origin of totems is somewhat speculative. His main work on the origin of totemism, incest taboo, exogamy and the Oedipus complex, is well known, for he argued the existence of a primal horde, the leader of which was the oldest male, who assumed exclusive sexual rights over all females in the group. Frustrated, the sons murdered and ate their father; but overcome by guilt afterwards, the sons decided to obey commands and abstain from sexual intercourse with their mothers and sisters. Selecting a totem animal as a symbolic father substitute, they declared that it must be protected during the year and consumed only on ritual occasions. These ritual totem meals thus reenacted their original deed and reinforced their self-imposed incest prohibitions. Freud thus, concluded that all cultures originate from this sacrificial meal.

Best known for his psychoanalysis, Freud saw the trauma of childhood reflected in the neuroses of adults. He established the Oedipus complex as a universal story in which the son, jealous of his father's attentions on his mother, entertains hostility towards the father and develops an erotic attachment to his mother. This desire is felt among all men; yet is buried by repression and then resurfaces in the actions of adulthood. Freud's psychoanalysis was an attempt to uncover the repressed childhood trauma through a series of word associations, dream analysis, and free flow talking.

His Oedipus complex analysis (in which a son hates his father for his strict authority and is jealous of his sexual prerogatives over the mother, yet loves him for strength and protection) among all societies, was also highly criticized and Malinowski, who tested this hypothesis among the matrilineal Trobriand society (1922), rejected Freud's views on the universality of the Oedipus complex. Franz Boas (1858-1942), though he was not interested in psychology, reacted to Freud's analysis and said that his method was one sided and could do nothing to advance understanding of cultural development. Kroeber (1876-1960) rejected Freud's conjectures by the phrase "bewilderingly fertile imagination". At the same time Kroeber, realized the importance of the psychological dimension of culture, which he felt should not be ignored. This Freudian hypothesis

influenced early anthropological research on culture and personality giving birth to what is known as Psychological Anthropology.

The primary aim of the culture and personality school of thought, is to examine the interrelationships between culture and personality. The attempts of this school are to study culture as it is embodied in the character of its members, rather than seeking to analyze culture as it is manifested in material items or social institutions.

#### **4.4.1 Impact of Personality on Culture**

Ruth Benedict (1887-1948) a student of Franz Boas documented in her PhD dissertation the rapidly deteriorating Native American societies, providing the impetus to pursue culture and personality studies. Through her work on the patterning of culture at an individual level, Benedict opened anthropology into a much larger discussion between the disciplines of anthropology and psychology. Idea of “pattern” was already in use before her, but credit goes to her for providing a methodological model for studying human culture in terms of “pattern” rather than social contents. She was of the opinion that life crisis rites are only one of the several ways in which patterns of culture emerge and are reflected in the behavior of members of a group. All the basic institutions that are a part of the culture tend to mirror the overall pattern for that culture. This point was successfully highlighted in her book *Patterns of Culture* (1934) which is considered to be a classic work in anthropology.

Ruth Benedict consideration of cultures as integrated wholes where each is configured to be different from all other cultures; is perhaps one of the most significant. She also stressed that a culture is organized around a basic theme, and that all of the various elements of that culture fit together. A culture according to Benedict is analogous to an individual in that it is more or less a consistent pattern of thought and action. Hence, she says any analysis of culture requires a psychological approach. According to her when traits and complexes become related to each other in functional roles, a cultural pattern is formed. Many cultural patterns integrate themselves into a functional whole and form a special design of a whole culture. This special design of whole culture is called configuration of culture. The integration of culture is on the basis of tendency seen in all aspects of culture. This tendency is called by Benedict “special genius” that brings about integration. She says there are two types of geniuses found in human society i.e. Apollonian and Dionysian. In Apollonian pattern, one will see the existence of peace, discipline and kindness. The Dionysian culture is characterized by a great deal of changes and aggressiveness. These two geniuses mold the personality of the members of their group. The Apollonian personality compels members of the group to behave in one form and the Dionysian personality in the other. This will lead to the formation of special cultural characteristics for the group concerned, thus personality influencing the culture.

Applying this approach to cross-cultural studies she did her fieldwork among the Zuni, Cochiti and Pima tribes of America. Benedict looked at different societies and described them in terms of their basic personality configurations. Pointing out how these personality types fit in with the overall culture. In her monograph *Patterns of Culture* (1934) she discussed, through literature, contrastive personality types between

Zuni of the Southwest America and Kwakiutl of the Northeast Coast of North America. The primary occupations of the two communities are different; the Zuni are foragers in a resource-rich environment whereas the Kwakiutl are agriculturists. She describes Zunis as very cooperative, never excessive in any aspect of their life. The typical Zuni was a person who sought to mingle with the group, and who did not wish to stand out as a superior among the other members of the tribe. Again she went on to point out how this basic personality type was reinforced in other elements of Zuni culture. Child training patterns were designed to suppress individuality. Initiation ceremonies were characterized by a lack of ordeal, and the youths were initiated in a group setting. Marriage was relatively casual. Leadership among the Zuni was ignored whenever possible, and was accepted only with great reluctance. Priests were low key individuals and special positions of power were delegated on a group basis, so that there was a medicine society rather than a single powerful medicine man. Among them death was an occasion for little mourning.

While comparing her study she found cultural configuration of Kwakiutl much different from that of the Zuni. According to cultural pattern Kwakiutl were characterized by a frenzied outlook, excess being the rule rather than the exception. They were ambitious and striving, and individuality was emphasized in every aspect of their life. The ideal man among the community was the one who always attempted to prove his superiority. Child rearing practices reinforced this pattern, emphasizing the achievement of the individual over cooperation with the group. In the initiation ceremonies, a boy was expected go out by himself and experience a personal relationship with the supernatural. Marriage entailed tremendous celebration Leadership among this community was characterized by a constant struggle for power, which must be sought by any possible means. Religious positions included that of the shaman, a priest who wielded enormous personal power. Even the death ritual among the Kwakiutl reinforced this overall configuration. A death was a major event, an occasion for elaborate mourning and was not accepted calmly and peacefully as among the Zuni.

She considered the Zuni to be non-competitive, non-aggressive, and gentle etc., whereas the Kwakiutl to be characterized by strife, factionalism, painful ceremonies, etc. On the basis of above characteristics in her view the two tribal communities are represented by to contrastive psychological attributes on the basis of which she describe Zuni as Apollonian and Kwakiutl as, Dionysian after the Greek Gods of wine and light (i.e. wine as Dionysian and light as Apollonian) respectively. These categories were derived from the work of Friedrich Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* (1956), a study on the origins of Greek drama. Benedict rejected Freud's notions of cultural evolution as unscientific and ethnocentric, and remained loyal to Wilhel Dilthy, who believed that the objective of psychology was to understand the inner mind and who proposed existence of different worldviews, which were much like the categories she used to describe the above personality types. She says it is a pattern that describes the typical member of the society, and to which all members conform to some extent.

During the Second World War the need was felt to understand the national characteristics of Japan and some of the American anthropologists helped in by



analyzing it through the Japanese films, and books on the history and culture of Japan. They concluded that the strict toilet training among the Japanese made them aggressive fighter in warfare. Ruth Benedict made a significant contribution in developing and then applying the “content analysis method” to study the culture at a distance. This content analysis method was developed by Benedict, when anthropologist could not freely travel to do fieldwork among the indigenous societies during World War II. The U.S. office of War information had asked her to undertake research on occupied or enemy nation. She selected Japan as her first target and wrote the famous work, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946) depicting the culture of that nation in a holistic manner, although she never visited Japan. She gathered material for her monograph from historical documents, literature readings of Japanese life and interviews of Japanese immigrants. After going through all these data properly, she analyzed and arrived at many significant conclusions about the Japanese society. To study culture at a distance it was first of its kind in the anthropological research. She describes Japanese culture has two methods of child rearing. In Japan during childhood an individual is given full love, freedom, care and cooperation. But when he or she reaches the stage of adolescence, a strict discipline is imposed. He or she is asked to behave in manner which will be pleasant and appealing to elders. She or he as adolescence is not expected to break cultural traditions. In fact the individual has to work according to the instructions provided by the family traditions. This paradox in personality traits of Japanese appears due to different cultural traditions of rearing in two periods, i.e. childhood and adolescence. She compares childrearing practices in Japan to the national flower of Japan Chrysanthemum and the Sword. Chrysanthemum symbolizes the socialization of a child during childhood. At the time of childhood, the Japanese parents take every care of their children to make them blossom like a chrysanthemum flower. When the children are fully blossomed like adolescents, they have to face a tough life. Parents leave them to earn something and lead independent life. As a result of this, children become aggressive and violent. A sword always hangs on their neck, because they do not seek cooperation from the elders.

During the late forties the school flourished with some of the best known studies on national character like Ruth Benedict’s *Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946) on the Japanese national character and Geoffrey Gorer and John Rickman’s *The People of Great Russia: A Psychological Study* (1949). The interest in understanding national character though faded after 1950s. Because in their studies the above authors tried, following the Neo-Freudian approach, to link early childrearing practices with adult personality.

#### **4.4.2 Impact of Culture on Personality Formation**

Margaret Mead (1901-1978) another student of Franz Boas, also investigated the relationship between culture and personality. Her monograph *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1949) established her as one of the leading lady anthropologists of the day. Starting as a configurationalist, Mead also wrote about national character. Hired in World War II by the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), Mead researched the national character of England and compared it to that found within the United

States. She determined that in each society the norms for interaction between the sexes differed, leading to many misunderstandings between the two otherwise similar cultures.

In her well-known book *Coming of Age in Samoa*, based on nine months intensive fieldwork, compares Samoan with American adolescent girls. She hypothesized that the stresses related to puberty in girls were culturally and not biologically determined, as her study showed such stresses were mainly associated with American adolescents whereas the Samoan adolescents had relatively an easy transition into sexual maturation.

While studying Samoa she found that the whole cultural mood in Samoa was much less emotional than that in America. For example, the facts of birth, death and sex were not hidden from Samoan children. Premarital sex was considered natural and did not demand strong emotional involvements and adolescents were not confronted with the necessity of selecting from a variety of often conflicting standards of ethics and values. Adolescence was, thus, not marked by storm and stress in Samoa, but was simply a part of the gradual development of life. The major point of the study was, in Mead's own words (1939) "the documentation, over and over, of the fact that human nature is not rigid and unyielding".

In her study on Samoan, Margaret Mead claims that children are taught early in their life that if they behave well or are quiet and obedient they can have their good way of life. Arrogance, flippancy and courage are not the qualities emphasized either for boy or girl. The children are expected to get up early, be obedient and cheerful, play with children of their own sex, etc. and the adults are expected to be industrious, skillful, loyal to their relatives, wise, peaceful, serene, gentle, generous, altruistic, etc.

During fieldwork she observed that, little girls move about together and have antagonistic and avoidance relationship with boys. On the other hand, when they grow up boys and girls begin to interact during parties and fishing expeditions. As long as a boy and a girl are not committing incest any amorous activities between them, including slipping into the bush together, are considered natural and adults pay little attention to such relationships. As a result, the transition from adolescence to adulthood is smooth and stress-free unlike such transition among the Americans. Hence she concluded that cultural conditioning, not biological changes associated with adolescence, makes it stressful. Criticisms notwithstanding, subsequent studies have lent support to her basic theory that childhood upbringing influences formation of adult personality.

Mead's finding on Samoa was very much supported by Edward Sapir, who realized that the anthropological studies of personality represented entirely a new approach to the understanding of culture. He also argued that the application of psychoanalytic methods, in the study of culture, would add a new dimension to ethnological field work and analysis, he was so much interested in this psycho-analytic method. After studying the Samoan society, Mead studied the personality formation of the children of New Guinea with special reference to Manus tribe, which was published as *Growing up in New Guinea* (1930). This study is concerned with the kind of enculturation processes

by which Manus of New Guinea brought their children up from infancy to childhood and childhood to adulthood. In fact, the book deals with educative role of culture in development of personality of child through different ages of life such as infancy, childhood and adulthood etc.

The third important book of Mead is entitled *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* (1935). In this particular study Mead deals with the impact of culture on personality formation. In this study like Benedict, Mead compared three different cultures, namely Arapesh, Mundugumor and Tschambuli, to test the range of variation of cultural patterns. The study was to understand why societies living in same area differ in their character, personality and temperament and why within the same society, temperaments of male and female differ. From her study she found that in Arapesh, cultural environments are such that both males and females have submissive temperament. In their culture, such personality traits are the matter of great praise and all members in this society follow these cultural traits with great enthusiasm. Among Mundugumor society, both males and females are aggressive. In this society, the personality traits of its members are reflected by such characters as suspiciousness, competition, quarrelsomeness, ego, jealousy, and unkindness. The cultural environment of Mundugumor is such that every member is found to be in struggle, conflict, and competition with each other. These cultural practices have direct bearing upon the personality formation of members of Mundugumor. The cultural traditions of Tschambuli are such that males acquire submissive temperament and females possess aggressive character. It is a matrilineal society dominated by female authority. The submissive character among males and aggressive character among females of their culture are reflected in the personality traits of Tschambuli (Upadhyay and Pandey, 1993).

From the above discussion of these three societies Mead reflected that differences in personality types of male and female in the same society or in different societies are due to cultural processes, which differ from one cultural group to another or from one society to another. She concludes by saying that it is a culture influence which moulds the character, temperament and personality of members of the group.

Mead did not confine herself to the study of character, temperament and personality of different cultural groups. She opined that the study of national character can be done by the culture and personality approach. Culture has been developed by human beings and is successively learned by each generation. The learned behaviour is reflected in the character of group of nation. Thus, the study of national character has historical depth of traditions, continuity and change as various dimensions. In her study *Keep Your Powder Dry: An Anthropologist Looks at America* (1942), she deals with the national character of America. She did not find difference in the personality of a baby in America as compared to Japan and Russia. Thus, the early personality was similar. They gradually start differing as the growth follows and family education and school education become effective.

### Activity 4.2

What influence has your cultural background had on you? Explain in your own words

#### 4.4.3 Impact of Culture on Personality and Vice-versa

The other early anthropologists who had made significant contribution to this field are Ralph Linton (1893-1953), Abram Kardiner (1891-1981), and Cora Du Bois (1903-1991). The three authors regard culture and personality as interdependent and complementary to each other. They tried to correlate the type of cultural patterns with the type of individual personalities obtained in that society. They firmly believed that as a consequence of continuous contact with a particular type of cultural pattern, similar types of personalities emerge. Linton was a co-founder of the basic personality structure theory with Kardiner. He sought to establish a basic personality for each culture. After studying the cultural behaviour of different societies Ralph Linton (1945) noted three types of culture viz;

- 1) real culture (actual behaviour)
- 2) Ideal culture (Philosophical and traditional culture)
- 3) Cultural construct (what is written on cultural elements etc.)

Real culture is the sum total of behaviour of the members of the society, which are learned and shared in particular situations. A real culture pattern represents a limited range of behaviour within which the response of the members of a society to a particular situation will normally be form. Thus various individuals can behave differently but still in accordance with a real culture pattern.

Ideal culture pattern is formed by philosophical traditions. In this, some traits of culture are regarded as ideals.

Linton stated that there is a difference between the way of life of people and what we study and write about. Both are different dimensions of culture. The former is reality and the latter our understanding of the same. If the former is called culture the latter can be called culture construct. It is an abstraction from the reality which is the actual human behaviour.

While studying different aspects of culture and personality, he suggested some more concepts viz., basic personality, status personality, social inventor etc. regarding basic culture he argued that in a society all the individuals undergo a similar type of socialization, custom, traditions etc., and therefore, individuals acquire a common set of habits, which may be called a basic personality of the society. He suggested that in a society there are certain individuals, who are granted some special privileges, which lead to form a status personality. Considering social inventor, he argued that in a society some individuals do not follow the old traditional rules and customs of the society, but they try to imitate some other norms, behaviour or mode of living or make certain new discoveries, which are laid down on the society in course of time, and he called such individuals as social inventors. He also discussed (1936) about different types of role, played by an individual in the society. The term role, according to Linton refers to the

rules for behaviour appropriate to a given status or social position. This classical definition of role, given by Linton, has been useful in functional analysis within a synchronic frame work. However, he prescribed some criteria to the characteristics as person needs to become eligible for a particular social role. He identified two kinds of status, vis., ascribed and achieved status. According to him ascribed roles usually come by birth. For instance roles based on age, sex, kinship, and caste etc., are ascribed status. Whereas he says some efforts must be made to qualify for an achieved status. For example occupational roles, especially leadership, doctor, engineer, lawyer etc are achieved status.

Abram Kardiner (1891-1981) a student of Sigmund Freud by profession was a psychoanalyst. He along with Ralph Linton argued that while culture and personality were similarly integrated, a specific causal relationship existed between them.

In response to the configuration list approach Kardinar, along with Linton developed the concept “basic personality type” in his book, *Psychological Frontiers of Society* (1945). The theory basic personality type is a collection of fundamental personality traits shared by normal members of a society acquired by adapting to a culture. The above theory was formulated after reading Freud’s *The Future of an Illusion* (1928/1961) in which he argues that children’s early life experiences determine their later religious life. Similar to Freud, Kardiner understood that the foundations of personality development were laid in early stage of childhood. Further Kardiner argued that since basic childrearing procedures are common in a society they resulted in some common personality traits among members of a society. He said that the basic personality exists in the context of particular cultural institutions or patterned ways of doing things in a society. Such social institutions are of primary and secondary types. Primary cultural institutions include kinship, childrearing, sexuality and subsistence, which are widely shared by societies. The shared personality traits across the societies are what constitute the basic personality structure. The secondary cultural institutions, on the other hand, include religion, rituals, folkways, norms etc. Between primary and secondary institutions, he poses the basic personality structure. According to him, childhood plays significant role in the formation of basic personality structure. Thus, the basic personality type expresses itself in the group’s ideologies, in emotional and cognitive orientation to life and death. He compared two communities the Tanala, who were horticulturists with the Betsileo, who were intensive cultivators of wet paddy. According to him, the emphasis on secondary institutions like magic and spirit possession among the latter tribe came from the anxiety that demands of irrigated agriculture produced in their basic personality structure. From his study he concluded that diversity in personality types in a culture increased with increased social and political complexity.

Following the Basic Personality Construct of Kardiner, Cora Du Bois also formulated a similar construct which she named ‘Modal Personality’ involving a more statistical concept. Here, the basic personality is expressed in the most frequent type of patterned individual behaviour observed in a society. Du Bois (1903- ) was heavily influenced by the work of Abram Kardiner and Ralph Linton. Her experience as an ethnographer and psychologist provided a valuable link in the chain of thought of the culture and

personality school. Du Bois modified Kardiner and Linton's notion of basic personality structure with her modal personality theory. She assumed that a certain personality structure occurs most frequently within a society, but that it is not necessarily common to all members of that society. Modal personality defined as the personality typical of a culturally bounded population, as indicated by the central tendency of a defined frequency distribution.

To develop the concept of modal personality Kardiner gathered data through psychological tests, which include projective tests Rorschach, or "ink-blot" test, and the TAT (or Thematic Apperception Test). TAT consists of pictures that the respondents are asked to explain or describe. The above tests combined with observation of frequency of certain behaviours, collection of life histories and dreams, and analysis of oral literature.

Incidentally, Kardiner did not have the kind of data he needed to prove his theory. To overcome this handicap, Cora Du Bois went to Alor Island in the Dutch East Indies where she collected variety of ethnographic and psychological data. When she returned in 1939 she along with Kardiner analyzed the data and arrived at the same conclusions about basic characteristics of Alorese personality. On the basis of this work she proposed 'modal personality' by which she meant the statistically most common personality type. This approach allowed interplay between culture and personality, and provided for variation in personality that exists in any society. This was an improvement upon Kardiner's 'basic personality theory' because of its ability to explain for the variation in personality types within a given culture.

She published the findings of her research on Alor in the year (1945) under the title *The People of Alora: A Social Psychological Study of East Indian Island*. For her research purpose, she spent almost eighteen months on the island of Alor, in eastern Indonesia. Her experiments were of three kinds:

- 1) She collected information on child-rearing;
- 2) She collected eight biographies, each with dream material; and
- 3) She administered a broad range of projective tests –the Rorschach test to thirty-seven subjects, a word-association test to thirty-six subjects, and a drawing test to fifty-five children.

Du Bois broke new ground when she asked specialists in various fields to assess and interpret her projective materials independently. These authorities were given no background briefing on Alorese culture or attitudes; neither were they permitted to see Du Bois' general ethnographies notes or interpretations. Abraham Kardiner was given the life histories, Emil Oberholzer the Rorschachs and Trude Schmidt Waehner the children's drawings. Working with only these materials, each prepared an evaluation. The effectiveness of the test procedure employed by Du Bois, and her success in eliminating her own emotional or cultural biases, were confirmed by the work of these independent authorities. To a remarkable degree, their findings concurred with hers.

A rather unfavourable modal personality for the Alorese emerged from this many-sided investigation. Alorese of both sexes are described by Du Bois and her colleagues as

suspicious and antagonistic, prone to violent and emotional outbursts, often of a jealous nature. They tend to be uninterested in the world around them, slovenly in workmanship, and lacking an interest in goals. Kardiner drew attention to the absence of idealized parental figures in the life stories. Oberholzer noted the lack of capacity for sustained creative effort, indicated by his reading of the Rorschach scores. Schmidt-Waehner identified a lack of imagination and a strong sense of loneliness in the children's drawings.

Turning to the possible causative influences, Du Bois and her co-researchers focused on the experiences of the Alorese during infancy and early childhood, up to the age of six or so. At the root of much of Alorese personality development, they suggested, is the division of labour in that society. Women are the major food suppliers, working daily in the family gardens, while men occupy themselves with commercial affairs, usually the trading of pigs, gongs and kettledrums. Within about two weeks after giving birth, the mother returns to her outdoor work, leaving the infant with the father, a grandparent, or an older sibling. She deprives the newborn child of the comfort of a maternal presence and of breast-feeding for most of the day. The infant thus experiences oral frustration and resultant anxiety. At the same time, the baby suffers bewildering switches in attention, from loving and petting to neglect and bad-tempered rejection. Thus, maternal neglect is viewed as being largely responsible for the Alorese personality.

#### **Activity 4.3**

Using the different aspects of culture, list as many specific examples as you can how different aspects of culture influence personality development and maintenance.

After 1950s Culture and personality research disseminated among others, by a comparison of several societies' quality of data is improved in the school of thought. For example, one such coordinated research project on child-rearing practices conducted by six teams in different parts of the world like northern India, Mexico, Okinawa, the Philippines, New England, and East Africa. In all the parts the research teams used common field guide and research techniques. They studied about 50 to 100 families randomly in each culture, observing as well as interviewing them about nurturing, self-reliance, responsibility, achievement orientation, dominance, obedience, aggression, sociability, etc. and ranked the societies on the basis of psychological tones of child rearing, which were then linked with certain cultural traits like presence or absence of warfare (Whiting 1963).

In (1965) Walter Goldschmidt conducted a research project to understand cultural, psychological, and ecological variation among four African groups, vis., the Hehe, Kamba, Pokot, and Sebei. Among the four communities occupation was different, some herded, some cultivated, and others did both. On the other hand Robert Edgerton, the researcher, gathered psychological data from eight different communities with one pastoral and one agricultural for each. He drew a sample of at least 30 adults from each sex and community and interviewed 505 persons. In order to evaluate the personality differences among the communities, he analyzed responses to questions, inkblot plates

and colour slides. It was thus based on statistical data with objective parameters unlike the earlier (pre-1950s) culture and personality researches based mostly on impressions.

The outcome of the above project is as follows. Kambas had male dominance, fear of poverty and restrained emotions; Hehe were aggressive, formal, mistrusting, and secretive; and other personality traits marked Pokot and Sebei. The latter two groups valued both sons and daughters and prophets; the former two valued just sons, land, and wealth. Economic backgrounds were also found to have important influence on personality: agriculturists consulted sorcerers, took group decisions, valued hard work, were hostile and suspicious, and were able to control their emotions and impulses whereas the pastoralists were individualistic, did not value hard work, were direct, open and realistic.

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#### **4.5 CRITICISMS OF CULTURE AND PERSONALITY THEORY**

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Despite criticisms of their work from various quarters studies of Benedict and Mead are best known and widely read, particularly in introductory courses in Anthropology. The following are the major criticism against the culture and personality school. Both Benedict and Mead assumed culture as given and determining personality but neither of them demonstrated how it happened. They completely disregarded historical analysis. Because Benedict believed that each society had a wide range of cultural options to choose from she did not explain why a society chooses one and not the others. Benedict has been criticized on her studies because of her strong belief that cultures have logical constancy. She has been criticized for saying that Pueblo in her study they did take alcohol during her fieldwork and they still do. She has been criticized for her statement like ignoring aspects of cooperation among Kwakiutl and strife, suicide and alcoholism among the Zuni cultures. Applying individual personality attributes to characterize whole cultures was also considered to be risky, as was later found from national character studies. Derek Freeman strongly criticized whose findings are completely contradictory to those of Meads. In her Samoan study she found the girls carefree about sexual experimentation whereas Freeman found a strict virginity complex among them. During their studies Mead noticed a free male-female relationship, while he found male-female hostility. The differences occur in their studies because their fieldwork was conducted in different Samoan villages at the time-gap of 15 years.

Prior to Freeman, Marvin Harris has criticized Mead for being too generalized about the emotions of Samoan girls. In her defense she emphasized on the significance of providing clarification rather than demonstration of facts particularly about intangible and psychological aspects of human behaviour.

Morris Opler criticized this configurationist approach stating that there are not only two bases of cultural integration but many. Thus, this approach is very narrow.

Even in small societies Kardiner's basic personality structure could not explain the variation in personality traits for this reason he has been criticized. Later on the weakness of the theory was taken care of by Du Bois' in modal personality theory.



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## 4.6 SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES OF SELF: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SELF

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One set of explanations, and the most sociological of those we discuss, looks at how the self, or one's identity, self-concept, and self-image, develops. These explanations stress that we learn how to interact by first interacting with others and that we do so by using this interaction to gain an idea of who we are and what they expect of us.

### 4.6.1 Charles Horton Cooley: *The Looking-Glass Self*

Among the first to advance this view was Charles Horton Cooley (1864–1929), who said that by interacting with other people we gain an impression of how they perceive us. In effect, we “see” ourselves when we interact with other people, as if we are looking in a mirror when we are with them. Cooley (1902) developed his famous concept of the looking-glass self to summarize this process. Cooley said we first imagine how we appear to others and then imagine how they think of us and, more specifically, whether they are evaluating us positively or negatively. We then use the perceptions to develop judgments and feelings about ourselves, such as pride or embarrassment.

Sometimes errors occur in this complex process, as we may misperceive how others regard us and develop misguided judgments of our behavior and feelings. For example, you may have been in a situation where someone laughed at what you said, and you thought they were mocking you, when in fact they just thought you were being funny. Although you should have interpreted their laughter positively, you interpreted it negatively and probably felt stupid or embarrassed.



### **Sociology: Understanding and Changing the Social World**

Charles Horton Cooley wrote that we gain an impression of ourselves by interacting

with other people. By doing so, we “see” ourselves as if we are looking in a mirror, when we are with them. Cooley developed his famous concept of the looking-glass self to summarize this process.

Whether errors occur or not, the process Cooley described is especially critical during childhood and adolescence, when our self is still in a state of flux. Imagine how much better children on a sports team feel after being cheered for making a great play or how children in the school band feel after a standing ovation at the end of the band's performance. If they feel better about themselves, they may do that much better next time. For better or worse, the reverse is also true. If children do poorly on the sports field or in a school performance and the applause they hoped for does not occur, they may feel dejected and worse about themselves and from frustration or anxiety perform worse the next time around.

Yet it is also true that the looking-glass-self process affects us throughout our lives. By the time we get out of late adolescence and into our early adult years, we have very much developed our conception of our self, yet this development is never complete. As young, middle-aged, or older adults, we continue to react to our perceptions of how others view us, and these perceptions influence our conception of our self, even if this influence is often less than was true in our younger years. Whether our social interaction is with friends, relatives, coworkers, supervisors, or even strangers, our self continues to change.

#### **4.6.2 George Herbert Mead: *The Self***

Another scholar who discussed the development of the self was George Herbert Mead (1863–1931), a founder of the field of symbolic interactionism discussed in “Sociology and the Sociological Perspective”. Mead's (1934) main emphasis was on children's playing, which he saw as central to their understanding of how people should interact. When they play, Mead said, children take the role of the other. This means they pretend to be other people in their play and in so doing learn what these other people expect of them. For example, when children play house and pretend to be their parents, they treat their dolls the way they think their parents treat them. In so doing, they get a better idea of how they are expected to behave. Another way of saying this is that they internalize the expectations other people have of them.

Younger children, said Mead, take the role of significant others, or the people, most typically parents and siblings, who have the most contact with them. Older children take on the roles of other people and learn society's expectations as a whole. In so doing, they internalize the expectations of what Mead called the generalized other, or society itself.

This whole process, Mead wrote, involves several stages. In the imitation stage, infants can only imitate behavior without really understanding its purposes. If their parents rub their own bellies and laugh, 1-year-olds may do likewise. After they reach the age of 3, they are in the play stage. Here most of their play is by themselves or with only one or two other children, and much of it involves pretending to be other people: their parents, teachers, superheroes, television characters, and so forth. In this stage they

begin taking the role of the other. Once they reach age 6 or 7, or roughly the time school begins, the games stage begins, and children start playing in team sports and games. The many players in these games perform many kinds of roles, and they must all learn to anticipate the actions of other members of their team. In so doing, they learn what is expected of the roles all team members are supposed to play and by extension begin to understand the roles society wants us to play; or to use Mead's term, the expectations of the generalized others.

Mead felt that the self has two parts, the “I” and the “Me”. The “I” is the active, spontaneous part of the self, while the “Me” is the more passive part of the self-stemming from the internalized expectations of the larger society. These two parts are not at odds, he thought, but instead complement each other and thus enhance the individual's contributions to society that needs creativity; but it also needs at least some minimum of conformity. The development of both these parts of the self is important not only for the individual but also for the society to which the individual belongs.

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#### **4.7 LET US SUM UP**

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The relation between culture and personality has been viewed as interdependent and interactive. Personality is made up of the characteristic patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that make a person unique. In addition to this, personality remains fairly consistent throughout life. Every society has a culture. Through the process of socialization (or enculturation), the culture of the society is internalized by the members of the society. The individual from her/his childhood onward learns the values, beliefs, norms, and the social and cultural practices of the society. In this process, culture moulds the personality of its members. Kardiner and Linton are of the view that culture frames the ‘basic personality types’ shared by most of the members of the society. At the same time, culture is man-made and culture keeps changing. It is the members of the society who brings change into the culture. Culture always provides space for creativity and in the personalities of the members such characteristics and capabilities are nurtured. Also, in a culture there exist some conflicts and tensions which find reflections in the personality of its members. These characteristics also bring changes in culture through the agency of people. Through these, people bring changes in their cultures. Again, the continuities of the culture are also due to the personalities that the culture shapes. People maintain the culture they have learnt.

Culture and Personality, sometimes also known as Psychological Anthropology, investigates the role of culture in forming personality in an “Eco cultural framework,” and considers problems of individual adjustments to demands of culture.

The theory was influenced by and Neo-Freudian psychology, which emphasized the primacy of infantile and early childhood experience in shaping the personality. Following the development of this school, many anthropologists attempted to study the national characters (representative personality types) across cultures. In so doing, anthropologists have employed the psychological concepts such as conditioned stimuli and responses, drives, rewards, punishments, conflicts, dreams, ego systems, id impulses, attitudes, values, cognitive orientations, ideas, etc.

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## 4.8 GLOSSARY

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- Culture:** a group's shared practices, values, and beliefs
- Generalized others:** the organized and generalized attitude of a social group
- Looking-Glass Self:** people's self-understanding is constructed, in part, by their perception of how others view them
- Patterns of Culture:** *Patterns of Culture* (1934), Benedict's major contribution to anthropology, compares Zuni, Dobu, and Kwakiutl cultures in order to demonstrate how small a portion of the possible range of human behaviour is incorporated into any one culture; she argues that it is the "personality," the particular complex of traits and attitudes, of a culture that defines the individuals within it as successes, misfits, or outcasts.
- Personality:** all qualities and attributes of an individual. The sum total of an individual including all his facilities, traits, behaviour patterns and other characteristics, are 'unique to the individual.

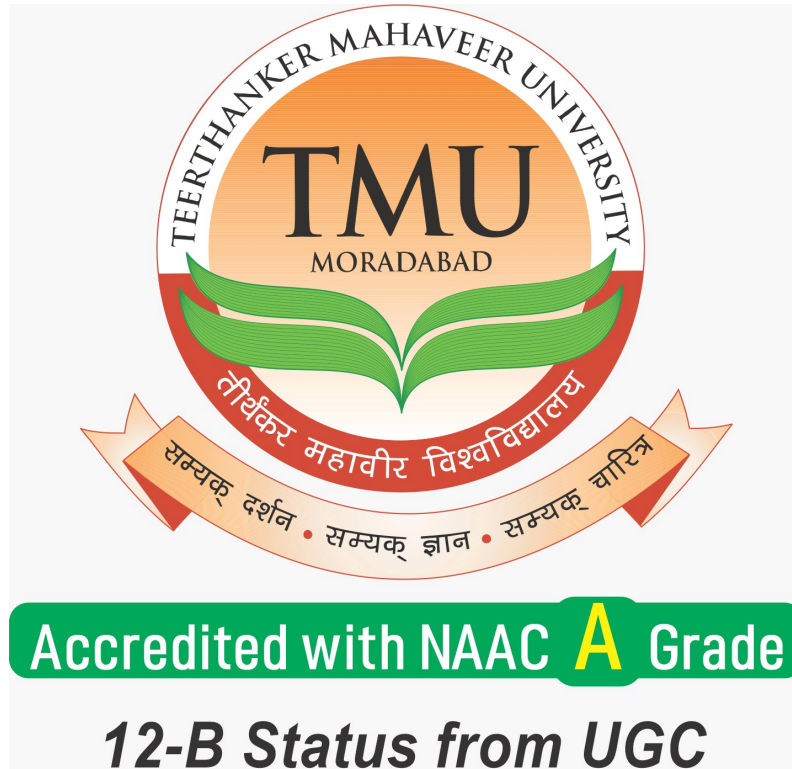
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## **BLOCK-2**

### **SOCIALIZATION AND SOCIAL CONTROL**

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**UNIT 1 MEANING, DEFINITION, TYPES AND STAGES OF SOCIALIZATION PROCESS**

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**UNIT 2 AGENCIES OF SOCIALIZATION**

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**UNIT 3 THEORIES OF SOCIALIZATION**

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**UNIT 4 MEANING, DEFINITION AND IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL CONTROL**

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**UNIT 5 TYPES AND AGENCIES OF SOCIAL CONTROL**

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# **UNIT 1 MEANING, DEFINITION, TYPES AND STAGES OF SOCIALIZATION PROCESS**

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## **STRUCTURE**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Objectives
- 1.3 Socialization: Meaning and Definitions
  - 1.3.1 Shared Meanings and Values
  - 1.3.2 Education and Socialization
- 1.4 Aim and Objectives of Socialization
- 1.5 Socialization: Norms and Values
  - 1.5.1 Transmission of Knowledge
  - 1.5.2 Conformity
- 1.6 Types of Socialization
  - 1.6.1 Conscious and Unconscious Socialization
  - 1.6.2 Primary and Secondary Socialization
  - 1.6.3 Child and Adult socialization
  - 1.6.4 Re-Socialization
  - 1.6.5 Anticipatory Socialization
- 1.7 Stages of Socialization Process
- 1.8 Importance of Socialization
- 1.9 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.10 Glossary
- 1.11 Check Your Progress: Answer Keys
- 1.12 Model Questions
- 1.13 References

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## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

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In this unit we shall discuss various aspects of socialization. It begins with the process and concept of socialization and discusses its aims and functions. Among the important aspects of this unit is a discussion on types and stages of socialization. This includes conscious and unconscious socialization and socialization into role playing, anticipatory socialization and re-socialization. This unit, thereby, provides an in-depth view of the nature of socialization.

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## 1.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- understand the concept of socialization
- discuss the Importance of socialization in society
- analyze various types of socialization
- explain the different stages of socialization.

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## 1.3 SOCIALIZATION: MEANING AND DEFINITION

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By now, we know that for the maintenance of social life, it is important that people know about the rules and regulations. Living in a society, we see how other people behaving in various circumstances and hear from them as to how to behave in different circumstances. Also, when we behave we are told and reminded of how to behave. In this way, we are trained about the rules, regulations, and practices of the society. The rules, norms, values, practices etc. of the society become internalized in the members of the society. This process is called socialization. Socialization is, thus, a process whereby the individuals learn to conform to the norms of the group. It is a continuous process of social learning.

*W.F. Ogburn* defines socialization as “the process by which individual learns to conform to the norms of the group.”

*Horton and Hunt* state that, “Socialization is a process, whereby, one internalizes the norms of groups so that a distinct ‘self’ emerges, unique to this individual.”

Every individual is born and brought up in different situations and have their individual history. We, therefore, find that each individual has passed through different combinations of the socialization process even within the same society. In a family, we find that the siblings are different in certain ways in their social personality. They may have been to different schools and educational institutions, had different friends and met different people who influenced them in the formation of their social nature or personality. But, despite these individual differences, the members generally learn the basic common norms, values and practices which enable them to behave with each other in ways that make possible the functioning of the society. Socialization is a kind of learning that contributes to one’s ability to perform social roles. It is desirable and desired learning. It is a continuous process that begins with birth and ends with death. In this process, we acquire new roles and drop old ones.

### 1.3.1 Shared Meanings and Values

The socialization of the young means that they learn to appreciate the shared meanings and values of the culture at large or take them and that as guides to direct behaviour patterns in their own life. As the young child grows, he or she learns to utilize role-learning so as to internalize what to expect from other people and how to produce for them what is expected of children. A child learns to recognize and to



respond to the shared meanings and expectations from others only through the process of socialization.

The process of socialization begins at birth. It is a continuous process because social learning never ends. However, childhood is the most important stage in the process of socialization during which a child internalizes or learns most of the values, beliefs, norms, attitudes and behaviour patterns of its family. The parents can be viewed as the socializing agents and the child as the socialized. "Parents are usually the most potent socializing force working on the individual in the early stages of childhood. Both consciously and unconsciously they push the child in certain directions disposing him to learn in a particular way." (White, G. 1977:1) It is viewed by sociologists as a continuous and dynamic process that continues throughout life and demands re-socialization (discussed in 8-6) at different stages of one's life.

Thus, from the point of view of society, socialization trains a child to become a member of a society by transmitting its norms, values and beliefs. It also transforms the biological organism into a self, with a sense of identity, capable of disciplining and ordering behaviour endowed with ideals, values and ambitions. However, socialization regulates behaviour, it is also an indispensable condition for individuality and self-awareness (Broom and Selznick; 1955: 43).

### **Activity 1.1**

Do you think a boy and a girl are socialized in the same way in your family/kin group? If not, then why? Write an essay on "Gender Difference and Socialization in My Family" in about 500 words. Share your ideas and essay with other students and Academic Counselor at your study center.

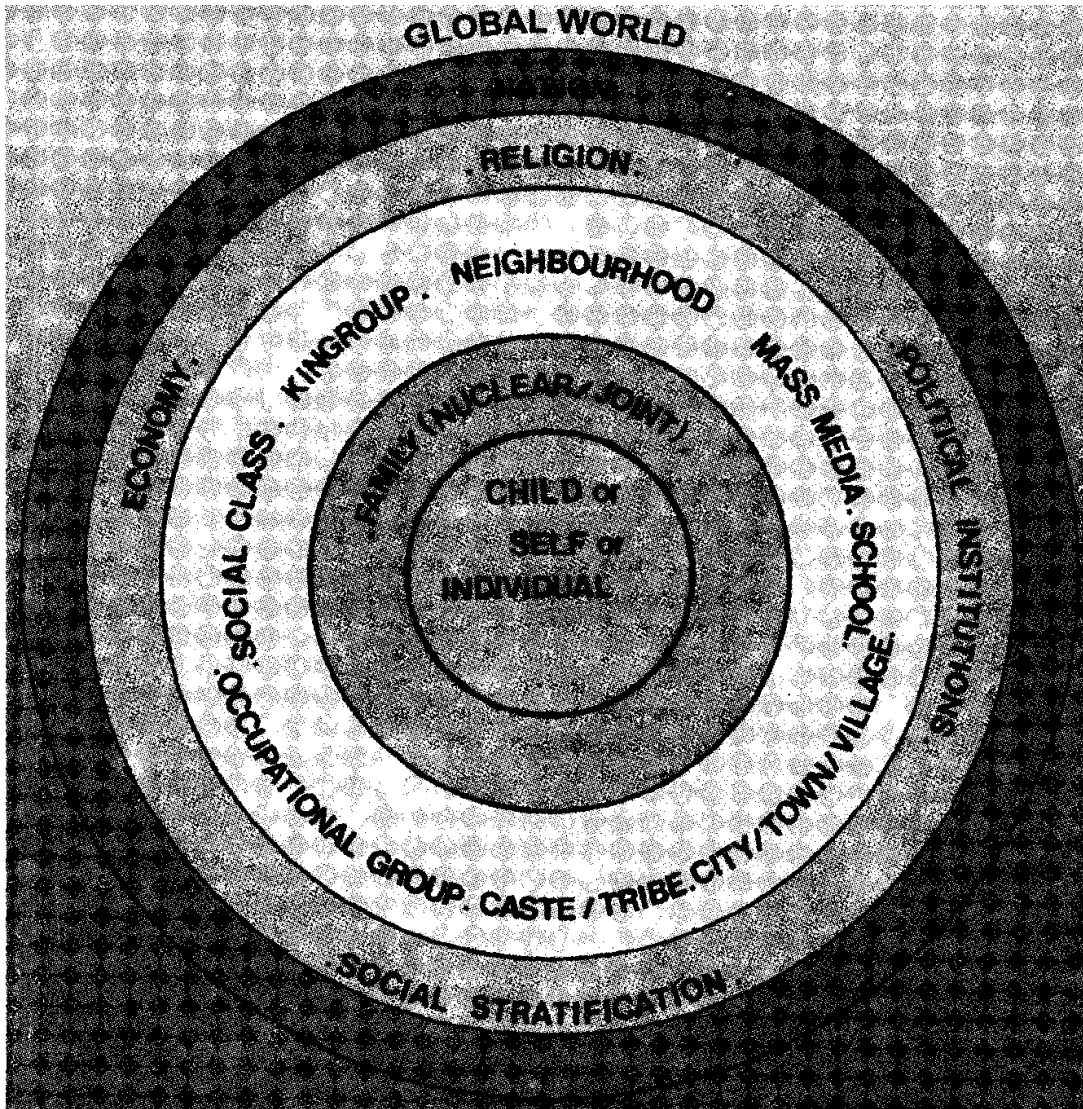
### **1.3.2 Education and Socialization**

In some societies, especially-in tribal societies, the education and socialization of the young - takes place without extensive formal educational institutions. However, education as a process of learning is universal and takes place everywhere whether one lives in a city, village, and jungle or in a desert. The universality of learning however does not mean that all learning is socialization just as all education is not socialization.

We may also mention that all learning is not socialization since some of what one learns may not be relevant or necessary for participation in given social roles. One could give the example of, learning to smoke cigarette, cigar, etc. which may be irrelevant to that norms of participation in the given social roles among certain social groups. However, the process by which individuals acquire these values and norms (these are also referred to as culture) is in many ways similar in all societies. They may differ from society to society and according to certain factors within specific societies.

A child, in the first instance, is a member of a family. But he or she is also a member of a larger kin-group (Biradri, Khandan etc.) consisting of brothers, sisters and other

relatives of the parents. The family into which he or she is born may be a nuclear family or an extended family (for the difference see Unit 5 of this course). It is also a member of a larger society. Membership of these groups and institutions imposes certain behavioural norms and values on each member. Thus, we are members of various groups simultaneously. For instance, we are a member of family, a biradri, a khandan, or a kunba, or a society, of a school or college all at the same time. Corresponding to these memberships there are roles that are performed, e.g., that of a son, daughter, grand child or a student. These are multiple roles which are performed simultaneously. The process of learning the norms, attitudes, values or behavioural patterns of these groups begins early in life and continues throughout one's life.



**Nature of Socialization**

**Check Your Progress Exercise 1.1**

**Note:**

- I. Use the space below for your answer.
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Q.1** Explain in three lines what is meant by socialization.

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#### **1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF SOCIALISATION**

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The main objective of Socialization is the development of self and the formation of personality. The concept of ‘self’ refers to the individual as subject (as the source of the action and self-reflection), whereas the term ‘personality’ refers to the individual as object (the object of external evaluation). Thus, Socialization is the process through which an individual is socialized and turned into an effective member of the society or a social being. The following are the main objectives of socialization:

- It inculcates basic disciplines ranging from toilet habits to the method of science.
- It helps an individual in developing the expertise and capacities needed to be a member of the society.
- It trains one social role (responsibilities) and their supporting attitudes.
- It aspires individuals and satisfies their needs.
- It helps in the transmission of culture from generation to generation.
- It develops a sense of identity and the capacity for independent thought and action, for example learning of language.
- It develops conscience, which is one important characteristic product of this process.

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#### **1.5 SOCIALISATION: NORMS AND VALUES**

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The norms and values may differ within a society in different families belonging to different castes, regions or social classes or religious groups according to whether one lives in a village or in a city or one belongs to a tribe and whether one is a boy or girl. These social groups can be viewed as socializing agencies. Their role confirms that the variation in norms and values takes place according to some of these affiliations mentioned above. For example, emphasis on cleanliness may vary according to social class. Also the language that one speaks depends on the region one belongs to. A child is not born knowing a particular language but learns it after birth. Again, some people do not eat meat altogether or abstain only from beef or pork according to the religious groups they belong to. Thus the same human infant is capable of growing into different kinds of adults. The adult personality formed in one society will be different from that of an adult in another society: he or she may be unfit for participation in many others. For example, a person who does not eat meat, smoke or drink alcohol may look odd in a family where all these are permitted. Is socialization a one way process in which the child merely receives from the parents passively without being actively involved in it? There are different views on it. However, in this unit, our position is that it is a two-way process involving mutuality of interaction. True, the young child is not as active as the adult member; it is never a passive

receiver.

What we have emphasized so far is that the aim of the socialization process is to help the child learn to conform to the societal norms, values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviour patterns. Here when we refer to societal expectation, it means that there are various levels of expectation. When the individual is born, the first societal experience is through the family but as the child grows up in the modern contemporary societies, his/her experiences expand. It becomes a member of a number of agencies. The school is the second agency of which children become members. Later on they will also become members of the religious groups to which their parents belong. They will also be members of the social classes to which their families belong. They will also become members of the occupational groups. The specific aim of socialization is to help the child to internalize these norms and become an active member of the society.

A child is integrated into the society in the manner discussed above. Therefore, socialization is the process of social control to strengthen group life and also to foster the development of the individual. It teaches or trains the individual to conform to the expectations of the social group or groups. Thus, conformity to the group norms and behaviour is basic to the process of socialization through which society exerts social control on the individual members.

### **1.5.1 Transmission of Knowledge**

According to Emile Durkheim, the categories of thought in the mind of individuals develop during the course of socialization. Socialization also transmits knowledge from one generation to the next. Social solidarity requires conformity to norms, rules and values as prescribed by the society. When groups assemble and reinforce the feelings of solidarity e.g., wedding, or religious festivals, mourning etc., these occasions help express the solidarity of the family and the kih group. On the other hand, the Republic Day and the Independence Day are occasions to express the solidarity of the nation. The social customs, rituals and social ceremonies and occasions which bring members of a group together are called socialization practices. Through these practices, knowledge about norms values and behaviour pattern is transmitted among members of human social groups.

The individual, through socialization, helps maintain the social order. Thus socialization brings about social control by enabling the individual to know what to think and what not to think, what to do and what not to do. Here, apart from the sense of group solidarity, the individual has the fear of disapproval, punishment etc. which the society metes out for various acts of deviance from the normal course of conduct.

### **1.5.2 Conformity**

While socialization produces a degree of conformity to social norms behaviour in every society, yet some individuals may still not conform. In other words, socialization may not be able to command complete conformity from all members of the society. Many factors may encourage conflict. There may be conflicts between the

aims and functions of the socializing agents and of the socialized. We have already mentioned that an individual is socialized by many agencies - the family, the school, playmates, peer group, occupational group, and in the modern society, also by the written word (i.e. books, magazines) and by the mass media (television, radio, cinema). If they emphasize different values, the individual's conformity to the values of a group or groups will be reduced. For example, students may be encouraged to be exposed to mass-media. However, if mass-media teaches fundamentalism and extreme conservatism, the conformity of students to liberal values is likely to be reduced.

The cases of non-conformity are referred to as those of deviance from the norms of the group. The values of the children from the poor families will be at variance with those of the school. These children are referred to as deviants and in extreme cases as juvenile delinquents.

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## 1.6 TYPES OF SOCIALIZATION

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A human infant is born in a social group. And soon after birth it becomes a member of the social group and occupies the social position of a son or a daughter or of a grandson or a grand-daughter. Thus the role refers to the social position one occupies by virtue of one's position in a particular social group, and it entails rights as well as obligations.



Various Roles of a Socialized

An individual has to play different roles, the role of a son or a daughter, the role of a grandson or a grand-daughter in the due course of his/her life. In other words, a person occupies different social positions which are interrelated. The term role-set is used to refer to the complex of roles occupied or performed by a person at one time

(see Unit 25). The implication of this is that a child learns to behave in the manner that is expected of it by different socializing agents. For instance, a child's behaviour with a parent has to be different from that with the sister, or friends or neighbors or classmates. These roles need not follow one after the other but may be performed simultaneously; other roles may be added or deleted. The list however is not exhaustive.

Similarly the behaviour with one's grandmother has to be different from that with one's own mother. The child learns to perceive and internalize these subtleties as part of growing up. As one learns a role well, one is able to interact with others, playing other roles and to engage in role-interaction over time. This is what is called role and role socialization.

Thus, role is the behaviour pattern based on norms. However, it is invested with specific meaning e.g., the role of a boy/girl in a particular society is part of the culture of that society.

How does one learn a role? Initially, a child merely observes the roles of parents and other members of the family and re-enacts them. Gradually, one learns to distinguish oneself from others and one's role from the roles of others. One learns through observation, constant reinforcement and reminders along with rewards for conformity and punishment for non-conformity.

### **Activity 1.2**

Do you observe any changes in parent child relationship within your family or friends circle which did not exist earlier? Discuss with your friends and family members and write a one page report on "The Impact of Social Change on the Process of Socialization Including Parent Child Interaction". Compare your report with those of other students at your study center. Also, discuss the topic with your Academic Counselor.

Various types of socialization are discussed below.

#### **1.6.1 Conscious and Unconscious Socialization**

Much of the socialization of the child within a family and the school is conscious. In other words, parents consciously inculcate in the child certain behaviour patterns and values that they consider desirable. They achieve this by constantly telling the child what is good from what is bad, what is right form of behaviour from what is wrong. They also reward the child if it conforms to these expectations, and punish in the opposite case. Therefore, the process of socialization is reinforced through a system of rewards and punishments. For example, the emphasis on cleanliness, obedience, promptness, manliness and womanliness begins early in life in most families. This is conscious socialization since the socializing agents (parents) are conscious about the aims of socialization process. Yet a major part of the process of socialization is unconscious and consists of learning through observation.

However, socialization process within the family is conscious, as well as

unconscious. The same is true of the school where the aims of the school are explicit and are sought to be inculcated in the classroom through text books. For instance, the explicit aim of the school is to teach and to help students to succeed in their examinations. At the same time, the children interact or mix with other children outside the classroom. They make friends and form small groups called peer groups. These are important sources of influence on children. They also become members of peer groups within their neighborhood where they have a small number of friends with whom they play almost regularly. Sometimes children learn the norms and behaviour patterns of the members of their groups and these may be contradictory to those of their family or the school. For example, if children begin to smoke because their friends smoke whereas their families are opposed to it, there is going to be conflict. Or, children may begin to take serious interest in schoolwork although no member of their families is intellectually inclined. On the other hand, interest in studies may be common to the members of the family as well as to their friends. This process is the unconscious process of the socialization where children who learn and the children from whom they learn are not conscious of or do not anticipate the consequences of their association and interaction.

### **1. Explicit and Implicit Directions**

We have distinguished between conscious and unconscious socialization processes and have given examples of the explicit and implicit injunctions against certain behaviour patterns. The aims of the process within the families are not deliberate, and explicit. Families do not say that they are training the children to become honest or hard working, or boys to become fearless, or girls to become passive. On the other hand, the cognitive aims of the schools are well-known. The students are to read well. Pass their examination and so on. Therefore there is a difference between the two processes that take place within the family, on the one hand, and the school and other formal agencies, on the other. We may therefore draw a distinction between the two processes and state that the aims of socialization process within the secondary groups such as schools are deliberate, more explicit and conscious compared with that of the family. But both the processes take place simultaneously.

### **2. Behaviour Patterns**

The learning of different behaviour patterns and values from one's friends or peers is the unconscious process of socialization. In fact, it is difficult to draw a distinction between a socializing agent and a socialized i.e., the peer group and the socialized. The staying away from the school could be one such example. A child may become friendly with those children who play truant very often and remain absent from classes, and may learn to play truant after becoming a member of that group. On the other hand, another child who initially did not place high value on punctuality within the school, may learn to do so because he happens to become friendly with children who are very punctual. These are examples of unconscious socialization.

In contemporary societies, much of the unconscious learning takes place through the mass media such as the cinema, the television, the comics, and novels (i.e., the print medium). The emulation of the hero in the Indian cinema by the college going youth

is a good example of unconscious socialization.

### **1.6.2 Primary and Secondary Socialization**

The needs of individuals are divided by psychologists into primary and secondary needs. The primary needs are those which are in-born such as thirst and hunger. The secondary needs are, for example, the need for learning or to work. Secondary needs are those which emerge, in the way, to satisfy primary needs. Similarly, institutions in the society are also divided into primary and secondary institutions. The family is the first social group in which the child is born, it is also the first group which satisfies and meets the primary needs of the human-infant. It is called a primary group whereas a school is a secondary group because it meets the derived needs of the child. Parents are the primary or the chief socializing agents for the child whereas the school teachers are the secondary socializing agents. We may also distinguish between primary and secondary roles and between primary socialization and secondary socialization. Norms and values within the family may be called the process of primary socialization whereas the learning of the behavioural patterns, norms and values of the school may be called secondary socialization.

### **1.6.3 Child and Adult Socialization**

As we have mentioned earlier, the process of socialization or learning of social roles continues throughout life. As the individual becomes a member of different social groups and institutions, it begins to learn new norms and values. For example, when one joins school one has to learn the discipline of the school and the role of a student. Later on, as an adult, one has to learn to become a parent and to assume family responsibilities. When one takes up an occupation and becomes a member of an occupational group one has to learn the responsibilities and roles that are implied in the membership of that particular group. For example, the role of an executive will be very different from that of a small tea-stall owner, or of a labourer. People have to be socialized in taking on these roles and values. That is why, sociologists believe that the process of socialization continues throughout life and does not end at adolescence.

### **1.6.4 Re-Socialization**

Re-socialization is a process of altering ones behaviour pattern and in the process imbibing new social values and behaviour patterns. An individual is constantly learning new roles, as a member of different social groups or institutions throughout one's life. For instance, a child becomes a member of its family first, and learns to play the role of a son or daughter, or that of a grandson or a grand-daughter if it is living in an extended family. If the father's sister is living in the family the child also learns to play the role of a nephew or niece. Later when beginning to play in the neighborhood, one makes friends and follows the norms of the group. For example, if a child disrupts the game too often or fights or cheats, others will boycott that child till he/she stops causing disruption.

Later, a child goes to school and learns to play the role of a student. Still later s/he takes up a job and joins an organisation or sets up one's own enterprise or business.



Whatever work is taken up, one has to follow the work ethics of that occupational group and abide by the norms. Thus, one is constantly learning new roles.

However, in some instances an individual has not only to learn a new role but simultaneously has to unlearn part of the norms and behaviour patterns associated with an earlier role in order to be effective in the new role. A very good example of unlearning the old role and learning a new one is the role of an Indian girl before and after marriage. While there may be differences in emphasis and also in the norms and behaviour patterns expected of girls in different parts of India, we may safely generalize behaviour pattern of a daughter before and after marriage.

### **1. Marital Re-socialization**

When a daughter is engaged to be married the process of new socialization or re-socialization starts. She may be given instructions on how to behave in the presence of her in-laws. Among Punjabi Hindu families a daughter does not cover her head in front of her elders before her marriage nor does she touch their feet. After her engagement she may be trained to cover her head and also to touch the feet of elders, since she will have to do this soon after the marriage. Though, we may mention that this may not be practiced any more among the upper and middle class families, especially among the educated in the metropolitan cities.

Her re-socialization begins after marriage. She has already been given countless instructions to give up the carefree behaviour of her maiden days in the home of her in-laws, and to pay deference to nearly every elder in her husband's family and how not to seem to be independent. A newly married girl goes through the process of unlearning her earlier behaviour gradually. In the initial stage she may only hide it or suppress it, and one may see her behaving normally when she visits her parental home. As for example, she may laugh freely in her parent's home - something that may be considered inappropriate in the home of her in-laws.

Another example of re-socialization is that of a widowed woman. This is particularly marked in some parts of India where a widow's behaviour has to change very drastically after the death of her husband. The external marks of a married woman are removed from her body, that is, she has to wear a particular dress or a saree of a particular colour, all her jewellery has to be removed, the *kum kum* and *vermilion* marks on her forehead and parting between her hair have also to be removed ceremoniously through certain rituals which are performed in these families. Her head is shaven. In addition she has to live in a different part of the house. The kind of tasks she is to perform in the family also changes suddenly. She is considered inauspicious and cannot participate in marriage rituals and other religious ceremonies.

### **2. Attitudinal Change**

Re-socialization refers to the process through which during their life span, individuals change or are forced to change their attitudes, values, behaviour and self-conceptions as they assume new roles and undergo new experiences. Though the long-range change may be profound, single steps along the way may or may not be gradual. For

instance, the new role may be a continuation of the old role or the past roles or may require discontinuation. Again, it may need only minor changes or radical changes involving a wholly new set of behaviour patterns. In addition, it may affect either a part or the whole of the personality or the self of an individual. It may also involve breaking away from the past values and norms or may just be a projection of the past values and norms.

Thus changes in adulthood that are gradual and partial are called continuous socialization. Re-socialization denotes more basic, rapid and radical changes. It involves giving up one way of life for another. It is not only different from the former but is at times incompatible with it. The usual examples given are brain-washing or indoctrination or rehabilitation of criminals. The aim is to fundamentally change the person and to affect a break with the past. Another example would be of persons who have lived all their life in Bombay, Kolkata or Delhi and are asked to live among tribals in a remote village in Madhya Pradesh or vice-versa. If you belong to a city, you may also be familiar with the villagers trying to adjust themselves to city life, by changing their notions of what is proper and what is improper and by changing their behaviour. Similarly if you belong to a village, you may have seen the problems faced by the person from the city, for example, school teacher or medical doctors or nurses or mid-wives and how they adapt to the village life.

### **3. Extensive and Intensive Socialization**

Certain occupational and life roles demand extensive and intensive socialization. This socialization approximates to re-socialization, for example, the role of a Christian priest or a nun or a Granthi in a Gurdwara or the role for combat only. Cadets are systematically removed from the society of which they are a part and then they are given assignments involving new personal and social identities; and a sense of identity with the nation and solidarity among themselves is instilled into them through the training given in the institutions. Similarly we have given the example of an Indian girl after marriage or that of a widow.

Re-socialization of a mature individual is difficult to accomplish. Generally speaking it requires that the conditions of childhood socialization be reproduced in intense and extreme form, especially when this is done through a very deliberate process as in the case of re-socialization of a cadet or a criminal or of a widow. Re-socialization may be forced upon the individual (as in brain-washing or indoctrination) or voluntary (as in the case of an anthropologist living in a tribe).

The process of re-socialization, if it contradicts with the initial socialization and if the individual is unable to cope with the demand made by the new role, may create conflict in the life of an individual. This is especially so where value systems differed is concerned. For example, a person coming from a conservative family background in India finds it extremely difficult to adjust to a cultural environment where social taboos, sexual taboos, etc. of his or her own culture do not match at all. In such an environment a person suffers a culture shock and can end up being a mental patient.

### 1.6.5 Anticipatory Socialization

Anticipatory socialization refers to the process whereby an individual or a group emulates the values, norms and behaviour patterns of a group other than to which one belongs, in anticipation of being accepted as its member. Thus, the concept of anticipatory socialization is related to the reference group theory. According to this theory, the behaviour, values and norms of an individual are determined with reference to a particular group or groups. As the membership of these groups varies, the individuals who are in the process of moving from one group to another will emulate the behaviour of the members of the group or with reference to the group they wish to belong. An excellent example would be that of individuals who have acquired sudden wealth and who try to conform to the values, and behaviour of the upper strata or upper castes of the society. They will change their dress, behaviour, dietary habits and even their language and customs. For example, those who did not give dowry may start doing so and those women who did not observe parda may be expected to do so.

Anticipatory socialization is undergone by individuals as well as groups and it happens or takes place in situations of social mobility and social change. Lower castes in the villages, after becoming well-off, try to emulate the upper castes. For example, if the dominant caste in a village are the Brahmins, the lower caste or castes who attain wealth will become vegetarian and teetotalers; they will change their caste names, wear the sacred thread to claim the status of the twice-born, stop sending their women to work for wages and adopt the rites of Brahmins such as head shaving (*Mundan*). They may also impose rigid behavioural norms on their widows.

#### Check Your Progress Exercise 1.2

**Note:**

- I. Use the space below for your answer
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Q.2** What is Primary Socialization?

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**Q.3** Name any two agencies of Secondary Socialization.

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## 1.7 STAGES OF SOCIALISATION PROCESS

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Socialization is a lifelong process and is not confined to childhood alone. It begins at childhood and continues throughout life. At every phase of life, an individual is subjected to different transitions and face various crises which he/she has to overcome. Some earlier scholars like S. Freud and Jean Piaget have analyzed and talked about the development process only up to childhood or adolescence. Freud has discussed a series of five stages of development of a child. These are *oral, anal, phallic, latency and genital*. Again, Piaget's classifications of the stages of cognitive development are sensorimotor stage (birth to 2 years), pre-operational stage (2 to 7 years), concrete operational stage (7 to 11 years) and formal operation stage (11 to 15 years). According to Piaget, the first three stages of development are universal but not all adults reach the three stages of operational stage. Following Freud, renowned sociologist, Talcott Parsons has also discussed about four stages- from the period of infancy (oral, anal and latency) to adolescence period. As said above, the process of socialization does not stop at adolescence or at a certain age, but it continues till death.

According to Sociologists, different stages of human development are not biologically determined, even though it may appear to be so. Sociologists study the social construction of age. For them, age is a social category. Thus, they examine or analyze age and age-stages not as biological or chronological categories but as social categories. The studies of feral and isolated children are a testimony to the fact that children do not develop from stage to stage (as contended by development theorists Freud and Piaget) at all if they do not interact. Interaction is a must for the development of a child. A child develops a consciousness of himself as being different from others through the association with other human beings. Hence, we can say that interactions help in making a child social. But biology is also important and cannot be completely ruled out. The stages of human 'life course' are social as well as biological. They are influenced by culture and also material environment of people in which they live. Man's biological nature makes socialization both possible and necessary. Socialization cannot occur if man did not have the inborn capacity to learn and use language.

Earlier, psychological (psychoanalytic) view of socialization stressed that internal stimuli, drives instincts (innate development process), while the sociological view focused on the way an individual learns to fulfill the requirements of the various social roles he/she is called upon to play. A person becomes human by internalizing the norms and expectations about behaviour of the people with whom he interacts. Sociologists have placed the main emphasis on the childhood and adolescence years rather than infancy period. In modern societies, the expectations at different stages of socialization are changing for both men and women.

Erik Erikson (*Childhood and Society*, 1963) has attempted to integrate biological, psychological and sociological perspectives about 'conception of the life cycle'. He charts eight stages of psycho-social development of the individual as under:

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Stages</b>	<b>Psycho-Social Crises</b>	<b>Significant Social Relations</b>
1.	First year of life	Trust v/s mistrust	Mother or mother substitute
2.	Second year	Autonomy v/s doubt	Parents
3.	Third through fifth years	Initiative v/s guilt	Basic family
4.	Sixth year to puberty	Industry v/s inferiority	Neighbourhood, school
5.	Adolescence	Identity v/s confusion	Peer groups and out-groups; models of leadership
6.	Early adulthood	Intimacy v/s isolation	Partners in friendship; sex competition, co-operation
7.	Middle adulthood	Generativity v/s self-absorption	Divided labour and shared household
8.	The ageing years	Integrity v/s despair	'Mankind', 'my kind'

Now, we shall describe briefly four important stages of socialization from infancy to old age.

- ***Infancy and childhood (oral, anal and latency)***

This stage of life starts from birth to the beginning of adolescence, i.e., a period from 0 to 13-14 years of age. Earlier, 'childhood' as a separate phase of development did not exist, especially in traditional and preliterate societies. The young child moved directly from a lengthy infancy into working roles within the community. However, in modern societies, long period of childhood has been recognized. Both parenting and childhood have become clearly distinct from other stages that were true of traditional societies.

The child in his first year communicates with the outside world, including his/her mother is through the mouth and lips. The mother is the first socializing agent of the child. It is the mother who begins the process of socialization. It is from her that the earliest social stimuli to which a child is subjected come. He/She responds to these stimuli by imitating them. At this stage, the child makes no distinction between persons and things-the mother's breast and the nipple of the bottle are equally and solely the means of organic satisfaction. His/Her social activities are merely confined to Crying, smiling and eye movement in response to others. The roles of the mother and the infant are merged at this stage of development.

In the second year, toilet and other training are initiated in many societies. During this phase, the child learns how to eat his/her food; talk and behave appropriately. The child begins to develop a sense of control over him/her and his/her environment, although he/she is still dependent on his/her parents. He starts recognizing the family

relations. During this stage, the child internalizes two roles-his/her own and that of his/her mother-now clearly separate.

Rapid physical development takes place from the 3rd to the 5th (phallic stage) year of life. During this period, the child becomes aware of genital sensations and in most cases, develops a sense of Freudian *Oedipus* complex, in which the boy's attachment to the mother is combined with jealous hostility towards father. At this stage, the child learns to 'behave himself/herself' in various contexts of his/her activity, particularly when interacting with adults. Besides, child also internalizes all the four roles of the family, viz., husband-father, wife-mother, son-brother and daughter-sister.

Following this stage is the stage of latency, which continues from about 5 years to 12-13 years. By about five, the child no longer remains a dependent baby and becomes independent in the elementary routines of life at home. During this period, the child acquires informal aspects of culture-folkways, customs, fads and crazes, along with secret modes of gratification and forbidden knowledge. Sociologists have termed this stage as the 'gang stage'. During this stage, the child's social world broadens or expands. He develops relationship outside his/her family. Friend's seem to be more important in this stage as the child begins to take more interest in friends rather than family. In this stage, growth of social consciousness takes place and group activities and group loyalty becomes highly important. He/She gradually begins to revolt against adult domination.

- **Adolescence**

The period of adolescence begins with the attainment of Puberty. Puberty leads to several biological changes and it is universal (the point at which a person becomes capable of adult sexual activity and reproduction). This stage, which begins around 14-15 years of a person and continues till he/she attains 20-21 years, is an important stage of socialization, It is a transition stage from childhood to maturity during which new patterns of behaviour are developed to meet the demands of both the larger and more diversified life of his peers of the adult society. In this stage, the attraction towards the opposite sex develops. Further Movies, Sports, T.V etc. captivates his/her attention and interest more than anything else. Psychologist G. Stanly Hall wrote that 'adolescence' is 'naturally' a period of psychological 'storm and stress'. But, sociologists believe that the emotional experience of youth varies greatly between individuals and across cultures.

- **Adulthood**

"A person is considered to be adult or have attained adulthood when he/she can support himself or herself entirely independent of the paternal family..... Full adulthood implies the ability to form a family of one's own life"(Johnson, 1960). During Adulthood, a person has to go through lot of stress and strain. Further, major decisions of life such as the choice of marriage partners, the choice of occupation, etc. has to be taken at this stage, and therefore, this stage becomes very crucial. Since, an individual starts working for his/her livelihood, gets married in this stage, he/she has

to occupy number of positions and therefore he/she is accorded different statuses and entrusted with number of roles. Once an individual gets married, he/she has to face a new series of accommodations in his/her personal conduct. He/She learn and develop new habits, ideals, customs and notions to adjust with the spouse and his/her family. Again when they become parents or when they give birth to their child, they are faced with new situations and the necessities of new adjustments emerge. Further, both the parents will have different child rearing practices as they were brought up by different sets of parents, and hence they will have to adjust and socialize each other to reach agreement about childcare practices. All of this learning is a part of adult socialization.

Another type of socialization is occupational training, which teaches the attitudes and values associated with an occupation as well as skills. A doctor has to acquire technical knowledge required to practice medicine. A new employee in an office has to learn how to conform to the expectations of the other workers and to the written and unwritten rules. One has to learn the styles of dress, decor and people's conduct in the company of fellow employees.

Adulthood can be divided into two stages –young adulthood and mature adulthood. Young adulthood is increasingly becoming a specific and important stage in the process of human development. This is a period of excitement and sexual development. In modern societies, young adults in their twenties engage themselves in preparing for their professional education, seeking career and finding some job or occupation. Besides this, they explore the possibilities of their life.

The mature adults (middle aged at about the age of 40) often experience a stress of self-evaluation during this period. At this stage, people realize that they have not achieved basic goals and ambitions and have little time left to do so. It is seen that women experience fear and confusion in their middle years. During this period, adults require the deep internalization of norms and attitudes that run counter to norms already learned and assimilated.

- **Old Age**

Old age is considered to be the final stage or the final period of transition, which starts mostly between 60-65 years. Since, the concept of Old or old age varies from culture to culture, there is no universally accepted definition of old age. After attaining old age, people start preparing for retirement and restrict their occupational responsibilities. (Norms of retirement differ from place to place). As an individual grows old, his/her body gradually stops supporting and refuses to take stress. However, it varies from individual to individual. Some individual may lead an active and pleasant life even at old age and in their case socialization continues till the end of life.

In traditional societies like India, older people are normally accorded a great deal of respect. The elders used to have a major, often the final, say in the matters of family and in the community as a whole. They had a great role in socializing the younger children in the family. Individuals used to feel themselves to be a part of a family and

a community. But, now, things are swiftly changing. Older people do not receive that much respect, which they used to. They are even despised and are left alone to live at their own rejected from the economic arena, and no longer living with their children, it is not easy for older people to make the final period of their life rewarding. At the same time, it is no longer widely accepted that older people should simply sit around passively, waiting to die. Instead, there has been an increase in programmes to socialize the elderly for meaningful pursuits and continue happy living.

### Check Your Progress Exercise 1.3

**Note:**

- III. Use the space below for your answer
- IV. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Q.4** Fill in the blanks given in the following sentences:

- i) The aim of the socialization process is to help the child to learn to conform to the \_\_\_\_\_ societal \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
- ii) Socialization may not be able to command complete \_\_\_\_\_ from all members of the society.
- iii) Socialization process within the family is \_\_\_\_\_ as well as \_\_\_\_\_
- iv) The aim of socialization process within the secondary groups such as schools are \_\_\_\_\_ more and as compared with that of the family.

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## 1.8 IMPORTANCE OF SOCIALIZATION IN SOCIETY

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- Socialization trains the individuals regarding the social roles that they need to play and also to choose from the various roles that they can play. In this way, it inducts the individual into the social world.
- It leads to growth of the personality and the self. The individual learns to place oneself in relation to others in society.
- The internalization of social norms enables one to perform roles accordingly and in this process, socialization helps social control, and maintains social order.
- Conformity to norms gives group identification and a sense of solidarity.
- In the process of socialization the individual also socializes others.
- It provides enough opportunities to display individual peculiarities.
- It is a process, which results in transmission of social heritage, eventually helps in the perpetuation and continuity of the society.



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## 1.9 LET US SUM UP

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- Socialization and social control shape and control social behaviour of its members.
- Socialization is a process whereby the individuals learn to conform to the norms of the group.
- It is a continuous process of social learning.
- Each individual passes through different combinations of the socialization process even within the same society.
- Socialization is a kind of learning that contributes to one's ability to perform social roles. It is desirable and desired learning. It is a continuous process that begins with birth and ends with death. In this process, we acquire new roles and drop old ones.
- It leads to the growth of personality and the self. The individual learns to place oneself in relation to others in society.
- It is a process, which results in transmission of social heritage and, thus helps in the perpetuation and continuity of the society.
- By primary socialization, we refer to the agencies that mould our social personality in the early years of our life and are the constituents of the informal groups
- Secondary socialization occurs in the later part of one's life where one gets involved with the formal and secondary groups such as school, work place, professional groups, etc.

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## 1.10 GLOSSARY

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**Conformity:** To absorb certain social rules and regulations in behaviour, e.g., being appropriately dressed in social gatherings.

**Internalization:** To absorb something within the mind so deeply that it becomes part of one's behaviour, e.g., to internalize good manners

**Socialized:** A person who is being socialized into the ways of society

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## 1.11 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: ANSWER KEYS

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**Answer to Q1:** Socialization is a learning process whereby one imbibes social values and behaviour patterns.

**Answer to Q2:** Primary Socialization refers to socialization during the early years of Childhood, which takes place within the family peer groups of close friends and closely knit groups.

**Answer to Q3:** School, Workplace etc. are agencies of Secondary Socialization.

**Answer to Q4:** (i) norms, values, belief, attitudes, behaviour pattern  
(ii) Conformity  
(iii) Conscious, unconscious

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## 1.12 MODEL QUESTIONS

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

Q.1: Define norms and values in socialization.

Q.2: Distinguish between primary and secondary socialization.

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

Q.1: Define Socialization. Discuss its importance in Society.

Q.2: Discuss the stages of Socialization

Q.3: “Socialization is a lifelong process”. Discuss

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## 1.13 REFERENCES

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## **UNIT 2 AGENCIES OF SOCIALIZATION**

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### **STRUCTURE**

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Objectives
- 2.3 Agencies of Socialization
  - 2.3.1 Growing Up
  - 2.3.2 Religion and Socialization
- 2.4 Differences in Socialization
  - 2.4.1 The Caste Factor
  - 2.4.2 Socialization in Tribes
  - 2.4.3 Other Institutions: The Ghotul
- 2.5 Families, Social Class and Socialization
  - 2.5.1 Behavior and Family
  - 2.5.2 Socialization and Communication
  - 2.5.3 School and Socialization
- 2.6 Sex and Gender Identity
  - 2.6.1 Gender Related Studies
  - 2.6.2 Sexual Discrimination
- 2.7 Mass Media and Socialization
  - 2.7.1 Messages in Mass Media
  - 2.7.2 Impact of Television
- 2.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.9 Glossary
- 2.10 Check Your Progress: Answer Keys
- 2.11 References

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### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

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This unit examines the various agencies of socialization. These include the family, religious organisation, mass media, etc. It also discusses differences in socialization of boys and girls. The significance of caste and tribal culture in the process of socialization in the Indian context is also discussed. The effect of social class on socialization and sexual discrimination in the socialization process are also examined in detail.

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## **2.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

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After going through this unit you should be able to:

- describe different factors in and agencies of socialization;
- state the differences in socialization process with the illustrations of some societies;
- assess the impact of family, class, caste and mass media on socialization; and
- explain the ways in which socialization process takes care of gender identity formation.

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## **2.3 AGENCIES OF SOCIALISATION**

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The child is socialized by several agencies and institutions in which he or she participates, viz. his or her family, school, peer group, the neighborhood, and the occupational group and by the social class. The position of the family in the social structure is determined by the social class, caste, religion, etc., and by the fact that the family lives in the rural or in the urban areas. We shall also mention some of the other factors which are important. For example, there is variation in the socialization process, according to whether one is rich or poor, whether one is tribal or non-tribal, whether one is a boy or a girl or whether one is a child or an adult. The differentiation in socialization may also be reflected through music, rituals, language, art and literature, which form part of one's culture consisting of complex set of variables.

These are the factors and agencies which introduce differentiation in the socialization process within different societies. These are very crucial and should be taken into account to dispel the impression that socialization is uniform across all societies or within a particular society. We shall first discuss some of the factors responsible for the variation in the socialization process namely age, religion, caste, region, etc. In the next section, we discuss the different agencies of socialization (namely, family, school etc.) which also prevent uniformity. In the last section, we outline the role of gender and the mass media (especially television) since these cut across all boundaries.

### **2.3.1 Growing Up**

The socialization process in infancy and childhood is different from that during adulthood. Some social scientists divide socialization into stages of the life of an individual. Some have referred to various Hindu rites or samskaras as being equivalent to different stages. In addition, there are the ashrams, which divide the life of an individual into stages.

There are various traditional Hindu rites or samskaras which divide childhood into several stages. These are namakarana, nishakarmana, annaprasana, chudakarana or tonsure, vidyarambha and upanayana. Moreover, traditionally the division of an individual's life into four stages, namely, brahmacharya, grihasthashrama, vanaprastha and sanyasa are a direct reflection of the socialization of a Hindu male.

The agencies of socialization change as the individual matures. For example, school and the peer group compete with the family for access to the individual through childhood and adolescence. The occupational group and the newly established family after marriage become more important during adulthood.

### 2.3.2 Religion and Socialization

Difference in the socialization processes and practices is noticeable among certain religious communities. As for example, the rites and ceremonies, customs, dress, sometimes language and beliefs, attitudes and values and the behaviour patterns of Christians, Hindus, Sikhs or Muslims are different. These may be at variance with one another although some of the external symbols such as dress, speech, and deportment have become uniform for all religious groups in the big cities during the last few years, so that it has become difficult to distinguish members of one religious community from another on the basis of dress, etc. In the villages, a significant section of people are continuing to wear their traditional dresses and can still be distinguished on the basis of these outward symbols. In addition, and more importantly, the emphasis on what constitutes a good Hindu or a good Muslim or a good Sikh or a good Christian, also creates differences in the values and behaviour of members of a larger society. For instance, a good Muslim must perform prayers five times a day, a Christian must attend church on Sundays, a Sikh should do service at a Gurdwara and a Hindu must give charity in the temples. Similarly, further subdivisions can be drawn on the basis of Shaivite and Vaishnavite Brahmins of southern India. So also the marriage ceremony and rites differ among those who follow the Arya Samaj and Sanatana Dharma, the two Hindu sects in the Punjab. Thus, the differences are not confined to religious ideology but are reflected in the socialization process through the beliefs, attitudes, norms and behaviour patterns of the people belonging to these sects and subjects.

#### Check Your Progress Exercise 2.1

**Note:**

- I. Use the space below for your answer
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Q.1** Write a brief note on the major agencies that socialize a person. Use about five lines.

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.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Q.2** Select the correct matching

- |                |                       |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| A) Childhood   | 1. Family             |
| B) Adolescence | 2. Professional Group |
| C) Adulthood   | 3. Peer-Group         |

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## 2.4 DIFFERENCES IN SOCIALIZATION

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A city-bred person who comes across a person from the village is likely to notice him or her because of the differences in their dress, speech and their deportment. The villager is recognizable not only by the outward symbols mentioned but also by his or her values norms and behavior patterns he/she upholds and considers appropriate. On the other hand, a person living in a village will be struck by the difference in dress, speech and deportment of those who belong to the city. You may have often heard that a person hailing from a village or a small town feels that people in the city are too involved in their own affairs to be bothered about their guests or the elders in the family. These differential responses are the outcome of differential socialization processes in the rural and urban areas.

### Box 2.1

An Indian villager generally believes that a “guest” is to be honoured in the same manner as God himself and whatever his/her capacity may be will not neglect a guest. But a city person, especially in the metropolis, may not welcome a guest who has no prior appointment. Reason for visit becomes an essential criterion.

It is not that a city person does not desire or know how to honour a guest but other life style factors, such as, living space, expensive everyday expenditure, children's education often forces people to curtail excessive entertainment of guests. Thus, circumstances change the values which ideally are believed by most Indians.

### 2.4.1 The Caste Factor

If you are living in a village or in a small town, you may be aware of the behaviour that is expected of you as a member of a small town. Thus, there are certain value norms and behaviour patterns that are common to most villages. Certain rituals and ceremonies may also be common to all the members of a village. However, a village community is also divided into small groups called castes. The castes are divided on the basis of birth because people are born into them. You may be at least able to distinguish a Brahmin from a Harijan or you may even be able to distinguish a blacksmith from a goldsmith or from a washer man. Therefore, within a village, there are likely to be subcultures while the culture of a village itself may have something in common which is shared by all its members and bind all the members together. The language or the dialect also tends to vary. The upper castes speak more refined and sophisticated form of the language than spoken by the lower castes. Similarly, there are differences in the dress that is considered appropriate or inappropriate for a particular caste. Again, the behaviour that is considered proper by one caste may not be so considered by the other. For example, vegetarianism may not be so considered by the other. For example, vegetarianism may be more popular among the Brahmins than among other castes.

### 2.4.2 Socialization in Tribes

The socialization process differs according to whether it occurs in a tribe or non-tribe. We shall give extracts of the socialization process in a tribe called Muria which inhabits the Bastar district of Madhya Pradesh in central India. However, this should not give the impression that the Muria represent the whole tribal culture. There are several tribes in India about which you have read in Units 5 and 6. There are tremendous variations in the socialization process among them as are in the non-tribal world. Therefore, this example of socialization process among the Murias is only one such example. You may be able to think of several others. If you meet people from different parts of India or have such friends, you may notice the differences.

### **2.4.3 Other Institutions: The Ghotuls**

Similar institutions are found among communities of Austro-Asiatic cultures. But Bastar ghotul is highly developed and the most organized in the world. One could think of communes in contemporary society, as for example, the Kibbutz in Israel where an effort was made to bring up children on community-basis by taking them away from their families. Similar institutions are found among other tribals in India, as for example, the village guardroom among the Nagas and the boys' club among the Oraon. Ghotul for the Murias is the centre of social and religious life. It also assigns educational tasks among children. All unmarried Muria boys and girls from the age of five or six years are members of ghotul. They sleep at night in the ghotul and are directly responsible for its care and maintenance. During the day, they go to their parents' home and help them in various tasks. They leave the ghotul after marriage.

The membership of ghotul is carefully organized. After a period of testing, boys and girls are initiated and given a special title which carries graded rank and social duty. Leaders are appointed to organize and discipline the society. The boys' leader is Sirdar and the girl's Belosa. Boy members are known as Chelik and girl members as Motiari. The relations between Chelik and Motiari are governed by the customary rules and regulation of ghotul to which they belong. Indeed, ghotul teaches discipline and introduces the feeling of fraternity and friendship among its members.

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## **2.5 FAMILIES, SOCIAL CLASS AND SOCIALISATION**

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These two dimensions are being taken together because 'family' here includes not only the size, the composition and the type but the social position. The social position of a family is determined by caste, race and social class, etc. However, it is the last dimension name by social class which have received attention of sociologists in the West while race too has been given some importance. Not many studies on socialization with reference to family or caste or any other dimension or agency have been undertaken in India. Therefore, we shall depend on our own observations to illustrate the relationship between family and socialization. We shall also take examples from other countries to substantiate the relationship between social class, family and socialization in the context of school.

It has already been mentioned in the sub section 3.3 that a key agency of socialization in all human societies is the family which transforms the young infant into a member of a human community. It is the first prolonged and intimate interaction system the

individual encounters after birth.

However, the things that members of a given family wish to teach or transmit to the child are limited by that family's unique historical and societal experience. As a result of this, we observe familial differences in child-rearing practices as well as attitudinal and behavioural outcomes regarding social relationships and skills. Each child is more or less uniquely prepared for the cultural reality that his or her family has experienced or wishes to experience.

### **2.5.1 Behaviour and Family**

Family inculcates attitudes relating to proper behaviour, decision-making and obedience to authority, etc. In addition, children learn the attitudes and skills necessary to play a role in the production and consumption of goods and services. Each family adopts division of labour regarding family tasks and prepares its young for the notion of work. Thus, early socialization into economic roles also takes place within the family.

As contact with others grows, other alternatives become available to the child. He or she is introduced to the new social institutions or agencies such as the school and the peer group in the neighborhood. The influence of parents is reduced because new reference groups such as peer group become more important. Thus, a number of secondary group relations and pressures must be coped with by the child alongside the group relations learnt initially in the family.

A number of studies have been undertaken on the effect of family background on the educational performance of the child, which is pertinent to socialization. One of the salient findings of these studies is the negative impact of a school on a child if he or she belongs to a working class home with little emphasis on cognitive achievement. This is because the school emphasizes good results and a behavior pattern which is alien to the child's family. Moreover, researchers have also pointed out those middle-class parents more than working-class parents are likely to put emphasis on the need for success in studies to reinforce the socializing function of the school and stress, in general, achievement-oriented values. Again, a relationship is seen between the occupational role of the father and the difference in the socialization-orientations of the children. For instance, since a working-class father has less autonomy and satisfaction in the work situation, he tends to be authoritarian and severe towards his family members, especially his son.

#### **Activity 2.1**

From your own experience, find out whether your socialization was done in an authoritarian atmosphere or liberal atmosphere i.e. whether your parents were very strict disciplinarians, allowing you no opinion of your own or were ready to listen to you and guide you on the right path with persuasion rather than tyranny. Write one page essay on "I and my Parents" on this issue. Discuss it with other students at your study centre.



### **2.5.2 Socialization and Communication**

The importance of language and difference in the pattern of communication between parents and children according to social class are the other dimensions which have been studied by sociologists, notable among them being Basil Bernstein. According to him, patterns of language-use and the teaching styles are class-based. He saw a relationship between social structure, forms of speech and the subsequent regulation of behaviour in the schools. For instance, he argued that children from different social classes respond differently to educational opportunities and an important determinant of their response to the school's cognitive aims and teacher's style etc., is the language or linguistic code of the child. He also argued that different social structures produce different types of speech systems. As the child learns his speech, he learns the requirements of his social structure, which vary according to social class. Therefore, the language of the working-class child is limited in vocabulary while that of the middle-class child does not suffer from this limitation. The teacher is, by and large, from the middle class and can communicate better with the middle-class child since they share the same linguistic code or language with its vocabulary, meanings, syntax etc. Thus, the working class child cannot communicate as well with the teacher and begins with a handicap which affects him or her throughout his/her school career because of this restricted co-operation.

The same factors can be observed in schools in India, where most teachers came from upper caste/class backgrounds in schools and students who belonged to scheduled caste or tribes could not some time even understand the language of the teacher, let alone feel at par with other upper caste/class students.

Several studies have been undertaken linking different dimensions of schooling with the family of the child. We have only given some examples to demonstrate the importance of family and social class in socialization at home and outside the home, particularly in the school. However, we may also mention that these studies merely indicate a direction and are not conclusive.

### **2.5.3 School and Socialization**

'School' is used here to refer to a whole range of formal educational institutions which are the characteristics of the contemporary industrial and industrializing, urban complex-societies. We shall only mention here that schools provide two contexts for the students. The first is the formal context of the classroom wherein the content of socialization is determined by the text books and the cognitive aims of the process of teaching. The second context is informal and can be perceived in the inter-personal relations of students with teachers and those among students (peer group).

Social control comes to be exercised by the school and the increased professionalization of teaching helps to undermine the authority base of the family as a socializing agency. Again, the content of socialization as well as the knowledge to be transmitted becomes the focus of the curriculum and syllabi and a set of carefully prescribed practices. What parents did or do by instinct and with love, professionals must do with clear regulations and justifications.

The socialization process within the school may or may not supplement and reinforce the process within the family. In fact, it may be in conflict with the socializing values, norms and behaviour patterns of the family.

### Check Your Progress Exercise 2.2

**Note:**

- I. Use the space below for your answer
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Q.3** Discuss briefly how socialization occurs in tribes. Use about five lines.

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**Q.4** Write a comment on the role of school on the socialization process. Use about five lines.

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## 2.6 SEX AND GENDER IDENTITY

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Every society has a systematic way to deal with sex or gender roles. In other words every culture has a process by which it prepares the children to play the roles that society expects and requires of them as adults and these roles vary according to sex, ethnicity and social class etc. Of course, sex is almost universally the most basic category and refers to biological differences (i.e. differences in their bodies) between men and women while gender refers to the social differences assigned to sex. In other words, it refers to the division between masculine and feminine roles, tasks, attributes, etc. For example, the division of sexual labour refers to the fact that women bear children and men do not. This division is based on biological differences. The sexual division of labour or gender-based division, on the other hand, refers to different tasks, such as agricultural work being masculine and household work as feminine. This division also includes traits such as aggressiveness being masculine and submissiveness being feminine. Of course, the sexual division may vary among societies and social groups.

The success of socialization process is indicated by the studies which show that gender identity is the unchanging core of the personality formation and is firmly established in the early stages of one's life. However, although biological differences between men and women are universal, there is differentiation of roles by gender, across cultures and societies. This is, because when biological differences are

projected into the social sphere they give rise to masculine and feminine roles although they are not innate. Anthropologists have given examples from different cultures to demonstrate variation in sex roles from one culture and society to another. For example, in the hunting societies while the male folk took active role in the hunting in making tools and weapons, females are mostly passive. Their females took active roles in the reproductive activities. On the other hand, in the agricultural society in Africa women play considerably active role in the productive activities. In spite of the stereotype of gender roles which exist in all societies, in reality women may be participating equally in the so-called masculine work, such as, agriculture, unskilled work in factories etc. In the same manner, men quite often assist women folk in domestic work, especially amongst the nuclear families in urban areas where both husband and wife work.

### **2.6.1 Gender Related Studies**

Systematic interest by social scientists in gender-related studies has been very recent. The most widely researched field is the socialization process which differentiates between men and women in almost all societies, and produces what are called masculine and feminine roles, images, behavior patterns and tasks. In other words, it helps in producing stereotypes of male and female. For example, in several societies women are considered submissive, passive and dependent as if these were inborn traits whereas the masculine traits are active, aggressive and independent. Again, the division of labour is along gender. For example, housekeeping tasks are assigned to women and most of the external, public and production- related tasks are given to men. (Yet there may be differences among different tribes, see for example, Muria.)

You may have observed that girls have to be obedient, submissive (not only to parents but also to their brothers in most Indian families) not outgoing or to take initiative. They are given elaborate instructions on what dress to wear and on what occasion. There is emphasis on modesty. They are not expected to laugh loudly although the situation may be changing in metropolitan cities. However, the situation goes back to square one at the time of a girl's marriage even in the most enlightened families. In many families they are discouraged to take subjects at school which involve hard work (science and mathematics) or which are likely to lead to a career (for example, medicine or engineering). It may be so even in families where sons are not doing as well in studies as are the daughters. Even then the sons will be encouraged to take up courses like science and other professional courses. When parents can afford to spend only on the education of one child (even in Delhi or Chennai etc.) the chances are higher that the son will be sent for higher education instead of the daughter.

### **2.6.2 Sexual Discrimination**

This is discrimination based on the social expectation that a girl from the upper and middle class will not be working even though a large number of them are working in the metropolitan cities these days. Also, that they will get married and become full-time housewives and leave their families.

Since parents, grand-parents, friends, teachers etc. are agents of socialization, the situation is further complicated because it takes place within the home and is very personal. Again, it takes place through people who are also emotionally involved in the process. It is further complicated by the fact that boys and girls like to approximate their behaviour to that expected by parents since it is likely to make the latter happy. They would also not like to offend those whom they love i.e., the significant others’.

The discussion of socialization and sex roles is linked to that of stereotypes and discrimination. When social roles are assigned on the basis of gender, which results in discrimination or puts unreasonable limitations on women, then it needs to be questioned. The other words, used in this context are bias, sexism, and stereotyping. Although, each has separate meanings, these terms underline the discriminatory treatment given to and inferior position assigned to women in society. For example, (a) men are considered superior to women and (b) women are denied access to positions of power. Some well-known examples of discrimination are: paying women less than men for the same jobs and denying them educational opportunities and certain jobs because of their sex. It may be illustrated with the fact that in agriculture women laborers are paid less than their male counterparts. Again boys may be encouraged to go in for higher education because they will bring higher income to the family. But this may not be the case for girls in a majority of the families. Such discrimination is rooted in stereotyping (mental picture held in common by members of a group). It represents an over simplified opinion and judgment about the members of a group, be they women, Hindus or Negroes.

Therefore, when we said earlier that society socializes the new born infant or that it socializes the child into becoming fit member of the society, we referred to certain traits which are expected of all members of society regardless of whether they are boys or girls. Hindus or Muslims, villagers or urbanites, tribals or non-tribals. The task of socialization is undertaken by various agencies; however, we have focused on the family since it is the primary agency of socialization.

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## **2.7 MASS MEDIA AND SOCIALIZATION**

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In contemporary societies, the means of mass communication such as the books radio, newspapers, films or cinema, records, and video are very potent sources of socializing those who are either their readers or the listeners or the viewers. These mass media, especially the films, the radio and the television simultaneously communicate the same message to a nationwide audience cutting across all boundaries. Therefore, its impact on socialization is crucial.

Here we are concerned basically with the message that is conveyed, the images that are projected because they form the content of the socialization process through the mass media and the impact of the message and the images. Thus, for example, the specific questions in the context of gender and socialization will be: What are the images of men and women portrayed on the mass media especially on the television? In the context of the rural population we may ask: What are the images of the rural folk and is the message relevant for the villagers? Is their image really representative

of their experience and if that is so, which part of village India does it represent? Or, what is the impact of violence in films on the children? Similar questions can be asked with reference to all the dimensions that cut across Indian society.

### **Activity 2.2**

Observe at least 5 children between the age group five to ten years in your neighborhood for at least two days. Write a report of about one page on “Impact of Mass Media (esp. TV) on Children’s Behaviour” in your society. Compare your answer with your peers at your study center.

Another question which is of general relevance would be: Which is/are the most important medium media and for whom? For example, while television in India has become the most important medium for almost everyone in India, comics are important for the children in the metropolitan cities while the video and now Cable T.V., Computer CD’s and Internet communication has become a rage among the elite families even in the rural areas.

#### **2.7.1 Messages in Mass Media**

However, the crucial question in the context of socialization is related to the message as well as the image. Scientific studies on media-use and media-impact are few and far between in our country. Very recently, the images of women in the text books and the comics as well as in the films and television and their impact on children have attracted the attention of scholars, and social activists. For instance, most school text-books portray women as being housewives and men as bread earners. Experts are arguing that this is not true in so far as the lower income strata are concerned since women in these strata always worked to earn money to meet the basic necessities of life. Moreover, even the middle class women in big cities are now-a-days working in order to meet the high cost of living as well as the rising social expectations arising out of higher education. Thus, the portrayal of women's images should reflect this reality.

Most studies on media conducted in other countries have either focused on television or have concluded that television is the predominant medium used by children although other important media exist (e.g., comics, books, films etc.). Watching television has become a central leisure time activity all over the world and remains a major source of leisure time gratification. We shall discuss television as only one example of socialization through the mass media. While some of the points raised here will be applicable to other media as well, certain others may not be relevant.

#### **2.7.2 Impact of Television**

Television contacts the viewer directly through its message and does not involve social and interpersonal interaction. Moreover, it is embedded in another agency, namely, the family since it is generally viewed at home. It can propagate values in contradiction to those rooted in a specific social context. Its message may also get distorted because a large proportion of our population is illiterate and lives in the rural areas while the programmes are oriented to the urban viewer. Thus, the values and

behaviour patterns transmitted through it may be in conflict with those upheld by the parents. Parents react to this in several ways such as rigorous control of viewing (especially on Sundays or during the examination) and not permitting the watching of certain programmes (e.g., late night adult movies). However, the child's peers or friends at school or in the neighborhood will influence him or her by discussing specific programmes. Teachers may also comment on them. In addition, parents have no direct control over the content of programmes.

What are the dominant concerns of the studies conducted in other countries? Most focus on children as the audience and the effects of television on children. The most widespread view of socialization through the mass media is that it contains harmful experiences, particularly for children, but also for families in general. Some refer to the hypothesized tendency of television (and even cinema) to incite young people to crime and violence. Although these studies are only speculative, they are pointers to further research.

So far, the impression you may get is that the impact of television is only unidirectional or one way. While it is true that its impact is direct, it is not devoid of the social context. Viewing is a social activity insofar as it is done within the home and in the presence of family members. Viewers comment on programmes favorably or unfavorably. The interpersonal elements of other viewers are important as much as are the timing and the physical environment. Therefore, television is one element in an interlocking system. It does not exist in a vacuum and its effects are mediated and modified by the social context of viewing. In other words, the reaction to the programme is determined to some extent, by the fact that you are watching it along with your parents or not, and whether you are watching it at home or outside, and so on.

**Check Your Progress Exercise 2.3**

**Note:**

- I. Use the space below for your answer
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Q.5** Write a description of how gender-based or sexual discrimination occurs in the socialization process. Use about five lines.

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**Q.6** Comment on the effect of mass media on the process of socialization. Use about five lines.

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## 2.8 LET US SUM UP

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We have seen in this unit that socialization has many agencies. It works through these agencies and disseminates different types of behaviour modes. Some of these agencies are the family, caste group, tribe, school, etc. In fact we have emphasized that even gender differences (between boys and girls, men and women) are largely learned processes. Very often the mass media such as cinema and television reinforce ideas and stereotypes of social behaviour. But sometimes they do not. This unit has also examined the impact of mass media on the process of socialization.

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## 2.9 GLOSSARY

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<b>Agencies:</b>	The means whereby the process of socialization (in our case) is facilitated, e.g. family and school.
<b>Dialect:</b>	This is the subordinate form of a language peculiar to a region or a social group with non-standard vocabulary and pronunciation.
<b>Gender:</b>	There are two sexes, male and female. It is the social dimension of the differences in the work roles, behaviour and traits of men and women.
<b>Ghotul:</b>	Bachelor's hall of both men and women of the Murias of Bastar in Madhya Pradesh.
<b>Linguistic Code:</b>	Language including vocabulary, speech patterns etc. used and understood by members of a given social group while communication through them may be difficult across social groups.

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## 2.10 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: ANSWER KEYS

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<b>Ans to Q.1</b>	The major agencies that socialize a person are the family, school, peer group, the neighborhood etc. The examples of factors that influence socialization are (i) membership to a social class or caste, and (ii) whether one is a boy or a girl.	
<b>Ans to Q.2</b>	A) Childhood B) Adolescence C) Adulthood	1. Family 3. Peer-Group 2. Professional Group
<b>Ans to Q.3</b>	Socialization occurs in tribes through special institutions like the Ghotuls among Murias, village guardroom amongst Nagas etc. In these institutions all unmarried boys and girls from the age of five or six live together. They are assigned educational tasks and are held responsible for its maintenance. During daytime they go to their parents' home and help them in various	

tasks but at night they sleep in the Ghotul. After marriage they leave the Ghotul.

**Ans to Q.4**

The two contexts of socialization that school provide are formal context and informal context. Formal context is determined by the text books and the cognitive aims of the process of teaching while informal context can be perceived in the interpersonal relations of students with teachers and those among the students (peer group).

**Ans to Q.5**

Sexual stereotypes are certain sets of attitudes, values, norms, customs and expectations based on social differences between men and women but justified on biological grounds, which shape the differential socialization of men and women. Men are supposed to be independent, capable and aggressive and women, to be dependent, timid and submissive.

**Ans to Q.6**

The mass media for example, radio, television, films, books, cinema, newspapers, etc. cut across all boundaries of region, religion, sex, caste or class. They convey the same message to a nation-wide population. Therefore, its impact on socialization is crucial. It portrays the messages and images; as in the case of video, film and T.V. etc. They affect the minds of adults as well as children and help to shape and reshape their values, behaviours and expectations through their messages and images.

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## UNIT 3 THEORIES OF SOCIALIZATION

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### STRUCTURE

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Objectives
- 3.3 Theories of Socialization
  - 3.3.1 C. H. Cooley's Theory of Socialization
  - 3.3.2 Mead's Theory of Socialization
  - 3.3.3 Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory of Socialization
- 3.4 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.5 Glossary
- 3.6 Check Your Progress: Answer Keys
- 3.7 References

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### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

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Socialization is the process through which people are taught to be proficient members of a society. It describes the ways that people come to understand societal norms and expectations, to accept society's beliefs, and to be aware of societal values. Socialization is not the same as socializing (interacting with others, like family, friends, and coworkers); to be precise, it is a sociological process that occurs through socializing. This Unit highlights major theories of socialization process.

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### 3.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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After studying this unit, you will be able to know;

- Cooley's theory of socialization
- Mead's theory of socialization
- Freud's psychoanalytic theory of socialization

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### 3.3 THEORIES OF SOCIALIZATION

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Social scientists have tried to analyze the processes of socialization in different ways. In this part we shall discuss some of the major theories in regard to the processes of socialization.

#### 3.3.1 Cooley's Theory of Socialization

Charles H. Cooley in his celebrated work "*Human Nature and Social Order*" (1902) propounded his concept of 'Looking glass' and explained how the self of an individual develops and socialization takes place. He emphasized the role of primary groups and social interaction, especially communication, in the formation of personality. Thus,

self develops within a context of social relationship. Self and others do not exist as mutually exclusive facts, therefore, self is social.

Cooley's important concept of the reflected or 'looking-glass' self has three basic elements, which are involved in the development of self and formation of personality. These are:

- i) The imagination of our appearance to the other person,
- ii) The imagination of his judgment of that appearance,
- iii) Some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification.

Cooley argues that social interaction or communication plays an important role in the development of individual's personality and his/her behaviour pattern. During interaction with people, the child remains conscious of how others perceive his/her behaviour towards them. On the basis of their judgment the child develops a feeling about himself/herself. It may be a feeling of pride, if the behaviour is appreciated, or of mortification, if the behaviour is denounced by the people. Regular condemnation of child's behaviour may develop an insipid and introvert personality in him/her while continuous appreciation leads to the development of a confident and extrovert personality. Thus, social self depends on the social interaction. Individual's values, ideas, attitudes and habits are shaped by the ideas and attitudes of the people of the surrounding with whom he/she interacts. This is the base of his/her socialization.

The primary group, according to Cooley's plays a central role in socialization. Primary groups are characterized by intimate, face-to face association, direct cooperation and conflict, a relatively free play of personality and of sentiment. Though primary groups are present in all social organizations according to Cooley, the family, play group and neighborhood play crucial role in the process of socialization. Cooley called these groups primary because they are the nursery of human nature, providing the individual with his earliest and most complete experience of social unity. This group experience gives rise to social ideals such as the spirit of service, kindness, adherence to social norms etc.

### **3.3.2 Mead's Theory of Socialization**

Cooley's theory of socialization as we saw earlier is based on human imagination, whereas George Herbert Mead explains socialization in the light of resulting 'acts' of this consciousness. Mead started his theory with two basic assumptions: (i) The biological frailty of human organisms force their cooperation with each other in group context in order to survive. (ii) Those actions within and among human organisms that facilitate their cooperation, ensure their survival. Mead further argues that the human being learns those behavioural patterns that provide gratification; and the most important type of gratification is adjustment to social context. Mind, self and other unique features of human being evolve out of efforts to adjust and consequently survive in the social environment. In his view society could survive only from the capacities for mind and self among the individuals. Thus, the capacities for mind, self and society are intimately connected.

Mead recognized that the unique feature of human mind is its capacity to use symbols or language to designate objects in the environment. The focus of Mead's theory is on how this capacity first develops in infant. Mind arises out of a selective process in which an infant's initially wide range of random gestures is narrowed as some gestures which elicit favorable reaction from parents. Gradually, gestures begin to denote same meaning to all the persons interacting with each other. Gestures that have such common meaning are termed by Mead conventional gestures. These conventional gestures increase the capacity of organism to adjust to one another and assume the perspective of those with whom they must cooperate for survival. By being able to put oneself in another place or to 'take the role of others' the probability of cooperative interaction acquires a new level of efficiency.

Thus, when an organism develops the capacity to understand conventional gestures, to employ gestures to take the role of others and to imaginatively rehearse alternative lines of action, Mead believes, has 'mind'.

Mead emphasizes the development of 'self' for the proper socialization of individuals. He points out that just as humans can designate symbolically other actors in the environment, so they can symbolically represent themselves as an object. The interpretation of gestures, then, cannot only facilitate human cooperation, but it can also serve as the basis for self-assessment and evaluation. As organisms mature, the transitory 'self-images' become crystallized into a more or less stabilized 'self-conception' of oneself as a certain type of object. With these self-conceptions, individual actions take on consistency, since they are now mediated through a coherent and stable set of attitudes, dispositions or meanings about oneself as a certain type of person.

According to Mead there are three stages in the development of self. The initial stage of role taking in which self-images can be derived is termed 'play'. The child identifies with the role of what Mead calls 'particular others' such as father, mother etc. Later by virtue of biological maturation and practice at role-taking, organism becomes capable of taking the role of several others. Mead termed this stage 'game' because it shows the capacity to derive multiple self-images from and to cooperate with, a group of individuals engaged in some coordinated activity. In this process 'I' converts into 'Me'. So long as the child has not identified or understood the roles of others he/she is only 'I'. With his/ her identification with other 'I' gets converted into 'Me'. This conversion of 'I' into 'Me' signifies the socialization of the child.

The final stage in the development of self occurs when an individual can take the role of the 'generalized other' or 'community of attitudes' evident in a society. At this stage, individuals are seen as capable of assuming the overall perspective of a community, or general beliefs, values, and norms. Thus, it is this ever-increasing capacity to take roles with an ever-expanding body of others that marks the stages in the development of the self.

According to Mead, the individual and society are inseparable. Society represents the organized interactions among diverse individuals. Thus, the individuals creates social environment. On the other hand only society makes individual a human being. As we

have already seen, the self of the individual develops from interaction with others in society and interaction is not possible without communication. The communication is based on symbols with shared meanings.

### **3.3.3 Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory of Socialization**

According to the Sigmund Freud's theory of socialization, the formation of human personality is an outcome of the interplay of biological, psychological and social faculties of the individual. While explaining the behaviour pattern and personality traits of individual, Freud formulated three basic principles. These are:

- i) Every conscious action has a cause in the unconscious,
- ii) That conscious is simply a puppet in the hands of unconscious, and
- iii) That whatever one becomes as an adult was determined to be so in his/her early childhood.

Thus, according to Freud's principles a major part of human personality is formed in the childhood and during rest of the life it is elaborated and sharpened. In this sense Freud reiterates the role of primary socialization in the formation of personality.

According to Sigmund Freud, the human mind has three main regions:

- i) Consciousness
- ii) Pre-consciousness
- iii) Unconsciousness

The conscious region of mind relates the individual with present events and activities in life. Preconscious region stores up memories, which easily enters consciousness. Such a memory can readily be called to mind, for example say the word school and you will recall an incident or a series of incidents from your school days. The unconscious region is the store house of all the repressed desires and bitter experiences which are unacceptable to the conscious mind. These repressed desires come to the level of conscious either in a disguised form or in psychoanalysis.

Unconscious is the predominant content of the mind in relation to the amount, which is in the consciousness at any given time. The conscious is comparable to foam on the surface of the vast and deep sea of unconscious. It is much more powerful, ruthless, and illogical and pleasure seeking than the consciousness.

For a more comprehensive analysis of human personality, in his later writings Freud shifts his emphasis from the regions of mind to the structure and function of personality. It is the interaction among 'id', 'ego' and 'superego' that gives a definite shape to the individual's personality. 'Id' is the source of mental and instinctive energy. It is seated in the unconscious and works on 'pleasure principle'. It believes only in what Freud calls 'true psychic reality'. It knows nothing about rules, regulations, values and moralities and never bothers about the objective reality in society. The main objective of id is to avoid pain and discharge tension. It must satisfy its needs, even if it has to arrange imaginary means such as nocturnal dreams. But such imaginary means is not really capable of reducing tension. For example, image of food cannot satisfy hunger.

The second important system of personality is ego. As we have already seen, at birth a child is capable of only a few instinctive responses. With gradual physical and psychological development and due to some references from others the child develops the sense of 'I' 'My' 'Mine' and 'Me'. This is the beginning of the development of 'ego'. It occupies a central place in the structure of the psyche and is seated in all the three regions of mind. The basic difference between 'id' and 'ego' is that id knows only subjective reality of the mind, whereas the 'ego' differentiates objective reality i.e. concrete external reality from the subjective reality i.e. imaginary reality. In order to avoid tension the 'id' desires to satisfy needs immediately, whereas 'ego' restrains the satisfaction of needs unless appropriate object of satisfaction is available. The ego decides what is right and what is wrong, what is acceptable and what is not acceptable or what is possible what is not possible. The action of an individual is guided by the 'ego' in choosing from among these alternatives on realistic principle.

The 'superego' is the third and the last system of personality. It is described as the earliest moral code of the child and in this sense it is the direct antithesis of id. Superego is also seated, like 'id' in the unconscious region of mind. It represents the values and norms of the society, which the child has internalized through the process of socialization. It strives for neither real, nor imaginary real. It concerns itself with what is ideal. Its main function is to decide whether the chosen object of satisfaction of needs is right or wrong from the point of view' of the moral principles of society.

In this whole structure of psyche ego occupies a central place because it is expected to maintain a balance between the two opposite forces of 'id' and 'superego'. As we have already seen 'id' demands direct instinctual satisfaction whereas superego as an internalized moral code checks the flow of id into undesirable and unapproved channels. According to Freud the sole purpose of psycho-analysis is to strengthen the ego. A weak ego is prone to all disorders. If ego remains weak and id becomes stronger then the result would be an antisocial behaviour, delinquency or crime. If superego starts dominating the psyche the result is suppression, leading to neurosis. Therefore, for the development of a healthy and socially useful personality it is necessary to have proper balance between id, ego and superego.

**Check Your Progress Exercise 3.1**

**Note:**

- I. Write your answer in the space given below.
- II. Compare your answer with those given at the end of unit.

**Q.1** What are the three basic elements of Cooley's theory of socialization?

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**Q.2 Match the following:**

a) Cooley

b) Freud

c) Mead

i) Symbolism

ii) 'looking glass' self

iii) Psycho-Analysis

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### 3.4 LET US SUM UP

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Sociologists recognize that the experience of socialization is a lifelong process. It occurs from childhood through adulthood and even into old age. It occurs across our entire life span and, to some extent, across all of our social interactions. People move into, and out of, roles throughout their lives from “getting a driver’s license, high school graduation, marriage, divorce, the first full-time job, retirement, [through] widowhood. In general, each major transition initiates a new socialization experience or situation that has implications for the individual’s self-concept” (Gecas 2000, 2861). At the end of life, socialization processes even help people prepare for death (Kubler-Ross 1969). In Looking-glass self-theory, Cooley stated that society provides a mirror which reflects to us who we are; we form our image on the basis of how we think others see us. Similarly Mead’s theory of self, discussed that we are not born with a ‘self’. We develop a self through social experience and interaction. Again Freud, in his theory argued that early socialization is critically important to personality development and to managing natural desires that promote self-interest rather than social interests. He also addressed the importance of internalizing norms and values.

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### 3.5 GLOSSARY

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<b>Ego:</b>	Freud’s term for our “self,” our personality, which balances the urges of the id with the requirements of a civil society
<b>Id:</b>	Freud’s term for our basic biological drives and needs.
<b>Looking-glass self:</b>	Cooley’s concept that society provides a sort of mirror that reflects to us who we are and on the basis of which we form our self-image.
<b>Role conflict:</b>	A situation that occurs when roles for the different statuses a person holds conflict with each other.
<b>Role set:</b>	All of the roles that go with a single status.
<b>Role strain:</b>	Tension that occurs when two or more roles associated with a single status are in conflict.
<b>Role taking:</b>	The ability to take the role of others in social interaction, enabling us to see ourselves as we perceive society sees us.

<b>Role:</b>	The behavior expected of someone in a particular status.
<b>Stereotype:</b>	A belief that generalizes certain exaggerated traits to an entire category of people
<b>Superego:</b>	Freud's term for our internalized social controls, culture, values, and norms.

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### 3.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: ANSWER KEYS

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**Answer to Q.1:** i) Imagination of our appearance to the other person,  
 ii) The imagination of his judgment of that appearance.  
 iii) Some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification.

**Answer to Q.2:** a) Cooley: 'Looking glass' self.  
 b) Freud: Psycho-analysis  
 c) Mead: Symbolism

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## **UNIT 4 MEANING, DEFINITION AND IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL CONTROL**

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### **STRUCTURE**

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Objectives
- 4.3 Meaning and Definition of Social Control
  - 4.3.1 Definitions
  - 4.3.2 Related Concepts
- 4.4 Social Control, Self-Control, Socialization, and Maladjustment
- 4.5 Goals of Social Control
- 4.6 Modes of Social Control
- 4.7 Need and Importance of Social Control
- 4.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.9 Glossary
- 4.10 Check Your Progress: Answer Keys
- 4.11 References

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### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

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



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## 4.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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After studying this unit, you should be able to know;

- the meaning and definition of social control, self-control, socialization and maladjustment;
- the purpose of social control and need of social control; and
- the importance of social control.

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## 4.3 MEANING AND DEFINITION OF SOCIAL CONTROL

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The terms 'social control' is broadly concerned with the maintenance of order and stability in society. It may be used in the limited sense of denoting the various specialised means employed to maintain order such as codes, courts, and constables. It is also used to categorise social institutions and their inter-relations insofar as they contribute specifically to social stability e.g. legal, religious, political institutions etc. Social control is one of the most fundamental subjects of sociological discussion. It arises in all discussions about the nature and causes of both stability and change.

### 4.3.1 Definitions

Let us look at certain definitions of social control in order to know what is contained in the concept.

Some definitions focus on the "order" aspect of social control. For instance Maclver and Page (1985) define social control as the way in which the whole social order becomes consistently interlinked and maintains itself. Some others look at social control as the means by which society establishes and maintains order.

Another set of definition emphasises the aspect of conformity to norms and expectations of the group as the most important element in social control. The emphasis is on all those means and processes whereby a group or a society secures conformity of its member to its expectations. In other words, social control refers to those ways used by a society to bring its wayward members back into line. When we use the term social control we are essentially referring to the processes and means which limit deviations from social norms (Horton and Hunt 1981; Berger 1963; Ogburn and Nimcoff 1978).

Social control has been defined as "the way in which the entire social order adheres and maintains itself- how it operates as a changing equilibrium" (MacIver & Page) , "the patterns of pressure which a society exerts to maintain order and establish rules" (Ogburn and Nimcoff), the process by which social order is (i) established, and (ii) maintained" (Landis), "a collective. term for those processes, planned or unplanned, by which individuals are taught, persuaded, or compelled to conform to the usages and life values of groups"(Roucek).

Thus social control may be defined as any social or cultural means by which systematic and relatively consistent restraints are imposed upon individual behaviour

and by which human beings are persuaded and motivated to behave in accordance with the traditions, patterns and value framework thought necessary for the smooth functioning of a group or society.

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

The main points that emerge from all these definitions about the meaning of social controls are:

- i) The term refers essentially to means and processes whereby certain goals are to be achieved.
- ii) The two most important goals sought to be achieved by social control are :
  - a) Conformity to norms and expectations of the group;
  - b) Maintenance of order in society.
- iii) There is an element of influence, persuasion or compulsion in control. The individual or a group is directed to act in a particular way. Conformity is expected or imposed irrespective of whether one likes it or not.
- iv) The scope of social control is vast. It may operate at different levels. One group may seek to control another group; a group may control its own members or an individual may seek to control another individual. The scope of control ranges from the management of deviants to social planning.

#### **4.3.2 Related Concepts**

Here we discuss some concepts which are closely related to social control.

##### **i) The concept of self-control**

Self-control implies that imposition of external control is not required to compel the individual to do the right thing in a given situation. In this sense, self-control supplements the mechanisms of social control in producing conformity. But, it should also be remembered that self-control itself, originates in social control. It is the process of social control which instils a sense of inner control in the individual. The relation between self-control and social control can be understood in the following manner: the group applies some sanctions (punishment etc.) on an individual for indulging in deviant behaviour. But many persons are capable of visualising the consequences of their action in advance, and restrain themselves. In this sense, self-control is also a form of social control. From this point of view we can also maintain that both self-control and social control are closely related to yet another process—socialisation, to which we now turn.

##### **ii) Socialization**

Socialization is the process by which an individual, from childhood, learns and acquires the cultural characteristics of one's group. He is thus able to participate as a member of the group of society. In childhood, one's parents, for instance, enforce

their expectations on the child by a system of reward, punishment and discipline. One also acquires many traits by observing the behaviour of others, and by anticipating the consequences of and reaction to, one's own conduct in different situations. In this way, one develops self-control, a sense of right and wrong. Through the learning process we begin largely to conform to group expectation, very often without any conscious attempt being made on our part to do so. You can cite several examples from your daily life in which you perform many minor and major activities which you are 'supposed' to do, without even being aware of why you are doing so. Thus, socialisation contributes significantly to bringing about effective social control in society. It is only when the process of socialization fails that the individual may begin to act against the expectations of the group. In that case, imposition of sanctions becomes necessary.

Social control also helps in the process of socialization. In so far as socialization involves learning process, a system of reward and punishment is required in accomplishing it. Thus, social control and socialization are mutually related, supplementing each other towards the ultimate objective of ensuring conformity to group norms, and maintenance of social order.

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#### **4.4 SOCIAL CONTROL, SELF-CONTROL, SOCIALIZATION, AND SOCIAL MALADJUSTMENT**

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

Social control and socialization are closely interrelated. Social control plays a vital role in the socialization process and socialization helps in maintaining social control. In the process of socialization, individuals are motivated to behave in accordance with the social values, ideals and standards and they are prepared in such a way as to be ready to shoulder their responsibilities as per society's expectations. This process continues throughout the life. The socially undesirable human behaviour is discouraged and sometimes also punished. Thus the social control acts during the socialization process itself. Social control is an extension of the socialization process. Socialization with the accompanying internalization of social norms and values provides essential sources of social control. Sometimes, both social control and socialization use common techniques to regulate the human behaviour (appreciating and rewarding the socially desirable human behaviour and actions and condemning

and punishing the undesirable human behaviour and actions are common to both).

In spite of the similarities visible in social control and socialization, differences are not missing. Socialization relates to the persons who are made to learn the culture of the group and society. Social control is related to all persons, groups and entire social system, and thus its approach is wider than that of socialization. Primary groups play an important role in shaping the human personality while secondary groups and state apparatus assume major responsibility in maintaining social control. Socialization is more concerned with the development of 'self' of the human beings while social control is directed to regulate the external behaviour of individuals, even if the individual is internally unwilling. In the process of socialization, a person himself informally and unconsciously learns many things which become a part and parcel of his personality but in the process of social control, persons are forced to behave in accordance with the formally and consciously described norms and values of society. Socialization is always in line with social and cultural values of a particular society but social control quite often may not be akin to the values of the established socio-cultural milieu. Though there is a marked commonality in many of the means and agencies of socialization and social control, yet the provisions for regulating the human conduct of non-followers may vary. In the socialization, maximum punishment for a person may be his social boycott but in the process of social control, a person of deviant behaviour may be given rigorous imprisonment or even may be hanged to death.

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

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

Individuals' failure to cope with the existing social system leads them to maladjustment. Since pressure of societal norms and standards on various groups of society is not uniform, the possibility of individuals'/groups' unequal response towards existing means of social control increases. Moreover, if the agencies of social control are too harsh in their use of control mechanisms or are supportive of the exploitative nature of the state, the chances of maladjustment in society are probably more. On the contrary, if the agencies of social control are soft towards individual

group behaviour and give reasonable and fair chance to mould their behaviour as per changing norms and standards of society, the chances of inverse relationship between social control and maladjustment are likely to be more perceptible.

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## **4.5 GOALS OF SOCIAL CONTROL**

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From many of the definitions of social control, which we have reviewed earlier, it becomes clear that social control is supposed to achieve several important goals. Some of these goals are:

### **i) Conformity**

One of the aims of social control is to bring about conformity in society. Social control mechanisms are employed to control, check or prevent deviant behaviour. As we shall see in Unit 31, deviant behaviour is dysfunctional to society in several ways. The objective of social control is to safeguard the group against such dysfunctional consequences of deviant behaviour.

### **ii) Uniformity**

A related objective of social control is to produce uniformity of behaviour. This does not mean that all the members have to behave alike. It only implies that there should be some co-ordinations, among the several interrelated activities performed by different people. For example, movement of traffic on a road will be impossible if some traffic rules (keeping to the left etc.) are not followed by all road users. A game cannot be played if uniform rules are not followed by all teams and its members. In every sphere of social life some uniformity of behaviour is not only expected, but is also essential.

### **ii) Solidarity**

This is a very important objective of social control. As Maclver and Page (1985) have noted, social control ensures order and solidarity in society. Society is constituted of several parts and units. These different parts have to maintain equilibrium with each other, and with the whole to ensure social solidarity and stability. The mechanisms of social control are directed at maintaining this equilibrium among the parts, and between the parts and the whole.

### **iii) Continuity**

Social control is also necessary to maintain and preserve the accumulated culture of the group. By compelling or inducing individuals to conform to the prevailing norms and values, continuity of these cultural characteristics is ensured. For example, when parents insist on their children following family customs or practices, their continuity over generations is sought to be assured.

### **iv) Social Change**

Social control is employed not only to conserve the existing patterns, but also

sometimes to induce desired social changes. In our country, many methods of persuasion, inducement, and compulsion are used to bring about desired changes in some social customs, attitudes and behaviour. Prescribing the age of marriage, 'Two child' family norm, removal of untouchability, dowry systems etc. are some of the examples of attempts to bring about social change through various means of social control.

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## **4.6 MODES OF SOCIAL CONTROL**

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

### **1) Social Control through Socialisation**

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

### **2) Social Control through Group Pressure**

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

Social psychologists (Sherif, 1935; Bovard, 1951) have made a number of experiments, which show how a person tends to bring his expressions in line with those of the group. The method in such experiments usually consists of asking the members for individual estimates, attitudes or observations on a topic, then informing them of the group norm, and finally asking for a new expression from each member. Many of the informants modify their second expression in the direction of the group norm. Schachter (1951) has also shown experimentally how the member who sharply deviates from the group norms in opinion is rejected by the group. We often notice that a new member of a group is more carefully conformist and more fiercely loyal than the old members. Meticulous conformity is a tool for gaining acceptance and status within a group, while rejection is the price

of nonconformity.

a) *Informal Primary-Group Controls*

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

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

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

- i) The mores determine much of our individual behaviour. They are the compelling and forbidding apparatus of the social world that constantly exerts pressure on every member.
- ii) The mores identify individual within the group. If on the one hand, the mores exert a pressure upon the individual to conform to the ways of his community or social class or sex, the individual, on the other, gains identification with his fellows by conforming. He thus maintains those social bonds that are clearly essential for satisfactory living.
- iii) In traditional Indian society, three social institutions used to exercise great control over conduct of its members are joint family, caste system and panchayat. Earlier on, in all three contexts a 'nonconformity used to be a rare phenomenon. Now with the advent of industrialization and urbanization these social institutions have started disintegrating and informal social controls gradually replaced by formal social control.

b) *Secondary Group-Control*

As we shift from primary to secondary group situations, we also shift from informal to formal modes of social controls. Secondary groups are generally larger, more impersonal and specialised in purpose. We do not use them to meet our needs for intimate human response, but to help us to get certain jobs done. If a secondary group does not meet our needs, we can generally withdraw with no greater anguish, for our emotional lives are not deeply involved. To maintain our status in the secondary group is desirable but not a desperate emotional necessity as it is in the primary group. True, it is possible in our society for people to change their primary groups --

leave their families, divorce their mates, find new friends- but the process is generally painful. The secondary group is a less compelling control agency than the primary group. The secondary group is still an effective control. Some of the informal controls still operate in the secondary groups. No normal person wants to appear ridiculous at the union meeting or as the Chamber of Commerce banquet. Such informal controls as ridicule, laughter, gossip and ostracism operate in secondary group settings but generally with a reduced impact. Meanwhile, other more formal controls are characteristic of secondary groups- ' parliamentary rules of order, official regulations and standardised procedures, propaganda, promotion and titles, rewards and prizes, formal penalties and punishments etc.

### c) *Control Through Force*

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

When the individual does not wish to follow these regulations, the group tries to compel him to do so. In such larger groups, he is too anonymous for informal group pressures to be brought upon him. Furthermore, in larger groups with complex cultures, some subcultures that conflict with the culture of the majority are also likely to develop. The individual who rejects the conventional regulations of the society may find emotional support from other persons who think and act as he does. Although he is still subject to group pressure, it now comes from a non-conforming group, which insulates him from the pressures of conventional society. So, conventional society uses force upon him-force in the form of laws and formal punishments-to compel his conformity.

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## **4.7 NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL CONTROL**

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The progress of any society depends upon the effective functioning of its various groups, organizations and institutions, which is often jeopardized by the clash of interests of its members. Individuals as well as groups want to serve their interests without caring for others. The lack of opportunities for all aggravates the problem further and the dominant group members1 groups want to monopolize and maintain their hegemony over limited societal resources. Also, the various types of 'isms' prevailing in society hamper the smooth social system, and therefore, exercise of some sort of control on the part of society to limit the fissiparous and selfish



tendencies of human beings become imperative. It will be difficult to maintain social equilibrium without proper adjustment among various social units and therefore, arises the need to control the deviant behaviour of people and promote the socially desirable actions of others. Social control helps us to achieve stability in the social organization, as individuals are not allowed to act contrary to the norms of society. They are persuaded and motivated to behave in accordance with the established social norms and values. Consequently, the instability and uncertainty make room for the regularity and continuity in the society.

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Check Your Progress Exercise 1.1

**Note :**

- I. Use the space provided for your answer.
- II. Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

**Q.1** What do you understand by social control?

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**Q.2** What is the importance of social control?

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#### 4.8 LET US SUM UP

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In this unit, we have given the meaning and definition of social control. The purposes of social control have also been pointed out. Social control vis-a-vis self-control, socialization and maladjustment has also been examined. The need and importance of social control i.e. why social control is required have also been discussed. The twin goals of social control are:

- i) to establish and maintain order in society; and
- ii) to check deviant tendencies and behaviour.

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#### 4.9 GLOSSARY

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**Social order:** A condition/situation of a society/group characterized by the of harmonious social relationships.

**Conformity:** Behaviour that is in accord with the expectations of a social group. It reflects compliance to the rules or social norms and is expressed in responses that are prescribed by group customs -or norms.

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

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#### 4.10 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: ANSWER KEYS

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**Answer to Q.1:** Social control may be defined as any social or cultural means by which systematic and relatively consistent restraints are imposed upon individual behaviour and by which human beings are persuaded and motivated to behave in accordance, with the traditions, patterns and value framework thought necessary for the smooth functioning of a group or society.

**Answer to Q.2:** First of all, social control maintains social equilibrium without which proper adjustment among various social units is not possible. Second, there is a need to control the deviant behaviour of the people on the one hand, and promote the socially desirable actions on the others. Thirdly, social control helps us to achieve the stability in the social organization as individuals are not allowed to act contrary to the norms of the social system. Fourthly, social control is also necessary to maintain the healthy traditions of our society and to transfer them from one generation to another. Fifthly, unity in group members belonging to different socio-cultural background can only be maintained by the effective system of social control.

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# UNIT 5 TYPES AND AGENCIES OF SOCIAL CONTROL

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## STRUCTURE

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Learning Objectives
- 5.3 Types of Social Control
  - 5.3.1 Informal Social Control
  - 5.3.2 Formal Social Control
  - 5.3.3 Conscious and Unconscious Control
  - 5.3.4 Direct and Indirect Control
  - 5.3.5 Positive and Negative Social Control
  - 5.3.6 Organised, Unorganised and Automatic Social Control
  - 5.3.7 Autocratic and Democratic Social Control
- 5.4 Mechanisms, Agencies and Consequences of Social Control
  - 5.4.1 Types of Mechanisms
  - 5.4.2 Agencies of Social Control
  - 5.4.3 Consequences of Social Control
- 5.5 Limits on Social Control
- 5.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 5.7 Glossary
- 5.8 Check Your Progress: Answer Keys
- 5.9 References

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## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

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In sociology, the study of social control occupies a place of central importance. The existence and persistence of organized social life is not possible without some minimum degree of control over its members. Social control is needed for maintaining social order. What do we mean by “social order”? A social order refers to a system of people, relationships and customs, all these together operating smoothly to accomplish the work of a society (Horton and Hunt 1981). No society can function effectively unless behaviour can be predicted. Orderliness depends on a network of roles. The network of reciprocal rights and duties is kept in force through social control.

In this unit we shall first focus on the meaning and nature of social control with the help of some definitions, including an examination of a few concepts which are closely related to social control. The discussion will be followed by a look at the goals and methods of social control. Then, we will describe the various types of

mechanisms, means and consequences of social control. Finally, we will also discuss the factors which limit the effectiveness of social control.

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## **5.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

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After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- define social control and describe its nature along with some concepts related to it;
- list the goals of social control;
- identify and illustrate the consequences of social control as it affects the individuals as well as the society; and
- describe the important factors that set a limit to the effectiveness of social control.

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## **5.3 TYPES OF SOCIAL CONTROL**

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

### **5.3.1 Informal Social Control**

This is also known as primary social control, as it is more effective in what sociologists call primary groups. The primary groups are relatively more homogeneous, small, compact and intimate groups. Members are tied to each other and to the group by feelings of personal loyalty. A family, playgroups, neighbourhood, rural community, and a simple primitive society are some examples of such compact social groupings. In such societies every individual, is constantly surrounded by very potent and subtle mechanisms of social control. Within a family the individual is under the control of his or her parents and other family members. Family, in turn, is under the control of neighbourhood or kinship groups, and these, in turn, are under the watchful control of the whole society. Thus, no individual or group can be free from social control.

We may say that in such social settings, social control exists like a set of concentric circles surrounding individuals and groups. The important characteristics of this type of control are that it is informal, spontaneous, and unplanned. Usually the group

shows its disapproval to the deviating member by ridicule gossip, opprobrium, criticism, ostracism and sometimes application of physical force and coercion. Since the group is compact, ties are strong, members are personally known and the individual has little choice of an alternative group's membership. He cannot afford to ignore the disapproval of his groups and so he has to conform to his group's expectations. Such methods of control are effective not only in primitive societies in which primary groups and relations abound, but are also effective in modern complex societies such as ours, particularly within secondary groups (such as voluntary associations, clubs and trade unions etc.) where such informal controls are effective to achieve the goals of the organisation.

#### **Activity 4.1**

Have you ever experienced social ostracism in your own or in the life of someone whom you know? Write an essay on the event(s) and relate in to the notion of "social control in my society" in about two pages. Share your essay with those of other students at your study centre.

### **5.3.2 Formal Social Control**

This is also known as secondary social control as it is usually found in larger, secondary social groups. Modern complex societies such as ours, are good examples of such social groupings. In such societies we find a large number of groups, which are characterised by impersonal relations, and are oriented to certain specific objectives. A political party, trade union, factory, office, students association, may be some examples. In these secondary groupings, relations among members are more formal and less intimate. Their relationships mean that informal controls such as ridicule, criticism or 'gossip' do not operate here. It is a well-known fact in sociology that informal groups do develop within such formal organisations. In a university or a college, certain cliques' informal controls are more effective. The point is that such informal groups which develop within formal organisations may either inhibit or facilitate formal secondary controls and affect the performance of the organisation.

Generally speaking, in secondary groupings informal controls take their place. Both positive sanctions in the form of reward, honour, and negative sanctions by way of punishments, expulsion etc. are used in this form of control. In the larger society, such controls are exemplified by law, police, courts, prisons and other agencies of law enforcement. Apart from these more visible forms, formal control mechanisms also include well organised propaganda through mass media, to 'engineer' social control in society. In large secondary groupings informal controls are weakened due to growing anonymity, mobility, and conflicting norms and values. Intimacy declines and members do not have personal or emotional feelings towards each other. They frequently move from one place to another or from one group to another. Thus, they can easily escape from the controls of some particular group. Moreover, in a complex society, there is always a conflict of norms and values of different groups. One group may approve a conduct which may be disapproved by some other group. Under such circumstances, recourse is ultimately taken to the formal agencies of social control.

### **5.3.3 Conscious and Unconscious Control**

The American sociologists C.H. Cooley and L. L. Bemard have described the forms of social control as conscious and unconscious. The human behaviour can be mainly categorised as conscious and unconscious. The conscious behaviour of human beings refers to such acts and actions as are done deliberately and in a planned way e.g. a subordinate employee does not sit in the chair of his boss and also, while talking to his boss he remains alert and attentive. On the other hand, some human actions are done unconsciously and the person himself does not know why he is doing so because repeated behaviour pattern becomes a part and parcel of his personality, e.g. while putting I on our clothes, we follow a certain pattern (eg. we put on our undergarments first and not after having put on upper garments). In short, in the situation where we behave cautiously and deliberately, the system is termed as conscious social control, and in the situations we behave spontaneously and unconsciously, the system of control is termed as unconscious social control. In the first type, we can include the prevalent patterns of eating and taking water, untouchability, and marriage within the caste system. In the latter type, we can include the control which is exercised under the influence of traditions, sanskars and religious prescriptions.

### **5.3.4 Direct and Indirect Control**

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

### **5.3.5 Positive and Negative Social Control**

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

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

their wrong doings. Punishment, ridicule, criticism, excommunication, imprisonment, fine and capital sentence are the examples of negative social control.

### 5.3.6 Organised, Unorganised and Automatic Social Control

Gurvitch and Moore have discussed the forms of social control as organised, unorganised and automatic. Under the process of organised social control human behaviour is influenced by a set of social agencies having clearly defined 'do's and 'don'ts' for individuals. Educational institutions, family, state, etc. exercise such type of social control. Unorganised social control influences the personality of human beings through the means of rites and rituals, customs and traditions, folkways and mores, etc. In the automatic social control, individuals are themselves motivated to act in order to meet their felt needs. Persons themselves embrace control over their immediate and long-term needs based on their experiences, values, ideals, thinking and mores. Religious prescriptions are examples of such type of social control which are not imposed upon individuals but are willingly and automatically adopted by them. Such type of control is enduring.

### 5.3.7 Autocratic and Democratic Social Control

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

#### Check Your Progress Exercise 2.1

**Note:**

- I. Use the space given below for your answer.
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Q.1** Write in brief about formal and informal forms of social control.

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## 5.4 MECHANISMS, AGENCIES AND CONSEQUENCES OF SOCIAL CONTROL

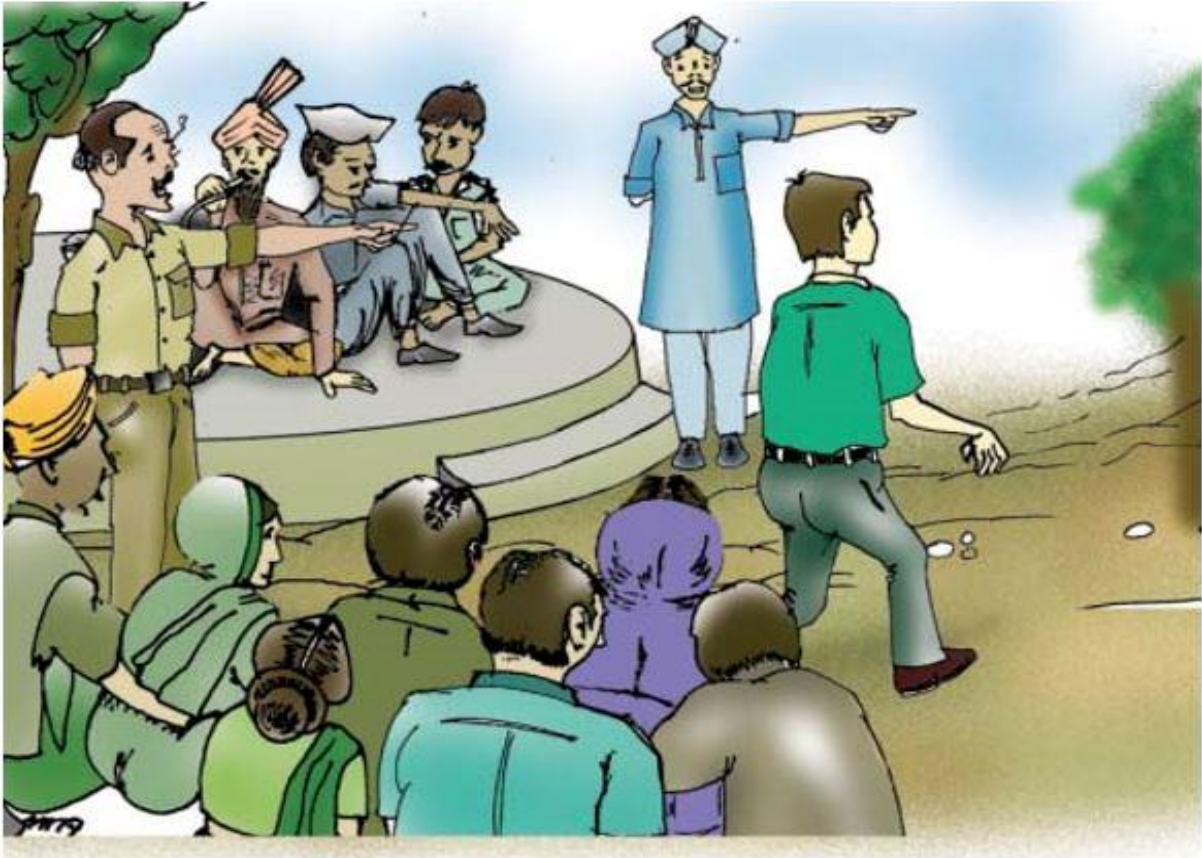
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Every society has devised various mechanisms to exercise control. Social control mechanisms are viewed by sociologists as all those social arrangements that (i) prevent such strains as may develop from the individual's place in the social structure and (ii) prevent the strains from leading to deviance (see Brearley 1947:65). Every society has certain means to exercise social control, and there are clear consequences of exercising social control for promoting stability and conformity in societies.

### 5.4.1 Types of Mechanisms

Mechanisms of social control can be classified into the following four categories:

- i) **Preventive mechanisms:** These mechanisms are designed to prevent such situations from developing that might lead to deviance. Socialization, social pressures, establishment of role priorities, force are some of the mechanisms through which conformity is promoted or the occurrence of deviance is prevented.
- ii) **Mechanisms to manage tensions:** Institutionalized safety valves like humor, games and sports, leisure, religious rituals are regarded as outlets for the tensions generated by social restraints, and cultural inconsistencies within a society.
- iii) **Mechanisms to check or change deviant behavior:** Sanctions are used by every society to bring about conformity, and check or change deviant behaviour. Sanctions have been classified into :
  - a) **Psychological sanctions:** Negative sanctions are reproof, ridicule non-acceptance, ostracism etc. Positive sanctions include acceptance in the group, praise, invitation to inner circle events, verbal or physical pat on the back gifts etc.
  - b) **Physical sanctions:** These are mostly negative. The most important forms of physical sanctions are expulsion, physical punishment and extermination.
  - c) **Economic sanctions :** These include positive rewards like promotion of a loyal sincere worker, grant of tenders to civic minded businessmen etc., or negative sanctions like threat of loss or reduction in one's income (e.g. threat of discharge by employer may prevent the employee from continuing his strike), economic boycott etc.



**Village Ex-Communicates one of their member**

#### EX-COMMUNICATION: A MECHANISM OF SOCIAL CONTROL

- iv) **Propaganda Mechanisms:** Another important mechanism that can bring about change in the desired direction, is propaganda or moulding public opinion. Propaganda is a deliberate attempt to control the behaviour and interrelationships of members in order to change the feelings, attitudes and values. For example, the efforts of the government to control population growth through family planning propaganda (see Horton and Hunt 1981).

#### 5.4.2 Agencies of Social Control

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

- i) **Custom**

Social codes found in every society provide standardised ways of doing things. These ways, known as customs, have come to be accepted in the group or society. Some degree of pressure is always exerted on the individual to make one conform to customs. In case, they are violated the group applies some sanctions or penalties of

varying degrees of severity. The severity would depend on the importance attached to the particular customary regulation.

Custom is sustained by common acceptance. Informal social pressures are brought to bear, in the case of violation of customs. Violation of mores, on the other hand, inspire intense reaction and the punishment may involve expulsion from the group, harsh ridicule, imprisonment or in some cases even death. To function effectively in a culture it is imperative that one learns the appropriate folkways (customs and conventions) and mores of that culture. Let us now see the role of law as a means of social control.

## ii) **Law**

Certain norms become laws when a society feels strongly, about them, Laws are formal standardised expressions of norms, enacted by legislative bodies to regulate certain types of behaviour. Laws not merely state what behaviours are permitted and not permitted, but they also state the punishment for violating the law.

As we shift from simple societies to the modern ones, the role of law as a mechanism of social control assumes greater significance. In modern, complex societies the more informal types of social control are weakened. Though law may itself be based on custom, it has three distinct characteristics which separate it from custom: first, it has politicality as it is upheld by the political authority of the state. Second, it has uniformity, as it is applicable throughout the jurisdiction of the state on all groups or parts of society. Third, it has penal sanction, as each law is enforced on the strength of penalty imposed by the State (Courts) in case of violation. There are distinct agencies such as police, courts, prisons etc. to enforce the law. However, when a law does not reflect folkways and mores, its enforcement is likely to be ignored or given low priority. For example, even though the minimum age at marriage for girls and boys in India is fixed by law, many communities ignore these prescriptions. When there is a conflict between custom and law, it becomes difficult to impose the law. We will now turn to the role of religion.

### **Activity 2.2**

Scan the newspapers of a week for any news item which describes how the customs of a community clash with the legal edict such as, practice of dowry, or sati. Write a page on the event and its sociological implications. Compare your note with those of other students at your study centre.

## iii) **Religion**

Sociologists are interested in studying how religion is organised, and what impact it has on the members of a society in terms of controlling their behaviour. They are also interested in the kinds of belief system developed by people, in different situations and circumstances, and how religious beliefs change over time as external situations and circumstances change. All religions are seen to have the following elements: (a) things considered sacred (b) a set of believers (c) a set of rituals and ceremonies (d) a system of beliefs such as a creed, doctrine or a holy book (e) a

certain form of organisation.

Religion contributes to stability and order in society in that it reinforces social norms providing sanctions for violation of norms and reinforcing basic values. Today, with the explosion of scientific knowledge, some customs, religious and moral interpretations of behaviour are no longer considered binding or accepted. The sacred books of most of religions include rules for ordering social relationships. It is especially explicit about matters pertaining to the family, marriage, divorce and inheritance. Though laws are challenging some of the practices upheld by religious teachings, beliefs and experiences associated with religion are still seen to be essential for both personal identity, and social cohesion. Education too is an important means of social control. Let us see how this is so.

#### iv) **Education**

The institution of education helps to control human behaviour through socialization of the young and adult members of society. The different levels of formal education transmit the culture of society, to individuals within the society. In discharging their socialisation function, schools and colleges transmit many of the society's values. The individuals learn to conform to rules, be honest, and be diligent and to co-operate with others etc. Another value of education is that it prepares students for their adult occupational roles. Education is further valued for the understanding it imparts, about the social and physical environment. However, the fact that education tries to impart such values, is no indication that everyone who goes to school and college learns and accepts these values. Were the educational system and educators and other socialisers always successful, there would be no deviance and no social conflict. This brings us to the topic of family.

#### v) **Family**

Across the world, the institution of family performs certain important functions. These include socialisation, imparting of affection and emotional support, regulation of sex and reproduction. Family is not only an important agency of socialisation but of social control as well. It is in the family that an individual normally has his most intimate, and important social relation. Some of human beings' most basic needs, both physical and psychological are fulfilled within the family. Though the more formal and more coercive measures of social control are generally absent in the family, other informal means such as ridicule, criticism, disapproval, loss of prestige, withdrawal of rewards etc. are very potent means of control. In fact, an individual always seeks emotional support of his or her near and dear ones in the family in times of stress and tension. The mere threat of withdrawal of this support, is sufficient to bring the recalcitrant member back into line. Every family has its own set of moral values and customs. These are enforced upon its members, particularly the younger ones through disciplinary measures and a system of rewards and punishments. We now turn to leadership.

#### vi) **Leadership**

It can play a very important role in social control. It develops out of the process of interaction itself. Leaders have guided the destinies of groups, communities, and nations. If the leader enjoys group support, his or her suggestions and directions lead the members towards some common values and goals, and may help to promote order and stability in society. In this process mass media can play a very important role.

#### vii) **Mass Media**

In traditional smaller societies face to face contact was the only means of communication. In modern technological societies the media of mass communication, such as newspapers, radio and television, are a means of not only communication but also of social control. Much of the public opinion and propaganda, for example, (and other social and cultural groups) make use of these means to mould public opinion, and to change or control attitudes and behaviour of the vast mass of population. New values and life styles, fashions, wants, ideas etc. are thrust upon the public with a view to redirect and control their behaviour in a particular way. We will now consider the role of force in social control.

#### viii) **Force**

Though some sociologists have neglected or under emphasised the element of force or physical coercion in social relationships, the role of force in social control cannot be underestimated. In some types of societies, such as the totalitarian states and colonial regimes, physical force and violence are used as significant instruments of control. In fact, it can be asserted that physical violence is the oldest and ultimate means of social control. Even modern, liberal democratic societies maintain police and armed forces. This signifies the fact that the resort to force and violence is the ultimate answer to many issues, when other means have failed. On the other hand, communal and caste violence, are examples of how force is used by interested groups to control and coerce each other though it is not legally sanctioned.

#### ix) **Language**

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

#### x) **Punishment and Reward**

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

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

Thus punishment and reward are important means of social control.

**xi) Folkways**

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

**xii) Mores**

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

**xiii) Propaganda**

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

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

**xiv) Public Opinion**

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

**Check Your Progress Exercise 2.2**

**Note:**

- I. Use the space provided for your answer.
- II. Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

**Q.2** List out the major agencies of social control.

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**5.4.3 Consequences of Social Control**

Though social control is seen as necessary for promoting continuing stability and conformity in societies, it can become dysfunctional at times. The following are some of the dysfunctional aspects of social control.

### **i) Exploitation**

Social control may sometimes become a subtle means of exploitation. Some of the dominant groups or individuals may simply use it to fulfil their own vested interests. These interests may be political, economic or social. In such cases, the real motivations are hidden under the cover of some laudable objectives. A ruling party may try to perpetuate its rule, or a business firm may try to sell its substandard goods by means of utilising the techniques of social control.

### **ii) Inhibiting Reform and Change**

Social control may have limiting consequences in that it may sometimes inhibit creativity, and obstruct attempts at constructive reforms and social changes.

### **iii) Psychological Pressures**

Social control may also exert enormous amount of emotional and psychological pressures on some individuals. The best example is that of the institutions such as the prisons and mental hospitals. The strict regime and oppressive atmosphere sometimes create mental tensions and even illnesses among them. Similarly, where parents have very strict standards of discipline, their children's personalities do not develop in a normal way. In repressive police-states, many individuals, likewise, suffer from stress and tension. Thus, the individual has to pay a price for social control in psychological terms.

### **iv) Social Tensions**

Social control may also lead to social tensions, particularly in a large, complex society. Here, there may be different groups with their distinctive interests, norms, and values which may conflict with each other. When attempts are made by one or more groups to impose their own standards on others, conflict and struggle become inevitable.

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## **5.5 LIMITS ON SOCIAL CONTROL**

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Effectiveness of social control is limited due to the following factors:

- i) Each group is organized around norms and values. Social control is intended to check deviation from these standards. Yet, it is not possible to contain deviation completely. Some deviation from prescribed norms will always be there. Each group or society has to determine the limit of tolerance of deviant conduct and thus set a realistic limit on social control.
- ii) The effectiveness of social control is also limited by the degree of consistency in the cultural directives. If the cultural prescriptions are uncertain and inconsistent, then social control cannot operate successfully. This is why in a rapidly changing society, in which normative standards become inconsistent, mechanisms of social control are generally weak. Individuals may not know what is expected of them in a particular situation.
- iii) In a complex society, it is not generally possible to impose social control



uniformly on all groups which are divided on the basis of class, caste, religion, race etc. Sometimes the uniform application of law also encounters numerous difficulties. In our country, despite the constitutional directive to have a uniform civil code, it has not been possible to evolve one so far.

- iv) Social control implies huge economic costs to the society. The control of deviance requires a disproportionate share of societal attention and resources. Huge expenditure has to be incurred on the establishment of social control agencies such as the police, prisons, mental hospitals, etc. There is a limit beyond which a poor country such as ours cannot afford to deploy such resources at the cost of other development programmes.

### **Check Your Progress Exercise 2.3**

**Note:**

- I. Use the space given below for your answer.
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

**Q.3** What are the four major mechanisms to check deviant behaviour? Use two lines for your answer.

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.....  
.....  
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**Q.4** In traditional society, mass media is the only source of social control. Tick the correct box.

Yes

No

**Q.5** Mention three dysfunctional aspects of social control. Use three lines for your answer.

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## **5.6 LET US SUM UP**

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In the previous unit, we have focused on the nature, approaches, goals and importance of social control. We have discussed that social control is a pervasive feature of social life. Social control means that every society has some rules which have to be obeyed, and some standards of conduct which have to be followed.

You also learnt that different societies have different methods to exercise control. Various types of social control are discussed here. Some of the important mechanisms and agencies of social control discussed in this unit are custom, law,

religion, education, family, leadership, mass media, force etc. Then, we have also looked at some of the consequences of social control from the point of view of both the society and the individual. Finally, we pointed out some of the factors that limit the effectiveness of social control.

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## 5.7 GLOSSARY

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**Dysfunctional consequences:** Certain results which are not recognised by the social norms.

**Social category:** Analytical tool used to categorise people having some characteristics in common viz., occupation class, middle class etc.

**Social restraints:** Collective opposition against non-conformity to social norms and institutions.

**Social sanction:** Punishment given for the non-conformity to social norms.

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## 5.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: ANSWER KEYS

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

**Answer to Q.2:** Social control is exercised in a number of ways by the authorities concerned. Some of these are: belief, social suggestions, social ideals, art, leader, humour and ridicule, fashion, language, punishment, rewards folkways, mores, propaganda, custom, public opinion, religion and morality, law.

**Answer to Q.3:** a) customs; b) law; c) religion, d) education, and e) family

**Answer to Q.4:** No.

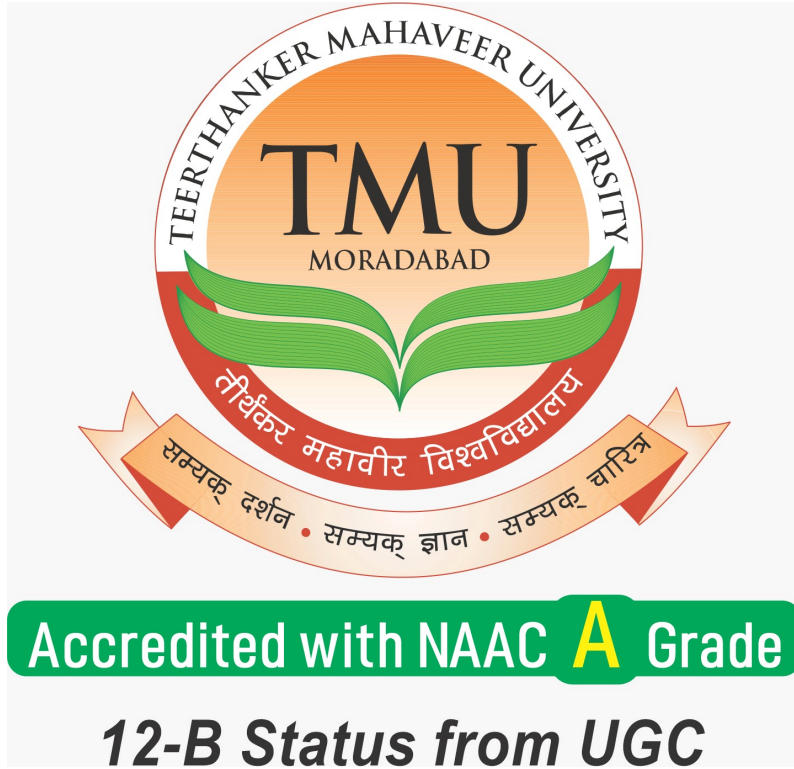
**Answer to Q.5:** a) It may lead to exploitation of the weaker section by the dominant one.  
b) It may cause psychological pressure.  
c) It may cause social tension.

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## 5.9 REFERENCES

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## **BLOCK-3**

### **SOCIAL PROCESSES**

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**UNIT 1 MEANING, DEFINITION AND TYPES OF SOCIAL PROCESSES**

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**UNIT 2 ASSOCIATIVE SOCIAL PROCESSES: COOPERATION, ASSIMILATION AND ACCOMMODATION**

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**UNIT 3 DISSOCIATIVE SOCIAL PROCESSES: CONFLICT AND COMPETITION**

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## **BLOCK 3 SOCIAL PROCESSES**

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The previous Block has discussed the study of social control - the means through which people are led to fill their roles as expected - begins with the study of social order within which people interact. Further, social control has been discussed in great detail as one of the mechanism of maintaining social order-how it operates as a whole, as a changing equilibrium. The present Block discusses the concept of social processes. It consists of three Units. **Unit 1** defines the meaning and characteristics of social processes. Associative social processes such as cooperation, assimilation and accommodation are discussed in **Unit 2**. Similarly, **Unit 3** denotes the dissociative social processes like conflict and competition and their features and this Unit also discusses the interrelationship among cooperation, conflict and competition and their relevance.

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# UNIT 1 MEANING, DEFINITION AND TYPES OF SOCIAL PROCESSES

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## STRUCTURE

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Objectives
- 1.3 Social Interaction and Social Processes: Meaning and Definition
  - 1.3.1 Social Contact
  - 1.3.2 Direct and Symbolic Interaction
  - 1.3.3 Inter-stimulation and Response
  - 1.3.4 Importance of Interaction
  - 1.3.5 Communication
- 1.4 Types of Social Interaction
  - 1.4.1 Associative social processes
  - 1.4.2 Dissociative Social Processes
- 1.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.6 Glossary
- 1.7 Check Your Progress: Answer Keys
- 1.8 References

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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

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This unit focuses on three important aspects of management of individuals in a society. Every individual interacts with other individuals in order to survive. In the beginning the interaction is with parent or caretaker, later on with other individuals in the society. As interaction takes place there are cooperation, competition and conflicts emerging in these relationships. The term 'social processes' refers to repetitive forms of behaviour, which are commonly found in social life. One of the most extensive treatments of social processes is found in Park and Burgess, Introduction to the Science of Sociology (1921). This highly influential textbook of an earlier period is primarily devoted to the classification and analysis of social processes. In recent decades sociologists have become less interested in social processes themselves and more interested in intensive analysis of behaviour in specific institutional and cultural settings. Yet it remains important for students to be aware of the major social processes found in all groups and societies. The most frequent classification of major social processes is in terms of associative and dissociative social processes such as Cooperation, Accommodation, Assimilation, Competition and Conflict.

The present unit deals with the meaning and definition of the concept of social interaction and social process.

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## 1.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- explain the meaning and definition of social interaction and social process
- define and explain types of social Processes
- know the interrelationship between different types of social processes

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## 1.3 SOCIAL INTERACTION AND SOCIAL PROCESS: MEANING AND DEFINITION

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

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

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

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

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

is only a necessary, not a sufficient basis of contact. Individuals can be in material contact without being in social contact. For example, two tribes living on opposite sides of swamp and having nothing to do with each other may nevertheless be bitten by mosquitoes that continually carry malaria from one tribe to another. It is not merely physical contact that counts, but meaningful or symbolic contact. Good will may be expressed by either handshake or a spoken phrase, a letter or a smile. Added to the sensory stimulus is a meaningful stimulus. A dead man's will is an indirect and tenuous material link with his heirs, but its physical character is far less important than its meaning. Until material or sensory contact acquires meaning for the subjective selves of the persons concerned, it is not social in the human senses. The social behaviour of human beings consists of acquired responses to the meaningful responses of others. Human interaction in other words, is communicative interaction. The social behaviour of human beings consists of acquired responses to the meaningful responses of others. Human interaction, in other words, is communicative interaction.

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

Each and every person is a social and cultural being. It is very difficult for people to live in isolation. Human beings always live in various groups and associations. They act and behave in a certain manner. In each and every moment, the behaviour of each individual is affected by the behaviour of others. This interaction is the essence of social life. Green defines social interaction as “the mutual influences that affects groups. Also these groups affect one another in their attempts to solve problems and in their striving towards goals”. According to Dawson and Gettys, “Social interaction is a process whereby men interpenetrate the minds of each other.” Gish defined social interaction as, “it is the reciprocal influence in which human beings exert on each other through inter stimulation and response.” Thus we can say that social interaction refers to the entire range of social relationships, wherein there is reciprocal stimulation and response between individuals.

Social interaction produces some definite influence upon social relations that exists among human beings. Two essential conditions of social interaction are:

- i) Social contact
- ii) Communication

It should now be clear that a significant classification of the kinds of interaction must



keep in view the meaningful character of social contact.

### **1.3.1 Social Contact**

Social contact can be established through the medium of radio, letters, telephones and other media of communication. Social contact is the first and important phase of interaction. It may be positive or negative. If it is positive, they lead to cooperation, mutual understanding and assimilation. If it is negative, they create hatred, jealousy and conflict. The above forms of social interaction are termed as social processes. MacIver observes, “social process is the manner in which the relations of the members of a group, are brought together to acquire a certain distinctive character. According to Gillin and Gillin, “by social processes we mean those ways of interacting by which we can establish system of relationships or find out what happens when changes of relationships occur or what happens when changes disturb already existing modes of life.” In this context we can use three important terms, viz., cooperation, competition and conflict.

### **1.3.2 Direct and Symbolic Interaction**

Interaction may be direct or symbolic. Direct interaction refers to the activities of a person which may be seen in such conduct of pushing, fighting, embracing etc. through bodily contact with other individuals. Symbolic interaction consists of vocal or other gestures and language, spoken or written. A symbol is a summary of experiences. It may represent a subject, or value or any expected response.

### **1.3.3 Inter-Stimulation and Response**

Inter-stimulation and response constitute the central nature of interaction. One stimulates the actions, thoughts or emotions of another person and other responds accordingly. Interaction increases mental activity, fosters comparison of ideas, sets new tasks, accelerates and discovers the potentialities of the individual.

### **1.3.4 Importance of Social Interaction**

The basic foundation of society is Social interaction. It is the most inclusive social process. Individual can't sustain in a society without interaction. Groups develop through interaction with other groups and disintegrate without some stimulation from outside. Society exists only when a large number of persons are interacting. Human interaction takes place in the context of social expectations, rules and norms. It is the process through which culture and structure develops and changes.

### **1.3.5 Communication**

Social interaction requires essential communication. Besides this, communications are essential adjuncts of social contact. Language, gestures, symbols, radio, telephone, television, newspaper etc. are the media for communication. Human interaction is undoubtedly a communicative interaction. In this context, we can further say that social interaction usually takes place in the form of co-operation, competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation.

Cooperation means working together in the pursuit of a common interest. It is a joint activity. It is the conscious form of social interaction where two or more persons work together to gain a common end. Cooperation may be of different types. Cooperation for human beings is both a psychological and social necessity. On the other hand, competition is an unconscious, impersonal and continuous struggle between individuals and groups for satisfaction. It is a contest to obtain something which does not exist in a quantity sufficient to meet the demand.

Competition, like co-operation, is indispensable in social life. Competition performs many useful functions in society. At different levels, competition occurs. It may be economic, cultural, social, and political. There is no society which is exclusively competitive or exclusively cooperative. Besides competition and cooperation, conflict is another important process in human relations.

Conflict is a conscious action as well as personal activity. It lacks continuity but it is a universal phenomenon. Causes of conflict are mainly individual differences, cultural differences, clash of interest, social change etc. Besides this, conflict serves constructive and positive ends. Conflict has both integrative and disintegrative effects.

Interaction is a two-way process whereby each individual or group stimulates the other and in varying degrees modifies the behaviour of the participants. The behaviour and personality characteristics of individual members of a group affect the behaviour of others and make a significant impact over the functioning of a group as a whole. The behaviour of each individual is affected by the behaviour of other individual. This is known as interaction process and it is the essence of social life. 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." Social interaction refers to the entire range of social relationship, wherein there is reciprocal stimulation and response between individuals. Social interaction is of a dual nature, of persons with persons and of groups with groups. The main forms of social interaction are cooperation, competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation. Combinations of these are called social processes. Social interaction and social process are:

- i. Sequence of events
- ii. Repetition of events
- iii. Relationship between events
- iv. Continuity of events
- v. Special results.

Actually society is an arena where there is expression of different social processes. Social processes are fundamental to the life of a community. Society exists wherever several individuals are in reciprocal relationships. It constitutes an aggregation of individuals in a society. So we can say that there are two forms of social interaction i.e.

- i. conjunctive
- ii. disjunctive

Social contact initiates interaction. Social process is a variety of view-points. Social behaviour can be classified on the basis of - (a) their intrinsic nature, (b) the inherent drives, instincts, interests, desires etc. and (c) the observable behaviours upon which observers can agree. Social processes are merely the characteristic ways in which interaction occurs. People interact through social relationships which involve reciprocal obligations, reciprocal statuses and reciprocal ends and means. These social relationships can be examined by the pattern or mode of interaction. These kinds of interaction are called social processes.

Different sociologists defined social processes in different ways. A. W. Green defined social processes as merely the characteristic ways in which interaction occurs. According to Ginsberg, "social processes mean the various modes of interaction between individuals and groups including cooperation and conflict, social differentiation and integration, development, arrest and decay." According to Horton and Hunt, the term social process refers to the "repetitive forms of behavior which are commonly found in social life."

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## **1.4 TYPES OF SOCIAL PROCESSES**

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We are concerned with two types of social processes such as associative social processes and dissociative social processes. Actually interaction occurs in the form of the above mentioned processes.

### **1.4.1 Associative Social Processes**

Associative social processes are the social processes which work for the integration and development of society. The associative processes of social interaction are of positive type of interaction. The associative process is always worked for the integration and benefit of society. These processes bring progress and stability in society. Associative processes are also called as conjunctive processes. The associative processes include cooperation, accommodation, adaptation, adjustment, integration and assimilation. Here we shall discuss about three types of interaction. They are co-operation, assimilation and accommodation.

### **1.4.2 Dissociative Social Process**

The processes that make special contribution towards social differentiation, antagonism and division are called dissociative processes. The dissociative processes of social interaction are of negative type of interaction.

These are also called disintegration of society. It hinders the progress and development of society. Sociologists say that these processes also strengthen the process of social solidarity. Adam Smith defined the role of competition in the economic activities of production, distribution and consumption. Similarly, the contribution of conflict in social structure has been systematically discussed, by Karl Marx, Coser, Dahrendorf, Park and Burgess. Competition, conflict and mutual opposition are included in dissociative processes.

### Check Your Progress Exercise 1.1

**Note:**

- I. Use the space provided for your answer.
- II. Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

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

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### 1.5 LET US SUM UP

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The interactions – cooperation, competition and conflict are elementary, universal and fundamental form. Generally, social contact initiates interaction. Interaction refers to an action done in response to another action, but when this interaction through repetition leads to a result, then it is called a social process. The essential elements of social process are:

- sequence of events,
- repetition of events,
- relationship between events,
- continuity of events; and
- Special result

Not only this, there are some classification which classify social behaviour on the basis of (a) their intrinsic nature, (b) inherent drives, instincts, interests, drives and (c) the observable behaviour upon which observers can agree. In this context we are concerned with the fundamental types, i.e., cooperation, competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation.

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### 1.6 GLOSSARY

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- Attitude:** An enduring system of evaluations or feelings in favor of or against a person or group.
- Communication:** The exchange of meaning and mutual influence.
- Group:** Two or more people who interact and influence one another.
- Group dynamics:** The way in which changes take in the behaviour of other members of the group. Groups can mobilize powerful force which may be constructive or destructive.
- Interaction:** Interaction is a two-way process whereby each individual or group stimulates the other and in varying degrees which

modifies the behaviour of the participants.

**Social cohesion:** Degree to which group members share common beliefs, practices and values and thus act together.

**Social distance:** Degree to which individuals are willing to interact with people from different social background.

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## 1.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: ANSWER KEYS

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

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

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## 1.8 REFERENCES

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1. Davis, K. (1954). *Human society*, NY: McGraw-Hill Book Company.
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## **UNIT 2    ASSOCIATIVE        SOCIAL        PROCESSES:                  COOPERATION,    ASSIMILATION        AND                  ACCOMMODATION**

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### **STRUCTURE**

- 2.1    Introduction
- 2.2    Learning Objectives
- 2.3    Cooperation: Meaning and Definition
  - 2.3.1    Characteristics of Cooperation
  - 2.3.2    Types of Cooperation
  - 2.3.3    Role of Cooperation
- 2.4    Assimilation: Meaning and Definition
  - 2.4.1    Characteristics of Assimilation
  - 2.4.2    Advantages and Disadvantages of Assimilation
- 2.5    Accommodation: Meaning and Definition
  - 2.5.1    Characteristics of Accommodation
  - 2.5.2    Forms of Accommodation
  - 2.5.3    Need of Accommodation
- 2.6    Let Us Sum Up
- 2.7    Glossary
- 2.8    Check Your Progress: Answer Keys
- 2.9    Model Questions
- 2.10    References

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### **2.1    INTRODUCTION**

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This unit focuses on three important aspects of management of individuals in a society. Every individual interacts with other individuals in order to survive. In the beginning the interaction is with parent or caretaker, later on with other individuals in the society. As positive interaction takes place there are cooperation, assimilation and accommodation emerging in these relationships. The present unit deals with all these three aspects and points out their importance and functions and how individuals work through their cooperation, assimilation and accommodation so as to achieve their stipulated goals.

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## **2.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

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After reading this unit, you will be able to;

- define and explain cooperation;
- describe about the social process of assimilation;
- term the process of accommodation.

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## **2.3 COOPERATION: MEANING AND DEFINITION**

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Cooperation is an integrating activity and is believed to be the opposite of competition. The word “cooperation” is derived from the two Latin words “co” meaning together and “operari” meaning to work. It is thus a joint activity in pursuit of common goals or shared rewards. It is goal oriented and conscious form of social interaction. Actually it involves two elements – (i) common end and (ii) organized effort. It is the process by which individuals or groups combine their effort, in a more or less organized way for the attainment of common objective. Generally co-operation means working together for a common objective. In many festivals, volunteers work together to collect money from different parts and want to organize the program successfully and everybody want to stretch forward their hands to celebrate the occasion successfully. Among the members of the group, there seems to be indication of good interaction process. All of them behave in co-operative manner. Co-operation is brought about by several factors which includes the following:

- a) desire for individual benefits
- b) desire to give and share
- c) total decision on common purposes
- d) situational necessity and
- e) desire to achieve larger goals

Cooperation implies a regard for the wishes of other people and is often regarded as unselfish, but human may also find that their selfish goals are best served by working together with their fellows.

According to Merrill and Eldredge, “cooperation is a form of social interaction wherein two or more persons work together to gain a common end.” Similarly, A.W. Green, “Cooperation is the continuous and common endeavor of two or more persons to perform a task or to reach a goal that is commonly cherished.” Fairchild, “Cooperation is the process by which the individuals or groups combine their effort, in a more or less organized way for the attainment of common objective.”

Thus, cooperation is a process of working together to achieve a common goal.

### **2.3.1 Characteristics of Cooperation**

The important characteristics of cooperation are as follows:

- a. Cooperation is a conscious process where individuals or groups work together consciously with an aim.

- b. It is a personal process
- c. Cooperation is a continuous process without which society cannot develop.
- d. Cooperation is a universal process which is found in all groups and societies.

### 2.3.2 Types of Cooperation

We can classify cooperation into five categories, viz.

- i) Direct cooperation
- ii) Indirect cooperation
- iii) Primary cooperation
- iv) Secondary cooperation and
- v) Tertiary cooperation

#### i) **Direct Cooperation:**

The essential characteristics of this kind of cooperation are that people do in company the thing which can also do separately. In this category cooperating individuals do things of common interest together and perform identical functions. Playing together, worshipping together are the examples of direct co-operation. Under this category we include all those activities in which people do like things together-play together, worship together, till the fields together, labour together in myriad ways. In such activities, there may be minor diversities of task-you wash, will dry-but their essential character is that people do in each other's company the things which they can also do separately or in isolation. They do them together, either because the face-to-face situation is itself a stimulus to the performance of the task or because it brings some other social satisfaction. Direct cooperation is exemplified also when people perform together tasks that would be difficult for one of them to perform alone as when they pull together on a line or together storm a barricade.

#### ii) **Indirect Cooperation:**

In this type of cooperation individual work towards a common end each has his own specialized functions. Thus, we can say that indirect cooperation is obtained when people perform dissimilar tasks towards a common end, i.e., each has its specialized role to play. In the modern society it is the indirect cooperation which is more in play than the direct cooperation because technological changes require specialization of skills and functions. Under this category we include all those activities in which people do unlike tasks but directed towards a single end. Here the principle of the division of labour comes into play, a principle that is: embedded in the very nature of social life. The division of labour is revealed in the procreation of life in the upbringing of a family. It is revealed whenever people pool their differences or for common ends. In industry, in government, in scientific research, even in recreational activities, functions tend to become more and more specialized. This process is more manifest in urban than in rural life, but the disappearance of the "husking bees" and "thrashing rings" signal the fact the people have to satisfy in other ways the need for social stimulation formerly satisfied through direct co-operation.



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

**iii) Primary Cooperation:**

There is an identity of interest between the individual and the group. It is the cooperation which is found in primary groups such as family. Not only family but also peer groups is also called primary cooperation where people have to choose face-to-face relations. We can also say that interest of the individual merge with the interest of the primary group.

**iv) Secondary Cooperation:**

Secondary cooperation is the characteristic feature of the modern civilized society and is mainly found in secondary groups. It is highly formalized and specialized. Most of the members of a group feel some loyalty towards the group, but the welfare of the group is not their first consideration. This type of cooperation is generally found in the secondary group, viz., government, industry, church and trade union etc.

**v) Tertiary Cooperation:**

This is the interaction between various big and small group to meet a particular situation. Here the individual or group who wants to compete with one another, come together and cooperate with each other for a specific purpose. In such type of cooperation the attitudes of the cooperating parties are purely opportunistic. It may be found between two or more political parties, castes, tribes, religious groups etc.

### **2.3.3 Role of Cooperation**

It is a universal phenomenon. Cooperation for human beings is both a psychological and social necessity. Individual as well as collective goals cannot be achieved without cooperation. Cooperation is essential for maintenance of social order. We cannot do anything without cooperation, if we are to live as members of the society. Family members cooperate with each other in terms of sharing economic, emotional and social requirements of one another. All the activity in each and every family is done in a cooperative way. People learn their first lesson in cooperation as members of the family. The physical, mental and even the spiritual needs of the individual remain unsatisfied if he does not agree to cooperate with his fellow members.

Cooperation helps society to progress. Progress in science and technology, agriculture and industry, transport and communication, etc would not have been possible without cooperation. Individuals who cooperate may generate unbounded enthusiasm. In democratic countries, cooperation has become a necessary condition of people's collective life and activities.

Within these common goals the members of the society have diverse individual and immediate goals or purposes. In the example of the farmer, wholesaler and retailer we have seen that the fulfillment of the individual goals is such that it enables the achievement of common goals. Individual goals are fulfilled in a way that common goals are fulfilled. In this process there is cooperation in society and the social life is maintained. Thus, we all work in such a way that our goals are fulfilled.

Through cooperation,

- The common goals are fulfilled and the many diverse individual goals also are fulfilled.
- It leads to social order and harmony.
- Cooperation maintains social and group identity.
- In this process the society perpetuates.

### Check Your Progress Exercise 2.1

**Note:**

- I. Write your answer in the space given below.
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit

**Q.1** Define the process of cooperation. Discuss its types.

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## 2.4 ASSIMILATION: MEANING AND DEFINITION

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

According to Young and Mack, “Assimilation is the fusion or blending of two previously distinct groups into one”.

Similarly Bogardus stated, “Assimilation is the social process whereby attitudes of many persons are united, and thus develop into a united group”.

Ogburn and Nimkoff cited, “Assimilation is the process whereby individuals or groups once dissimilar become similar and identified in their interest and outlook”.

Biesanz said, "Assimilation is the social process whereby individuals or groups come to share the same sentiments and goals".

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

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

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

#### **2.4.1 Characteristics of Assimilation**

Following the important characteristics of assimilation;

- i) Assimilation is a slow and gradual process. It occurs only when there is relatively continuous and direct contact. The speed of the process of assimilation depends upon the nature of direct contacts. Secondary and superficial assimilation occurs very slowly compared to primary assimilation.
- ii) Assimilation is a two-way process. It involves the principle of give and take. Individuals or groups incorporate cultural elements from other groups.
- iii) It is an unconscious process. In the process of assimilation, the individual and group is usually unconscious of what is taking place. Mostly in an

unconsciousness manner, individuals and groups discard their original cultural heritage and substitute it with the new one.

- iv) It is not confined to a single field only. It is applied to explain the fusion of two distinct cultural groups.

## **2.4.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of Assimilation**

### **Advantages**

- i) Tolerance helps the individuals to close together and helps to develop contacts to achieve a common goal. The process of assimilation can be possible when people become tolerant towards cultural difference among themselves. People from different cultures get the opportunity to participate and work together for the betterment of the society.
- ii) Assimilation develops and strengthens social relationships. It can be possible through direct and personal relationships in primary groups like family and peer groups.
- iii) Assimilation is the amalgamation of intermarriage of different groups. Through this amalgamation, different groups come together to work.
- iv) Assimilation helps to discard the differences in cultural and ethnic identity and people become more functional.

### **Disadvantages**

- i) Besides advantages, it has certain disadvantages too. Individuals and groups may lean towards to accept other cultures which may not fit with the mainstream culture.
- ii) Assimilation can bring the loss of identity as different cultural groups lose their individual culture in the process.
- iii) Assimilation can be the product of several social problems such as trafficking.

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## **2.5 ACCOMMODATION: MEANING AND DEFINITION**

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Accommodation is resolution of conflicts which means adjusting oneself to the new environment. Accommodation denotes acquired changes in the behaviour of their environment. The famous psychologist J. M. Baldwin was the first to use the concept of accommodation. To him, the term denotes acquired changes in the behavior of individuals which help them to adjust to the environment. According to MacIver, “the term accommodation refers particularly to the process on which man attains a sense of harmony with his environments”. Besides this, as a process, accommodation is the sequence of steps by which persons are reconciled to changed conditions of life through the formation of the changed conditions themselves. Accommodation is a term used by the sociologists to describe the adjustment of hostile individuals or groups. Accommodation is the process by which the individuals and groups make the necessary internal adjustments to social situation which have been created by competition and conflict. Accommodation is associated with the social order that is fixed and established in custom and the mores. Assimilation implies a more thorough

going transformation of the personality – transformation which takes place gradually under the influence of social contacts of the most concrete and intimate sort. Lundberg defines that “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”. Similarly, Ogburn and Nimkoff, “accommodation is a concept, used to explain the adjustment to unreceptive individuals and groups”.

### **2.5.1 Characteristics of Accommodation**

- i) The associative social process of accommodation is the result of dissociative process of conflict. When conflict arises among the individuals or groups, to avoid the conflict situation, they go for settlement which is called accommodation. It may be permanent or temporary.
- ii) It is a form of adjustment. The differences between the individuals and groups exist, but these differences are accepted.
- iii) Thus, conflict may exist in a latent manner. At an overt level it is contained.
- iv) Accommodation is also a built-in mechanism of a society. There are many different patterns of behaviour and subcultures in the society. Culture trains its members to accommodate and continue without much friction. An example is the family where the various members carry on with the family life despite the many differences in the individual attitudes, beliefs and behaviour of the members. Accommodation, thus, can be subconscious.
- v) It may also be a deliberate exercise as in arbitration, mediation, and conciliation of which we will learn while discussing the various types.
- vi) It is a universal and a continuous process.

### **2.5.2 Forms of Accommodation**

#### **i) Yielding to coercion**

When the parties are of unequal strength, the weaker party submits to the demands and interests of the stronger party. This happens when the weaker party is not in any position to resist the stronger party. This is coercive accommodation.

#### **ii) Compromise**

It is giving up of part of the demands by the conflicting parties. In the process, each party can accommodate the demands of the other party. Usually, this happens when both the parties are almost of equal strength.

#### **iii) Third party intervention**

Third party intervention may take the forms of arbitration, mediation and conciliation. While in arbitration the decision of the arbitrator, i.e. the third party, is binding, in mediation the decision of the third party is not binding upon the contending parties. In conciliation, the third party seeks to create conditions where the contending parties themselves can arrive at an agreement.

#### **iv) Toleration**

This is a form of coexistence with differences. The conflicting parties accept each other's differences. This is also a kind of avoidance, where the conflicting grounds are avoided. Settlement of differences and arriving at a resolution are yet to take place. Sometimes, differences may become too complex to resolve by agreement and compromise. In such situations individuals and groups might simply avoid the conflicting aspects. This is toleration.

**v) Conversion**

In this type, one of the conflicting parties adopts the views of the other. In such a situation the conflict is resolved.

**2.5.3 Need of Accommodation**

- a) Accommodation is an integral social process. There is the existence of various kinds of status and role, the different types of social relationships, different interests, values and goals in society. All these together comprise social life. Conflict is latent (hidden) in a society. At the same time, the process of socialization trains the individuals and groups to play the various roles and interact mutually. Thus, the individuals and groups are trained to mutually orient one's behaviour to that of others. This means recognizing and accepting the differences, i.e. accommodation. In the example of the family given above we have already seen that people accommodate with each other. This keeps potential conflict from becoming overt (open). Accommodation makes possible social relations and, thus, social life.
- b) These different varieties may at times lead to a situation of overt conflict. A society cannot continue for long with overt conflict, so various processes come to operate to contain overt conflict. Accommodation is one such process. In such situations accommodation comes to occur after conflict occurs. It contains overt conflict in a manner that the opponent is not destroyed.
- c) By keeping conflict from becoming overt and containing conflict after it becomes overt, accommodation makes possible group life, continuity of society and enables cooperation and also competition in a manner that social life becomes possible.

**Check Your Progress Exercise 2.2**

**Note:**

- I. Write your answer in the space given below.
- II. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit

**Q.2** Explain the meaning of the term assimilation and how it is used for reducing conflict situation?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

.....  
**Q.3** Match the following.

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| (i) Cooperation    | (a) opposition of goals                    |
| (ii) Accommodation | (b) Working together towards a common goal |
|                    | (c) adjusting with differences             |

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## 2.6 LET US SUM UP

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Associative social processes discussed above are found in all the societies, although there is great variation in emphasis. People come together in groups to socialize to get things done, or because they require doing so. Much of what we accomplish as individuals and as groups depends on our ability to get others to work with us on common tasks and for mutually acceptable goals. Cooperation may be personal or impersonal, deliberate or symbiotic in character. Primary groups demand highly personalized cooperation; secondary- group cooperation is found in most organized social groups. Group functions may be centralized or decentralized, may be simple or complex. But what we are referring to is the process known as cooperation – working together for mutually acceptable goals. Cooperation may involve merely our participation in a set of mutually understood role behaviours. The kind of cooperation that takes place between individuals occupying positions of unequal power and status actually amounts to obedience or compliance. Cooperation at a more advanced level may take place in problem-solving situations – situations that have a relatively high degree of ambiguity and a low degree of structural or predictability. Assimilation and accommodation is also one mechanism of reducing conflict or adjusting with opposite culture group through fusion of two cultures.

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## 2.7 GLOSSARY

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- Accommodation:** the process whereby an individual or group from one culture adjust with other from different culture.
- Assimilation:** the process by which an individual or group takes on the characteristics of the dominant culture.
- Cooperation:** Cooperation is a form of social interaction wherein two or more persons work together to gain a common end. It is the process by which individuals or groups combine their effort, in a more or less organized way for the attainment of common objective.
- Social cohesion:** degree to which group members share common beliefs, practices and values and thus act together.

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## 2.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: ANSWER KEYS

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**Answer to Q.1:** According to Merrill and Eldredge, “cooperation is a form of social interaction wherein two or more persons work together to gain a common end.” There are five types of cooperation such as direct cooperation, indirect cooperation, primary cooperation, secondary cooperation and tertiary cooperation.

**Answer to Q.2:** Whenever groups meet, some mutual interchange or diffusion of culture takes place. Even groups which seek to prevent such diffusion do not fully succeed in protecting their culture from all cultural interchange. This process of mutual cultural diffusion through which persons and groups come to share a common culture is called assimilation.

Assimilation reduces group conflicts by blending differing groups into larger, culturally homogenous groups. Anything, which binds people into a larger group, will tend to reduce rivalry and conflict between them.

**Answer to Q.3:** (i) Cooperation (b) Working together towards a common goal  
(ii) Accommodation (c) adjusting with differences

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## 2.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

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

Q.1: Elucidate briefly about cooperation.

Q.2: Define Assimilation and accommodation

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

Q.1: What is associative social process? Discuss its types.

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## 2.10 REFERENCES

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## **UNIT 3 DISSOCIATIVE SOCIAL PROCESSES: CONFLICT AND COMPETITION**

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### **STRUCTURE**

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Objectives
- 3.3 Conflict: Meaning and Definition
  - 3.3.1 Characteristics of Conflict
  - 3.3.2 Causes of Conflict
  - 3.3.3 Types of Conflict
  - 3.3.4 Mechanisms to Deal with Conflict
- 3.4 Competition: Meaning and Definition
  - 3.4.1 Characteristics of Competition
  - 3.4.2 Types of Competition
  - 3.4.3 Variability of Competition
  - 3.4.4 Competition in a Contemporary Society
- 3.5 Cooperation, Conflict and Competition: Interrelations and Relevance
- 3.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.7 Glossary
- 3.8 Check Your Progress: Answer Keys
- 3.9 Model Questions
- 3.10 References

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### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

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As we have learnt earlier, the members of society play their roles. In this process of role playing they interact among themselves. This is social interaction. It is dyadic in the sense that, for social interaction to occur there should at least be two persons involved. In the previous Unit, we have learnt different kinds of associative social processes such as cooperation, assimilation and accommodation. In the present Unit, we will discuss different types of dissociative social processes like conflict and competition.

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### **3.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

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After reading this unit, you will be able to;

- understand the meaning and characteristics of conflict
- Analyze the causes and types of conflict
- explain the social process of competition
- discuss the role of competition in contemporary society

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### 3.3 CONFLICT: MEANING AND DEFINITION

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The conflict process is little praised but widely practiced. It develops whenever a person or group seeks to gain a reward not by surpassing other competitors, but by preventing them from effectively competing. It is formally defined *as the process of seeking to obtain rewards by eliminating or weakening the competitors.*

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

Conflict is a conscious action. It is a deliberate intent to oppose. We can say that conflict is universal. Not only this, conflict lacks continuity. Besides this, it is a personal activity. According to Gillin and Gillin, "Conflict is the social process in which individuals or groups seek their ends up directly challenging the antagonist by violence or threat of violence." Green defined, "Conflict is the deliberate attempt to oppose, resist and coerce the will of another or others." Conflict is a competition in its more occasional, personal and hostile forms. It is a process of seeking to obtain rewards by eliminating or weakening the competitors. It is inherent in every society or social system. Conflict is apparently noted when an individual or a group seeks to attain its own end. Conflict is the opposite of cooperation. Conflict may lead to antagonism, violence or threat to peace. Conflict is also regarded as non-associative social process.

#### 3.3.1 Characteristics of Conflict

The characteristics of conflicts are;

- Although conflict is universal but it's nature vary from society to society. No society is characterized exclusively by conflict.
- Conflict is a conscious action. To achieve the respective goals the members oppose one another.

- Conflict leads to social change. It is mainly an expression of disequilibrium.
- It primarily remains personal activity. Sometimes it acquires greater intensity and involves many people. At first, it is manifested at the level of a particular group but ultimately it involves the entire society.
- Asymmetrical social, political and economic relations coupled with the sense of relative deprivation as the root cause of social conflict.
- Sometimes conflict is the life of society and progress emerges from a struggle in which each individual, class or institution seeks to realize its own idea of good.
- We the people are organized into groups to seek a common goal, the probability of conflict increases.
- All conflicts are not the same.
- We face conflicts on all levels as we have disagreements with family, friends and co-workers.
- Conflict is an ever-present process in human relations.
- Unmanaged conflict is a threat to the survival of the group and ultimately tends to make the group less effective.
- Conflict can occur within groups (intra-group conflict) and among groups (inter-group conflict).

### 3.3.2 Causes of Conflict

According to Freud and some other psychologists, the innate instinct for aggression in man is the main cause of conflicts. Generally it arises from a clash of interest within groups and societies and between groups and societies. The significant causes are:

- Individual difference** – It is true that, we, the human being, are not alike by nature, attributes, interests, personalities etc. These differences may lead to conflict among the human being.
- Cultural differences** – The culture of a group differs from the culture of the other group. The cultural differences among the groups sometimes cause tension and lead to conflict.
- Differences of opinion regarding interest** – In fact, the interests of different people or groups occasionally clash. For example we can say that interests of the employers and employees vary in much respect which may ultimately leads to conflict among them.
- Social change** – Social changes occur off and on in each and every society. Conflict is an expression of social disequilibrium. Social change is the cultural log which leads to conflict.

### 3.3.3 Types of Conflict

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

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

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

### **3.3.4 Mechanisms to Deal with Conflict**

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

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

### Check Your Progress Exercise 3.1

**Note:**

- I. Use the Space provided for your answer.
- II. Check your answers with the model answers provided at the end of this unit.

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

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### 3.4 COMPETITION: MEANING AND DEFINITION

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

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

make the most money, get the highest grades or run the fastest race.

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

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

Competition is the most important form of social struggle. 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 some limited material and non-material goods." According to Sutherland, Woodward and Maxwell, "Competition is an impersonal, unconscious continuous struggle which, because of their limited supply, all may not have." Competition is a form of interaction. It is the struggle for position to gain economic status. It occurs whenever there is an insufficient supply of anything that human being desire - insufficient in the sense that all cannot have as much of it as they wish. Sometimes competition happens because of limited supply and also difficult for equal distribution

### **3.4.1 Characteristics of Competition**

The characteristics of competition are:

- Competition is impersonal struggle. Park and Burgess defined competition as "interaction without social contact." We can say it is inter-individual struggle that is impersonal. It is usually not directed against any individual or group in particular.
- Competition is universal. There is no society which is devoid of competition. Not only this, degree of competition may vary from society to society. It is very common for society as well as culture.
- Competition is considered as conducive to progress. Competition provides the individuals better opportunities to satisfy their desires for new experiences and recognitions.
- Both associative and non-associative dimensions of social processes indicate competition.
- Competition is mainly an unconscious activity but personal competition or rivalry is a conscious activity.
- Competition may create emotional disturbances.
- Competition is an innate tendency.
- Competition is a social phenomenon.
- Degree of competition is determined by social values and social structure.

### **3.4.2 Types of Competition**

Three types of competition have been given by Bernard. These are as follows.

#### **a) Economic Competition**

This type includes competition for economic benefits as jobs, salaries, promotion and competition in the market as among the producers, among the sellers, etc.

#### **b) Political Competition**

This is competition for political power between individuals and groups. In democratic societies also we find the prevalence of this type of competition. The political parties compete among themselves to form the government.

#### **c) Social Competition**

Competition to improve ones' social position is social competition. It can be achieved through economic, political, religious and other means. Possessing of formal degrees in various spheres of education, or having a well-paid job and economic benefits may raise a person's social status in society. Competition to improve one's social status could be a motivating factor for the other kinds of competition.

### **3.4.3 Variability of Competition**

An essential part of any social system, competition varies as to *scope*, *intensity* and *type* from one system to another system. Soviet Russia has plenty of competition. So does the United States but in a different way. The American variety has molded the economic institutions of private property, contract and the open market, the political institutions of representative government. These not only define the type of competition but give it great scope as well. They open the door to the pursuit of wealth through entrepreneurial ability.

### **3.4.4 Competition in a Contemporary Society**

Competition is indispensable in social life. Competition performs many powerful functions in society. Sometimes competition is extremely dynamic. It performs five positive functions.

- It helps to determine the status and location of individual members in a system of hierarchy.
- It tends to stimulate economy, efficiency and inventiveness.
- It tends to enhance one's ego.
- It prevents undue concentration of power in an individual or group of individuals.
- It creates respect for the rules of the same group.

We can say that competition determines who is to perform what function. According to Ross, "Competition performs that broad function of assigning to each individual in his social world. Competition is a progressive force which fulfills and does not necessarily destroy." We can further say that fair competition is conducive to economic as well as social progress. Competition provides the individuals better opportunities to satisfy their desires for new experiences and recognition. It believes in achieved status. Sometimes competition has some negative function. It may lead to frustration. It may lead to monopoly. It may lead to conflict. It may create emotional

disturbances. It may develop unfriendly and unfavorable attitudes among the persons or groups toward one another. It is true that unfair competition has the most disintegrating effects. Sometimes unlimited competition leads to monopoly.

Competition is extremely dynamic. It stimulates achievement by lifting the level of aspiration, by threatening failure as well as promising success, and by adding an element of rivalry. For this reason, it becomes particularly strong in complex and changing societies. Present day society is characterized by excessive amount of competition. Today man overlooks the institutions and rules, which alone make competition to work- the protection of property, the enforcement of contracts, the prevention of fraud. He overlooks the common ends and values which are not competitive but which are superior to those that are. He forgets that competition can be vicious as well as beneficent, that it can lead to starvation in the midst of plenty, to fear and insecurity, to instability and panic. Today we have forgotten that unlimited competition leads inevitably to monopoly, that the very success of strong leads to gigantic power over the weak and creates such inequality that a mockery is made of free contract.

**Check Your Progress Exercise 3.2**

**Note:**

- I. Use the space provided for your answer.
- II. Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

**Q.2** What do you understand by term Competition and how it is different from conflict?

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**Q.3** Discuss the nature of competition in contemporary society?

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**3.5 COOPERATION, CONFLICT AND COMPETITION:  
INTERRELATIONS AND RELEVANCE**

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**1. The Interrelation of the Forms of Interaction**

It should be clear that the forms of interaction discussed here-conflict, competition and cooperation-are all interdependent. They are ever-present aspects of human society. Any social system, in fact any concrete situation, will manifest all three in a complex and intertwined manner. There is no cooperating group, no matter how



harmonious, which will not contain the seeds of suppressed conflict. There is no conflict, no matter how bitter, which will not have some hidden basis of compromise. There is no competition, no matter how impersonal and ruthless, which cannot claim some contribution to a larger cooperative cause.

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

Unless competition enhances the overall goal of the society it will find critics aplenty. So long as it is controlled and institutionalized, it is presumably a means by which the cooperation of all is accomplished. In reality it is conflict rather than competition that is the opposite of cooperation. Yet cooperation may occur without making internal use of competition and between two competitors the overarching elements of cooperation may be lost from sight. In fact, each of two competitors trying to outstrip each other may view his organization as cooperating within itself but not cooperating at all with the other organizations. Often, therefore the ultimate cooperative effect of competition escapes awareness; the closer and more intimate cooperation of the organized group is the center of attention. This is what gives the illusion that competition and cooperation are necessarily opposed.

It should also be clear that any analysis of social behaviour in terms of the forms of interaction is an indispensable mode of approaching social phenomenon. Cooperation is the basic form of human interaction in which men strive jointly with each other for a good goal. Competition as a form of interaction occurs when two or more persons or groups struggle for some goal. Conflict takes the form of emotionalised and violent opposition in which the major concern is to overcome the opponent as a means of securing a given goal or reward.

It is direct and openly antagonistic struggle of persons or groups for the same object or end, cooperation is an associative process, while competition and conflict are dissociative processes. Competition and conflict divide men. But competition differs from conflict in that the former is impersonal, while the latter is personalised competition in a less violent form of struggle than conflict.

The three forms of interaction thus appear to be distinct and separate. In reality, however, cooperation, conflict and competition are interrelated. They are ever-present processes in human relations. They are not separable things but phases of one process which involves something of each.

According to Cooley, conflict and cooperation are not separable things, but phases of one process which always involves something of both. Even in the most friendly

relations and in the most intimate associations there is some point where interest diverge. They cannot therefore cooperate beyond that point and conflict is inevitable. The closest cooperation, for instance, within the family does not prevent the occurrence of quarrels.

Cooperation exists between men when their interests remain harmonious. But according to Davis, there is no group whether family or the friendly group which will not contain the seeds of suppressed conflict. Elements of conflict exist in all situations, because the ends which different individuals try to attain are always to some extent mutually exclusive.

Conflict also involves cooperation. In very conflict, there is some hidden basis of compromise or adjustment. For example, enemies in wartime cooperate under certain rules while they proceed to annihilate each other with the accepted modes and weapons of war. As end-result of conflict, there emerge arrangements and agreements which give rise to cooperation. In human society, however, most conflict ends in some sort of arrangement or accommodation or in the fusion of the two opposing elements. There is no competition which will not contain the seeds of conflict. As competition becomes more personal, it shades into conflict. Conflict does not always occur when competition become acute. It only happens if attitudes of the competitors become personal and hostile toward one another.

But every competition will contain such attitudes, though suppressed. An individual wishes not only to win the prize but beat another individual. Each knows that he can win the prize only by defeating the other. When competition becomes personalised in this way and becomes keener, hostility between the competitors easily develops.

Competition also involves cooperation. A competitive struggle implies some agreement among the competitors. Members of football teams compete according to rules prescribed for them.

The interrelations between three processes have been stated by Giddings in following ways. In a given region, with specific physiographic characteristics, including food supplies, an 'area of characterization' is formed ; and human being dwelling intend to become increasingly alike', and to develop solidarity on the basis of 'consciousness of kind'. In this way, says Giddings, The first two conditions of social life... namely grouping and substantial resemblance are provided.

But since they are alike, individuals living together in one habitat compete with each other in obtaining things which each is able to get by his own effort, and they combine their effort obtain things that no one can get without the help of others.

Whatever happens, their interests and activities are not wholly harmonious and easily become antagonistic. Competition tends to endanger conflict inimical to group solidarity. Eventually, says Giddings, equilibrium of 'live and let live' is arrived at, which makes conscious association possible for human beings.

## 2. Cooperation, Competition and Conflict: Interrelations and Differences

Cooperation and competition are the two basic forms of social processes which are fundamental for the existence of human society. Both play important role in the functioning of the society. Both are considered as the two sides of the same coin. No such society is exclusively cooperative or competitive. Both cooperation and competition have their own advantages. According to Ross, the form of social stratification also influences the relative cooperativeness and competitiveness of the societies. Competition brings an open-class and rapid changing society which is a positive nature of the competition. For example, in India, democratic political system encourages competition more than the totalitarian system. Healthy competition helps not only the individuals but also makes the society to move towards progress and development. It provides the society stability and change. Besides all these positive aspects, both have certain differences:

1. Cooperation is a form of associative social processes where two or more people work together to achieve a common goal, similarly competition is a dissociative social process where two or more individuals struggle for goal or end and conflict seeks reward by weakening or destroying the other competitors.
2. Cooperation brings positive results whereas competition brings both positive and negative results. Conflict only brings negative results. It harms and makes the society to move towards destruction.
3. Cooperation has no boundaries. But competition has its own limitations. It is bound by social norms.
4. C.H Cooley stated that cooperation has certain features like kindness, sympathy and mutual understanding, whereas competition has negative qualities like strong aspiration to get something, the readiness to suffer and struggle.
5. Cooperation brings satisfaction and contentment but competition may cause satisfaction or dissatisfaction, anxiety, uncertainties.
6. Cooperation is of various types like primary, secondary, tertiary whereas conflict can be said as class conflict, group conflict, religious or cultural or caste conflicts.

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### 3.6 LET US SUM UP

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

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

Traditional societies are likely to be less competitive than urban, industrialized societies. Life in urbanized societies offers many opportunities, large or small, to prove oneself competitively. Today we are much concerned about involving people throughout the world in large-scale problem-solving. The problems of the world – health, education, peace and war, preservation of the ecology, allocation of scarce resources – cannot be solved by individual people or individual nations. They can be solved only by cooperation and collaboration. Besides this, social contact, which inevitably initiates conflict, accommodation, or assimilation invariably, creates sympathies, prejudices, personal and moral relations, which modify, complicate and control competition.

Conflict, assimilation and accommodation are all intimately related to control. Competition is universal in the world of living things. The cumulative effects of innovations, technological revolution, environmental crisis, generation gap, new value orientation, break-up of the normative structure etc. are the factors which create conflicts. Social interaction is the reciprocal influences which human being exert on each other through inter stimulation and response. Social interaction and social process are interrelated factors. Society is an expression of different social processes and there are variety forms of social processes. Among the various processes, cooperation, conflict and competition are the important one.

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### 3.7 GLOSSARY

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**Competition:** Competition is impersonal, unconscious, continuous struggle between individuals or groups for satisfaction which, because of their limited supply, all may not have. Competition is that form of social action in which we strive against each other for the possession of or use of some limited material or non-material good.

**Conflict:** Conflict is the social process in which individuals or groups seek their ends by directly challenging the antagonist by violence or threat of violence.

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

**Social order:** A condition/situation of a society/group characterized by the predominance of harmonious social relationships.

**Social Distance:** degree to which individuals are willing to interact with people from different social background.

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### 3.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: ANSWER KEYS

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**Answer to Q.1:** Conflict is formally defined as the process of seeking to obtain rewards by eliminating or weakening the competitors.

Conflict is an ever-present process in human relations. It may be

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

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

**Answer to Q.3:** Present day society is characterized by excessive amount of competition. Today man overlooks the institutions and rules, which alone make competition work-the protection of property, the enforcement of contracts, and the prevention of fraud. He overlooks the common ends and values which are not competitive but which are superior to those that are. He forgets that competition can be vicious as well as beneficent, that it can lead to starvation in the midst of plenty, to fear and insecurity; to instability and panic. Today we have forgotten that unlimited competition leads inevitably to monopoly, that the very success of strong leads to gigantic power over the weak and creates such inequality that a mockery is made of free contract .

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### 3.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

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

Q.1: Define competition.

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

Q.1: Write in brief about the causes and characteristics of conflict.

Q.2: What are the general types of conflicts?

Q.3: Briefly discuss the types of competition and its role.

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### **3.10 REFERENCES**

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**Email :** [university@tmu.ac.in](mailto:university@tmu.ac.in)