BACHELOR OF ARTS

SEMESTER III

COURSE: SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT

UNIT 1: ENLIGHTENMENT AND EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL THOUGHT

STRUCTURE

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1.0. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe enlightenment movement and emergence of social thought.
- Elaborate the evolution of social and sociological thought.
- Explain the contribution of different sociologist for emergence and development of sociology and sociological thought.
- Delineate the major factors behind emergence and development of sociological thought.
- Differentiate and explain different perspectives and developments in sociology such as Evolutionism, Functionalism, Marxism, Interactionism, Structuralism, Poststructuralism and Postmodernism.

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The beginning of sociological thought can be seen with emergence of sociology, particularly with the efforts of its founding father, Auguste Comte. Comte has introduced the word sociology in his text 'positive philosophy' which he started writing in 1832 and completed in 1842. He wanted to establish sociology as a new science and he knew that to establish any science or scientific discipline there is need of theory, perspective, subject matter and methodology (Coser, 2010). Therefore, he developed theories, subject matter and methodology to prove sociology a new scientific discipline.

There are many factors influenced Comte to establish sociology as a new scientific discipline (Aron, 1950). Amongst, the most important factors are enlightenment movement, different revolutions (Industrial Revolution-1779 and French Revolution-1789) of 18^{th} century, the ideas of first phase (Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, etc.), second and third phase philosophers (Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Montesquieu and Jean Rousseau, Friedrich Hegel, Adam Smith, David Ricardo etc.). Although some of these thinkers have not directly influenced Comte, however these all thinkers and their ideas are directly connected with enlightenment phase of 17^{th} and 18^{th} century (Ritzer, 1972). Hence, the enlightenment phase, revolutions, philosophical tradition, natural sciences and emergence of sociology and ultimately sociological thought are inter-connected.

Thus, in this unit we will emphasis on enlightenment phase, revolutions, natural science tradition, the ideas of first phase, second phase and third phase philosophers etc. to understand the emergence of sociology and sociological thought. There are multiple ways to understand the evolution of social and sociological

thought. In this unit, we will understand the evolution by emphasizing on different perspectives contributed by different sociologist at different times. For better understanding on evolution of social and sociological thought, we will also elaborate the further extensions existing in these perspectives. Before talking about evolution, lets understand the emergence of sociological thought.

1.2. ENLIGHTENED AND EMERGENCE OF SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT

The emergence of sociological thought is directly linked with enlightenment phase and French revolution, therefore at first it becomes important for us to understand enlightenment phase, French revolution and related events. The Enlightenment period is marked by significant changes in perspective about the world. It is also known as European intellectual movement of the 17^{th} and 18^{th} centuries in which ideas concerning reason, logic, nature and humanity were synthesized into a worldview that instigated revolutionary developments in philosophy, political and economic structure of society (Morrison, 2006). The central idea of enlightenment thought was to bring out rational changes in the way of living, thinking, social, political, cultural and economic structure etc. Some thinkers also call this period, a great transformation period and a period when modern social theory emerged (Polanyi, 1944).

Although enlightenment movement is the outcome of the contribution of 16^{th}, 17^{th} and 18^{th} century thinkers, however its connection can also be found in first phase philosophical thinking (Semelser, 1993). The ideas of first phase thinkers such as Socrates (469 B.C-399 B.C), Plato (428 B.C-348 B.C), Aristotle(384 B.C-322 B.C) etc. has influenced directly or indirectly, the second and third Phase thinkers of 16^{th}, 17^{th}, and 18^{th} century such as Hobbes (1588-1679 AD), Locke (1632-1704 AD), Montesquieu (1689-1755 AD), Rousseau (1712-1778 AD), Hume (1711-1776 AD), Kant (1724-1804 AD), Adam Smith (1723-1790), David Ricardo (1772-1823 AD), Hegel (1770-1831 AD) etc. whose ideas contributed enlightenment movement.

Further, enlightenment movement caused various revolutions in different parts of the World (Morrison, 2006). Amongst the major revolutions are American Revolution (1776), Industrial Revolution (1779) and French Revolution (1789). The French Revolution, which erupted in 1789 marked a turning point in the history of human struggle for freedom and equality. It put an end to the age of feudalism and ushered in a new order of society. An outline of this revolution will explain to you the kind of turmoil that occurred in Europe. This revolution brought about far reaching changes in not only French society but in societies throughout Europe (Ritzer, 1972). Even countries in other continents such as, India, were influenced by the ideas generated during this revolution. Ideas like liberty, fraternity and equality, which now form a part of the preamble to the Constitution of India, owe their origin to the French Revolution.

Thus, along with enlightenment, we consider French Revolution as one of the major reason behind emergence of sociology and sociological thought. Comte (1798-1857), who started sociology and developed sociological theories, was largely influenced by the consequences of French revolution which is the outcome of

enlightenment phase or modern social thinking. After looking into the consequences of different revolutions, Comte felt a need for a science which is concerned with society as a whole or with total social structure because all other social sciences deal with particular aspect of the society. At his time, there was political economy subject that was dealing with political and economic issues of society. Also, the historical events were largely understood by philosophers of that time (Inkeles, 1987). However as far as social outcomes are concerned no subject was looking into it directly. Thus, Comte was the first to create a new science of society which primarily look into social concerns. For this, he distinguished the subject-matter of sociology from all other social sciences. Comte developed the first complete approach, theories and perspective to the scientific study of society. Other social sciences may give a snapshot view of society from various angles but never a view of society in its comprehensive totality. Hence, sociology appeared when it was felt that the other fields of human knowledge do not fully explain man's social behaviour.

Comte decided to study the whole series of theoretical sciences which he identified with positive philosophy. From the result of such study Comte sought to formulate a system of laws in the forms of theories governing society so that he could postulate a cure for society on the basis of these laws. In 1822 when he, with Saint-Simon, conceived the necessity of the new science, he intended to name the new science social physics. He wrote, I understand by social physics the science which has for its subject the study of social phenomena considered in the same spirit as astronomical, physical, chemical or physiological phenomena that is subject to natural invariable laws the discovery of which is the special object of investigation (Collins, 1997). Thus, the programme of a new science, which later renamed as sociology was clearly stated. Soon after the publication of their work, Comte and Saint – Simon dissolved their partnership and began bitterly to attack each other. Comte's lecture notes were gradually published between 1832 and 1842, forming his voluminous master work, Course of Positive Philosophy in six volumes (Ritzer, 1972). Very reluctantly Comte changed the name of the new science from social physics to sociology. In the latter part of his Positive Philosophy he explained that he had invented a new name because does not want to make it a part of physics. In Positive Politics, Comte attempted to give more flesh and blood to rather formal definition of sociology implied in Positive Philosophy. Between the years 1851 and 1854, he wrote treaties entitled System of Positive Politics in which he applied the findings of theoretical sociology to the solution of social problems of his time (Coser, 2010). Thus, accomplished his initial goal, establishing a new science which will directly linked with understanding of social phenomenon. Overall, with the efforts of Comte, sociology got scientific title, sociological theories (Law of three stages, hierarchy of sciences, social static and social dynamics), first perspective (evolutionary perspective), methodology (Positivism) and subject matter (Social phenomenon) etc. We can call this a beginning and emergence of sociological thought in sociology.

1.2.1 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS I

1. Write down any two major factors behind emergence of sociology and sociological thought.
   _____
2. What do you understand by Enlightenment? How enlightenment movement is connected with French Revolution?
   _____
3. Who is the founder of sociological thought? Write about his contribution in brief.
   _____

1.3. EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT

As discussed above, Comte has started the discipline of sociology, therefore he is the one who established sociological thought at first. His contribution later on appreciated and critically analysed by many of his followers who have extended the boundaries of sociology with their contributions in the form of theories and perspectives (Coser, 2010). Perspective is an umbrella term which consist theories of thinker/s. For instance, Interactionist perspective in sociology started with the efforts of Max Weber which is later on extended by George Herbert Mead (Symbolic Interactionism), Alfred Schutz (Phenomenology), Harold Garfinkel (Ethnomethodology), Erving Goffman (Dramaturgy) and many more. There are multiple ways to understand the evolution of social and sociological thought. We can better understand the evolution by emphasising on different perspectives, particularly their emergence and extensions. In this unit, we will be discussing Evolutionary Perspective at first, followed by Marxism, Functionalism, Interactionism, Structuralism, Poststructuralism and Postmodernism. The reason behind this sequence is the birth year of founding fathers of these perspectives. The detailed discussion on these perspectives is as follows

1.3.1. EVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVE OR EVOLUTIONISM: FROM COMTE TO SOROKIN

In a history of sociology, we always recognize Comte (1798-1857) at first as he is the one, who has given birth to sociology, its subject matter, methodology, theories and perspective. Comte has constructed many theories such as Law of three stages, hierarchy of sciences etc. which largely talks about how the society evolved and passed through different stages (Coser, 2010). Hence, his contributions in the form of theories has given birth to first perspective in sociology i.e. evolutionary perspective. Comte discovered the successive stages through which each human race had evolved. He Compared human thought process with society and argued just as each individual develops from stage of a devout believer in childhood, to a critical metaphysician in

adolescence, to a natural philosopher in adulthood similarly the human society have evolved in three major stages;Theological Stage, Metaphysical Stage/Abstract stage and Positive Stage or Scientific Stage.

Further, the evolutionary perspective was extended by Herbert Spencer. Spencer talks about the evolutionary movement from simple to compound, doubly-compound, and trebly-compound societies (Coser, 2010). For Spencer, society grows through both the multiplication of individuals and the union of groups. The increasing size of society brings with it larger and more differentiated social structures, as well as the increasing differentiation of the functions they perform. In addition to their growth in size, societies evolve through compounding, that is, by unifying more and more adjoining groups. Thus, initial evolutionary theories are based on the assumption that societies gradually move from irrational stage to rational stage (Comte) and simple to more complex (Spencer) etc.

The ideas of Comte and Spencer later on challenged and critically analysed by Pitirim Sorokin. He has contributed a new idea in evolutionary perspective by opposing unilinear process of evolution. He questioned the idea of Comte and Spenser and said society progress in stages but not always in unique direction (Coser, 2010). He wrote a text entitled Social and Cultural Dynamics (1937-1941), in which he introduced Pendular theory of social change. Through his theory, he classified societies according to their 'cultural mentality', which can be ideational (reality as spiritual), sensate (reality is material), idealistic (a synthesis of the two). Instead of viewing civilization into the terms of development and decline he proposed that they fluctuate between two cultural extremes: the sensate and the ideational.Both according to him, represent pure types of culture (Coser, 2010). Hence no society ever fully conforms to either type. As the culture of a society develops towards one pure type, it is countered by the opposing cultural force.Cultural development is then reversed moving towards the opposite type of culture.Too much emphasis on one type of culture leads to a reaction towards the other. In between these two types there lies a third type 'idealistic' culture. This is a desirable blend of other two but no society ever seems to have achieved it as a stable condition. For instance, he Interpreted the contemporary western civilization as a sensate civilization dedicated to technological progress, its fall into decadence and the emergence of a new ideational or idealistic era (Coser, 2010). Thus, the ideas of Sorokin has expended the boundary of evolutionary perspective.

1.3.2. MARXIAN PERSPECTIVE OR MARXISM: FROM MARX TO HABERMAS

Karl Marx’s (1818-1857) story is quite different from other sociologists. Some scholars consider Marx as sociologist and some are not in a favour of giving Marx any such title as he was a free philosopher who was just talking about the concern of have nots. Although, this is debatable that whether Marx was Sociologist or not, however, his contributions has given birth to Marxian school of thought in sociology. Marx ideas were interpreted and critically analysed by many sociologists, who appreciated his theories and ideas and included those ideas into the domain of sociology (Turner,

1995). So, Marx ideas are important for us and we consider him the founder of this new perspective in sociology.

While reading about Marx, a fundamental question come to our mind that what forced Marx to write The Communist Manifesto?and constitute communist league? After making analysis of his work, we come to know that there are conditions which forced Marx to understand social reality. These conditions include, exploitation existing in the factory system in the form of long working hours in a day (usually work for 16 hours a day; 5.00am to 9.00pm and Seven work day culture in a week), poor wages despite long working hours, child labor in in the factory, deaths or injuries due to poor condition of machines etc. He wrote an essay and got published under title "A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy". The preface of this creation highly quoted by many in all over the world. The main purpose of this text was to explain the exploitation of workers in the capitalism (Morrison, 2006). To understand these exploitation patterns in capitalism, he wrote many theories such as theory of historical materialism, theory of surplus value, alienation, class consciousness, class in itself, class for itself etc.

Further, his ideas are extended and critically analyzed by many scholars such as Ralf Dahrendorf, Randall Collins, Antonio Gramsci, Louis Althusser, Jurgan Habermas, Max Horkheimer, Lewis Coser, George Simmel etc. We see the contribution of these thinkers as further extensions or evolution of Marxian school of thought in sociology. The one fundamental question which we see in the theories of these thinkers is that why the revolution not took place in society as Marx predicted at his own time. They tend to see society as composed of distinct groups pursuing their own interests. They saw the existence of separate interests means that the potential for conflict is always present and that certain groups will benefit more than others. They examine the tensions between dominant and disadvantaged groups within society and seek to understand how relationships of control are established and perpetuated. In all of its versions, Marxism differs from most other traditions of sociology in that its authors see it as a combination of sociological analysis and different reforms. Not all conflict theories take a Marxist approach. Some conflict theorists have also been influenced by Weber, Durkheim etc. A good example is the contemporary German sociologist Ralf Dahrendorf. In his classic work, Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society (1959), he argues that functionalist thinkers only consider one side of society - those aspects of social life where there is harmony and agreement exist. Conflict, Dahrendorf says, comes mainly from different interests that individuals and groups have (Coser, 2010).

Marx saw differences of interest mainly in terms of classes, but Dahrendorf relates them more broadly to authority and power. By this, he automatically comes close to Weber and Marx. In fact, he tried to combine both Weber and Marx through his theory entitled dialectical conflict heory where he discussed about conflict and consensus. In analyzing and evaluating the arguments of structural functionalism and Marxism, Dahrendorf believed that neither theory alone could account for all of society. He focused upon Conflict (Marxism) and Consensus (Functionalism) for understanding social reality.Similarly, he modifies Marx's ideas

and said, Marx's theory is not for post capitalist society (Turner, 1995). Post capitalist society is more concerned with authority relation, command/control, obedience, emergence of leadership, formation of ideology, highly democratic govt, greater mobility, less conflict etc. He argued that in all societies, there is a division between those who hold authority and those who are largely excluded from it - between rulers and ruled.

Further extension of Marxism in sociology can be seen through Collins ideas. With his theory 'Towards a More Integrated Conflict Theory', Collins elaborated and extended Marxism ideas into different direction. He has developed a conflict approach that, at its core, is Weberian but that adds elements from Durkheim analysis of rituals, Goffman's dramaturgy, conversation analysis with ethnomethodology and phenomenology and other micro level theoretical perspectives. For him, macro level phenomena are sustained by micro encounters among individuals (Collins, 1997). Large and long-term social structure are built from what he terms interaction rituals that have been stung together over time in complex patterns (Turner, 1995). For understanding social reality, one has to understand interaction rituals, within a macro structure. Interaction rituals involves; physical presence of individual, face to face interaction, common focus of attention (collective conscience), use of symbols by interacting individuals etc. Thus, in his first major work on conflict sociology, Collins moved from the analysis of micro social processes to meso-level social forces such as stratification and organizations, and then to truly macro-level processes operating at the societal and inter-societal level.

The further extension in Marxism can be seen as Neo Marxian school of thought. The Frankfurt school has become one of the most important proponents of Neo Marxism. It grew out of the Institute of social research at the university of Frankfurt, Germany.Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Antonio Gramsci, Jurgen Habermas are some of the proponent of Neo Marxism. Neo Marxism is known as critical theory where class divisions under capitalism is viewed as more important (Morrison, 2006). Neo-Marxism encompasses a group of beliefs that have in common rejection of economic or class determinism. Antonio Gramsci argued the main reason for exploitation of have nots is hegemony of ruling class. According to him, Traditional Marxism only rely on coercion and ignored consent.He focused upon consent along with coercion.Gramsci argued that how the working class is made to consent to the capitalist system to its own oppression (Coser, 2010).

Further, Jurgen Habermas's understanding on Marx consists both defence and a critique. Habermas's work emerges from extended reflection on the nature of cognition, the structure of social inquiry, the normative basis of socio cultural tendencies of the age. He took note of the substantial changes in the capitalist and socialist societies which have cast doubt on the validity of Marx's work. According to him, Marxism proved ineffective in the West and the Marxist theory often fell into either deterministic objectivistic science or a pessimistic cultural critique. With regard to capitalism one could say that state intervention and profit oriented market became the norm of the time. Though capitalism came to be organized rigorously day by day, public sphere came to be threatened by the growth of instrumental reason and

bureaucracy.From 1920s through 1960s critical theory moved in a direction which was very different from Marx's development.At this point, the need of the hour for Habermas was to root out the errors in the Marxist legacy and show how it was insufficient in the twentieth-century. Thus, as like Gramsci, Collins, Dahrendorf etc, Habermas also critically analysed the work of Marx and extended the boundaries of Marxism.

1.3.3. FUCTIONAL PERSPECTIVE OR FUNCTIONALISM: FROM DURKHEIM TO JEFFERY ALEXANDER

Another major development took place in sociology with the efforts of Emile Durkheim (1857-1917). He is also known as modern founding father of sociology. After Comte, he is the one among others who has developed a scientific base of sociology. He wrote first methodological text in sociology entitled The Rules of Sociological Methods. His ideas and theories largely emphasis on functionality of structure and sub structure within larger systems because of which we call him functionalist. After Durkheim, number of scholars contributed their ideas in this school of thought and extended its boundaries in different dimensions. The prominent thinkers of this school of thought are Talcott Parsons, Robert Merton, Bronislaw Malinowski, Jeffrey Alexander etc. We also include the contribution of Comte and Spencer in this school of thought, however the ideas of Durkheim are directly linked with the emergence of this school of thought.

Functionalists holds that society is a complex system whose various parts work together to produce stability and solidarity in the system (Turner, 1995). According to this approach, the discipline of sociology should investigate the relationship of parts of society to each other and to society as a whole entity. For instance, we can analyse the customs, norms, values of a family, kinship, religious institution in society by showing how they relate to other institutions within it.

Further, Functionalist emphasizes the importance of moral consensus, in maintaining order and stability in society. Moral consensus exists when most people in a society share the same values. Functionalists regard order and balance as the normal state of society. This social equilibrium is grounded in the existence of a moral consensus among the members of society. For instance, Durkheim argued that religion reaffirms people's adherence to core social values, thereby contributing to the maintenance of social cohesion (Morrison, 2006).

This school of thought was extended by Talcott Parsons (1902-1979) and Robert K. Merton (1910- 2003), who each drew extensively on Durkheim. Merton's version of functionalism has been particularly influential. Merton distinguished between manifest and latent functions. Manifest functions are those known to, and intended by, the participants in a specific type of social activity. Latent functions are consequences of that activity of which participants are unaware. A major part of sociological explanation, according to Merton, consists in uncovering the latent functions of social activities and institutions. Merton also distinguished between functions and dysfunctions (Lemert, 2013).

Functionalists, such as Malinowaski, wrote as societies have 'needs' and 'purposes', even though these concepts make sense only when applied to individual human beings. To fulfil the needs in the system, human beings come into contact and form a functional relation. The ideas of functionalists were again critically analysed by Jeffery Alexander who has propounded a Neo functionalism school of thought. The basic aim of neo functional school of thought has been to merge certain aspects of functionalism, those which have withstood the test of time, with other paradigms that have better developed critical perspectives (Lemert, 2013). The aim has been to build a hybrid that combines the strong points of the other perspectives so that one can deal with the so called opposite issues (such as, consensus and conflict, equilibrium and change, collectivity and individual) in a balanced manner.

The goal of neo-functionalists is to create a more synthetic theory. There is no doubt that Parsons was an unparalleled synthesizer of grand theory and structural functionalism has a strong synthetic core from the beginning. In his variety of structural functionalism, Parsons tried to integrate a wide range of theoretical inputs. He was also interested in drawing an interrelationship between different systems that constitute the social world such as, cultural, social, and personality systems. So, Alexander said, the beginning of structural functionalism was quite promising, but gradually, Parsons's approach became overly narrow and deterministic. He started viewing the cultural system as determining the other systems. Also, his overwhelming preoccupation with the 'problem of order' led to insufficient attention being paid to other areas such as conflict and strain. Neo-functionalism allocates equal attention to action and order (Lemert, 2013). According to Alexander, Structural functionalism has a tendency to focus almost exclusively on the macro-level sources of order in social structures and culture. It gives little attention to micro-level actions, the actions that take place at the local level. In its analysis, neo-functionalism includes rational as well as expressive actions.

1.3.4. INTERACTIONIST PERSPECTIVE OR INTERACTIONISM: FROM WEBER TO GOFFMAN

Interactionism or interactionist perspective was started with the ideas of Max Weber (1864–1920). Weber was a German sociologist who disagreed with the position of Durkheim on his over emphasis on structure. He argued that sociologists must also consider people's interpretations of events and not just the events they themselves observe. Weber believed that individuals' behaviours exist because of their interpretations of their own behaviours as people tend to act according to these interpretations (Morrison, 2006). In short, he has given importance to individual or agency. He argued that individual has its own importance and individual has the capacity to affect the structure or system. Hence, according to weber there is a great importance of individual actions and to understand the actions of individuals sociologists have to adopt method of empathetic understanding wherein sociologists mentally put themselves into the other person's shoes and thus obtain an interpretive understanding of the meanings of individuals' actions or behaviours.

The Further extensions within this school of thought can be seen in the work of George Herbert Mead, Alfred Schutz, Harold Garfinkle, Erving Goffman etc. The work of Mead had an important influence on sociological thought, in particular through a perspective called symbolic interactionism. Symbolic interactionism springs from a concern with language and meaning. Mead claims that language allows us to become self-conscious beings aware of our own individuality and able to see ourselves from the outside as others see us (Giddens, 2009). The key element in this process is the symbol. A symbol is something that stands for something else. For example, words that we use to refer to certain objects are in fact symbols which represent what we mean. The word 'spoon' is the symbol we use to describe the utensil that we use to eat soup or food. Non-verbal gestures or forms of communication are also symbols. Waving at someone or making a rude gesture has symbolic value. Mead argued that humans rely on shared symbols and understandings in their interactions with one another (Lemert, 2013). Because human beings live in a richly symbolic universe, virtually all interactions between human individuals involve an exchange of symbols. Symbolic interactionism directs our attention to the detail of interpersonal interaction and how that detail is used to make sense of what others say and do.

The ideas of Weber and Mead was further extended by Alfred Schutz and Harold Garfinkle who propound phenomenology and ethnomethodology. Phenomenology is the philosophical study of the structures of experience and consciousness. As a philosophical movement it was founded in the early years of the 20th century by Edmund Husserl and later on extended by Alfred Schutz. Phenomenological sociology has largely developed out of the works of Alfred Schutz, who is best known for The Phenomenology of the Social World -1967). Schutz suggests that in the course of our action, we employ assumptions about society and how it works and we use Verstehen in a crude way to predict the action of others (Haralambos& Holborn 2018) and as a result, our acts are 'meaningful' not because we have a particular intention or motive, but because other actors interpret our action as having symbolic significance. It is said that the phenomenological perspective take the interpretive approach, initially developed by Max Weber and later on by other thinkers, to the extreme. This perspective further says that our reality consists just of meanings, therefore the job of the sociologist is to discover the meanings of actions and behaviour and nothing else. In popularizing this approach, Schutz uses the philosophy of Edmund Husserl in order to extend Max Weber's methodology. He does this in order to construct a radical account of the nature of social action. In Schutz's view, Weber failed to give any real account of the way in which actions can only be constructed by drawing upon a shared set of social concepts, symbols and meanings (Giddens, 2009). Phenomenological sociology is the study of the formal structures of concrete social existence as made available in and through the analytical description of acts of intentional consciousness. Thus, in many ways we can understand this approach as a departure from the conventional model of interpretive sociology

The another advancement in this school of thought happened with the advent of ethnomethodology. The term ethnomethodology was coined by Harold Garfinkel who is best known for his work Studies in Ethnomethodology (1967).

‘Ethno’ refers to the stock of common sense knowledge available to members of society; ‘methodology’ refers to the strategies which actors use in different settings to make their meanings understandable (Lemert, 2013). Ethnomethodology is a perspective within sociology which focuses on the way people make sense of their everyday world. In this regard, Garfinkel attests that ethnomethodological studies analyse everyday activities as members’ methods for making those same activities visibly rational and reportable for all practical purposes. People are seen as rational actors, but employ practical reasoning rather than formal logic to make sense of and function in society. It refers to the analysis of the ways in which we actively make sense of what others mean by what they say and do. Much of our everyday interaction occurs through informal conversations with others (Haralambos& Holborn 2018). Garfinkel analysed these conversations. He showed how these conversations are based on shared understandings and knowledge. Although this approach was developed by Garfinkel, it is based on Schutz’s phenomenological reconstruction of Max Weber’s interpretive sociology. Thus, ethnomethodology has its roots in the fusion of symbolic interactionism and phenomenology

In this school of thought, the ideas of Erving Goffman are well read by many scholars of contemporary times. Goffman in his book The Presentation of Self made a distinctive contribution by popularising a particular type of interactionist method known as the dramaturgical approach. The dramaturgical approach also derives from the interpretive approach and it compares the everyday life to the setting of a drama, a theatre or a stage (Lemert, 2013). The dramaturgical approach is the study of social interaction as though participants are actors in a play in a theatre. Hence, social behaviour becomes analogous to theatrical drama. Just as actors act in front of us and present to us certain visuals or images, we individuals also like to present certain qualities of our personalities in front of the outside world, while we like to hide some of them. Goffman’s primary focus has been to understand the process of impression management (Lemert, 2013). Hence, individuals not only present themselves to each other in a presentable manner, but also attempt to manage the image they present. This aspect gives an important dimension to dramaturgy. That is, it assumes that all the world is a stage and that people manage their acts in face to face interactions. In a way, it also gives a complex dimension to the action perspective. If we are to understand the meanings of actions as Weber postulated, it would be necessary to deeply and subjectively involve ourselves during interactions, in order to gauge whether an individual is engaging in the act of impression management.

1.3.5. STRUCTURALIST PERSPECTIVE OR STRUCTURALISM TO POSTRUCTURALISM: FROM LEVI-STRAUSS TO DERRIDA

Another perspective in sociology is introduced by Claude Levi Strauss (1908-2009). In fact, he has adopted the idea of structuralism from linguistic structuralism. He was influenced by the ideas of founder of structuralism, Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), a Swiss Linguist. Hence, Structuralism began in linguistics and spread to

sociology, anthropology, philosophy, literary criticism, and other fields. Levi Strauss in his book entitled The Elementary Structures of Kinship -1948 emphasized on the importance of structure and binary oppositions within larger structures. There are certain areas in which the structuralist directly emphasis. Structuralism tend not to doubt the existence of reality (Turner, 1995).Structuralist tend to focus on monosomy, how system sets limits to what can be thought, said and meant. Structuralist tend to reduce many complicated phenomena to few key elements that they argue explains everything. Structuralist try to find always their own version of universal truth. They are searching for universal structures that binds all humans together at some level. Structuralist focus on monolithic structure that is the systems of meaning and how these meanings function in society (Lemert, 2013).

The ideas of structuralist are critically examined and analyzed by many scholars. Amongst, the Post-structuralists are very important. Basically,Post-structuralism emerged in France during the 1960s. The Founding father of this school is Jacques Derrida who wrote 'Of Grammatology' and introduced a theory of deconstruction, particularly 'Deconstruction of Logocentrism'. The other scholars associated with this school of thought include Roland Barthes, Jacques Lacan, Julia Kristeva etc.

Poststructuralist do doubt the existence of reality (Nothing is real). They argued that reality is beyond. Post structuralist tend to focus on polysemy; plurality of meanings.They too tend to be reductive but they keep in mind the differences that are being ignored by the structuralist while carrying out the reduction. Post structuralist have given up the search for universal truth. They focus more on the reader and speaker who is operating within the structure (Lemert, 2013). They encourages a way of looking at the world that challenges what comes to be accepted as truth and knowledge. Poststructuralists always call into question, how certain accepted 'facts' and 'beliefs' actually work to reinforce the dominance and power of particular actors within international relations. According to them, language is not a transparent medium that connects one directly with a truth or reality outside it but rather a structure or code, whose parts derive their meaning from their contrast with one another and not from any connection with an outside world (Lemert, 2013). Further, they criticise the centre, structure and structured reality. They criticise a singular meaning approach and emphasis on the idea of multiple meanings. In poststructuralism the text offers a large space for interpretation. In other words different interpretations are encouraged. According to them there are no hierarchies or binary oppositions. They argue history is present, it is used a diachronic method; the idea of a multi-voiced language. There is a critique of the sign and a transcendental signified. Overall, the ideas of post structuralist is against the ideas of structuralists.

1.3.6. POSTMODERN PERSPECTIVE OR POSTMODERNISM: LYOTARD, FOUCAULT, BARTHES, BAUDRILLARD

Postmodernists and poststructuralists are one at certain grounds and at the same time they also intervene into one another domain. In short, some scholars are purely post-modernist and some are poststructuralist, at the same time many of the scholars are both post-modernists and post structuralists in their approach. Post modernism is most recent approach and it is a critique of modernism. Further, we may say that post modernism is opposite of modernist perspective which largely take diversion from modernist ideas. The ideas of early sociologist, largely comes under the domain of modernism. Modernists believe in scientific techniques, methods, fixed reality, whereas post-modernist question science and scientific techniques. One of the post-modern thinker, Jean F. Lyotard (1924-1998) argued that science is never a superior form of knowledge.

Further, Postmodernism typically criticizes long-held beliefs regarding objective reality, predictability, universalism, cause effect relationships, experimentation etc. Lyotard in his analysis rejects metanarratives and grand theories of Durkheim, Weber, Marx and other sociologists of this category. Postmodernist are anti-authoritarianist, or refuse to recognize the authority of any single style or definition of what art should be. Postmodern thought is against modern art and architecture. The modern art is considered to be highly influenced by elitism. They believe new art has reached to the grass roots and common people. It is closer to the ground reality. The another postmodernist Jean Baudrillard (1929-2007) has developed a theory which says that there is nothing real in this world. Instead, there are simulations, that is, carbon copies of reality and worse enough, there is no original copy. Postmodern society is multicultural and incoherent. Human beings in a society are never uniform. They are multicultural, multi-ethnic. They believe the community is never 'one'. It has varying ethnicities, feelings, religious followings and linguistic learning's. It is never possible to think of a community as a large family. There is enough fragmentation in a society.

Postmodernity is multi-dimensional. Each author has defined it from his own theoretical perspective. In Postmodernism the individual identity is not fix and prescribed. Roland Barthes (1915-1980), through his famous slogan The Death of the Author, focused on readers. He said the postmodern society, which is known for its plurality, diversity, multi-ethnicity and fragmentation, is also understood for having varying interpretations of the writings of authors. Further according to renowned postmodernist, Michal Foucault (1926-1984), knowledge-power relationships are major attributes of post-modernity. For him, the history of all social institutions is the history of power relations. He questioned, where does power come from? In the answer he said power originates from knowledge.

In the postmodern period it is the knowledge-power relationship which controls and governs the society. He argued that there are several social institutions in the society including penal system, psychiatry which deals with the activities of men. Foucault believed that none of these institutions is neutral or independent. All these are tied up in the complex of power in our society. The power, all through the history of mankind, is exercised through surveillance, monitoring and other forms of regulation of people's lives. For Foucault, the modern-day notion of the self is bound

up with, and inseparable from, the workings of such institutions, and so none of us can claim to stand apart from the exercise of power Further, Postmodernism gave a new dimension to the expansion of individual identity. During this period, social life is faster and more complex than it was in modernity.

1.3.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS II

1.Write a short note on evolutionary perspective.

_____
_____

2. How neo-functionalism is different form functionalism? Write down any three differences between neo-functionalism and functionalism.

_____
_____

3.Write down the contribution of Weber for evolution of sociological Thought.

_____
_____

1.4. SUMMARY

In this unit, we have introduced you with the major contributions of different sociologists for developing and extending the boundaries of sociology. We have mainly defined the emergence and evolution of sociological thought. Further we have elaborated the major factors behind emergence of sociology and how it is directly connected with enlightenment movement and French revolution. The Enlightenment movement and French revolution was a turning point in the history of thought. It was also largely responsible for the development of Sociology and sociological thought. For better understating on evolution of social and sociological thought, we have discussed different perspectives and their sequence. We have also explained the further extensions existing in these larger perspectives.

1.5. QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

1.5.1. LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1.Write a detailed note on evolution of social and sociological thought.

2. Discuss the contribution of Comte, Weber and Durkheim for the development of sociology and sociological thought?

1.5.2. SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. How enlightenment and French Revolution are responsible for emergence of sociological thought.
2. Write down any three differences between structuralism and post structuralism.
3. Write a brief note on all extensions within interactionist school of thought.

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BACHELOR OF ARTS (LIBERAL ARTS)

SEMESTER III

COURSE: SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT

UNIT 2: AUGUSTE COMTE: POSITIVISM, LAW OF THREE STAGES

STRUCTURE

2.0 Learning Objectives

2.1. Introduction

2.2. Theory of Law of Three Stages

- **2.2.1. The Theological Stage**
- **2.2.2. The Metaphysical Stage**
- **2.2.3. The Scientific or Positive Stage**

2.3. Major Societies Identified by Comte

- **2.3.1. The Theological-Military Society**
- **2.3.2. The Scientific-Industrial Society**

2.4. Positivism

- **2.4.1. Foremost Thoughts of Comte's Positivism**

2.5. Summary

2.6. Questions for Practice

2.7. Suggested Readings

2.0. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the major contribution of Comte to sociology.
- Elaborate the idea of Law of Three Stages and Positivism.
- Describe the scope and relevance of above two theories.
- Delineate the importance of scientific methods to understand social world.

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Founder of Sociology and Positivism, Auguste Comte's (1798-1857) theories and ideas of society has greatly influenced many thinkers in all over the world (Giddens, 2009). The period of Comte's life was during the 100 years of turmoil in France The society in France experienced crisis and change especially after the 1789 revolution followed by Napoleon's reign. Because of this, Comte developed theories to explain the conditions of society affected due to French Revolution (Bogardus, 2010). Also, during the crisis in France, industrialisation and science rose to prominence. He developed the subject, the science of sociology (previously called social physics as the name suggested by Saint Simon) to be used to understand the changes and find the solutions.

Comte published *Positive Philosophy* in which he mentioned the need of Plan for scientific studies necessary for the reorganization of society (Bottomore, 2019). In this text he developed a theory of social evolution- the stage by stage of society's progress towards an ideal society. He called this progress as *'The Law of Three Stages'*. Further, the study of science was at its peak during his time, thus, his study of society is mostly correlated with science.

To develop sociology as scientific discipline, he established the ideas of positivism. He adopted a stage-by-stage change towards society in his theories to explain the social changes on the French society at that time. While explaining about sociology in his book 'Positive Philosophy', he wrote sociology is the science of social phenomena, 'subject to natural and invariable laws, the discovery of which is the object of investigation' (Giddens, 2009).

Although Comte recognized that each scientific discipline has its own subject-matter, he argued that the latter could be studied using the same common logic and scientific method that aimed at revealing universal laws. Just as the discovery of laws in the natural world allows us to control and predict events around us, in the same way uncovering the laws that govern human society can help us shape our destiny and help in the welfare of humanity (Inkeles, 1987). Comte argued that society conforms to invariable laws in much the same way that the physical world does (Giddens, 2009). Thus, according to him, scientific study of social phenomena is possible through a new science called 'Sociology'. In this unit, we will discuss more on Auguste Comte's theories, namely law of three stages and positivism, which contributed upon the creation of Sociology and the groundwork that Comte had laid upon.

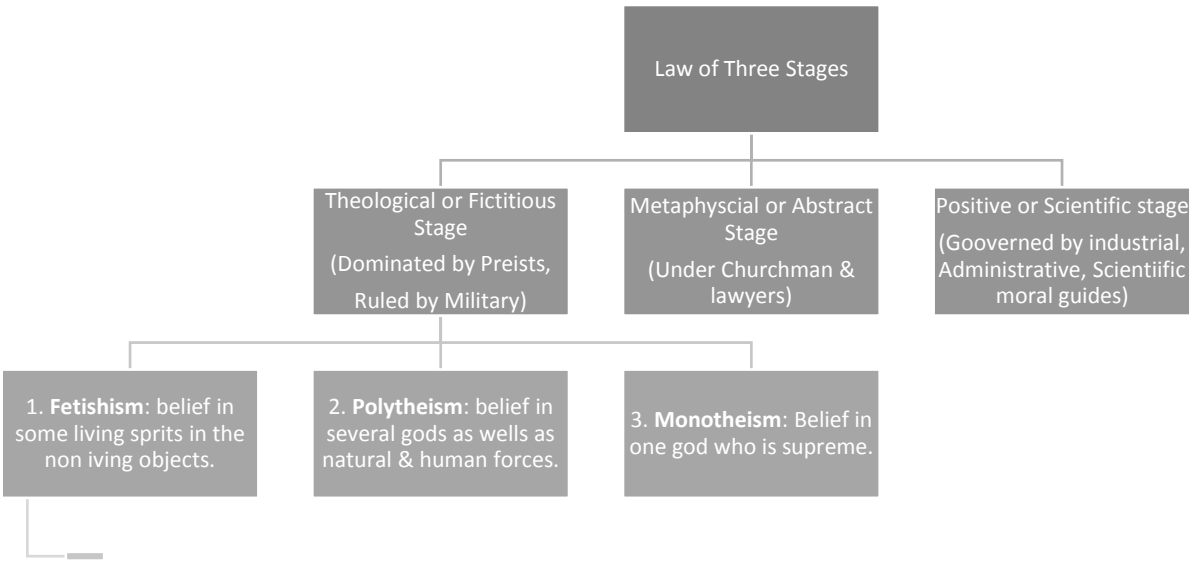
2.2. THEORY OF LAW OF THREE STAGES

The theory of 'The Law of Three Stages' or 'The Law of Human Progress' was one of the major and main contribution of Comte to the field of Sociological Thought. As early as 1822, when Comte was beginner and learning the base from Saint Simon, he himself set the task to discover the pattern through what series of successive transformations the human gradually led to the point at which civilized society finds itself today (Coser, 2010). With his searching mind Comte emerged with his central conception "The Law of Three Stages". He organized and classified the social thought prevailing before his times. In his major work, Politique Positive, he argued that each branch of knowledge, passes successively through three different theoretical conditions the theological or fictitious, the metaphysical or abstract and scientific or positive.

For Comte, each successive stage or sub-stage in the evolution of the human mind necessarily grew out of the preceding one. The emergence and constitution of the new system cannot take place take place before the destruction of the old system (Coser, 2010). Although Comte emphasized mainly on stages in the development and progressive emancipation of the human mind and knowledge, he stressed that these stages corelated with parallel stages in the development of social organization, of types of social order, of types of social units and of the material conditions of human life (Inkeles, 1987). He said, as individuals develop from Childhood superstitions & unknown fears of Supernatural powers, to adolescent belief in great cosmic principles and to adulthood's practical positivism, so do the society from primitive religion to more advanced philosophical idealism to modern scientific mentalities (Giddens, 2009).

Similarly, he related the evolution in the branch of knowledge and human thought process with changing conditions of society. All these he thought evolved in similar manner as the changes in progressive mental developments. Thus, the theory of Law of Three Stages was based upon belief in 'Social Evolution' of utmost importance. The following graph gives us a glimpse of Law of Three Stages.

Graph 1. Law of Three Stages



2.2.1. THE THEOLOGICAL STAGE

In the theological stage, the society believed in the spiritual being and religion plays an important role in society. All theoretical conceptions, whether general or special bear a supernatural impress (Gorden, 1998). This type of thinking is found among the primitive races and sometimes the thinking of children is also at this level. At this level of thinking, there is a marked lack of logical and orderly thinking. The primitive man and children do not have the scientific thought process. Therefore, theological thinking is characterized by non-scientific.

The main subject matter of theological thinking is natural events (Inkeles, 1987) . The usual and unintelligible events of nature tend man towards theological or fictitious interpretation of the events. Unable to discover the natural causes of the various happenings, the primitive man attributes them to imaginary or divine forces. The explanation of natural events in non-natural divine or imaginary conditions is known as theological or fictitious thinking. For instance, if some deficiency occurs in body, in such case human beings use to relate it with divine forces and the karma (past actions). According to Comte, it can be counted as theological thinking. The theological thinking implies belief in another-world wherein reside the divine forces which control the events in this world. Further, Comte has divided theological stage into three sub stages namely, fetishism, polytheism and monotheism.

1. FETISHISM

Fetishism is a belief that there is some living spirit in the non-living objects in this world. This is known as animism. As the very term animism signifies it means that the so-called inanimate objects are not dead and lifeless but are informed by a living spirit (Horton and Hunt, 1985). In this stage society had belief that everything is a creation

of divine power. They had belief in spirits and supernatural powers. The supernatural powers were behind events and the creation of the universe. People at this time were used to worship of inanimate objects such as rocks, tress and stones etc (Coser, 2010). With the passage of time, there comes certain changes in the thinking of human beings and society turned into new phase within theological stage called polytheism.

2. POLYTHEISM

In this phase of evolution, the human beings classified gods, natural powers and human forces. Each human force had a presiding deity. Each god was associated with particular function. Their area of action was also determined by set of people. Further, they also created the class of priests to get the goodwill and the blessings of these gods. Overall, this phase of human evolution was characterized by the existence of multiple gods with multiple powers and functions associated with them. All-natural forces were controlled by different Gods (Ritzer, 1972).

3. MONOTHEISM

The presence of too many gods also created contradictions in their minds, hence they started believing in the idea of one god for all and the society tuned into new phase called monotheism. They started believing in the super human power of only single god, which governed the universe, the events in people's daily lives and also the society. Slowly and gradually, the human minds started thinking about the phenomenon with logics and hence the society turned into new stage (Ritzer, 1972).

The theological stage leaves little explanation other than the belief in anything spiritual. Generally, the people in this society accept beliefs that have been passed from generation to generation. In addition, this stage adopted 'military and monarchical social organization, with god at the head of hierarchy as king of kings' (Bogardus, 2010).

2.2.2. THE METAPHYSICAL STAGE OR ABSTRACT STAGE

The metaphysical stage is a period of transition between the theological stage and the positivistic stage. In this stage, the people in the society began to doubt the explanations of a spiritual being and moved towards accepting that objects or things have its own essence or 'spirit' (Bogardus, 2010). In short, the metaphysical stage tried to understand nature, society and the universe and the connection of things without the help of God or spiritual beings. This stage is the beginning of secularization whereby the people in this society began to think further rather than accepting everything around them is in the hands of a spiritual being. For instance, the philosophers, most notably, Aristotle, developed theories in which he and his fellow successors was able to 'explain physical phenomena by physical causes or to predict their occurrence' (Mill, 1998). In addition, the judicial system during this time was starting to mature replacing laws according to religion and God, especially during the

Greek and Roman times as it progresses to politics and the creation of courts and lawmakers.

2.2.3. THE SCIENTIFIC OR POSITIVE STAGE

The last stage of evolution according to Comte is the scientific-industrial stage or the positive stage, where the society will finally reach (Ritzer, 1972). It is an ideal stage that Comte envisioned in which the society will no longer use the explanations of a spiritual being but turn to scientific evidence. Here industrialization is a major role in changing the society's structure. The society will experience great change in intellectual thinking and advanced technological findings during this stage (Coser, 2010). According to Comte, in each and every stage, the society will find itself in a state of crisis before the next stage could be achieved. For instance, Comte drew his theory from the after effects of the French Revolution where the society used to be faithful to the monarchy alongside god and religion but now it is changing towards secularized advanced society where achieved status is more acceptable. He predicted that the societies around the world would eventually reach this ideal stage even though it would not happen accordingly to the '*Law of three stages*' For instance, a particular society could start at stage two, metaphysical and then stage one till stage three, positive stage.

Further, as per the above three stages of Mental progress which are actually the three major states or epochs of developing society, the theological stage and the metaphysical stage are subjugated by Military values; where theological stage focuses on the Conquest and the metaphysical stage is characterized by defence. The Scientific stage is advent of Industrial society. Comte also talks about two major societies. These are as follows.

2.3. TWO MAJOR SOCIETIES IDENTIFIED BY COMTE

2.3.1. THE THEOLOGICAL-MILITARY SOCIETY

This Society is based on Military activities and Theological Thinking, where priests have the spiritual & intellectual power while the military is supposed to exercise temporal authority.

2.3.2.THE SCIENTIFIC-INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

In this society, The Scientists are the major commander who embodies the moral and intellectual powers for the growth and development of scientific thinking to be applied in production and military activities of society.

Comte was of the idea that the scientific-industrial society will be the society of "All Mankind". In the series of successive human race transformation this stage is the ultimate stage. He said; "the new system is built upon the destruction of the old. Thus, his theory of progress is called as the unilinear theory of evolution

which specifies the development of human race to a single design which includes the culmination of individual mind, the human society and this all makes the ultimate state of positivism. In the following part of this unit, we will concentrate on the positivism of Comte.

2.3.3. CHECK YOUR PROGRESS II

1.Write down any two differences between theological and positive stage?

_____
____

2. Discuss about the two major societies identified by Comte.

_____

3. Explain any two characteristics of Metaphysical Stage.

_____
_____

2.4. THEORY OF POSITIVISM

One of the important philosophical movements which originated in the nineteenth century and shaped the thinking of scientists and scholars in the 20th century, is positivism. The doctrine and movement founded by the French philosopher Auguste Comte in the nineteenth century (Coser, 2010). The Comte was the founder of this movement, however the general philosophical view of knowledge was proposed by Francis Bacon, John Locke and many other prominent philosophers. The main ideas of Comte behind positivism was to establish sociology as new scientific discipline. According to dictionary of oxford, positivism means the philosophical system, recognizing only positive facts in observable phenomena, and rejecting metaphysics and theism (Gorden, 1998). It is a doctrine which asserts that the only true knowledge is scientific knowledge, that is, knowledge which describes and explains the co-existence and succession of observable phenomena including both physical and social phenomena (Jary and Jary, 2000). While talking about positivism, Comte argued that any sociological approach which operate on the general assumption that the methods of physical sciences such as, experimentation, predictability, cause effect relationship, observation, search for laws, measurement etc. can be carried over into the social science as they are in physical or natural sciences (Coser, 2010). Comte believed that the function of approaches and theories in science is to co-ordinate observed facts rather than to explain them in terms of causes and to emphasize this view, he used the

term positive (Ogburn and Nimkoff, 1972). His Positive Philosophy, a major text, later came to be called Positivism. The main characteristics of positivism are; (a) Positivism rejects the metaphysical speculation in the favour of positive knowledge based on systematic observation and experiment. (b) Positivism mentioned that there is no spirit, above and beyond the history which objectifies through the vagary of time. (c) Positivism is nothing but a philosophy of science. (d) While representing the radical relativism, Comte said; "Everything is Relative; there is only Absolute thing", Positivism as a principle, absolutes relativity which makes all the previous system and ideas a result of historical condition. (e) The inherent order of human thought and understanding is the only unity that the system of positivism affords in its anti-metaphysical state. (f) Positivism denies, theological and metaphysical knowledge and more believe in factual, logical and scientific and experiences. (g) Positivist believe, scientific knowledge must be based on direct experiences. The direct experiences of a reality can be attained by the unity of scientific methods. (h) Positivism, as according to Comte can be used in two distinctive ways; Positivism as method and positivism as way of thinking.

2.4.1. FOREMOST THOUGHTS OF COMTE'S POSITIVISM

1) **Invariant laws governing the social & natural worlds:** He said, this search has profoundly influenced the system in which sociologists have conducted sociological enquiry. Comte also argued further and said; sociology could become an individual science on the par with the most positivistic of sciences, physics.
2) **Comte used the expression "Positivism" in different senses:** He said, Positivism is a force that has countered the very part of negativism of his time/era. In Comte's view, most of the Western Europe was under the political & moral disorder that was the consequence of French revolution of 1789. According to Comte's philosophy, positivism is the force that brings order, progress and sustainability to the European crises of Ideas.
3) **The law of three stages forms the basis of Comte's Idea of Positivism:** As per Comte, it was the rejection of metaphysics in the favor of scientific reasons, that Comte's positivism is different in many ways to logical positivism. He rejected the idea that there are universal criteria that can be used to distinguish scientific statement from non-scientific statements, also discarded the reductionist ideal of the logical positivism.
4) **Positivism is a final stage of society:** According to Comte, Positivism is the belief that societies have their own scientific studies. It's a general belief that true knowledge is only found through science. In short Comte's idea of positivism is definitely a product of final stage of society, the Scientific Stage.

Comte believed that Positivism could both advance science (Theory) and change the ways people live their lives (Practical). He argued that upper class of his time was far too conservative to advocate positivistic change. Women & the members of working class however were well situated to advocate positivism (Bottomore, 2019). Comte viewed the working class as agents of positivistic change because of their ties of

affection to their family, respect for authority, exposure to misery and propensity for self-sacrifice.

Comte's idea of positivism criticised by many scholars at certain grounds. Timasheff argued that Comte's sociological theories represent a premature jump from the level of observation and inferences to the level of theory. Comte claimed to be the father of positivism or scientific approach however, he himself was not committed to it. According to John Stuart Mill, Comte's ideas on religion does not stand the test of rationalism because that can never be put into practice. Comte's religion was born out of his moral intoxication. One scholar named, Rollin Chambliss argued Comte wanted to build a science of social phenomena. But instead of doing that he struggled to provide his projects of social reorganisation. He built a Utopia instead of science. This is only one side of understanding on Comte's work, there are number of scholars who followed the ideas of Comte while explaining the social world (Semelser, 1993). According to them, Comte's has contributed distinctive ideas in the field of social science philosophy. Utmost he has founded a new subject and initiated a scientific tradition to understand the phenomenon of society with the help of scientific methods.

2.4.2 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS II

1. What was the main concern and goal of Comte's idea of positivism?

   _____

   _____

2. Write down the distinctive characteristic of positivism.

   _____

   _____

3. Explain Positivism as a method.

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   _____

2.5. SUMMARY

In this unit, we have introduced you with the major contribution of founding father of Sociology for establishing and providing scientific base to sociology. Sociology began to evolve and branches of sociological theories appear after Comte, sociology and social thought has now become renowned subjects in academia. The works of Comte are translated by many authors and thinkers and influenced great scholars such as Durkheim, Parsons, Merton etc. Comte's views of studying society as a science and his sociological methods are still used and even modified to suit every research, although not everyone agrees on his opinions –regardless, his contributions is important to understand the social changes until today. The theory of law of three stages not only explained the evolution of society, also it has strengthened the general law of society. In short it has developed a tradition to look at society and its issues in a sequence. Other than this, the idea of positivism is another great contribution of Comte to social scientist and particularly sociologist to understand social phenomenon

with systematic way. Except the theory of law of three stages and positives, Comte has developed many other others important ideas and theories on the basis of which he has given birth to new science called sociology. Thus, Comte had contributed number of theories and ideas which help us to understand society in the past, present and the future. John Morley discussed Comte's contributions and said '*Neither Franklin, nor any man that has ever lived, could surpass him in the heroic tenacity with which, in the face of a thousand obstacles, he pursued his own ideal of a vocation'* (Bogardus, 1922).

2.6. QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

2.6.1. LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1.Critically evaluate the theory of positivism.
2.Discuss your views on the theory of law of three stage. Also, how this theory is still relevant to understand social phenomenon?

2.6.2. SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Write down any three distinctive characteristics of positive stage.
2. What is the central theme of Comte's theory of positivism.
3. What is the major difference among sub phases of theological stage?.

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BACHELOR IN LIBERAL ARTS (BLA)

SEMESTER III

COURSE (SUBJECT) SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT

UNIT 3: HERBERT SPENCER: EVOLUTION AND SOCIAL DARWINISM

STRUCTURE

3.1. Learning Objectives

3.2. Introduction

3.3. Theory of Evolution

3.3.1. Organic Analogy

3.3.2. Evolution of Societies

3.4. Social Darwinism

3.5. Summary

3.6. Questions for Practice

3.7. Suggested Readings

3.1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After the completion of this Unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the major contribution of Spencer to sociology
- Describe the theory of evolution of society and organic analogy.
- Elaborate the concept of social Darwinism.
- Delineate the importance of above two concepts in contemporary society

3.2. INTRODUCTION

Herbert Spencer is one of the most renowned philosophers of the 19th Century. He had exerted a profound influence in the development of modern Sociology. Many sociologist believe, Spencer has contributor new ideas to sociology and many also stated that Spencer continued Comte's evolutionary approach. Although, Spencer's ideas were close to the ideas of Comte, however, his general orientation to look at society differs significantly (Coser, 2010). Moreover, later sociologist, after analysing the work of both scholars, argued that the contribution of both to sociology was almost equal as for both the turmoil was same. Both worked hard to establish science of society (Giddens, 2009). Both believed in progress and irreversibility of historical development, however, their way to look at evolution of society was different. While talking about evolution of society, Comte compared it with human mind and Spencer compared the growth or evolution of society with organism. Thus, like Comte, Spencer also known as one of the fathers of sociology.

Herbert Spencer was born in Derby, England, in 1820. As one of the most notable exponent of social evolution, he is considered as the father of classical evolutionism too (Ritzer, 1972). Three volumes of 'Principles of Sociology', written by Spencer, are considered as the first systematic study devoted to the sociological analysis. He stressed upon the obligation of sociology to deal with the inter-relations between the different elements of the society. According to him, the whole society should be considered as one single unit (Semelser,1993). Herbert Spencer's contribution in the field of sociology is specially recognized because of his theory of 'Social Evolution' and 'Organic Analogy'.

While explaining social evolution Herbert Spencer used the idea of biological evolution propounded by Charles Darwin. He applied it to how societies change and evolve over time to adjust according to the uprooting requirements. He felt that the society was bound to change to survive. According to Spencer's philosophy, societies (like organisms) would begin simple and then progress to a more complex form (Ritzer, 1972). Spencer also found similarities between animal organisms and societies in that both had three main systems. The another major theory of spencer is Organic Analogy. Herbert Spencer presented the organic analogy, as a secondary doctrine which played a vital role in his thought system. Spencer maintains that we can understand society best, if we compare it with an organism. He thinks that society is like a biological system, a greater organism, alike in its structure and its functions. Like an organism society is subject to the same process of gradual growth or development from a simple to complex state. Like any organism, society also exhibits differentiation in functions and integration structure (Coser, 2010). In this connection, it must be noted that Spencer does not subscribe to the view that society is an organism; he maintains it only as an analogy. Spencer has contributed many ideas to sociology and most of these ideas are still relevant in contemporary society. Here in this unit, we will only emphasis on social evolution, organic analogy and social Darwinism.

3.3. THEORY OF EVOLUTION

Spenser was influenced by Darwin's ideas on evolution. Darwin developed the concept of evolution in his prominent text 'origin of species', 1859. Darwin's '*The Origin of Species' concerned to the understanding of how life evolved on earth form a simple unicellular organism like* amoeba *to multicellular complex organisms like, human beings (Coser, 2010).*Spencer applied Darwin's ideas on social world and given a name to it, social evolution. Social evolution according to him, a set of stages through which all the societies moved from simple to complex and from the homogenous to the heterogeneous. In context of evolution, he writes in his text, civilization is a progress from indefinite, incoherent, homogeneity to definite, coherent and heterogeneity (Ritzer, 1972). Here the term social evolution implies the evolution of man's social relations, cultures and living patters.

Spencer was impressed by the idea of organic evolution which explain how the species evolved throughout the time and he wanted to see whether this kind of evolution has also taken place in society in a similar way. He proved the analogy between organism and society through his theory of organic analogy (Giddens, 2009). Thus, organic analogy is a foundation for Spenser's sociological theory and it becomes important to understand his idea of organic analogy before discussing his idea of social evolution.

3.3.1. ORGANIC ANALOGY

While explaining the relationship between organism and society spencer writes, *So, completely is society organized on the same system as an individual that we may perceive something more than an analogy between them, the same definition of life applied to both biological and social organism* (Coser, 2010).Spencer argued that the first similarity between organism and society can be observed interms of size and growth. For instance, as Amoeba's size is very small and with the passage of time it turned into human body similarly the size of primitive societies was very small as compare to contemporary modern society. Also, as organism grows continuously, similarly society also grow with the passage of time. For instance, a child grows up to be an old man and communities becomes metropolitan area and small state becomes and empire. At the primitive stage of a society, the division of labour is not that conspicuous. Societies are almost like altogether warriors, entirely hunters or completely tool-makers and each part of the society is fulfilling all its necessities itself. So, there exists homogeneity. As the society grows, the parts become dissimilar.

The second major similarity is both increase in the complexity of structure. Both grow simple to complex. For instance, organism; Amoeba to mammal and society; Primitive community to Modern industrial society. The structure of mammal is more complex and similarly the modern industrial societies are more complex than primitive society. The Third similarity is that differentiation of Structure Leads to differentiation of functions. Both move from general to specific. For instance, each

organ performs different function similarly, each organization/institution perform different function. Further, as change in the structure of organism leads to change in functions similarly change in society's structure also leads to change in its function too. For instance, the working patterns in modern society are different than traditional ones. Further, there is a differentiation in the parts of human body at the same time they all are interdependent. Similarly, society has also many sub parts and these all parts depends on one another. For instance, family depends on state, law and many other sub parts of society. Loss of one part of body affect the other parts, similarly the loss of one member in the family also affect the whole family. If one part of the body gets damaged it does not destroy the whole body. The other parts full the need of that part, similarly if one part of the society does not work it does not mean that society will not survive. The other parts of society full fill the need of that part. Thus, it can be said that everything moves a condition of simplicity to a condition of organized complexity, a condition of indefiniteness to a condition of definiteness, a condition in which their parts are relatively undifferentiated to a condition of increasing specialization, aunstable condition to stable condition

Along with similarities, there are various differences exist between Organism and Society (Coser, 2010). The very first difference is, the organism is a concrete, integrated whole whereas society is a whole composed of discrete and dispersed elements. Organs are organized, but Parts of Society are Independent; e.g. organism such as legs, hands, face, etc., cannot have existence outside the physical body of the organism. But the parts of society such as family, school, army, police, political parties, etc., are relatively independent and are not organically fixed to the society. Society does not have a definite form as does the Organism. For instance, organisms have an outward form or shape for example, dog, donkey, monkey, deer and so on, whereas societies such as Indian society or American society do not have any definite and externally identifiable form. Society is only a mental construct. It is abstract and exists in our mind only in the form of an idea (Horton and Hunt, 1985). There is also difference regarding the centrality of "Consciousness": In an organism, there exists what is known as "consciousness" and it is concentrated in a small part of the aggregate. The parts of the body do not have this. But in the case of the society consciousness is diffused throughout the individual members. Further, differences regarding the structure and functions, in the case of organism each of its parts performs a definite and fixed function. The parts perform their functions incessantly. This certainty relating to the functions of the parts, we do not find in society. Functions of the parts of society such as institutions often get changed. Some of the functions of family, for example, have changed. On the contrary, the eyes, heart, nerves, ears, tongue and other organs of the organism cannot change their functions.

3.3.2. EVOLUTION OF SOCIETIES

After looking into similarities and differences, now we will be able to understand the evolutionary ideas of spencer. Spencer attempts to categorize the societies according to their evolutionary phases and determines that the societies become complex in a series (Inkeles, 1987).

a. SIMPLE SOCIETIES

At first, there happens to be simple societies which remain in the form of a single working whole 'unsubjected' to any other and the parts work together without a regulatory centre for certain public. These societies are 'headless' in the sense that there leadership style is mainly occasional leadership or unstable leadership. These types of societies consist families as a larger units.

b. COMPOUND SOCIETIES

Then, because of the unification of two or more simple societies (may be in a peaceful way or a result of wars), compound societies come into existence. These societies are mainly agricultural in nature and have some basic division of labour and permanent residences. In these types of societies the unification of families turns into different 'Clans'

c. DOUBLY COMPOUND SOCIETIES

The next form is called doubly compound societies where political organizations become more intricate (rigid and complex) under a single head and comparatively formal system. These societies mainly found under tribal structures. The unification of different clans turned into different tribes and these tribes were independent units

d. TREBLY COMPOUND SOCIETIES

The last kind, according to Spencer, is the trebly compound societies that are actually the great civilized nations where the complication of structures and the increased shared dependence become more evident. In these types of societies, tribes, villages, cities etc. came under the control of state. According to Spencer, all the societies have to go through this compound evolution process (Coser, 2010).

e. MILITANT AND INDUSTRIAL SOCIETIES

Though this evolution of structural complexity is similar for all societies, their organizational purposes vary. According to organizational purposes, Spencer divided the societies into two distinct categories: 1) Militant Societies 2) Industrial Societies,. This classification emphasizes on the type of internal regulation within the society and on the relation of a society to other societies in its significant environment.

The militant societies have only one commanding centre that 'exercises control over all its members and over all spheres of their activity, not only prohibiting certain actions, but also deciding what should be done'. These societies are characterized by 'compulsion' which is referred to as compulsory cooperation. Here, 'the will of the citizen in all transactions, private and public, overruled by that of government'. All the organizations in this kind of society are public and the state has a centralized structure (Giddens, 2009).

Industrial society is a literal opposite to the militant society and it is based on 'voluntary cooperation' rather than 'compulsory cooperation'. Here it is believed that 'the social whole exists for the benefit of its member parts' and 'the will of the citizens is supreme and the governing agent exists merely to carry out their will'.

3.3.3 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS I

1. Write down any two differences between militant and industrial society?

_____

2 Elaborate any two features of Trebly compound society.

_____

3: How Spencer's ideas on evolution are different form Comte?

_____

3.4. SOCIAL DARWINISM

Nicholas S. Timasheff in his book Sociological Theory-Its nature and growth writes about Social Darwinism, as a 19th century adaptation of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, is a theoretical explanation of human social life in general and social inequality in particular. According to him the term Social Darwinism refers to any doctrine which makes use or misuse of Charles Darwin's biological evolutionary principles to explain or justify the existing form of human social organization. Among many other philosophers, Herbert Spencer is one, who systematically applied Darwin's principles of evolution to understand and explain the nature of evolution in society. Both, Darwin and Spencer's ideas on evolution are quite similar. One has emphasized on organism and the other compared society with organism and found the common patter of evolution among both. Both argued that the evolution is the key concept for understanding of the world including natural world (Semelser,1993).Everything in this world, be it mountains or oceans, trees or grass, fish or reptiles, bird or humans, societies transform one structure to another. Transformation of everything follow universal laws. Further, this transformation is systematic and testable.Everything emerges out of nature and decline, dissolve within it.

Along with Darwin, Spencer also followed the ideas of Comte. As like Comte, Spencer firmly believed in the operation of social laws, which are as deterministic as those governing nature. Further spencer argued that there are two questions, either society has laws or it has not. If it has not, there can be no order, no certainty, no

system at all (Bottomore, 2019). If it has, then they are like the other laws of the universe. Further, social Darwinism is centred around two fundamental principles namely, survival of the fittest and the principle of non-interference.

Darwin in his book Origin of Species argued that it is not the strongest of species that survive, nor the most intelligent that survives, it is the one who is most adaptable of change. According to him only those species survived in this world who adapted in the environment and changed themselves according to that environment (Gorden, 1998). Spencer took this idea form Darwin and related it with the society in his concept survival of the fittest. Spencer argued that only those societies survived in this world who fit according to the conditions. For instance, as above discussed that simple societies are no longer existing as they now turned into trebly compound societies. If we relate it with contemporary society, we may say that the rich and powerful became so because they were better-suited to the social and economic climate of the time. Further, it is also fact that the strong survived at the cost of the weak (Jary and Jary, 2000). In short, we may say that the strongest and the fittest should survive and flourish in the society, and the weak should be allowed to die out. Thus, on the positive side, social Darwinism led to the creation of programs that allowed deserving participants to receive resources that would help them change their dire circumstances (Coser, 2010). The negative side of believing in this theory is the false concept that if something naturally happens then it is alright or good that humans do it as well. On the extreme side, this thinking is part of what led to the rise of the practice of eugenics with the Nazi party in Germany or the American eugenics movement of 1910-1930.

Another principle that Spencer addressed in his writings is the principle of non-interference. The interventions of outer agencies for instance government, in social affairs, must distort the necessary adaptation of society to its environment. Once government intervenes, the beneficent processes that world naturally lead to man's more efficient and more intelligent control over nature will be distorted and give rise to a reverse maleficent process that can only lead to the progressive deterioration of the human race (Coser, 2010).

3.4.1. CHECK YOUR PROGRESS II

1. Which idea of Darwin Influenced Spencer the most?

_____
_____

2. Write a brief note on principle of non-interference.

_____
_____

3. Explain any two similarities between structure of organism and society.

3.5. SUMMARY

In this unit, we have introduced you with the major contribution of prominent philosopher and sociologist Herbert Spencer. He has contributed many ideas in the field of sociology. Amongst, theory of evolution, organic analogy and social Darwinism are the major contributions. In the field of sociology, he is also known as the father of social evolution theory. As like Comte, his theory of social evolution not only explain unilinear change in society but also strengthen the general laws of society. He proved the analogy between organism and society and argued that as like organism grows from simple to complex structure, similarly the society moves from simplicity to complexity. In short, as like Comte's theory of Law of Three Stages, his theory of evolution and organic analogy has developed a tradition to look at society and its issues in a sequence. Other than this, the idea of social Darwinism is another great contribution of Spencer to sociology and particularly for sociologist. Thus, as like Comte, Spencer contributed number of theories and ideas which help us to understand society in the past, present and the future.

3.6 QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

3.6.1. LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

4. Critically evaluate Spencer's theory of evolution.
5. Write a detailed note on social Darwinism.

3.6.2. SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

6. Explain Spencer's theory of organic analogy.
7. Do you think Spencer's ideas on evolution are still relevant in contemporary society? Discuss in brief.
8. Write a brief note on survival of the fittest.

3.7 SUGGESTED READINGS

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BACHELOR OF ARTS (LIBERAL ARTS)

SEMESTER III

COURSE: SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT

UNIT IV: SOROKIN – THEORY OF SOCIAL CHANGE

STRUCTURE

4.0 Learning Objectives

4.1 Concept of Change

- **4.1.1 Classical viewpoints on social change**
- **4.1.2 Major theories of social change**

4.2 Cyclical theory: basic understanding

- **4.2.1 Pitirim A. Sorokin: Biographical sketch**
- **4.2.2 His major theories**
- **4.2.3 Criticisms**

4.3 Summary

4.4Questions for Practice

4.5 Suggested Readings

4.0: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this unit is to provide you with an understanding of the contribution of PitirimA Sorokin with specific reference to his theory of cyclical theory of social change. After reading this unit, you should be able to understand:

- Ideas of classical thinkers on social change
- Meaning of cyclical theory
- Sorokin's contribution on cyclical theory on social change
- Understanding nature and methodology of sociology
- Contribution on modalities of interaction
- Understanding on the relationship between culture and change

4.1: INTRODUCTION

Change and continuity, becoming and being, dynamic and static, transience and permanent are undesirable facts of life that complete its cycle. Change has been a fascinating subject compelling the social scientists and philosophers as well to delve deep into its ever widening scope and significance. According to Heraclitus, an ancient Greek philosopher remarked that "Nothing remains the same; all comes and goes, resolves itself and passes into other forms". Another renowned thinker Engels' viewed that "Nothing remains what, where and as it was; but everything moves, changes, comes into being, and passes away".

Change being the inexorable law of nature, a society experiences it. In other words, every society – be it primitive, agrarian or industrial – is in continuous transformation. The rate and tempo of change, however, vary from society to society. While some society experience quick transformation, others, take time for noticeable change. However, the contemporary world is changing rapidly. Due to sweeping changes, cultural foundations are fast disappearing. As a result, traditional values are being questioned and replaced with modern thoughts and practices.

The problem of explaining social change was central to ninetieth century sociology. This preoccupation arose from (i) an awareness of the radical social effects of industrialization on European Societies, and (ii) an appreciation of the fundamental gap between European industrial societies and so-called 'primitive societies'. In a very simple form of explanation, the first attempts at sociological analysis were prompted by the need to explain two great waves of changes that were sweeping across Europe; namely, industrialization and the expansion of democracy and human rights in the wake of American and French Revolution.

The founding fathers of the discipline have made the theme of the social change a subject matter of sociology. Auguste Come, the father of sociology, has divided the subject matter into two major parts, i.e., the social statics and social dynamics. While social statics studies the factors related to continuity and stability, social dynamics is concerned with the development and change. Comte believes that both the parts are equally important because one cannot be understood without the other.

In other way, Herbert Spencer offered a theory of change that was evolutionary, based on population growth and structural differentiation. He has also emphasized studying the inter-relationship between the different elements of society to examine how the parts influence the whole and vice versa. A study of this type helps one understand the transformations in the parts as well as in the whole society. Similarly, Durkheim, another founding father of sociology, in his famous book *The Division of Labour* has examined how with the growing division of labour, societies with 'mechanical solidarity' are transformed into societies with 'organic solidarity'.

Another noticeable classical thinker in sociology i.e., Max Weber's interest in social change is implicit in his definition of sociology as 'a science which attempts at the interpretative understanding of social action in order to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects'. His work, *Protestant Ethics and Spirit of Capitalism* is a classic among the analytical studies on a major aspect of change. Karl Marx has devoted major portions of his work to the analysis of causes and courses of change. He contended that the most significant social changes were revolutionary in nature and were revolutionary in nature and were brought about by the struggle of supremacy between economic classes. The general tendency of nineteenth century theories of social change was towards historicism and utopianism.

This century, theories of social change have proliferated and become more complex, without ever wholly transcending these early formulations. In the modern world, we are aware that society is never static, and that social, political and cultural changes occur constantly. Changes can be initiated by governments, through legislative or executive action (for example, legislating for equal pay or declaring a war); by citizens organized in social movements (for example, trade unionism, feminism); by diffusion from one culture to another (as in military conquest, migration, colonialism); or by the intended or untended consequences of technology.

Sociologists have explored the question of change largely by the close analysis of particular change processes, and by refining definitions. Social change theories now encompass a very broad range of phenomena, including short-term and long-term, large-scale and small-scale changes, from the level of global society to the level of the family. Sociologists are also interested in changes that affect norms, values, behaviour, cultural meanings and social relationships. The theories of social change thus centered on the nature of capitalist or industrial development and the apparent absence of social development in those societies which had become part of the colonial empires of Europe. These theories of social change were concerned broadly with long term and large –scale or macro development.

Sociological theories of change, especially nineteenth – century ones, may be divided into theories of social evolution and theories of revolution. In the first, social change was thought to involve basic stages of development such as 'military society' and 'industrial society', by which society progressed from simple, rural, agrarian forms to more complex, differentiated industrial – urban ones. This type of evolutionary theory was developed by Comte, Spencer and Durkheim. In other way, theories of revolutionary social change, particularly deriving from Marx, emphasized the importance of class conflict, political struggle and imperialism as the principal mechanisms of fundamental structural changes. This distinction between evolutionary and revolutionary theories is a fundamental analytical division, but theories of social change can be further classified in terms of: (i) the level of analysis (whether macro or micro); (ii) whether change derives from factors internal or external to the society, institution or social group; (iii) the cause of social change (variously demographic pressure, class conflict, changes in the mode of production, technological innovation or the development of new systems of belief); (iv) the agents of change (innovative elites of intellectuals, social deviants, the working class); (v) the nature of change (whether a gradual diffusion of new values and institutions, or a radical disruption of the social system).

Since the perspectives or viewpoints of the scholars differ, theories of social change are varied in scope and focus. According to Richard Alpelbaum (1970:91), they are four in number:

(i) Evolutionary

(ii) Equilibrium (functional)

(iii) Conflict

(iv) Cyclical (rise and fall)

Evolutionary theory assumes change to be smooth, cumulative and often linear and always in the direction of increasing complexity and adaptability. Equilibrium (functional) theory, on the other hand focuses on conditions driving towards stability. Conflict theory asserts that change is inherent in all social organization and emphasizes the conditions that tend towards instability in society. Lastly, the cyclical (theory of rise and fall) theory holds that societies, cultures or civilizations change in cycle. Besides these four theories of social change, there is another popular theory called deterministic theory which is built around a single factor identified as the prime movers of change.

4.2: CYCLICAL THEORY

Cyclical theory is otherwise known as the 'Rise and Fall' theory of social change. This theory states that societies or cultures have the periods of rise and fall, of growth and decline. In contrast to the evolutionary theory, the cyclical theory contends that there is no unilinear development of societies. Rather societies move in a cyclical manner. In other words, societies grow, reach a peak and then decay and this process repeats forever. The cyclical theorists equate the rise and fall of civilizations with the life cycles of an organism that is born, grows to maturity, becomes old and finally dies. Such notion of change has been dominating the human thinking from the very early times. But it was first presented in 1977 by Giovanni Battisto Vico. Later it was documented by Edward in his monumental work *Decline and fall of the Roman Empire*. In 1920, the world famous historian H. G. Wells also gave the vivid description of the rise and fall of civilizations in his book *Outline of History*. Other notable scholars also expounded the ideas of cyclical changes are: P. A. Sorokin (1937), Oswald Spengler (1939) and A. J. Toynbee (1947).

P. A. SOROKIN (1889 - 1968)

The best known cyclical theory off social change in sociology was developed by Pritim A Sorokin, a Russian born and American bred sociologist. His famous volume four volume work *Social and Cultural Dynamics* bears ample testimony to his comprehensions of social change.

4.2.1: BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Pitirim A. Sorokin was born in a remote village in Russia on January 21, 1889. Born amongst the Urgo-Finnish- speaking, the Komi, of the Volgoda Province in the far north country of Russia's forested frontiers, Sorokin emerged as Russia's first distinguished sociologist. Though reared amongst peasant people in a small community, Sorokin exemplified a thirst for knowledge. Three sons were born to his father, Sorokin's mother died when he was only three years old, and owing to the erratic displays of despair and abuse of his father, the sons ran away when Sorokin was just ten years old. But at fourteen, Sorokin was able to win a scholarship, albeit a modest one, to attend the Khrenovo Teachers Seminary where he received training as an elementary teacher for the Orthodox Church's school system. Sorokin was mocked and teased mercilessly for being an uncouth peasant from the rude back country. But his congeniality with his peers, his capacity for hard work and robust interchanges with his teachers earned him respect and served his ambitions well.

In his teenage years and as a seminary student, Sorokin was arrested for revolutionary activities and spent four months in prison. Eventually, Sorokin made his

way to St. Petersburg University and interspersed diligent studies, teaching responsibilities, revolutionary activities that once again landed him in prison briefly. Sorokin's dissertation was scheduled to be defended in March 1917, but before his examination could take place, the Russian Revolution was under way. Sorokin was not able to earn his doctorate until 1922. After a lot odd situations, harassments, he arrived in the United States in October 1923.

At first, Sorokin gave lectures at various Universities, but eventually he obtained a position at the University of Minnesota. He soon became a full professor. After spending six years at Minnesota, productive years by professional standards, he wrote numerous articles and books. Among his more important books at the time were *The Sociology of Revolution (1925), Social Mobility (1927), Contemporary Sociological Theory (1928), Principles of Rural-Urban Sociology (1929),* and a three-volume study, a systematic source book in *Rural Sociology (1930-32)*. By 1929 he was offered (and accepted) the first chair at Harvard University in Sociology. The position was placed in the department of economics because there was not yet a sociology department at Harvard. Soon after his arrival at Harvard, a separate department of sociology was created, and Sorokin was named as its first chairman. In that position, Sorokin helped build the most important sociology department in United States. Over the next twenty-nine years at Harvard, Sorokin continuing teaching, research and publishing. During this period, he also completed what would become his best – known work *Social and Cultural Dynamics (1937-41).*

Though popular with students for his passionate lectures and Revolutionary Vignettes and having been elected President first of the International Institute of Sociology (1936) and then of the American Sociological Association (1964). He eventually resigned the chairmanship of a department and handling over the leadership to his most popular and distinguished American colleague, Talcott Parsons. Many books were published during the period, the most important being his *Sociological Theories of Today (1966)* published when he was seventy seven years old. He taught until 1955, and fully retired from University functions at age seventy, was still a vigorous and intellectually stimulating scholar. Friends, family and admirers kept him life full and were always proud to be a great scholar and teacher. With a very simple lifestyle and great scholarship, on February 11, 1968 Sorokin died at the age of seventy eight.

4.2.2: MAJOR THEORIES

(a) SOCIOLOGY: ITS NATURE AND METHODOLOGY

Given his substantial involvement in the revolutionary ideology in the Russia of his day, on the one hand, and his careful and successful study of society in its scientific mode of approach on the other hand, Sorokin's experience necessarily resulted from the conflicting traditions of Russian intellectual history, viz., populist idealism of the

revolutionary party and positivistic and deterministic behaviorism of the scientific community. Following his disenchantment with the Russian Revolution, Sorokin turned away from the behaviorism and positivism supported by the communist ideologies.

Sorokin defined sociology as the study of the general characteristics common to all classes of social phenomena including a careful investigation of the relationship between social and non-social phenomena. He referred to general sociology as the study of those properties common to all socio-cultural phenomena and divided it into two parts:

(i) Structural sociology which deals with the structure of social, cultural and personality features of the super organic.

(ii) Dynamic sociology which investigates;

(a) repeated social processes and change, together wit the uniformities of the how and why,

(b) repeated cultural processes and change,

(c) the processes and changes of personality in its relationships with the social and cultural processes.

In his famous book *Society, Culture and Personality*, he defines sociology as the generalizing theory of structure and dynamics of (i) social systems and congeries (functionally inconsistent elements); (ii) cultural systems and congeries; and (iii) personalities in their structural aspects, main types, inter-relationships and personality processes.

During his later years at Harvard, Sorokin kept up his work, serving as self-appointed critic of major trends in modern society. At Harvard, his research centered among the modes of behaviour antithetical to current values. As strong advocate of what has come to be called the 'integralist school' of sociology, Sorokin wrote a strong treatise on methodology in his volume entitled *Dynamics* and again his *Socio-cultural Causality, Space and Time*. The Integralist School focused its attention upon an investigation of social phenomena in three ways:

(i) Empirically, social phenomena are studied though sense perception and sensory-empirical observation;

(ii) 'Logico-rational' dimension in which socio-cultural phenomena must be comprehended through discursive logic of human reason; and

(iii) Socio-cultural reality which has its super-sensory, super-relational and meta-logical dimensions.

In addition to his researches on cultural dynamics, Sorokin also spent much time in the area of personality studies. His research led him to strongly emphasize the

influence of socio-cultural environments in shaping the human personality. Sorokin was concerned particularly about the interdependent and interacting elements of the individual and personality on the one hand and society and culture on the other as integrated totalities or social wholes. Sorokin also believed that each of the broad socio-cultural systems to be discussed later viz., Ideational, Sensate, and Idealistic.

(b): MODALITIES OF INTERACTION

In pondering the complex relationship of these two correlated pairs of social phenomena, viz., individual personality and society-culture, Sorokin became convinced that 'interaction' must be the single most important and determinative unit in terms of which social phenomena should be analyzed. Upon introducing the concept socio-cultural interaction, Sorokin is quick to point to three inseparably interrelated components - viz.,

(i) Personality as the subject of interaction;

(ii) Society as the totality of interacting personalities;

(iii) Culture as the totality of meanings, values and norms possessed by the interacting personalities and the totality of the vehicles which objectify, socialize and convey these meaning.

The process of interaction is seen to compromise three components:

(i) thinking, acting and reacting human beings as subjects of interaction;

(ii) meaning, values and norms for the sake of which the individuals interacting, realizing and exchanging them in the course of interaction;

(iii) Overt actions and material phenomena as vehicles or conductors through which immaterial meanings, values and norms are objectified and socialized.

The modality of a particular interaction depends on any one of three possible kinds of relationships between parties involved solidarity, antagonistic or mixed. Both antagonisms and solidarities vary in intercity (from a mere coldness to the most intense hatred) and extensity (from a small fragment of one's personality to total involvement). Sorokin classified relationships into three types:

(i) Familistic relationship – as an 'ideal' type based on mutual love, sacrifice and devotion, the Familistic relationships are usually found among members of a devoted family and among close friends and have certain characteristics like – (a) predominantly solidarity; (b) direct; (c) durable; (d) mutual; (e) based upon a deep sense of the socio-cultural oneness of the parties.

(ii) **Contractual relationship** – in this typology, variety of mixed relationships are the main motivation of solidarity. This relationship is limited and specified, covering only a portion of the lives of the parties concerned; the rights and duties of each party are specified by contract. It is self-centred and instrumental.

(iii) **Compulsory relationship** – this type of relationship is characterized by antagonism which may vary from some form of mild discomfort to the most intense hatred. 'It may be rooted in the fundamental, the normative, or the purposive type of motivation or in a combination of all three'.

(c): CULTURE AND CHANGE

Sorokin was not singularly concerned with an understanding of personality as the subject of social interaction, he was also involved in a study of society as the totality of those interacting personality and he believed that both personality and society rested upon the foundation of culture. For Sorokin, culture consists of the totality of meanings, norms and values possessed by interacting persons and carried by material vehicles such as ritual objects or works of art, which objectify and convey these meanings.

In his first volume of *Dynamics*, Sorokin offers his formal definition of culture as 'the sum total of everything which is created or modified by the conscious or unconscious activity of two or more individuals interacting with one another or conditioning one another's behavior'. Throughout his career, Sorokin's thought was dominated by a concern for large super-systems or socio-cultural complex was characterized by a central mood or idea which is the predominant view of truth in any specific culture. The three major 'cultural mentalities' which Sorokin identified and studied in culture history were the Sensate, the Ideational and the Idealistic. And, he pointed, history suggests that the pattern or cycle of rise and fall of each is in this specific order – the sensate followed by the counterpoising ideational, followed by the synthesis of the idealistic. While fluctuating between the ideational phase and the sensate phase culture stops for a period what Sorokin calls idealistic phase.

The ideational culture is characterized by spiritualism and idea of other worldliness. The individuals in such a society prefer spiritual wellbeing to material acquisition. They rely on intuition, faith and introspection. Moral values prevalent in the society are held imperative and unchangeable. Even the art and architecture of this period dwells on religious and sublime themes. The sensate culture, on the other hand, is diametrically opposite to the ideational culture. Here, the individuals place great trust in their senses. Material rather than spiritual gain is highly craved. Sensate culture relies on the truths-verifiable and pragmatic, morals are constantly questioned and crossed. Sensate art is visual and sensational.

The idealistic culture on the contrary, is a balanced culture. It is a mixture of sensate and ideational elements. Both materialism and spiritualism find place in it.

Knowledge is based partly on super-natural intuition and partly on sensory experience. According to him, while the medieval culture was ideational, the golden age of Pericles was idealistic, and the twentieth century American civilization is highly sensate. Sorokin is optimistic that this American civilization must be supplanted by a new ideational system.

In short, Sorokin believed that all societies, great civilizations pass through three cultural systems in a cyclical way:

(i) the ideational culture society based on faith and revelation;

(ii) the idealistic culture society guided by a 'mixed' notion of supernatural beliefs and empiricism; and

(iii) the senate culture society, which are guided by empirical senses perceptions. He pointed out that all societies need not necessarily decay but rather they go through various stages by shifting from one cycle to another as the needs of the society demand.

CRITICISMS

Sorokin's views on social change are also subject to criticisms on the following grounds:

First, Sorokin states that change occurs because the nature of things is to change. This is deterministic stand.

Second, S. C. Dube (1992:54) criticized his theory on the ground of subjectivity. According to Dube, Sorokin's major concepts, i.e., ideational and sensate are subjective terms. Sorokin has not made it clear us to what is to be included in the sensate and what in ideational cultures.

Third, another criticism relates to Sorokin's view that when each culture reaches it zenith, it is only then that the retreat takes place and a middle culture is adopted. But practical experiences have proved it wrong. In many societies, the idealistic stage came before the sensate stage.

Lastly, Sorokin has mentioned that the Western culture has reached the ripe phase of the sensate culture and has begun to turn towards the ideational point. However, such notion of Sorokin has remained a speculation. Therefore, some critics point out that Sorokin's theory is highly speculative and geared more towards philosophy than towards sociology.

4.3: SUMMARY

Social change is a universal phenomenon that takes place in our lives. Cyclical theories assume that societies pass through a cycle of change – grow, reach a peak of development and then decay – and repeats the cycle again in the same pattern. It refers to a course or series of events that recur regularly and lead back to the starting point. He proposes two cultural extremes: the 'sensate' and the 'ideational'. The sensate culture stresses those things which can be perceived directly by the senses. It is practical, hedonistic, sensual and materialistic. Ideational culture emphasizes those things which can be perceived only by the mind. It is abstract, religious, concerned with faith and ultimate truth. It is the opposite of the sensate culture. Both represent 'pure' types of culture. In brief, too much emphasis on one the type of culture leads to a reaction towards the other. 'Societies contain both these impulses in varying degrees and the tension between them creates long-term, instability'. Between these types, of course, there is a happy and desirable blend of the other two, but no society ever seems to have achieved it as a stable condition.

Sorokin's explanation on cyclical theory of social change in terms of its methodology, philosophical orientation, modalities of interaction, and major cultural explanation – ideational, idealistic, and sensate – are highly context specific and explanatory in nature. Some cyclical theorists are pessimistic in that they think that think that decay is inevitable. But Sorokin's theory has not been accepted by the sociologists as it portrays his prejudices and probably his disgust with the modern society. His concepts of 'sensate' and 'ideational' are purely subjective. His theory is in a way 'speculative' and 'descriptive'. It doesn't provide an explanation as to why social change should take this form. Thus, the cyclical theories, in general are not satisfactory.

4.4QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

4.4.1: LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Define Social change. Discuss the major viewpoints of classical thinkers on the concept of social change.

2. Critically explain Sorokin's theory of social change.

3. Briefly explain the major contributions Sorokin in the analysis of cyclical theory of social change.

4.4.2: SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Major postulates of cyclical theory
2. Sorokin's major process of Interactions
3. Meaning of sensate culture and ideational culture
4. Meaning of idealistic culture

4.5 SUGGESTED READINGS

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BACHELOR OF ARTS (LIBERAL ARTS)

SEMESTER III

COURSE: SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT

UNIT 5: EMILE DURKHEIM SOCIAL FACTS, SUICIDE, AND DIVISION OF LABOUR

STRUCTURE

5.0 Learning Objectives.

5.1 Introduction.

5.2 Social Facts.

5.3 Suicide.

5.4 Division of Labour.

5.6 Summary

5.7 Questions for Practice
5.8 Suggested Readings

5.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After the completion of this Unit, you should be able to understand

- Life sketch and contribution of Emile Durkheim
- Social facts and types of social facts
- Suicide, types, factors, role of society

- Integration and Regulation of Society
- Division of labour and its types
- Labour in Traditional and Modern societies
- Abnormal forms of division of labour

5.1 INTRODUCTION:

David Emile Durkheim was born on April 15, 1858 in France. He died on November 15, 1917, at the age of 59. He is considered as one of the three founding fathers of sociology with Karl Marx and Max Weber because of the efforts to establish sociology as a distinct from philosophy and psychology. He was a leading political thinker who wanted to introduce scientific, comprehensive approach to the study of social institutions. He became the pioneer in giving sociology the status of a science and its own methodology.

Durkheim made a number of important contributions to sociology. His major publications were: Social facts; Suicide; Division of labour; The rules of sociological methods; The elementary forms of religious life etc. Sociology, as an idea, was born in France in the nineteenth century and Durkheim wanted to turn this idea into a discipline, a well-defined field of study.

5.2 SOCIAL FACTS

We live in society where individual was attributed for everything, even social problems like pollution, racism, poverty etc. Emile Durkheim was the first person who approached things from the opposite perspective, stressing the social dimension of all human phenomenon. For Durkheim society is made up of social facts which constrain people in all areas of social life and it also exceed our intuitive understanding and must be investigated through observations and measurements.

He gave two ways of defining a social fact so that sociology is distinguished from psychology. First, a social fact is experienced as an external constraint rather than an internal drive; second, it is general throughout the society and is not attached to any particular individual.

Durkheim separated sociology from philosophy and argued that social facts cannot be reduced to individuals, but must be studied as their own reality. Social facts are to be treated as things and studied empirically. Social facts must be studied by acquiring data from outside of our own minds through observation and experimentation.

Durkheim referred to social facts with the Latin term sui generis, which means “unique.” He used this term to claim that social facts have their own unique character that is not reducible to individual consciousness.

According to Durkheim, social facts are the subject matter of sociology, "Social facts can be defined as patterns of behaviour that are capable of exercising coercive power upon individuals. They are guides and controls of conduct and are external to the individual in the form of norms, mores, and folkways".

Durkheim defines social facts as ways of acting, thinking, and feeling, external to the individual, and endowed with power of coercion by reason of which they control him. In this way social facts have the characteristics of externality, constraint, independence and generality.

Social facts can be defined as "A social fact is every way of acting, fixed or not, capable of exercising on the individual an external constraint; or again, every way of acting which is general throughout a given society, while at the same time existing in its own right independent of its individual manifestations." "Social facts are the social structures and cultural norms and values that are external to, and coercive of, actors."

For Durkheim, the study of sociology should be the study of social facts, attempting to find the causes of social facts and the functions of these social facts. Social facts regulate human social action and act as constraints over individual behaviour and action. They may be enforced with law, with clearly defined penalties associated with violation of the sentiments and values of the group. Social facts are things because they are outside the individuals, they are not product of or creation of the present generation; they are a given, pre-existing condition for the human agency and they cannot be known by introspection, by reflection. The human agency that produced the social facts was exercised in the past, by collective agents pursuing collective, not individual goals.

Social facts include social institutions, statuses, roles, laws, beliefs, population distribution, urbanization, social activities and the sub-stratum of society or social morphology. Social facts also include social currents, groups experiences, emotions that transcend the individual and emerge only in the context of collectively, where they force individuals to act in ways, they would not have considered possible if acting individually, isolated from others.

While society is composed of individuals, society is not just the sum of individuals, and these facts exists at the level of society, not at the individual level. Each social facts is real, which is not just in the mind of the individual, i.e., these facts are more than psychological facts. That these exists in society as a whole, overtime, and sometimes across societies, provides some proof of this. At the same time, they are in the minds of individuals so they are also mental states.

Durkheim has discussed four characteristics of Social Facts:

1. **Externality**:
   In the context of social facts, here externality means looking at social events and problems beyond personal thought and experience and seeing the real nature of society. According to Durkheim, social facts exist outside the individual consciousness, they exist beyond individuals. For example, in an

organization like business and family, the fulfilment of responsibility is beyond the individual, that is, it is related the whole society, not to the social.

2. **Constraint:**
   This is the second characteristic of social fact which means that social facts must be accepted by individuals. All kinds of institutions are found in society, for example, according to law, religion, education, a person has to walk or he is bound to walk.
3. **Independence:**
   Talking about any characteristic of a social fact, social facts are independent. These are gradually formed by the mutual association of individuals according to the needs of the society. The social phenomenon is derived from the group's collective work experience and belief, which in itself is an independent process.
4. **Generality:**
   The fourth feature of a social fact is generally, that is, social is not for the individual but for the whole society. It applies equally to all. Social facts occur almost equally in society. The universal properties of human nature are independent in the sense of not being limited by the individual qualities of individuals. These differ in properties from the facts arising out of individual consciousness, social facts can be classified and classified. On the basis of this nature of social facts, it can be said that social facts have similar beliefs. All groups have social elements that can be classified.

Durkheim differentiated between two broad types of social facts—

1. **Material Social Facts:**

Material Social facts are features of society such as social structures and institutions. These could be system of law, the economy, Church, educational institutions etc. They could also include features such as channels of communication, urban structures and population distribution. Material social facts, such as styles of architecture, forms of technology, and legal codes, are the easier to understand of the two because they are directly observable.

2. **Non-Material Social Facts:**

Durkheim recognized that nonmaterial social facts are, to a certain extent, found in the minds of individuals. Non-Material social facts constitutes the main subject of the study of sociology. Non-Material social facts are those which do not have material reality. It consists of features such as norms, values, collective conscience, collective representation, social currents and system of morality. More importantly, these non-material social facts often represent a larger and more powerful realm of moral forces that are external to individuals and coercive over them.

Social facts can also be divided into Normal and Pathological social facts.

1. **Normal Social Facts:** are most widely distributed and usual social facts, assisting in the maintenance of society and social life. A social life is normal

when it is generally encountered in a society of a certain type at a certain phase in its evolution.

2. **Pathological social facts:** Every deviation from the standard is a pathological fact. Crime to some extent is a normal fact, however, an extraordinary increase in the rate of crime is pathological. A general weaking in the moral condemnation of crime and certain type of economic crisis leading to anarchy in society can also called pathological facts.

To summarize, social facts can be empirically studied, are external and coercive to the individual, and are explained by other social facts.

5.3 SUICIDE

Emile Durkheim calculated and compared the different rates of suicides among various sections of the French society. He distributed suicide rates among the males and the females, rural and urban populations, persons following Catholic and Protestant faiths, married and unmarried persons as well as he included several other factors to study suicide. He examined different rates of behaviour in specified populations and characteristics of particular groups or changes of such characteristics. Suicide rate was calculated by the number of persons committing suicide in one year in a population of one million.

Durkheim did not consider suicide as an individual act, as was previously thought by leading scientists of his time. For him suicide was a social fact because it was something that happened driven by social causes, however hidden they were. Durkheim examined patterns on the data in an attempt to determine how social factors could play a role in explaining these phenomena. Durkheim's method was very empirical, and he searched through various sorts of data and evidence to find factors associated with suicide. Durkheim has given importance to the social factors in suicide and has reduced the importance of other factors.

Durkheim in his classic study of suicide, demonstrated that neither psychopathic factors, nor hereditary, nor climatic, nor imitation, nor poverty, nor unhappy love and other personal factors are responsible for suicide. Suicide is a social fact and is due to social forces. Individuals are compelled to commit suicide whenever the condition of society departs from a state of balance.

Durkheim attempted to derive a sociological explanation of variations in social suicide rates. He demonstrated that suicide varies inversely with the degree of integration. When society is strongly integrated, it holds individuals under control. The degree of integration of family structure is related in the same way to suicide; those in large families are less likely to commit suicide, whereas those in smaller families, or single are more likely. In order to test his theory, he studied suicide rates across time and place (throughout Europe, spanning many years). once he had completed his primary research and analyses, he came to the conclusion that, despite

major differences in suicide rates between individual societies, rates within a society remained stable.

After his study he was able to demonstrate that suicide was higher among protestants than Catholics and lowest among Jews. It was high among single people than married people and lowest among married people with children. Rates of suicide was higher among soldiers than among civilians. The suicide rate was higher in times of economic depression and economic booms than during stable period and rates of suicide are higher during peacetime than they are during wars.

Durkheim classified suicide into four types:

1. Altruistic Suicide:

In societies where the individual consciousness is so submerged with the collective consciousness of the society, the kind of suicide found is altruistic in nature.

Altruistic suicide is associated with high degree of the integration. Altruistic suicide is committed by people who are deeply committed to group norms and goals and who see their personal ego as unimportant and they are completely controlled by the group without any regard for their personality. Basically, these suicides involved dying for a cause. Psychologically, it is based on the individual sense of duty to sacrifice himself for the sake of larger social unity. This type of suicide mostly occurs in the traditional and primitive societies. For example, sati or jouhar of women in India.

The altruistic suicide can further be divided into following three sub types.

a) Obligatory altruistic Suicide- Individual commits suicide for the sake of honour. For example, practice of sati system in Indian society.
b) Optional altruistic suicide- is committed by the individual for being praised by the other members of the society. Self-killing by army suicide and self-destruction by *human bombs of militant groups are some of the examples of optional suicide.*
c) Acute altruistic suicide- in this individual kill himself for the purpose of joy of sacrifice and self-renunciation, for example self-killing of Buddhist or Jain monk.

2. Egoistic Suicide:

In societies where the individuals are not properly integrated in society and where a person gives too much importance to his or her ego, the kind of suicide found is egoistic suicide. Egoistic suicide is associated with a low degree of integration. Egoistic suicide occurs when an individual feels too much isolated from the social group. Egoistic suicide is very much seen in the modern society and there was rare incidence of this suicide in traditional societies. Modern society is characterised by

impersonal self-centred, secondary association lovers, socially isolated individuals, and extremely cut off from the normal contacts. Therefore, a good number of individuals commit suicide. Egoistic suicide is the index of social disorganization in modern society.

3. Anomic Suicide:

Anomic Suicide is regulated with low regulation. Anomic suicide occurs when there is lack of regulation in the society and it is committed by the people when society is in crisis or rapid change. In such times, customary norms may weaken or break down. With no clear standards of behaviour to guide them, many people become confused, their usual goals lose meaning, and life seems aimless. This type of suicide is dell to a sudden breakdown of the social equilibrium. The suicide rate increases not only in case of poverty, but due to prosperity also. Many people are unable to adjust themselves to such sudden violent changes in their life's organization, whether the change is towards a happy or unhappy direction. Under such circumstances anomic suicide solves their personal dilemma. The anomic suicide is related to lack of external constraints on people. For example, situations such as sudden setback in business or gain in wealth or political upheavals in quick succession led to a state of normlessness or anomie in societies due to which the rate of anomic suicide increase.

4. Fatalistic Suicide

Fatalistic Suicide is associated with high regulation. This is opposite of altruistic suicide, which arises as a result of increased control over the individual by the group. When there was an excess or strict regulation, which become un-tolerable then the individual commits this type of suicide. When regulations are too strong, and person is violently choked by oppressive discipline, and when one finds no way out than fatalistic suicide is committed. Suicide committed by slaves came in this category.

Durkheim's idea can be presented in the following way:

Integration	Low	Egoistic suicide
	High	Altruistic suicide
Regulation	Low	Anomic suicide
	High	Fatalistic suicide

5.4 DIVISION OF LABOUR

The division of labour in society has been called Sociology's first classic work done by Emile Durkheim. In this work he traced the development of the modern relation between individuals and society. He examined how social order was maintained in different types of societies and how it differed in traditional societies and modern

societies. Durkheim was particularly concerned about how the division of labour changes the way that individuals feel they are part of society as a whole. He tried to determine what the basis of social solidarity in society was and how this has changed over time.

Durkheim argued that traditional societies were mechanical and were held together by the fact that everyone was more or less the same, and hence had things in common. In traditional societies, the collective consciousness entirely subsumed individual consciousness, social norms were strong and social behaviour was well regulated.

In modern societies, the division of labour became complicated which resulted in organic solidarity. Different specializations in employment and social roles created dependencies that tied people to one another, since people no longer could count on filling all of their need by themselves.

Durkheim classified human societies into 'Mechanical solidarity' and Organic solidarity'

A. **Mechanical Solidarity:** in earlier daysevery society tended to be small scale and relatively simple, with little division of labour or only a simple division of labour by age and sex. In this type of society, people were very similar to each other, each person carried out essentially similar types of tasks, so that people shared the type of work they carry out. These societies were characterised by likeness, in which the members of the society shared the same value, based on common tasks and common life situation and experiences. Mechanical solidarity which comes out from likeness and prevails where individual difference is minimized and the members of society are much alike in their devotion to the common belief. Mechanical solidarity is sui generis i.e., born in the natural course of events based on resemblances of individuals. It directly links them with the society. This type of solidarity has arisen out of a number of common experiences of like members in a given society. Mechanical solidarity can be characterised by segmental system in which every segment is homogenous and involved in the social structure. Hence the society is divided into quite small compartments which envelop the individual completely.
   In mechanical solidarity There exists a great deal of homogeneity and tightly-knit social bonds which serve to make the individual members one with their society. The collective conscience is extremely strong. By collective conscience we mean the system of beliefs and sentiments held in common by members of a society which defines what their mutual relations ought to be. The strength of the collective conscience integrates such societies, binding together individual members through strong beliefs and values. Violation of or deviation from these values is viewed very seriously. Harsh or repressive punishment is given to offenders. This is a solidarity where Individual differences are extremely limited and division of labour is at a relatively simple level. Briefly, in such societies, individual conscience is merged with the collective conscience. Durkheim studied these different types of solidarity

through law. A society with mechanical solidarity is characterised by repressive law.

B. Organic Solidarity: Durkheim viewed that division of labour is an essential condition of organic solidarity, and it gradually replaces that engendered by social likeness. The growth of organic solidarity and the expansion of the division of labour were associated with increasing individualism. Here individual depends upon those parts, which the society is composed of. In this respect a society is an arrangement of different and specific functions which are linked mutually by social bonds. In this conception the differences among the individuals are visible to the extent that everybody has his specific field of activities and confines himself or herself to that area only. Hence, the individual's conscience is distinct from the collective conscience. Organic solidarity, is a product of the division of labour and it develops out of differences, rather than likeness, between individuals. The increasing differentiations of functions in society lead to increasing differences between its members. By organic solidarity, Durkheim means a solidarity based on difference and complementarity of differences.

Societies based on organic solidarity are touched and transformed by the growth of industrialisation. Thus, division of labour is a very important aspect of such societies. A society based on organic solidarity is thus one where heterogeneity, differentiation and variety exist.

The growing complexity of societies reflects in personality types, relationships and problems. In such societies, the strength of the collective conscience lessens, as individual conscience becomes more and more distinct, more easily distinguished from the collective conscience. Individualism becomes increasingly valued. The kind of grip that social norms have on individuals in mechanical solidarity loosens. Individual autonomy and personal freedom become as important in organic solidarity as social solidarity and integration in societies characterised by mechanical solidarity.

Durkheim did not consider the development of the division of labour as a natural condition. He considered it to be associated with increasing contact among people. According to him the division of labour emerged in different ways in different societies, leading to somewhat different forms of solidarity. He also noted that at the end of the division of labour in society there could be problems in the society. Society with organic solidarity is characterised by restitutive law.

There are following two forms of abnormal forms of division of labour.

1. Anomic division of labour: when there are industrial and commercial crisis, there may be partial break in organic solidarity. Also, where there is conflict between capital and labour, which can cause the increased separation of employee and the employer under capitalism. The real problem is lack of regulation or a weakened common morality that can occur in modern society.
2. Forced division of labour: The forced division of labour is where the division of labour is not allowed to develop spontaneously, and where some act to

protect themselves and their positions. Any factors that prevent individuals from achieving positions, with the wrong people in particular positions.

5.5 SUMMARY

In this Unit, we discussed the brief life sketch of Emile Durkheim and his contribution and his efforts to establish sociology as a distinct from philosophy and psychology as well as how he became the pioneer in giving sociology the status of a science and its own methodology.

The main points are as follows:

a) Social Facts**:** For Durkheim society is made up of social facts which constrain people in all areas of social life. Social facts are to be treated as things and studied empirically. Social facts must be studied by acquiring data from outside of our own minds through observation and experimentation.
b) Social factswere differentiated into Material Social facts and Non-Material social facts.
c) Social facts can be divided into Normal and Pathological Social facts.
d) Suicide rates were calculated and among various sections of the French society.
e) Suicide rates were found different among the males and the females, rural and urban populations, persons following Catholic and Protestant faiths, married and unmarried persons.
f) Durkheim classified suicide into four types: Egoistic suicide, Altruistic suicide, Anomic suicide and Fatalistic suicide.
g) Durkheim examined how social order was maintained in different types of societies and how it differed in traditional societies and modern societies. He tried to determine what the basis of social solidarity in society was and how this has changed over time.
h) Durkheim classified human societies into 'Mechanical solidarity' and Organic solidarity'.
i) Traditional societies were mechanical and were held together by the fact that everyone was more or less the same, and hence had things in common.
j) In modern societies, the division of labour became complicated which resulted in organic solidarity.

5.6: SUGGESTED READING:

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BACHELOR OF ARTS (LIBERAL ARTS)

SEMESTER III

COURSE: SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT

UNIT 6: VILFREDO PARETO: LOGICAL AND NON-LOGICAL ACTIONS AND CIRCULATION OF ELITES.

STRUCTURE

6.0 Learning Objectives

6.1 Introduction

6.2 Pareto's theory on society

- **6.2.1 Social Action Theory of Pareto**
- **6.2.2. Logical development in non-logical conduct**
- **6.2.3. Circulation of Elites**

6.3 Summary

6.4 Questions for Practice

6.5 Suggested Readings

6.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To simplify the concept of action in learner's mind
2. To familiarize students with the role of objectivity, subjectivity, means and goal in understanding logical and non-logical action.
3. To enable learner, comprehend the primacy of sentiments in human action
4. To familiarize learner with the factors responsible for making human actions non logical.
5. To communicate the ideas of elite, aristocracy and power circulation to the young mind.
6. To explain the cyclical perspective of change advocated by Pareto.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923), a distinguished Italian sociologist, was born in Paris. He made several significant contributions to the disciplines of sociology and economics. His major writings include "The Treatise on General Sociology" published in 1915 and "Mind and Society" in 1936. He wished to supplement economic theory with sociological conceptualization. Pareto was a scientist. He was trained as an engineer and he studied thermodynamics. He was interested in explaining the abilities of a social scientist in understanding human activity. Thus, he focused on establishing scientific sociology. Moreover, he wanted to move beyond the scope of economic theory. He discovered a means of rationally explaining the irrationality and non-rationality in human behaviour. Pareto characterised sociology as that social science which deals with the non-logical action of people, leaving the analysis of logical action to economics, technology and military action. Observation, experiment and reasoning constitute the most fundamental methods of Pareto's science. He introduced the idea of the logico-experimental method. According to his methodology, the study of sociology should have two important factors i.e. logical reasoning and observation of facts. The three main sociological contributions of Pareto are (i) The postulate of society as a system, (ii) the destructive critique of positivistic-rationalistic theories and the corresponding stress on the role of irrationality in social behaviour (iii) the emphasis on the importance of social stratification and social mobility in society.

6.2 PARETO'S THEORY ON SOCIETY

Pareto says, society is a system in equilibrium. He focussed on the concept of equilibrium which is composed of individuals who are exposed to numerous forces which determine the condition of the social system. In his understanding of equilibrium, parts are interdependent forming a whole. It requires an analysis at three

levels that are, analysis of the extra-human environment, analysis of elements exterior to society, and analysis of inner elements of the system i.e., residues and derivations. He says, society focuses on sociological analysis depicting productivity, power and beliefs about the dynamics of productivity. Pareto defined productivity as the supply of goods and services. Three things in productivity vary in every social system i.e., levels of productivity, the direction of social change, rate of social change. They make use of capital called resources for productive expansion. As the productivity increases, economic activity tends to diversify, the economic elites increase and exploitation increases.

He says power is a generic property of the social system. He believed in the centralisation of power. He defined power as the ability to coordinate and control. Resources are utilized in the exercise of power. In society according to Pareto, systems which are extremely centralized or extremely decentralized lack power. Thus the social system oscillates between periods of centralization and decentralization of power. According to Pareto, the dynamics of belief defines belief as evaluative standards people use in judging situations that they confront. He concluded that collectivities are characterised by a common pattern of belief. He made a cross-comparison of belief systems of three types of groups i.e., Political elites (foxes and lions), economic elites (speculators and rentiers) and the general population. People in society oscillate between two opposing belief systems between traditionalism and periods of innovation. Values in understanding would come from a sustained concentration of his attention upon the actual theories and belief systems that function to rationalise non-logical and irrational behaviour.These three are the dominant system of the social system. The structural features associated with them gives empirical form. The social system functions through the linking of these three. Thus a systemic and dialectical view of social reality is portrayed in Pareto's understanding of the theory of society, where all social systems are believed to move through a series of understandable system states. It has been suggested that Pareto's theorem of the restoration of equilibrium within the social system has been confirmed by the study of social reaction to crime, the outcome of political and cultural evolution and the impact of war on societies.

6.2.1 SOCIAL ACTION THEORY OF PARETO

An action is said to be social action when there is the presence of actors, interaction within them, a situation, definite means and ends, the necessity of subjective meaning and gratification of situation. Pareto summarised his idea of social action in *The Treatise on General Sociology*. It attempts to study only the non-rational aspect of the action. Pareto observes that the form of a society is determined by all the elements

acting upon it. Society for Pareto is a system in equilibrium. It shows that in all societies there are certain forces or structures of society. Outward forces change society and inner forces push towards restoring its equilibrium. These inner forces are composed of sentiments. Pareto's concept of logical and non-logical action is related to the analysis of the inner forces in society. Thus he drew a distinction between two types of action i.e., logical and non-logical action. He says, all the actions are divided into two broad categories: personal and social. Every action or social phenomenon has two aspects; that is form and reality. The former is subjective in nature as it depicts the way in which the phenomena present themselves to the human mind and the latter objective in nature is the reality that involves the actual existence of things. Moreover, all the actions of individuals whether it is personal or social has two parts i.e. means and end. In the *Treatise of General Sociology*, he wishes to make a logical study of non-logical actions. He wanted to study the whole of society with both logical and non-logical actions.

Therefore, the structure of Pareto's classification of actions has several criteria for classification. The first one is the distinction between objective and subjective aspects of actions. The second one focuses upon the teleological structure of action, that is, whether the actions have objective ends and subjective purposes or not and whether they are identical. The third one shows, the objective ends have to be empirical and the subjective purpose can be empirical or non-empirical. Pareto has an internalist-externalist concept of rationality. He says actions with subjective purposes would be rational from an internalist point of view and actions with objective ends would be rational from an externalist point of view. In the case of Pareto's rational action, the internalist and the externalities would agree to call it rational. Pareto's logical action is synonymous with rational action. Pareto's logical action is substantially rational because the justifying theory of the actor has to be empirically justified itself.

6.2.1a. LOGICAL ACTION

Pareto says, for an action to be logical, there should be a connection between means and ends. Every action has a form that is subjectively related and reality that is objectively related. In logical action, there should be a connection between the both. The end should be objectively attainable and the means are objectively united with the end. Moreover, the logical connection should exist both in the mind of the actor as well as in the objective reality. It should be guided by reasoning. Pareto also employs the logico-experimental method. It is based on observation and experiment of facts. There should be no speculation. It includes analysis of all facts in an objective approach. Pareto says, there is uniformity and interrelationship between facts. For example, if A follows B everywhere then if we see B we must know that A is around. Thus, the aim of logico-experimental science is to discover experimental uniformities. It is the regular relation between the phenomena. He says, the method of logico-experimental science is used to understand and make a logical study of non-logical behaviour. The features of logical action are the following: (i) The actions are

based on experiment and logic. (ii) Actions are objective and real. (iii) It must be rational in nature and motivated by reasoning (iv) These actions must be accepted by actors and defined objectively (v) Social sanction must be there behind such justification.

Pareto says whereas logical actions are those motivated by reasoning, non-logical actions are those that involve to some degree a motivation by sentiment. Pareto says, logical action or science covers only a narrow domain of our behaviour and most part of our behaviour is non-logical. Most of the time people engage in non-logical behaviour but they have a tendency to logicalize their behaviour. Non-logical actions are guided by sentiments. These are not logical but that doesn't mean these are illogical. Raymond Aron says, all non-logical actions involve to some degree a motivation by sentiment. These are determined by subjective factors and actions are not determined by reality. Aron says for an action to be logical, the means-end relation in objective reality must correspond to the means-ends relation in the mind of the actor. Other actions, the so-called non-logical ones are those which are not logical and which does not mean they are illogical.

There are four principal categories of non-logical actions. These constitute the subject of *Treatise on Generation Sociology*. This can be shown in a table.

Objectively	NO	NO	Yes	Yes
Subjectively	NO	Yes	NO	Yes

It shows the means and ends are connected objectively and subjectively. The four categories are (i) NO-NO category (ii) NO-Yes category (iii) Yes-NO category (iv) Yes-Yes category.

The first category depicts that the action is not logical as the means and ends are not connected. There is no connection between the means and ends either in reality or in the mind of the actor. It is a rare category because man has a reasoning capacity. The second category has no objective goal but has only a subjective goal. It is in the mind of the actor that whether things exist in reality does not have significance but subjectively there is a link between the means and goals. All our rituals, religious practice and symbolic actions fall in this category. For example, before attending examinations students offer prayers to God. It may not have a real result but the actor imagines that such action will lead to a result in his belief. However, in reality, there is no logical connection between means employed and ends attained. Only means-ends relation exists subjectively but not objectively.

The third category shows the action is objectively related to the goals by employing means but the actor has not conceived the means-end relation. It is not subjectively logical. The actor is unaware of a relation between the means employed and the ends found. All our reflex action, instinctive type action, animal behaviour etc fall under this category. The action is objectively defined but subjectively not logical.

The fourth category shows, there is a connection between means employed and goals attained both objectively and subjectively but still the action is not logical because the sequence of objective connection and subjective connection does not match. The means employed produce a result in reality and also in the mind of the actor. There is non-coincidence between the objective and subjective sequence. Examples of this kind include revolutionary action, illusionary action and the like. Here the intended consequence does not reach but whatever results that definitely has a link to the means employed.

Among these four categories of non-logical actions, Pareto gives emphasis to the second and fourth ones. People most often come across these two categories of actions. People engage in non-logical actions most of the time.

6.2.2. LOGICAL DEVELOPMENT IN NON-LOGICAL CONDUCT

Pareto tends to dispute the hitherto believed assumptions (i) doctrines/ theories impinge upon individual actions; (ii) action tends to impinge upon the prevailing doctrines/ theories. Instead, he goes on to argue that people's state of mind tends to impinge upon individual actions and the prevailing doctrines/ theories; not vice versa. This 'state of mind by and large is non-logical in nature. However, there is a tendency among people to logicalize their non-logical actions. It is in this context, Pareto introduces the concepts of residue and derivation in the elaboration of the idea of 'state of mind'.

6.2.2a. RESIDUES AND DERIVATION

The theory of non-logical actions is further elaborated by Pareto in his doctrine of residues and derivations. Pareto says people do engage in non-logical actions but they have a tendency to logicalize their action, so two fundamental elements are observed. Firstly, the phenomena under consideration have a constant element and secondly there exist theories to rationalize that action. The former is residue and the latter is derivation. Pareto says residues are not identical with what psychologists call instincts. They do not reflect all instincts but rather those instincts which give rise to rationalization. They are the manifestation of sentiments. They are relatively constant. In reality, the residue is an intermediary between sentiments that we cannot know directly and the belief system that can be analysed. The residues are the pattern or principles in accordance with which the sentiments work and they can only be discovered by an analytic and comparative study of complex acts. Pareto attempts to discover the different ways in which the sentiments affect the action and behaviour. A classification of residue would thus be a classification of the different ways in which

the fundamental impulses realize themselves in human behaviour. Hence, residues are not instincts and sentiments rather they are the manifestation of those things. They guide human behaviour and represents elements of human behaviour. Although they are relatively stable elements they may change in demand of time and condition. Pareto has classified six types of residues and four types of derivations.

6.2.2b. IMPLICATIONS OF PARETO'S NON-LOGICAL ACTION ON INDIAN SOCIETY.

Pareto gives classes of residues with numerous subdivisions namely, combinations, persistent aggregates, sociability, activity, the integrity of the individual and sex. G.R Madan has emphasised the Indian perspective relating to the residues of Pareto.

i. Residues of Combination

It is a combination of various similar and opposing elements. Similar things produce similar results. It is a combination of psychological and physical elements. Tendency to establish a relation between ideas and things is found in all moral societies. The Hindu belief is that objects belonging to saints act mysteriously. People may believe in the efficacy of certain rites of religion without believing in religion, a fact that emphasizes the non-logical character of the conduct. But generally, there is first an instinctive belief in the efficacy of a rite, then an explanation of the belief is desired, then it is found in the religion. This is one of the many cases where the residue figures as the principal element and derivation as secondary.

ii. The persistence of aggregates.

It is an aggregate of sensations. There is the persistence of relation between a person and other person and places, there are the relationship of family and kindred groups, relationships of social class. The concept of group persistence is social equilibrium. It is the residue of social integrity and social stability. It brings stability in two areas as social relationships and individual behaviour within society. It is a relationship between man and man, the man with environment and living with the death. It emerge in certain circumstances and continues to exist even if the situation has stopped to exist. Examples include among other things custom, tradition and the like. It refers to the family association in different countries. The nucleus of such a group is constituted by individuals bound to one another by ties of kinship. In orthodox India, the caste system forms like that. Caste is formed on the basis of kinship ties supplemented by a religious tie.

iii. **Manifestation of sentiments through external activity**.

These may be related to the unexpected desire of an individual. The feelings are expressed in the form of religious feelings, worshipping etc. It is also expressed

through political activities example ritual acts. The gesture or sound by which approval or disapproval is shown varies from society to society. One example can be the worship of stones among the Hindus. In this, it is not the need for the symbols, but the need for doing something acting, fixing the attention on something concrete. Similar instances are found among people in other religions.

iv. **Residue connected with social ranking and sociality**.

It is a psychological phenomenon. The man stays in society and his sociability can alter his behaviour for acceptability. This residue is connected with people's lives in society. People want to live in groups. It also refers to personal integrity. Various types of ascetics in different religions manifest this residue. These residues are important for social organisation, cooperation, sympathy etc. It refers to membership in any special society like a voluntary organisation.

v. Residue relating to the integrity of the individual and his belonging.

It is resistance to alteration in social equilibrium, sentiments of equality etc. This residue of the integrity of personality is helpful in maintaining high moral standards. This residue is the non-logical counterpart of interest in the sphere of logic. There are many forms of impurity but they all correspond to a single sentiment of alteration in personal integrity. Menstruation and childbirth are impurities. The restoration process involves the regeneration of the whole personality. This residue includes the rules about the purification of sins and impurities among the Hindus.

vi. The sex residue and its manifestation

These residues help in establishing, maintaining and strengthening relationships. It manifests its presence in sanctions, permissions, preferences, prescriptions and taboos in matters concerning the opposite sex union.

6.2.2c. DERIVATION

The concept of derivation is the equivalent in Pareto's terminology of what is ordinarily called ideology, justification and theory. They are the various means of verbal justifications by which individuals and groups lend an appearance of logic. Pareto tries to discover how men use a number of logic to rationalise his action. He has given a classification of derivation in his book "*Treatise on General Sociology*". These are simple affirmation, authority, supernatural or emotional and verbal proof. Derivation for Pareto is conceived of as surface manifestation. These derivations can be explained through underlying forms of social life.

Simple affirmations are the derivation of assertion including affirmation of facts and sentiments. Example includes a mother speaking something carrying facts and sentiments. It includes the communication of a mother who tells her child to obey her order. These are the definite statements that are not subject to experiment. These derivations are easy to perform. These are also accepted as correct. If these

affirmations are connected with sentiments, these are accepted and known as mixed affirmations.

Authority as derivations includes individuals, groups, customs, etc. It consists of those derivations that have the sanction of some force or power behind it. Sometimes if the affirmations are based on reasoning and are stated with definiteness then it becomes an authority. For example, power and social sanction both make an individual politician.

Supernatural or emotion is a derivation that tries to maintain common sentiments and principles. It also includes collective interest, legal entities or elements as well as supernatural entities. These derivations are linked with the justification of activity with the sentiment.

6.2.3. CIRCULATION OF ELITES

The term elite denotes a class of people who have the highest indices in their branch of activity. They constitute a smaller number of individuals who have succeeded and achieved a higher position in the professional hierarchy. Example: businessmen, famous Bollywood stars etc. Pareto says, society consists of a heterogeneous group of people. Some are very talented and capable as people are unequal physically and intellectually. That is, some people are having talent whereas others are devoid of that. The former ones are elites and the latter non-elites. The class of elites is a universal. They manipulate political power as they have the capacity to establish superiority over others. Pareto says the elite class is divided into two categories: Governing elite and non-governing elite.

Governing elite comprises individuals who directly or indirectly play some considerable part in government. The non-governing elite is comprising the rest of the individuals. Pareto's basic focus is on governing elite. Circulation of the elite is between the elite and the non-elite and between the governing elite and non-governing elite. Pareto says "History is the graveyard of the aristocracy". It means the history itself shows that once people who were talented and powerful have now lost their power in due course and those people who were powerless and non-elite have gained power and have gone up in the social ladder. It is cyclical. Thus, the elites who were dominant fall into decadency and are replaced by non-elite. Pareto's focus is the differential relationship of individuals and groups with respect to the various functions of society and with the particular distribution of these differentials. His focus is on a class structure like that of Karl Marx. Pareto was not interested in elites in general but in those who were suited to positions of political administrations: the governing elite and the non-governing elite.

Pareto classifies four types of mobility found in his work that have a bearing on elite circulation. They are as follows:

(i) Forced or structural mobility. It shows that the governing class including businessmen leaders, elite individuals may move into governing positions by virtue of

economic expansion. Conversely, elite individuals may be denied access to such positions.

(ii) There is a movement by co-optation that through self interesting selection on the part of the governing class.

(iii) He introduces the notion of free circulation. This movement is based on the openness of the class structure whereby the less competent ones are replaced by the more competent ones.

(iv). He says about revolutionary circulation, which occurs when the incumbents of the governing class are forcefully displaced by individuals from the governed class.

Based on the interactions of the four system elements, Pareto's theory describes a historical cycle. Thus for him, history is the graveyard of aristocracies.

He sees the history of every human society as the history of the relation between its elite who rules and its non-elites who are just ruled. The circulation takes place when the elite no longer possesses the residue necessary for keeping it in power and on the other hand the lower strata of society would possess the necessary residue needed for capturing the higher position. The elites who control the economy, political system and social system are powerful. In course of time, the elites lose their capacity and power to control the non-elite; as a result, the non-elites ascend power to rule the elite. This is called the circulation of elites.

If such circulation is disturbed then the social equilibrium is upset; it creates tension in body politics and body social leading either to the opening of new channels of mobilization or overthrowing the inefficient governing elite and replacing by a new one. Raymond Aron says, through the circulation of elites Pareto wanted to show two things:

(i) The distribution of residue in the population.

(ii) The relationship of residue with the political and economic structure.

This is reflected in the political and economic spheres. In the political sphere, it reflects power tussle between two groups: lions and foxes; and in economic domains, there is a constant battle between two competing forces: speculators and rentiers. He says the residues are differently distributed in the ruling and the ruled groups and it is on the balance of the residues in both groups that social equilibrium depends. Political elites are divided naturally into two families, one of which deserves to be called the family of the lions and the other the family of the foxes. In Pareto's sociology the various political elites, the lions and the foxes, are characterised primarily by the relative abundance of residues of the first or the second class. Foxes are the elites endowed with residues of the first class; they are powerful. Raymond Aron says according to Pareto, the western societies are governed by elites belonging to the family of foxes, elites excessively dominated by an instinct for combination and on

the other way losing their capacity for violence which is necessary to govern society. Pareto saw a new kind of elite emerging, a violent one with greater use of force and less guile who are the elites of the family of lions. The lions are conservative elites in whom the second class of residues predominate whereas, the foxes are the elites abundantly endowed with residues of first class. A similar trend is seen in the economic order, the antithesis between speculators and rentiers. The foxes are the speculators whereas the lions are the ones that rely on force rather than on cleverness. In the economic field, they are the rentiers. Power including resource keeps shuttling between these two poles: lions and the foxes in the political field. Similarly, resource always shuttles between two groups in the economic field: rentiers and the speculators. Lions represent stability, status quo and force. Foxes represent change, innovation and strategy. When lions are in power, the foxes are in opposition and vice versa. Similarly, when the rentiers are ruling the economy sphere, the speculators are in opposition and vice versa. The cycle continues. That makes Pareto's understanding of change cyclical in nature.

6.3 SUMMARY

Pareto explains the concept of action in relation to the properties of objectivity, subjectivity, means and end. He tends to delineate a detailed account of people's motives and state of mind in which he goes on to argue that most of people's actions are non-logical in nature as they stem from instincts/ impulses/ sentiments which are primarily six in number. However, there is a tendency in every individual to claim that his/ her action is logical by using derivations of one kind or the other. In this context, Pareto advocates, the task of the logico-experimental method is to explain the extent to which people's actions are non-logical in nature howsoever they claim their action is logical. At the macro level, Pareto develops a cyclical perspective of change in society in which he is of the contention that power/ resource in society oscillates between two poles/ forces groups in successive intervals. In other words, when one group is in possession of such power/ resource, the other group is in constant battle to capture the same.

6.4 QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

6.4.1 LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Define non-logical action. Discuss its types with examples and limitations.

2. Discuss Pareto's explanation of residues along with its types, uses and limitations

3. The elite theory of Pareto represents his cyclical perspective of social change. Comment.

4. "History is the graveyard of aristocracy" Substantiate.

6.4.2 SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. What is logical action?

2. What is residue?

3. What is non-logical action?

4. Discuss the types of residues.

5.Analyze Pareto's theory of circulation of elites.

6.Discuss the types of derivations.

6.5 SUGGESTED READINGS:

- Coser A Lewis. 1977. *Masters of Sociological Thought*. New York. Harcourt Brace.

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- Homans, George C., and Charles P. Curtis Jr. (1934) *An Introduction to Pareto: His Sociology*. Alfred A. Knopf. New York.

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BACHELOR OF ARTS (LIBERAL ARTS)

SEMESTER III

COURSE: SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT

UNIT 7: KARL MARX: HISTORICAL MATERIALISM, DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM AND CLASS STRUGGLE

STRUCTURE

7.1. Learning Objectives

7.2. Introduction

7.3. Historical Materialism

- **7.3.1. Production**
- **7.3.2. Forces of Production**
- **7.3.3. Relations of Production**
- **7.3.4. Mode of Production**
- **7.3.5. Surplus Value**
- **7.3.6. Alienation**
- **7.3.7. Historical Materialism: From Primitive Communism to Communism**

7.4. Dialectical Materialism

7.5 Class Struggle

- **7.5.1. Determinant of Class Position**
- **7.5.2. Class in Itself**

7.5.3 Class for Itself

7.5.4. Class in the Capitalist Society

7.5.5. Exploitation of Labour and Class Struggle

7.6. Summary

7.7. Questions for Practice

7.9. Suggested Readings

7.1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After the completion of this Unit, you should be able to:

- Understand and Explain the major contribution of Karl Marx
- Describe the core idea behind Marx's Philosophy
- Elaborate Marx's concept of historical materialism and dialectical materialism
- Explain how Marx defined class and class struggle, also the major factor behind class struggle

7.2. INTRODUCTION

Karl Marx Born in 1818, Trier (German) and grew up in Middle class Jewish household. His family converted to Protestantism to escape the social difficulty suffered by Jews in German society. In 1835, at age of 17, Marx Joined University of Bonn as Law Student. After some time, he shifted to University of Berlin, where he read Hegel whose theoretical writings influenced him throughout his career. As unable to find academic employment, Marx began a journalistic career in 1841. Because of its critical tone, the journal was shut down by the government. In 1842, met Arnold Ruge (editor of periodical) and published his first work in the periodical. Soon, he became the editor of this periodical. In 1843, moved to cologne where he studied works of Ludwig Feuerbach. During this period his writings were shaped by the criticism of Hegel (Coser, 2010). The writings were, *A Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* and *On the Jewish Question.* Immediately following these critiques, developed an outline of a theory of history and economic life (Ritzer, 1988).

In 1843, he moved to Paris and started studying Adam Smith and David Ricardo's Political Economy. Political Economy was specialized subject at that time. In the same year, he married Jenny and later met Friedrich Engels (1820 – 1895), a

wealthy textile manufacturer who became Marx's lifetime intellectual collaborator and financial supporter. Their first collaboration was 'The Holy Family'. Later they collaborated on a work entitled 'The German Ideology'. In 1845, Marx shifted Brussels from Paris. In Brussels, involved in the worker's movement which took him further into economic questions. In 1848, communist league asked Marx and Engels to draw up a workers' character. In response to this they published 'The Communist Manifesto-1848'. This creation had great impact on worker's movement throughout Europe. Next Ten years, devoted to writing and preparing his most famous work entitled 'Capital', which was published in 1867. Later he written two more volume, which was published by Engels after his death at the age of 65 in 1883 (Ritzer, 1988).

Karl Marx has written so extensively on various issues of society and contributed many ideas therefore it is very difficult to elaborate his contribution on few pages. His ideas influenced many scholars and he has a huge chain of followers in all over the world (Cuff et al., 2009). The main concern Marx emphasized in his writings is the exploitation of have nots (Proletariats; those who don't have property) by the haves (Bourgeois; those who have property). The conditions which forced Marx to constitute communist league, to write communist manifesto and to shift his interest towards working class are; long working days and hours for workers, extremely low wages, involvement of children of workers in hazardous work in factories, poor working conditions and frequent deaths of workers in factories and many more (Turner,1987).

To highlight and put these issues in front of society, he wrote many essays and texts, individually and with his friend Fredrick Angels. Some of these are, The Holy Family, German Ideology, A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, Das Capital etc. Karl Marx wrote many ideas and theories in these texts amongst theory of historical materialism, dialectical materialism, surplus value, alienation, class conflict, class consciousness, class and class struggle etc. All these theories are still important and used by many scholars to elaborate the existing inequalities in society. In the present unit, we will mainly emphasis on the theory of historical materialism, dialectical materialism, class and class struggle.

7.3. THEORY OF HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

Marx's general ideas about society are known as his theory of historical materialism or theory of society. In this theory, the main emphasis of Marx was to understand how have nots (those who don't have property) are exploited by the haves (those who have property and hold on resources). As discussed above, Marx was interested to know how the capitalist system is against the workers and further how rich are becoming richer and poorer are becoming poorer. Marx born and brought up in capitalism, hence he was more interested in exploitative relations in capitalism. Further to understand the exploitation of the workers, he went to the history and searched the patter of

division of labor and tried to explore from when exactly this exploitative system started in society. Because of this, he adds the term historical in his theory (Morrison, 2006). Marx traced the evolution of human societies from one stage to another. The stages discussed by Marx in his theory are, primitive communism, ancient society, feudalism and capitalism. He further adds two more further stages in the form of solution. They are socialism and then communism.

For Marx, material conditions and economic factors effects the structure and development of society (Turner, 1987).It is known as materialism because Marx has interpreted the evolution of societies in terms of their material or economic basis. For Marx materialism meant that the material world, perceptible to the senses, has objective reality independent of mind or spirit. Marx does not deny the reality of mental or spiritual processes but affirmed that ideas could arise, therefore, only as products and reflections of material conditions (Turner, 1987). He wrote in the preface of an essay 'A contribution to Critique of Political Economy', *It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness'* (Coser, 2010). Thus, Marx understood materialism as the opposite of idealism of Hegal, by which they meant any theory that treats matter as dependent on mind or spirit, or mind or spirit as capable of existing independently of matter. For them, the materialist and idealist views were irreconcilably opposed throughout the historical development of philosophy. There is no doubt that Marx taken certain ideas form Hegal and he also appreciated his work too. At the same time he opposed Hegal's idealism and stands him on his head by giving priority materialism. Thus, his theory of historical materialism also known as materialistic interpretation of history.

To understand the theory of historical materialism, we must have an understanding on certain ideas of Marx which are directly, indirectly related to Marx's theory of Historical Materialism. These ideas are; production, forces of production, relationships of production, mode of production, the concept of surplus value and alienation. The understanding on these ideas will help us to understand the thesis of Marx's theory of historical materialism. These concepts are also known as major pillars of his theory. The discussion on these concepts and ideas is as follows.

7.3.1. PRODUCTION

For Marx, without production there is no society.People can't survive without basic needs.These basic needs (food, Clothing, shelter) cannot available ready-made.So, human being produces material goods from objects found in nature for their survival. According to Marx, the first historical act is the production of material life. Infect this is as historical act and a fundamental condition of all history (Bottomore, 2019). Thus, the production of material goods has always been and still in the basis of human existence.

7.3.2. FORCES OF PRODUCTION

Forces of production are the ways in which material goods are produced. The forces of production includes the means of production and labour power. Means of production are tools, machines, factories, equipment etc and labour power is the skill, knowledge, experience and other human capacities used in work. The labour power is actual exercise of one's power to add values to commodities. The forces of production express the degree to which human beings control the nature. The more advanced the forces of production are, greater is their control over the nature and vice versa (Turner, 1987).

7.3.3. RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION

According to Marx, in order to produce commodities for survival, people enter into definite relations with one another (Ritzer, 1988). In short, we can say relations of production are the social relations found among the people involved in the process of production. These relations are determined by the level and character of the development of productive forces. Further, there is close nexus between forces of production and relations of production. The development of one lead to contradiction with the other and this gives birth to new mode of production, new forces of production and also new relations of production.

7.3.4. MODE OF PRODUCTION

Forces of production and relations of production are two aspects of mode of production. A particular stage in human history carries particular mode of production. Historical periods are founded and differentiated on the basis different modes of production (Turner, 1987) . In his theory of historical materialism, Marx defined various modes of productions namely,Asiatic Mode of Production, Ancient Mode of Production, Feudal Mode of Production and Capitalist Mode of production (Gorden,1998). Except these, he also predicted the future mode of production such as socialist mode of production in socialism stage and communist mode of production in communism stage. Further, according to Marx, no mode of production remains static. The crucial element in defining mode of production is the way in which the surplus is produced and its use is controlled (Bottomore, 2019).

7.3.5. SURPLUS VALUE

Surplus value is the value for which the worker is not paid. The value that a capitalist earned on the behalf of worker or the share of worker. In other sense, it is also defined as exploited money. In simple words, surplus value accrues because the commodity produced by the worker is sold by the capitalist for more than what the worker receives as wages. The surplus value can also be measure in the form of time as well as money (Gorden, M. 1998).

7.3.6. ALIENATION

Alienation means “separation from” or start feeling stranger to themselves.Alienation is prevalent in those societies where the producer is separated from the means of production and in which dead labor, capital dominates over living labor, the worker.For Marx, Alienation is an action through which a person, an institution, or a society becomes aliento the results or products of its own activity, to the nature in which it lives, to other human being,to itself. The surplus value and alienation, later becomes a reason for class struggle and revolution (Turner, 1987).

7.3.7. HISTORICAL MATERIALISM: FROM PRIMITIVE COMMUNISM TO COMMUNISM AND END OF CAPITALISM

After looking into all important concepts, now it will be easy for us to understand the main idea behind the theory of historical materialism. As discussed earlier, the main concern for Marx was to understand the exploitation of have nots by the haves in capitalism as he born and brought up in capitalism. To understand the exploitative relationships he went to the history of society and tried to find out roots behind emergence of classes and the exploitative relationships among them. Marx explained the production of material life is the first historical act. He writes, *in the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will, namely relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production (Marx, 1959)*

Human beings have variety of needs. After meeting primary needs, human being remains dissatisfied.Secondary needs arise after fulfilling primary needs. To satisfy primary and secondary needs human beings enter into social relationships.By this, material life becomes more complex, and ultimately division of labor occur in society. This gives birth to different classes in society. The unequal division of labor further divided society into two classes namely, haves and have nots. And according to Marx, with the class formation there is a beginning of ancient society in which for the first-time classes and class system was found. Before ancient society, there was primitive communism which was characterized by the notion of equality. Marx argued that in primitive communism, people were used to work according to their capacity and they were used to spend according to their need. He wrote the idea of ‘each according to their ability and each according to their need’ was prevalent (Ritzer, 1988). As discussed above, due to hording and unequal division of labor the Asiatic mode of production turned into ancient mode of production through which class formation begins. In ancient society there were two classes namely, masters and slaves. The masters were haves, who had control over resources and property and slaves were have nots who don’t had property. With the passage of time there comes crises in the existing mode of production which led society to another mode of

production i.e. feudal mode of production. The name of this stage was feudalism in which masters were replaced by feudal lords and slaves were replaced by serfdoms. Feudal mode of production was characterized by agricultural economy. Due to clash in forces of production and relations of production, the feudalism tuned into capitalism and new mode of production emerged called capitalist mode of production (Cuff et al., 2009).

Marx writes it in clearly as follows; *"At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or – this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms – with the property relations within the framework of which they have operated hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution. The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole immense superstructure" (Marx, 1959)*

In capitalism the feudal lords were replaced by bourgeois (Haves) and serfdoms were replaced by proletariats (Have nots). The exploitation of have nots reached on its peak in capitalism and it was very high as compare to earlier stages. Marx predicted, this was a high time for a revolution and achieving the rights of worker. The profit making and exploitation reached at peak, and also this is responsive for alienation of workers. Marx argued continuous exploitation will turn the class in itself to class for itself. The workers of the world will unite and they will revolt against the bourgeois (Coser, 2010). According to Marx, this will be the end of capitalism and the new society and new mode of production will emerge i.e. socialism. In socialism state will be there for redistribution of resources. Once the state will complete its responsibly, it will go away and socialism will turn into communism, the final stage in the history of human beings. In communism again, the notion of equality will exist. Each will work according to their capacity and each will consume according to their need. No class will exist in this stage (Turner, 1987).

7.4. DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

Dialectical Materialism is an approach and principle that Marx used in his theory historical materialism. The idea of dialectics, he has taken from Hegel and the idea of materialism from Feuerbach. Dialectics means discussion and a debate between two opposites which further leads third. There is a thesis and also opposite to it there is anti-thesis. The dialectics between two leads to synthesis (Coser, 2010). Further, the synthesis turns into thesis and this process happens continuously. Thus, dialectics is a study of contradicts, which lie at the very heart of existence. Hegel was taking about dialectical idealism, whereas Marx adds word materialism at the place of idealism. As discussed above he criticise Hegel for being idealist and given priority to materialism because the very first act of humans was the production of material. Marx

used the ideas of dialectics as method in his all concepts. He explained the contraction between classes, different stages, different mode of productions with the help of dialectical method. Overall, the dialectical materialism was the base of his all major ideas. His theory of historical materialism, class and class struggle etc. were based on dialectics method.

7.4.1CHECK YOUR PROGRESS I

1. What are the main problems with Marx's theory, and are such theories appropriate for studying human societies?

_____

2. 'Each according to the ability and each according to the need'. What was the core idea behind the above statement of Karl Marx?

_____

3. : Explain dialectical materialism in brief.

_____

7.5. THEORY OF CLASS AND CLASS STRUGGLE

Marx characterizes the human history as the history of class struggles. He wrote 'the history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggles' (Marx, 1859). He says that except in the period of primitive communism, in all other periods of history, society has classes and class struggle remained the part of it. In the period of primitive communism, the economic resources belonged to the community and they were controlled by the community. So there was no class distinction existing at that time. When man left the stage of primitive communism, the distribution became unequal and class distinction made its appearance (Coser, 2010). Thus. during all periods of history, there was a difference in distribution and society was divided into classes, the privileged and dispossessed. In the ancient society, there were masters and slaves, the hold on resources was in the hands of masters. In the next phase of society, which Marx called feudalism, the masters were replaced by feudal lords and slaves were replaced by serfdoms. In the capitalism the feudal lords were replaced by bourgeois (Haves; Capitalist) and serfdoms were replaced by proletariat (Have nots; workers). Though, Marx has emphasized on two classes, however he also mentioned about other middles classes too.
He argued there are seven types of classes existing in capitalism, however among

them only two are important as, when there will be time of revolution the other classes will either merge into haves and some with the have nots (Ritzer, 1988). Therefore, as according to Marx they are irrelevant.

7.5.1. DETERMINANT OF CLASS POSITION

Marx holds the economic factor to be the key factor in determining class differentiation. Classes are formed and differentiated with reference to the ownership of means of material production. Those who own the means of production constitute one class and those who have no means of production form a different class. Thus, with reference to the ownership of means of production, *two classes- namely, Haves (the propertied class) and Have Nots (the property less class)-* are formed. These two classes exist through ages in the human history, though their names are different. So, according to Marx, a person's class position is determined by his relation to the means of production. His occupation or income has nothing to do with it. A person may be a carpenter by profession. It only depends on whether he owns a shop or works for wages, that his class placement is determined. If he owns a shop, he becomes the member of the propertied class and if he works for wages, he becomes a member of the property less class (Morrison, 2006).

7.5.2. CLASS IN ITSELF

Thus, Marx, considers the relation of the individuals to the means of material production as the key factor in determining a class. People who share the same relationship to the means of production form a class. However, according to Marx, this relation to the means of production is not sufficient to determine the class, as in his view. It is not sufficient for a class to be merely a class in itself, but it should also be a class for itself.

7.5.3. CLASS FOR ITSELF

When the people form a class by having the same relation to the means of the production, it is only in such objective condition, they constitute a class. At that stage, they constitute mere a "class in itself". But, they will constitute a real class- 'class for itself' only when they constitute a class in subjective consciousness, that is, when they share similar consciousness that they all belong to the same class. The small peasants form a vast mass and live in identical conditions. They share the same relationships to land. But they are not conscious of the fact that they live under the economic

conditions that separate their mode of life, their interests and their culture from those of other classes. Hence, they do not constitute a class.

Thus, according to Marx's theory though some relation to the means of production is a necessary condition for people to constitute a class, it is insufficient. For them, to constitute a class, there must be a feeling of separation from other social classes. Even here, Marx emphasizes that the feeling of separation must be a feeling of hostility towards other social classes. 'Separate individuals form a class only to the extent that they must carry on a struggle against another class (Morrison, 2006).

7.5.4. CLASS IN THE CAPITALIST SOCIETY

All the features which Marx adds with class are found particularly in the modern capitalist system. Though classes are formed in different stages of history. Marx recognizes only the classes of the modern capitalist society. The reason is that only in the capitalist society, class lines are clearly drawn. With reference to the means of material production, the society is clearly divided into two classes- Haves (*the propertied bourgeoisie) and Have Notes (the property less proletariat)*. It is around these two classes that the history revolves.

By taking then means of the production in their exclusive possession, *the capitalists become the Haves (propertied class)*. The rest – *the majority of the people are deprived of the means of production*. The latter own nothing but labour. It is the only marketable asset they have. As they have no other asset which required for economic needs, they sell it and become the workers under the owners of the means of production which provide increasingly means of employment for the free labourers. The relationship between the propertied class and property less class is divided into two class such as, *the capitalists and the workers*.

Marx emphasizes that in the final stage of capitalism, there will be only two classes in the society- the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. However, of the two classes, only the proletariat remains a solid class. They individually possess the capability for organizing themselves into a class (Inkeles, 1987). The conditions of work and inaccessibility to the means of production facilitate the emergence of solidarity and prevent competitiveness. When a large chunk of the population are reduced to the level of wage labour and the capitalistic exploitation of the labour becomes intense, the working class becomes conscious of their common interests and placement and gets united. They also get motivated by an appropriate system of ideas that enables them to confront the bourgeoisie oppressors (Turner,1987).

On the other hand, there is no similar capability for the bourgeoisie to get united. They are kept divided by the competition in the market and the market forces. They can get united on political issues and other issues but they will not be united on economic issues. The political power and ideology can substitute class consciousness and unite the bourgeoisie.

7.5.5. EXPLOITATION OF LABOUR AND CLASS STRUGGLE

Having control over the forces of production including the labour process, the bourgeoisie could easily exploit the proletariat. The only aim of the bourgeoisie is to obtain maximum profit in the market. As Stalin writes that the fundamental law of capitalism is maximum profit. If someone is bent on earning maximum profit in the business, he has to raise the price of his products. Any commodity produced by the labour is result of his own labour. He should be given adequate labour for the efforts he has rendered. But in result he is paid very less labour. The capitalists exploit the worker by expropriating half of the value of human labour and pays for the remaining value of labour (Lemert, 2009).

The capitalists exploit the workers by asking him to work for more than the stipulated duration. They are forced to work for more hours but are not paid adequate wages. The capitalists use their wealth and man power to control the courts and manage the political system. Their political power enables them to exploit the workers without any obstacle. As the legal and political systems are subservient to the capitalists, they carry on the exploitation of workers with any challenge. The capitalists are not contented here. They are bent on maximizing their profit. In order to quench their thirst for money, they set up more factories. These activities require a large number of people to run the factories. In the factories, the workers are able to work unitedly and they communicate with each other and share their feelings and ideas. The capitalists also dominate the market by raising their economic activities. They try to monopolize their share in the market and throw away the small businessmen from the market. When these small businessmen are cornered, the capitalists enjoy full authority in the market and exercise their monopoly in the market (Lemert, 2009).

The poor businessmen who are thrown out of the market are reduced to the status of proletariat. The poor businessmen, the labour and self-employed people, master craftsmen and skilled persons also join them and come to level of proletariat. These people are left stranded without land, usable skills or marketable cheap goods as industrialisation transforms the economy. All these developments lead to division of social relations into polarization of the society into two hostile classes: *the bourgeoisie and proletariat* (Lemert, 2009) The capitalist enjoy their monopoly status in the market.

The working class after being exploited by the capitalist, becomes conscious of their rights and organize themselves into a working class movement. They form trade unions for themselves and fight for better wages and good working condition for the labour. But they may be stuck to their interests and will not be associated with other shop keepers associations and other trade unions. But gradually they develop a consciousness that all the workers belong to the same class with common interests and turn hostile against the capitalists. In other words, they evolve as *'class for itself'*. The working class organize themselves and start a struggle against the capitalists.

7.5.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS II

1. Write down any difference between class in itself and class for itself?

_____
____

2. Discuss about the determinant of class position.

_____
_____

3. Explain the relationship between exploitation of Labour and Class Struggle.

_____
_____

7.6. SUMMARY

In this unit, we have introduced you with some of the major theories and ideas of world-renowned philosopher Karl Marx. Though, his status as philosopher and social scientist is under debate as many scholars consider him sociologist and many gives him a tag of philosopher, political scientist, economist etc. His ideas influenced many sociologists which has given birth to Marxian school of thought in sociology. His ideas were critically evaluated and extended by many scholars namely, Ralf Dehrendorf, Louis Althusser, Antonio Gramsci, Jurgen Habermas, Max Horkheimer, George Simmel, Lewis Coser and many others. There are two main reasons for us to study Karl Marx. The first reason is his emphasis on working and marginalised class. And the second reason is his contribution for new school of thought in sociology. Through his theory of historical materialism, dialectical materialism and theory of class struggle, he highlighted the inequalities and exploitation faced by working class in society. He has not only elaborated the problems of working class but also provided a solution for it.

7.7 QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

7.7.1. LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

- According to Karl Marx the very first act of all societies was always economic because human beings had to satisfy their everyday material needs before anything else. While giving this statement, to whom Karl Marx stands on his head? Further, how they both differ in their ideas?
- It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness". Keeping in mind the above statement of Karl Marx, explain how Marx differs from Hegal?

- Elaborate the theory of historical materialism. Also write about the main cause behing this theory

7.7.2. SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

- Write a short note on relations of production.
- Explain the concept of class struggle.
- Disuses any two features of class as defined by Karl Marx.

7.8. SUGGESTED READINGS

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BACHELOR OF ARTS (LIBERAL ARTS)

SEMESTER III

COURSE: SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT

UNIT 8: MAX WEBER: PROTESTANT ETHICS AND THE SPIRIT OF CAPITALISM, SOCIAL ACTION

STRUCTURE

8.0LearningObjectives

8.1Introduction

8.2 The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism
- **8.2.1Defining 'Religion' and 'Economy'**
- **8.2.2 The concept of 'Capitalism' and the 'Spirit of Capitalism'**
- **8.2.3 The concept of Protestant Ethics**
- **8.2.4 Meaning and Features of Calvinism**

8.3 Theory of Social Action
- **8.3.1 Meaning of Social Action**
- **8.3.2 Social Action and Verstehen**
- **8.3.3 Types of Social Action**

8.4 Summary

8.5Questions for Practices

8.6 Suggested Readings

8.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This unit will help the students to understand following concepts;

- Brief idea on Max Weber's theoretical approach to understand the nature of relationship between 'religion' and 'economy'
- The influence of Calvinist ideas in Protestantism on the development of modern capitalismas studied by Weber.
- Conceptual understanding of the concept on Social Action and its various types as observed by Max weber.

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Max Weber was born in a protestant family in Erfurt, Prussia (present-day Germany) on April 21, 1864. Weber's father was a successful lawyer, and also a business man. His mother was a very religious calm lady with a strong faith in the Calvinist sense of duty. Weber was a very weak child but intellectually very sound. At his early adolescence period, he used to read extensively and developed intellectual interest of his own. He was brought up in an intellectually stimulating atmosphere. Weber finished his studies at the University of Berlin, earning his doctorate in 1889 and joined the University of Berlin as a faculty, and a consultant to the government. In 1894, Weber was appointed as a professor of economics at the University of Freiburg and there he developed his superb scholarship in various lectures and addresses. His research at that time focused mainly one economics and legal history. Gradually, he emerged as a central figure among the intellectuals of his time. Weber had deep interest in politics and published many papers pertaining the socio-political situation of Germany during that period. His full scholarly activities began in 1903, Weber became the associate editor of the Archives for Social Science and Social Welfare where his interest was in more fundamental issues of social sciences. From among his many widely acclaimed essays, the essay on 'The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism' received huge intellectual attention. From 1916 to 1918, he argued powerfully against the imperialist war goals of Germany and strongly favoured in strengthening parliamentary democracy. Finally, after getting attacked by pneumonia, Weber passed away in June, 1920.

Max Weber is regarded as one of the prominent figures in the field of social thought. He was a jurist, economist and a politician, all rolled in to one. His profound understanding of history and other sciences of culture had given him a deep insight in the social affairs. Weber's thought reveals his inner conflicts. As a "disenchanted man" he saw contradiction between the rationalizing society and the need for faith, and between "Science and action". He was a profound scholar, a voracious reader and prolific write.

Major Publications:

- The Protest ant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (1904)
- The City (1912)
- Economy and Society(1922)
- The Sociology of Religion (1922)
- General Economic History (1924)
- The Theory of Social and Economic Organization (1925)

8.2 THE PROTESTANT ETHIC AND THE SPIRIT OF CAPITALISM

The Ethic of Protestantism and the Spirit of Capitalism by Max Weber (1904-5) originated as an anthology of essays on possible relations between Christian puritanism and the growth of modern capitalism. Weber believed that protestant countries were the first to become rich, and puritan groups were in the forefront of capital accumulation, investment, industrialization and economic and social progress. He describes how "the spirit of capitalism" developed from protestant ethics emphasizing individual discipline, responsibilities, asceticism and duties. The spirit of capitalism has its source in the predestination doctrine according to the Swiss reformist Jean Calvin.

To protestants work became an important tool along with a decent moral life, viewed as indications of God's grace. The purpose is not just to earn money but how to accumulate and make rational investment of it for more profit with hard work and ascetic living is the Calvinist way of leading life. This attitude of life in western Europe particularly in England, Germany led to rapid industrialization and economic growth. The spirit of capitalism is a work-ethic which calls for the accumulation of wealth for its own sake. To do so, work has to be organised in an efficient disciplined manner. Hard work is a virtue that carries intrinsic rewards. The spirit of capitalism demands individualism, innovation, hard work and the pursuit of wealth for its own sake. It is thus an economic ethic.

8.2.0 DEFINING'RELIGION'AND'ECONOMY'

In this essay on protestant ethics and spirit of capitalism, 'religion' and 'economy' are viewed as two important concepts. The term 'religion' refers to a set of ideas and beliefs about the "supernatural" and its impact on the lives of human beings is very deep and long lasting. As human beings are surrounded with multiple problems of

their personal and social life, they are often found in taking refuge under the supernatural force in the form of a religion. They believe in finding solutions or ways of means to various forms of challenges and life complicacies through faith and devotion. Religious beliefs provide explanations to their queries coming out of natural life processes. For instance, suffering due to any reason may be explained by saying that it is attesting on man's faith on God or that it may be accepted as a punishment for sins committed in past lives. Religious beliefs attach meaning to life. In order to lead a meaningful devoted religious life, every religion has certain guidelines to conduct human behaviour which are expected to be followed by men.

Similarly, 'economy' is essential to human social life. It fulfills the basic physical or material needs of man such as food, clothing and shelter which are fundamental for our survival. The economy or economic system refers to those arrangements made by society for the production, consumption and distribution of goods and services. Since beginning of human civilization men are engaged with this prime task of production not only to produce food but also to fulfil day-to-day material requirements. Religion and economy both are found to influence each other and the society at large. Religion which basically strives for 'salvation' or ultimate spiritual realization by focus on human nature, economy primarily aims at comfortable decent living with the focus on wealth and consumption. It seems both are opposed to each other, but in practical life, material and spiritual condition of man influence the present and future of man kind.

Max Weber argued, it was the beliefs, values and set of ideas toward the world derived from religion, that determine the way of life and guide the religious as well as economic behaviour of the man. Every religion has its prescribed guidelines for its followers regarding what to do and what not to do. In the context of Indian society, respect to elders at home is religiously defined as ideal and virtuous. As a result, we find many Indian families are joint in nature and the eldest members of the family have are spectable position in the family whether They financially contribute or not. But this is not a regular phenomenon in other countries mostly in western countries rather elders are viewed as outsiders or dependants without earning potential. In this example we can understand how religious ideas behind elderly care in the family stands primary to Indian seven though it is financially strenuous. In this essay Weber has tried to justify that the values and beliefs influence the life and life-conditions.

8.2.1 THECONCEPTOF'CAPITALISM'ANDTHE'SPIRITOFCAPITALISM'

This essay is a part of Weber's studies of other world religions to examine and analyse rational significance of different religions in the promotion of socio-economic development of the society. Weber observed there is close and positive connection between protestant ethic sand the capitalist mode of production and this affinity helped capitalism to grow in the western world. Weber has made distinction between

traditional capitalism off or mer times and rational capitalism of modern times. Capitalism arose in the western nations during the period of industrial revolution. The growth of the factory system, new techniques of production, new tools and machines made it possible for the capitalists to earn vast amounts of money. For that, the production process had to be rationally organised with essential characteristics of efficiency and discipline.

Under traditional capitalism, the worker-employer relationship is informal, direct and personal. Here, workers prefer less work to more pay, relaxation to exertion. They are either run able or unwilling to take up new work method and techniques. Traditionalism hampers the growth of capitalism. Whereas modern or rational capitalism is not just to generate wealth for enjoyment or luxurious living but to make proper use of it to make more wealth. The thirst for money-making for its own sake is the very essence of modern capitalism. Traditionalism is characterized by a much less disciplined and efficient system of production and modern capitalism stresses individualism, innovation and the relentless pursuit of profit. Thus from Weber's standpoint, modern capitalism is an economic system which aims at the unlimited accumulation of profit through the rational organisation of production.

MARXANDWEBERONCAPITALISM

Compared with Marx, weber both broadens and narrows the definition of capitalism. He considers all forms of money making through trade and exchange to represent capitalist activity, while Marx tended to define capitalism as a mode of production or fully developed system of capital accumulation. At the same time, weber narrows the definition of capitalism, identifying it with peaceful free exchange, so that acquisition by force, e.g., piracy, is not part of capitalism. For weber, rational capitalistic acquisition is the systematic use of goods and services so that the balance at the end exceeds the capital originally invested whereas Marx's primitive accumulation of capital was not an essential part of capitalism, but an expression of non-capitalistic forms, perhaps even detracting from, rather than assisting in, the development of capitalism.

According to weber, rational capitalism is the best efficient process that produce the greatest possible balance at the end. Weber argues that such rational type of capitalism can only develop in the west. Looking at the successful growth of capitalism in western countries, Weber has primarily emphasized on the influence of ideas, most specifically religious ideas, in the development of capitalism.

THE SPIRIT OF CAPITALISM

The worker is a means to an end, the end being profit. The attitude towards work is that it should be done well not because it has to be done, but because it carried an intrinsic reward. Hard work and efficient work, is viewed as an end in itself. This is regarded as the spirit of capitalism.

Weber defines that the Protestant ethic is the combination of dedication to disciplined work and acquisition, along with a life of denial of pleasure and spontaneity in enjoyment of life. Weber notes that industry and commerce existed for many centuries using traditional methods, with traditional ways of life and methods predominating. These methods of conducting activities began to change. Suddenly, increased supervision over the activities of labour were undertaken by employers, a shift to expansion of output on the basis of lower prices took place and, in general, the leisurely ways of conducting business gave way to the competitive struggle. Competition forced other business people to behave and operate in much the same manner as those who applied this spirit most dutifully. Historically, capitalist expansion, imperialism, and desire to overcome economic backwardness have created this spirit through much of the world.

For Weber, the crucial issue was the origin of this capitalistic spirit. Weber finds the answer in Calvinism and the Protestant ethic. Weber was not interested in all the theological teachings of these different religions. Rather, it was the question of the religious beliefs which led to psychological sanctions behind rationalized conduct. In the words of weber, "And what is most important in this connection, it was not generally in such cases a stream of new money invested in the industry which brought about this revolution ... but the new spirit, the spirit of modern capitalism, had set to work."

8.2.3CHECKYOURPROGRESS I

1. What is the role of religious belief to men?

_____
_____

2. What is the difference between ‘capitalism’ and the ‘spirit of capitalism’?

_____
_____

3. State whether the following statements are True(T) or False(F)

a. Rise of ‘rational capitalism’ is only possible in the west as observed by Weber.

b. The idea of ‘capital accumulation’ as mentioned by Marx is the only condition for ‘rational capitalism’.

8.2.2 THECONCEPTOFPROTESTANTETHICS

Protestant ethics or ‘Protestantism’, as the name suggests, is regarded as a religion of protest. It arose in the 16th century in Europe in the period known as the “Reformation”. Its founding fathers like Martin Luther and John Calvin broke away from the Catholic Church. They felt that the church had become too immersed in doctrines and rituals. It had lost touch with the common people. Greed, Corruption and vice had gripped the church. Priests had a life-style more suitable for princes.

The protestant sects that sprang up all over Europe tried to recapture the lost spirit of the church. They stressed simplicity, austerity and devotion. Calvinism, founded by the French man John Calvin was one such sect. The followers of Calvin in England were known as the Puritans. They migrated to the continent of North America and were the founders of the American nation. Weber observed that in the west, it was by and large the Protestants who had made greatest progress in education and employment. They were the top bureaucrats, the most skilled technical workers and the leading industrialists. Weber says, by studying the main features of Calvinism, the link between religion and economy would be understood.

8.2.3 MEANING AND FEATURES OF CALVINISM

The French religious reformer John Calvin (1509-1564) is best known for his doctrine of predestination emphasizing the omnipotence of God and the man’s salvation by God's grace alone. Calvinists broke from the Roman Catholic Church in the 16th century, having different beliefs of predestination and election of salvation. Ideas of Calvin is known as Calvinism. Features of Calvinism are given below.

1. CALVIN’S IMAGE OF GOD:

According to Calvinist’s idea, God is all powerful and, transcendent. His divine will be unknowable. It would be foolish of any human being however powerful may

be, to try to understand God's will. It cannot be understood simply the way religious leaders misguide people by simply saying its God's will.

2. DOCTRINE OF PRE-DESTINATION:

At the core of Calvin is the misbelief that, certain persons are chosen or 'elected' by God to enter Heaven (Salvation), while the rest are damned (damnation). The chosen will reach heaven no matter what they do on earth. We cannot bribe God to give us a place in Heaven through prayers and sacrifice. As this will is unknowable, we cannot change it. Nobody knows whether he was elected or damned by the God. He could not turn to a priest for solace and help because no mortal man could understand God. Then, without knowing his future status, how could be possible for a man to remain in a state of uncertainty so long? It is further clarified by Calvinists that the man would work for the glory of God. He could do so by achieving material prosperity on Earth. His material prosperity would be the symbol or token of his election to the heaven.

3. THE NOTION OF CALLING:

Weber argues that the Reformation was not the result of historical necessity (as Marx argued), and the capitalistic spirit not merely the result of the Reformation and its effects. Rather Weber regards the Reformation as emerging independently of economic factors but examines the ways that ideas from the Reformation are connected with the capitalistic spirit.

Weber introduces the concept of the calling as "a religious task set by God", which is absent in other religions, or Roman Catholicism. The calling is a product of the religious reformation, and is a Protestant notion. The idea of the calling is that the individual must fulfill the obligations of his or her position in the world in order to be acceptable by God unlike the monk, whose duty was to be otherworldly, denying the self and the world. Calling is that where one's fulfilment is in the duty of worldly affairs which is the highest form of moral activity of the individual.

According to Calvinist Ethic, all works are important and sacred and these should be performed with devotion and sincerity. Max Weber described the strong relationship between the spiritual vision of the world and a certain style of economic activity.

4. CALVINISM AND THIS-WORLDLY ASCETICISM:

In the last chapter of the book, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Weber reviews the doctrines of the Puritans and comments that a man without a calling thus lacks the systematic, methodical character which is ... demanded by worldly asceticism. Weber then connects this with the division of labour which emerged and expanded as industrial capitalism developed. With respect to wealth, the attitude was one of responsibility for that wealth, and responsibility toward possessions, "for holding them undiminished for the glory of God and increasing them by restless effort." Consumption, especially of luxuries, was to be restricted. Together these teachings acted to assist the accumulation of capital by encouraging the ascetic compulsion to save.

The word ascetic refers to self-denial or self-discipline, used to refer to the monk or hermit in Greek, and came to be used for the monk sin medieval society, who devoted themselves to God, denying bodily and worldly pleasures. Weber argues that the asceticism of Protestantism had different implications than what it did in earlier societies and the Middle Ages. Unlike the religious asceticism of earlier periods, Protestantism was a worldly asceticism, in that "the highest form of moral obligation of the individual is to fulfill his duty in worldly affairs.

FORBIDDEN ACT SIN CALVINISM:

Followers of Calvinism are known as 'Methodists', a sect who are instructed to forbid following acts;

a) To make words when buying and selling(haggling)

b) To trade with commodities without paying the necessary taxes and tariffs.

c) To change rates of interest higher than the law of the country permits.

d) "To gather treasures on earth" (the transformation of invest men capital into funded wealth.)

e) To borrow without being sure of one's ability to pay back the debt.

f) "The luxuries of all sorts."

The fruits of hard labour could not be spent on worldly pleasures. Thus, there was only one out let for money–it was reinvested and hence used to make more money. Not a moment was to be idled away as "work is worship" and "time is money."

8.2.5CHECKYOURPROGRESS II

1. What led to the emergence of ‘Protestantism’ and who were the major exponents?

_____
_____

2. How is the notion of Calling linked to the ‘spirit of capitalism’?

_____
_____

3. what is the difference between ‘asceticism’ and ‘worldly asceticism’?

_____
_____

4. State whether the following statements are True (T) or False (F)

i. The idea ‘predestination’ helps most Protestants lead a life devoted to prayer and the sacraments. T/F

ii. To trade and business, paying necessary taxes and tariffs are notes sent in rational capitalism. T/F

iii. Religious asceticism and worldly asceticism are not same according to Weber. T/F

_____
_____

8.3.0 THEORYOFSOCIALACTION

Weber saw both structural and action approaches as necessary to develop a full understanding of society and social change. Max Weber first developed a theory of social action in “Economy and Society” first published in 1920s, in which he said ‘Sociology is a science concerning itself with interpretive understanding of social action and thereby with a causal explanation of its course and consequences’. His primary focus was on the subjective meanings that human actors attach to their actions in their mutual interactions within specific socio-historical context.

Weber argued that the objective sciences of the outer world of nature had failed

to treat the problem of 'human inner understanding'. He claimed that social sciences were concerned essentially with the 'inner states' of actors. The social sciences have their special objectives which in principle are different from the objects of the sciences like physics, chemistry and biology. Weber believed that what sets the subject matter of social science apart is that human beings have 'inner states' in terms of which they 'understand' the events of the outer world in which they come to act.

Human individuals understand the action of others by interpreting them, and that theydependonthisunderstandinginordertoact.Theiractionsinvolvemeaningfulinterpretations ofthe act of others they are responding to. Society is the product of what is produced by human beings acting according to values and value ends. Thus, whatever is produced in the society by human action is the result of values attaching to it. Every product of society- history, language, art, religion-embodies some values recognized by the human actors.

8.3.1 MEANING OF SOCIAL ACTION:

According to Weber, any form of investigation which reduces human action to its simple external characteristics would be meaningless since it would not capture the tendency of human interpretative understanding. Human beings can only act in the world after having interpreted the act of others to whom they are responding. "Social Action" takes place only 'when the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to the act and when the act takes account of the behaviour of others and is thereby oriented in its course.' From this point of view, there appears to be three key aspects to define a human action as social:

1. Meaningful to the actor - Presumably things that are understandable or are of concern to the social actor, perhaps as a result of experiences, values and interests.

2. Consider others - other social actors are necessarily involved in order for an individual action to become social action, and they must explicitly be considered by the social actor (whether positively, negatively or neutrally).

3. Orientation-some direction or purpose in the action.

MEANING AND ORIENTATION:

This includes actions that are associated with ends that the actor wishes to pursue, actions or ends that have value of their own sake for the actor (spiritual, ethical, emotional), 'feeling states' associated with affectual and emotional activities and interests, traditional and habitual feelings, concerns and interests that may drive

from experience sand socialisation.

Some activities that Weber does not consider to be social action, like contemplation or personal spiritual activities which may hold meaning for the individual but these things either do not involve others or are not oriented towards others.

8.3.2 SOCIAL ACTIONANDVERSTEHEN:

'Verstehen' is a German term which means to understand, know, and comprehend the meaning, nature and significance of any phenomenon. It is oriented to grasp and correlate the intended thought or expressed ideas behind it. Weber used the term to refer to the social scientist's attempt to understand both the intention and the context of human action. Weber argued that before the cause of an action could be ascertained you had to understand the meaning attached to it by the individual. He distinguished between two types of understanding.

First, he referred to Aktuelles Verstehen – or direct observational understanding, where one just observes what people are doing. For example, someone cutting the tree, or someone's emotional state from his body language or facial expression. However, observational understanding alone is not sufficient to explain social action.

These condition type of understanding is Eklarendes Verstehen–or Empathetic Understanding – in which sociologists must try to understand the meaning of an act in terms of the motives that have given rise to it. This type of understanding is required to find out why someone is cutting the tree – Are they doing it because they need the firewood, are they just clearing a forest as part of their job, are they working off anger, just doing it because they enjoy it? To answer this, Weber argued that one has to get into the shoes of people doing the activity. Empathetic understanding helps to understand the real situation by going deep into the root and find meaning behind the action.

8.3.3 TYPESOFSOCIALACTION

The major thrust of Weber's work is to identify the factors that have brought about this "rationalization" of the West as pointed out by Raymond Aron (1970) and Coser (1977). Max Weber didn't just believe that individuals shape society – societies encourage certain types of motive for action – for example, the religion of Calvinism encouraged people to save money, which eventually led to capitalism. Weber believed that there are four ideal types of social actions. Ideal types are used as a tool to look at real cases and compare them to the ideal types to see where they fall. No social action

is purely just one of the four types.

1. Traditional Social Action: actions controlled by traditions; the way it has always been done.

2. Affective Social Action: actions determined by one's specific affections and emotional state, you do not think about the consequences.

3. Value Rational Social Action: actions that are determined by a conscious belief in the inherent value of a type of behaviour.

4. Instrumental-Rational Social Action: actions that are carried out to achieve a certain goal ,one does because it leads to a result.

1. TRADITIONAL SOCIAL ACTION–

This is a form of social action in which the individual reacts 'automatically' to theprobleminitheoutsideworldandtotheexternalcircumstancesinahabitualmanner.Traditi onalaction is based on a habitual response to the world that guides the behaviour of the actor in a course of action, which has been repeatedly followed in the past.

To act in this way, Weber argued, the act or need not imagine a goal, a picture an outcome or be conscious of a specific commitment to values or to value scales. According to Weber, the bulk of everyday action corresponds to this type. In traditional action, the ends and means are fixed by customs, there is no calculation in the attainment of ends, and there is little or no judgement. Traditional action lacks a specific orientation to rationality, it lies closer to what Weber called the 'borderline of what can be justifiably called meaningful oriented action'. A religious leader, for example, may exhibit traditional action by a devotion to routine or to ways of living in the world that are frozen in tradition. Traditional action is distinguished from the other types of action by the absence of a subjective meaning that is attached by the actor to the situation, and from this perspective Weber believed that traditional action forgoes a specific orientation to subjective meaning since the actor largely responds to situations based on a customary view of reality that is handed down from the past.

2. AFFECTUAL (EMOTIONAL) ACTION

Action is emotional when it 'satisfies a need for revenge, sensual gratification, devotion, contemplative bliss, or the working off of emotional tensions. In this context, the actor is directly impelled to act on the basis of an emotional response to a situation or external circumstance that is determined by the state of mind of the actor.

Like traditional action, emotional action lacks a specific orientation to goal or to a set of ultimate values since its means of expression is based on the emotional state of the actor in a given circumstance. Under these conditions, emotional action lacks a

specific rational orientation to the world and forgoes means and ends calculation since it is governed by impulsive acts which often have no goal or aim. Like traditional action, emotional action is on the border line of what is considered to be meaningful action and, in this sense, it is irrational in that it forgoes inner evaluation and subjective meaning.

3. VALUE RATIONAL ACTION (WERT RATIONAL) –

This is a type of action in which ultimate values act as a guide to action. While the first two types of action were characterized by the absence of a specific meaning that is subjectively assigned by the actor, value rational action exemplifies a rational orientation to the extent that a specific meaning is applied to the action by the actor.

Weber describes value rational action as a straightforward orientation to absolute valuesandconsiderationofactionbasedonavalueorientationtotheworld.Underthesecircumstancestheactor seeks to put into practice their convictions of what seems to them to be required either by duty, honour, the pursuit of beauty, are ligious call or the importance of some cause no matter in what it consists, regardless of possible cost to themselves.

In this case, the meaning of an action does not lie in the achievement of a result but rather lies in carrying out the realization of the specific value considerations for its own sake, and therefore the sole aim of value rational action is the realization of specific value and the obligation placed on the actor by the value in question. The actor feels obligated to follow commands or demands which are binding on the actor's commitment to specific values. For instance, the Dalai Lama acts on the basis of promoting peace in the world because of the meaning that attaches to the value of promoting human life and his commitment to the pursuit of such values.

4. INSTRUMENTAL RATIONAL ACTION (ZWECK RATIONAL) –

This type of action differs from value rational by virtue of the fact that the ends, the means and the secondary results are all rationally taken into account and weighed for the explicit purpose of maximizing successful out comes and controlling unfore seen circumstances in reality.

Instrumental action utilizes strategies in relation to the world based on the most effective procedures for attaining desired ends. This is an action where the actor(s) measures the utility of the goal, and also analyses and compares different means to achieve the goal. The actor determines the goal, based on rational deliberation and chooses his means purely in terms of their efficiency to attain the goal. Actors may choose to treat ends as a given set of subjective want sand arrange them in a scale of urgency. To the extent that instrumental action orient itself to the rational achievement

of ends, it may be without relation to values, and in this respect the actor may not be bound by specific values or value scales. The actor takes into account those conditions of knowledge calculated to produce the best possible outcomes.

Weber concluded that behaviour in modern societies is mostly influenced by the growth of industrial and bureaucratic system which is dominated by goal-oriented rationality or instrumental rational action (Zweck rational) than traditional, emotional or, value-based action.

8.3.4 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS III

1. What are those three key aspects to understand the meaning of social action?

_____

2. How does the 'Verstehen' approach understand social action?

_____

3. Name four ideal types of social actions as defined by Weber.

_____

5. Fill in the blanks with appropriate answers

i. Every action is a social action,----------.(true/false)

ii. The four types of action given by Weber are actually---------- (ideal types/non-ideal types)

iii. Weber believed hat in modern societies, action and behaviour are more influenced by

----------(value-oriented rationality, instrumental rationality)

8.4.0 SUMMARY

Max Weber is regarded as one of the prominent figures in the field of social thought. His profound knowledge in the history and other sciences of culture had given him a deep insight in the social affairs. Weber's approach connects the emergence of Protestant ideas as religious reform with the necessary attitudinal changes required for the development of capitalism with infusion of rationalistic approach in its spirit. The Protestant ideas behind the doctrine of predestination, notion of calling and the essence of worldly asceticism have influential role for the growth of capitalism. These religious ideas as an independent force are not created by the change in economic institutions and structures (e.g. money, trade, commerce, etc.) but emerged entirely separately as an unintended consequence of the Reformation. Calvinist's faith on all powerful God and man's obligation to work for the glory of God created a disciplined and dedicated workforce without which capitalism could not have emerged. These new ways of thinking and acting undoubtedly played a role in changing the view of the people who became capitalists and workers and thus, influenced capitalism.

Max Weber began with the idea of social action to make sociology a scientific enquiry. To him, a 'social action' is an action carried out by an individual to which an individual attaches a meaning to it. Social action PRESUPPOSES the existence of other individual and some action by him. This means there can be no social action in isolation. Max Weber's Social Action Theory divided the types of social action into the 4 categories mentioned above: traditional social action, affective social action, rational social action with values and instrumental social action. The types of social action guide the theoretical understanding of human actions in society and how behavior stems from subjectivity and can influence other human beings in their behavior.

8.5.0 QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICES:

A model of questions both in long type and short type have been given below for this unit.

8.5.1LONGANSWERQUESTIONS

1. Examine weber's contribution in understanding of protestant ethics and the spirit of capitalism.
2. Discuss Weberian approach in the study of social action.
3. Critically examine Weber's approach in study of social structure and social action.

8.5.2 SHORTANSWER QUESTIONS

4. How is capitalism defined by Weber?
5. What is the difference between Marx and Weber on capitalism?
6. What do you mean by world-ascetism?
7. Who introduced Calvinist ideas and why?
8. What is ‘Verstehen’?
9. How did Weber define ‘Social action’?
10. What do you mean by goal-oriented rational action?
11. Give any one example of value-oriented rational action?
12. Give one example of affective action?
13. How did Weber explain traditional action?

8.6 SUGGESTEDREADING

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BACHELOR OF ARTS (LIBERAL ARTS)

SEMESTER III

COURSE: SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT

UNIT 9: George Herbert Mead: Symbolic Interactionism, Development of Self

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Structure

9.1. Learning Objectives

9.2. Introduction

9.3. Symbolic Interactionism

9.3.1. George Herbert Mead on Symbolic Interactionism

9.3.2. Criticism of Symbolic Interactionism

9.4. Development of Self

9.4.1. Mind, Self and Society

9.4.2. Self as a Social Emergent

9.4.3. Genesis and Growth of Self

9.4.4. The 'Me' and the 'I'

9.5. Summary

9.6. Questions for Practice

9.7. Suggested Readings

9.1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After the completion of this Unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the major contribution of Mead to sociology
- Delineate the importance of Interaction and self.
- Describe the core idea behind symbolic interactionism.
- Elaborate the concept of Development of Self.

9.2. INTRODUCTION

George Herbert Mead (1863-1931) was an American philosopher, sociologist and psychologist, who was primarily affiliated with the Chicago School for Sociology. He is regarded as one of the founders of symbolic interactionism and contributed many ideas in this school of thought. George Herbert Mead was a pragmatist. Many of his theories and written works revolve around his pragmatic thinking. At Harvard, Mead met Josiah Royce who became a major influence for him and his thoughts. George Herbert Mead had a career spanning to more than forty years where he wrote and published numerous papers and articles in both philosophy and psychology. After his death, many of his students put together an edited four volumes filled with the records of Mead's social psychology course at the University of Chicago, his lecture notes and numerous unpublished papers. In his lifetime, Mead has published nearly around 100 scholarly articles, reviews and incidental pieces some of which are published by his followers under title Mind, Self and Society and many of which are still unpublished. His contributions to micro-sociology, especially the theory of symbolic interaction and sociology in general is recognized by many sociologists.

Initially the subject matter of sociology was confined, however with the contribution of modern founding fathers, Durkheim, Weber, Marx and their followers it has been expended in various dimensions. Amongst, one of the important dimension is interactionism. The beginning of interactionism or inter actionist school of thought can be seen with the contribution of Weber and later on it was again expended by George Herbert Mead, who has given birth to symbolic inter actionalism along with scholars of his time (Lemert, 2013). Thus the 'study of society, also include the study of human social behaviour, patterns of social and relationships, social interaction, and culture that surrounds everyday life within larger society. This is a one dimension of sociology, similarly there are other dimensions their further development exist in the field of sociology. In a larger sense, the Sociologists divided the subject matter of sociology into micro-level analyses and the macro-level analyses of society. Microsociology is a field of sociology that concerns itself with small-scale sociological analysis and face-to-face interaction among small groups. It uses interpretative analysis rather than statistical/empirical observation. In this unit, we shall mainly emphasis George Herbert Mead and his contributions towards sociology in general, laying focus on his theory of symbolic interactionism. We shall also emphasis on the another important idea of Mead i.e. Development of Self. His sociological and philosophical thoughts shall be discussed, his contributions towards the field of microsociology and symbolic interactionism shall also be discussed and further, its applications and uses in our daily lives will be seen.

9.3. SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Symbolic interactionism is a sociological approach which tries to lay stress on subjective meanings (Haralambos and Heald 2010). It also uses observed data to better understand the various social processes, generally accessed through micro-analysis. Symbolic interactionism, emerged in the Chicago School during the 1920s and 30s, which during the then period was, 'the center of sociological research and graduate study.' It mainly focused on creating a framework to develop a theory which saw the society as the product of the daily interactions an individual has with one another (Giddens, 2009). Here, society was nothing more than a shared reality build by an individual as they interacted with one another. The school believed that society was nothing more than a complex and dynamic montage of subjective meanings.

Thus, symbolic Interactionism can be defined as the frame of reference to understand how an individual interacts with one another, thereby creating a symbolic world and in return how these worlds help shape individual behaviours (Lemert, 2013). In simple context, it refers to a body which helps understand how society is preserved and created through repeated interactions among individuals. It is one of the pillars of microsociology and finds importance in social psychology as well. Symbolic interactionism is derived from the philosophy of pragmatism and from various works of George Herbert Mead. The theory believes that humans exist in a world composed of only objects. Sociologists frame the theory via three assumptions; (a) An individual construct meaning through communication. (b) Behaviour is motivated by a self-concept (c) There is a unique relationship between the individual and society (Giddens, 2009).

The important sociologists associated with the Symbolic interactionism theory include: Max Weber, John Dewey, William I. Thomas, George Herbert Mead, Herbert Blumer, Erving Goffman, Fred Davis George Homans and Peter Blau etc. Among various philosophers who contributed to the growth of symbolic interactionism, George Herbert Mead is usually regarded as the major figure.

9.3.1. GEORGE HERBERT MEAD ON SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Mead argued, human thought, experience and conduct are essentially social in nature. They owe their nature to the fact that human beings interact in terms of symbols, the most important of which are contained in language. A symbol does not simply stand for an object or event. It defines them in a particular way and indicates a response to them (Haralambos and Heald, 2010). We normally live in an environment that is, at the same time, both physical and symbolic, and the significances of the world and of our actions are built by ourselves with symbols (Coser, 2010).

Due to the fact that we share the same significant symbols (that Mead distinguishes from natural signs) we can substitute ourselves to the others. Based on

the culture (an ensemble of significances and values guiding our actions) that we share with our pairs we can predict the behaviour of the others (Coser, 2010). Thus, we learn to understand through interacting with one another with the help of symbols, be it letters, language, etc. Based on this idea, when an individual and society has consensus on what a symbol means, communication is clear. For example, we can understand what the word, 'dog' means through our social interactions with one another. Similarly, social interaction has got similar usage and applications in our day-to-day life. Society is filled with similar symbolic interaction, some examples from recent years are; The American flag is a symbol of freedom, hope and pride. However, during recent years, some people have emerged which view the symbolism of the American flag and associate it with oppression.

Further, Gender is a very good example of symbolic interactionism because gender is a sociological construct. For example, the dress men and women wear, the social opinion formed and moulded about males and females in different society is formed due to the interaction the society has with one another (Haralambos and Heald, 2010),. This sometimes causes, inequality among the genders in various spheres of life. Symbolic interactionism plays a great role in family relationship. Based on your interaction with your family, you form an opinion about the words, 'mother', wife', 'uncle', etc.

Thus, symbols impose particular meanings on objects and events and in doing so largely exclude other possible meanings. Also without symbols there would be no human society. Symbolic interaction is necessity, as man has no instincts to direct his behaviour. Human beings are not naturally and genetically programmed to respond to the actions of others. They do it as they learn the symbols and at the same time also help in developing other symbols for generations (Haralambos and Heald, 2010). People bow their head in front of their elders only because they have learned this symbol from others and further they have tendency to share it with others also. Thus, social life can only proceed if the meanings of symbols are largely shared by members of society with others. If it does not happen, the meaning full interaction would be impossible.

The important condition in the interaction process is, the human being are required to interpret the meanings and intentions of others. This is made possible only by the existence of common symbols, but actually accomplished by means of a process which mead called 'role taking'. The process of role taking involves the individual taking on the role of another by imaginatively placing himself on the place of person with whom is going to interact (Ritzer, 1972). For instance, if a person A is laughing at person B, the person B is supposed to interpret the intention and action of the person A by placing himself/herself at the place of A, to know whether person A is giving a positive message or the person A wants to make aware person B for his action. This is what, Mead said, normally happen in the life of individuals. Thus, human interactions can be seen in a continuous process of interpretation with each taking the role of the others.

Mead's ideas on symbolic interactionism was well addressed and discussed by Joel M. Charon. He argued;

1. Human Being must be understood as a social person. Symbolic interactionism mainly deals with activities which takes place between actors. They do not focus on an individual and his personality, and about how the society affects human behaviour. The basic research and study in this field is through interaction, how it creates individuals and society and how it affects one's behaviour and actions (Joel, 2004).
2. Human Being must be understood as a thinking being. A human being does not only interact among individuals but they also interact within individuals. Humans are not simply conditioned, trained and influenced. They are thinking beings who interact with one another (Joel, 2004).
3. Humans do not sense their environment directly, instead, humans define the situation they are in. An environment may exist but what is primary is the human definition for it which is obtained through interactions and thinking (Joel, 2004).
4. The cause of human action is the product of what is occurring in the present situation. It is not the past experiences but social interaction, thinking and situation which currently takes place in the present. The past may enter into our present actions while we think about it and apply it while trying to define present scenarios (Joel, 2004).
5. Human Beings are described as active beings in relation to their environment (Lemert, 2013).

9.3.2. CRITICISM OF SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Critics find the symbolic interactionism theory too broad and general. They claim symbolic interactionism to be a theoretical framework rather than a theory. They claim that the theoretical framework just like every other framework is vague when it comes to analysing empirical data or predicting outcomes. The theory is also often related and connected with the social structure. This means that symbolic interactionism is a construction of people's reality and the interpretations made will not make much a difference (Lemert, 2013).

Many critics criticise symbolic interactionism for failing to account for social structure, as well as criticisms that interactionist theories cannot be assessed with quantitative methods and cannot be falsifiable or tested empirically. Another criticism the theory often faces is that the theory does not take human emotions into account, implying that symbolic interactionism isn't completely psychological. The theory also gets criticised for its limited interest in social structure, meaning that the theory isn't completely sociological as well (Haralambos and Heald, 2010).

Even with all these criticisms, the theory still finds many applications in the social world and is an important part while studying the field of microsociology. It forms the core in micro level studies and analysis and is recognised and accepted by millions of sociologists and social philosophers worldwide.

9.3.3CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Write a short note on major contribution of George Herbert Mead to Sociology?

_____
____

2: Write the criticism of Mead's ideas on Symbolic Interactionism.

_____
____

3: How Joel M. Charon define Mead's ideas on Symbolic Interactionism? Discuss in brief.

_____
____

9.4. DEVELOPMENT OF SELF

George Herbert Mead argued that the development of human self is largely depends on their interaction with other human beings (Lemert, 2013). Mead believed that people and their 'self' are social products and these 'self' are both goal-directed. Mind, Self and Society by George Herbert Mead highlights the concept of social interactionism and particularly development of self. Mind here refers to an individual's ability to use symbols to create meaning for the social environment or situations. An individual uses language and thought to accomplish their tasks. Self refers to the individual's ability to think about how the individual is perceived by others and Society refers to where all these interactions are taking place (Ritzer, 1972).

9.4.1. MIND, SELF AND SOCIETY

'Mind, Self and Society (1934)' describes Mead's theory of how the individual mind and self-arises out of the social process and develop through a gradual process. In his writings, Mead analyses experience from the 'standpoint of communication as essential to social order' rather than taking experience in terms of individual psychology (Haralambos and Heald, 2010) . Mead believed that individual psychology was legible only for social processes and that the development of the individual's self and of his self-consciousness within the field of his experience is dominantly social. Mind, according to Mead, is attached with process of communication. This communicational process can be divided into two phases; (a) The conversation of gestures (b) The language. Both these phases hypothesize a social scenario within which two or more individuals are in conversation with each other. Mead has brilliantly introduced his idea of the 'conversation of gestures' with his famous example of the dog fight; Dogs approaching each other in hostile attitude carry on such a language of gestures. They walk around each other, growling and snapping, and waiting for the opportunity to attack. The act of each dog becomes the

stimulus to the other dog for his response. There is then a relationship between these two; and as the act is responded to by the other dog, it, in turn, undergoes change. The very fact that the dog is ready to attack another becomes a stimulus to the other dog to change his own position or his own attitude. He has no sooner done this than the change of attitude in the second dog in turn causes the first dog to change his attitude. We have here a conversation of gestures. They are not, however, gestures in the sense that they are significant. We do not assume that the dog says to himself, "If the animal comes from this direction he is going to spring at my throat and I will turn in such a way." What does take place is an actual change in his own position due to the direction of the approach of the other dog" (Mead, 2015).

In Mead's conversation of gestures, communication usually takes place without the individual knowing that he/she is communicating. Therefore, since the individual is unaware of others to her gestures, the individual is unable to respond to his/her own gestures from the standpoint of others. The conversation of gestures, thus becomes the unconscious communication. However, it is due to this conversation of gestures that language or the conscious communication emerges (Lemert, 2013).

Language, in Mead's point of view, is communication using significant symbols. A significant symbol can be defined as a gesture, usually a vocal gesture, that calls out in the individual making the gesture the same response that is called out in others to whom the gesture is directed. This basically means the understanding of his/her gesture by an individual (Haralambos and Heald, 2010) .

Mead points out that the social process of communication has a triadic structure which consists of the following components; (a) An initiating gesture by an individual. (b) A response to that gesture by a second person. (c) The result of the action caused due to the initiating gesture. An individual can however, predict the response of the others and can therefore consciously and intentionally make gestures which will bring out the desired result from others (Haralambos and Heald, 2010) .

Gestures become significant symbols when they arouse in an individual the same responses which they are supposed to arouse on others. This significant symbol lays the foundation for Mead's theory of mind. Mead's concept of the social act is relevant, not only to his theory of mind, but to all surfaces of his social philosophy. Further, Mead's philosophy of Self and Other has been divided into various sections for better understanding.

9.4.2. SELF AS A SOCIAL EMERGENT

This theory tries to explain that the self, like the mind, is a social emergent. Mead argues that this social conception of the self, involves that individual selves are the product of social interaction and not the preconditions of that interaction. For Mead, the self was a reflective process and it was this reflexivity of the self that distinguished human from animal consciousness (Haralambos and Heald, 2010).

Mind, Self and Society points out two uses of the word consciousness-(a) As a certain feeling which is the outcome of an organism's sensitivity to its environment (b) As a form of awareness. The second use of the term is more appropriate when it comes to human consciousness. Self-consciousness, then involves the objectification of the self. Self-consciousness may be defined as a result of a process in which the individual takes the attitudes of others towards herself, in which she attempts to view herself from the standpoint of others. The objectified self is an emergent within the social structures and processes of human intersubjectivity (Coser, 2010).

9.4.3. GENESIS AND GROWTH OF SELF

The most notable idea of Mead is his account of the genesis and development of self through the gradually developing ability in childhood to take the role of the other and to visualize his own performance from the point of view of others (Coser, 2010). Mead's theory of social emergence of the self is developed further through a detailed illustration of the three forms of inter-subjective activity: 'language, play and the game.' In other words the development of self of children take place in three stages and the interaction of children with others in these stages. These stages are preparatory stage, play stage and game stage (Haralambos and Heald, 2010).

In the play stage, child play at the level of simple role taking an slowly the child move towards generalizing others and entre into new stage called game stage. In game stage, child look at his own actions and at the same time the child is also looking at the roles of others around him or her. These symbolic interactions are the major examples in Mead's theory of socialization and these are the basic social processes that make the reflexive objectification of self-possible. In Mead's theory language is a necessary mechanism for both mind as well as primary social foundation of the self. Within this language, the individual takes the role of the other. This process within symbolic interaction is the primary form of self-objectification and is essential to self-realization (Haralambos and Heald, 2010).

9.4.4. THE 'ME' AND THE 'I'

This theory states that there are two phases of the self:

1. The phase which reflects the attitude of the generalized other.
2. The phase which responds to the attitude of the generalized other.

These two phases were termed the 'Me' and 'I' by George Herbert Mead. Mead has defined the 'Me' as a conventional, habitual individual and 'I' as the novel reply of the individual to the generalized other (Mead, 2015). The 'I' and 'Me' exists in a dynamic relationship to one another. An individual either takes the attitude of the 'I' or the 'me' depending on the situation he/she finds himself/herself in. Mead believed

that both aspects of the 'I' and 'Me" was necessary to the self and without them the life of the self would be impossible (Ritzer, 1972).

The self, then, has reference to social projects and goals and it is through this socialization process that an individual is brought to assume the attitudes of those in the group who are involved with the individual and his social activities. The self therefore, was one of the most elusive and effective instruments of social control (Lemert, 2013).

Mead, however had restrictions and limits for social control. These limits included the phenomenon of 'I' and Mead's description of specific social relations. Therefore, the self was always a reflection of specific social relations that were themselves founded on the specific mode of activity of the group (Coser, 2010). Mead's work on social theories is well known and appreciated among various sociologists. In fact, it has become the foundation of the symbolic interactionist school of sociology and still finds its importance in the field of microsociology, in particular the theory of symbolic interaction.

9.4.5 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. How and on what ground Mead divided self in two parts.
   _____
2. How human self is outcome of interaction with others in society?
   _____
3. Write a short note on dialectics of self.
   _____

9.5. SUMMARY

In this unit, we have introduced you with the major contribution of George Herbert Mead to Sociology. Mead wrote many articles on importance of symbols and development of self, which are published by his followers in the form of text under title 'Mind Self and Society'. While talking about self, he argued that the self of human beings is outcome of his interactions with others in society. Even the development of self is also attached with the interaction process. As Max Weber given emphasis on interactions of human beings, George Herbert Mead emphasized on symbolic interactionism. He has defined the role and importance of symbols, gestures and language in interaction process and development of self. Because of this, is also known as a father of symbolic interaction school of thought. Later on his ideas were followed by Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), principal founder of phenomenology, AlfredSchutz (1899-1959), who extended phenomenology, Harold Garfinkel (1917-2011), who established and developed ethnomethodology, Erving Goffman (1922-1982), who developed Dramaturgy, and many others.

9. 6. QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

9.8.1. LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Critically evaluate the ideas of George Herbert Mead on Symbolic Interactionism.
2. What is the central theme of mind, self and society. How the development of human self-take place in society? Discuss in detail.

9.8.2. SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Differentiate between mind, self and society.
2. What do you understand by generalised others?
3. What is the major difference between play stage and game stage?

9.7. SUGGESTED READINGS

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BACHELOR OF ARTS (LIBERAL ARTS)

SEMESTER III

COURSE: SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT

UNIT 10: HAROLD GARFINKEL: ETHNOMETHODOLOGY

STRUCTURE

10.0 Learning Objectives

10.1 Introduction

10.2 Ethnomethodology: Fundamental Concerns

10.3 Ethnomethodology and Problem of Order

10.4 Analytical Techniques used by Ethomethodologists

10.5 Criticism

10.6 Summary

10.7 Questions for Practice

10.8 Suggested Readings

10.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand the thinker and his ideas.
- Know about the Ethnomethodology: Fundamental Concerns
- Analyze Analytical Techniques used by Ethomethodologists

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Towards the end of nineteenth century there developed a shift in the interests of social theorists away from the study of large scale social structures and processes as initially explored by Marx, Spencer and social Darwinians, who employed such concepts as social evolution, class conflict and body social. The social thinkers began to focus their attention on the complexities of the individual's relationship to the large-scale structures of society. The idea was to understand the interactional nature of man in society not from the point of view of social institutions but from that of individual person within society's institutions.

From here developed the symbolic interactionism approach, that focuses on nature of interaction, the dynamic patterns of social action and social relationship. It is based on the premise that societies are composed of interacting individuals who not only react but perceive, interpret, act and create. The individual is not a bundle of attitudes but a dynamic and changing actor, always in the process of becoming and social milieu is essentially an interaction. Within this framework emerged the phenomenological and ethnomethodological sociology, so unlike traditional approaches in sociological theory and methodology which emphasize the historical and functional character of social behavior, phenomenological and ethnomethodological sociology are interpretive approaches to social life that lay emphasis to understand social action from the point of view of social actor.

Phenomenological sociology was developed by Alfred Schutz. His early work The *Phenomenology of the Social World* (1967) laid down this approach. Schutz finds that individuals have certain assumptions about the society which a person would generally employ in the course of his action and use the interpretive / vertehen methodology in a crude way to predict the action of others. So our acts are meaningful not because we have a particular intention or motive but because other actors interpret our action as having symbolic significance. The phenomenological perspective was developed by taking cues from the interpretive approach, initially developed by Max Weber and later on by other thinkers. This perspective further says that our reality consists just of meanings; therefore the job of the sociologist is to discover the meanings of actions and behaviour and nothing else. The object of such an analysis is the meaningful lived world of everyday life or 'life-world'. Therefore, Schutz developed this perspective in order to basically suggest that, we individuals act successfully only when all share the same set of meanings. Just like Weber, Schutz believed that social research differs from research in the physical sciences and that people engage in making sense of the world. In interacting with other fellows, we are seeking to make sense of their sense making. What distinguishes the social sciences is that the social scientist assumes the position of the disinterested observer. He or she is not involved in the life of those observed – their activities are not of any practical interest, but only of cognitive interest.

10.2 ETHNOMETHODOLOGY: FUNADAMENTAL CONCERNS

The term ethnomethodology was coined by Harold Garfinkel who is best known for his work Studies in Ethnomethodology (1967). 'Ethno' refers to the stock of common sense knowledge available to members of society; 'methodology' refers to the strategies which actors use in different settings to make their meanings understandable.

Harold Garfinkel was born in 1917 and died in 2011. He completed his Ph. D. (Harvard) in 1952.He was a sociologist, an ethnomethodologist and a Professor Emeritus at the University of California, Los Angeles. The term ethnomethodology, a special field of research, was developed and established by him, in 1954. At this university he also met Alfred Schutz, who took great influence on his further work. His most influential work is his collected volume entitled 'The Studies in Ethnomethodology' which was published in 1967.

The most fundamental question that the sociologists raise was how do sociologists and other group of people create and sustain for each other the presumption that the social world has a real character? And so does the question about the ways people go about consciously and unconsciously constructing their social world. Ethnomethodology primarily examine the way people come to have similar perceptions to those of others and how they put together the phenomenon in such a way that we all construct a shared or similar 'everyday world'.

This approach has taken many assumptions of phenomenological approach yet they emphasize their distinct perspective. Etnomethodologists extend the concerns of symbolic interactionism and phenomenology and focus on microscopic aspects of human behavior. They are especially interested in the empirical analysis of the ways in which particular meanings are constructed. Ethnomethodologists also claim for the validity of micro approaches and contend that larger social structures can be meaningfully understood only by studying small groups and face-to-face situations. The chief concern for ethnomethodologists is focus on the processes by which common-sense reality is constructed in everyday face-to-face interaction. So in this sense we can find that the ethnomethodology is a distinctive branch of phenomenological sociology. Garfinkel the founder of ethnomethohdology sought to understand the methods employed by people to make sense out of their world.

So this approach studies the processes by which people invoke certain taken –for-granted rules about behaviour with which they interpret an interaction situation and make it meaningful. So, they would not aim to explain human behaviour or to show, for example, places and generations vary in their suicide and divorce rates, or why religion really exists. The ethnomethodologists would focus on the people's methods of making sense of their social world or let's say in the above example that how people would understand and explain and make sense of the above phenomena's of divorce or suicide or religion.

Ethnomethodology is in fact a form of folk technique by which actors in social interaction come up with a series of account or verbal descriptions that enable them to construct social reality. Ethnomethodologits are interested in the ways in

which people create a sense of reality. In every society we have availability to a member of commonsense knowledge of his society. Thus, ethnomethodology is the study of folk or commonsense methods employed by people to make sense of everyday activities by constructing and maintaining social reality.

Ehtnomethodology do not use commonsense method rather they study commonsense methods of constructing reality. So for Garfinkel the proper subject matter of social science is the way ordinary people establish rational behaviour patterns. Ordinary people use various methods to determine what is happening in society and this methodology is 'ethno' like that of "Ethnobotany" which is derived from folk knowledge rather than from professional scientific procedures. So ethnomethodology would study the methods used by members of a group for understanding community, making decisions, being rational, accounting for action, and so on.

Garfinkel who coined the term also provided some frameworks for the perspective. Garfinkel argues that members employ the 'documentary method' to make sense and account of social world and to give it an appearance of order. This method consists of selecting certain aspects of infinite number of certain features contained in any situation or context, of defining them in a particular way and seeing them as an evidence of an underlying pattern. The process is then reversed and the particular instances of the underlying pattern are then used as an evidence for the existence of the pattern. Thus the documentary method can be seen as 'reflexive'. The particular instance is seen as a reflection of the underling pattern and vice versa. Garfinkel argues that the social life is essentially reflexive. Members of society are constantly referring aspects of activities and situations to presumed underlying patterns and confirming the existence of these patterns by reference to particular instances of their expression. So members produce accounts of social world which not only make sense of and explain but actually constitute the world. Another central concept employed by Garfinkel and other ethnomethodologists is of 'indexicality' which means that the sense of any object or activity is derived from its context. As a result any interpretation, explanation or account made by members in their everyday life is made with reference to particular circumstances and situations.

10.3 ETNOMETHODOLOGY AND THE PROBLEM OF ORDER

One of the major concerns of sociology is the explanation of social order. Traditional sociology believes that social order has an objective reality whether it is functional approach or Marxian approach. Ethnomethodologists either suspend or abandon the belief that an actual or objective social order exists. They proceed from the belief that social life appears orderly to members of society. So social order appears to exist because of the way members perceive and interpret social reality. The methods and accounting procedures used by members for creating a sense order forms the subject matter of ethnomethodological inquiry.

There is one major sense of difference between Grafinkel and Durkheim over the issue of 'social facts'. For Durkheim social facts are objects out there or an objective reality which can be empirically studied by sociologists whereas Garfinkel finds objective reality as an on going accomplishment of the concerted activities of everyday life.

10.4 ANALYTICAL TECHNIQUES USED BY ETNOMETHODOLOGISTS

There four methods which are readily employed by ethnomethodologists:

1. Participant-observation

2. First time through :- This is the practice of attempting to describe any social activity, regardless of its routine or mundane appearance, as if it is happening for the first time. This is done to expose how the observer of the activity assembles, or constitutes, the activity for the purposes of formulating any particular description.

3. Ethnomethodological experiment: - which essentially calls for a disrupting of any interactive situation by acting(usually on the part of researcher) incongruous or inappropriate with the situation norms. For example, driving on the wrong side down a busy one-way street could reveal many useful insights into the patterned social practices, and moral order, of the community of road users. The point of such an exercise is to demonstrate the work involved in maintaining any given social order can often best be revealed by breaching that social order and observing the results of that breach.

4. Documentary interpretation: this consists of taking behavior, statements, etc, and other external appearances of any other person or group as a document or reflection of an underlying pattern used to interpret appearances.

5. To interpret the relationship between linguistic form and the structure of social interaction with a significant interest in linguistics as a communication of meaning.

10. 5 CRITICISM

Some of the major criticism of this approach is that this approach does not account for the motives and goals of members that populate the social world. There is little indication to the fact as to why people want to behave or are made to behave in a particular manner and also there is no concern about the nature of power in the social world and possible effects of differences in power on member's behaviours. So macrosociologists criticize this approach neglect of social order and largely emphasizing on the interpretative situation which does not take into account the large systems as power or class structures.

10.6 SUMMARY

Ethnomethodologists regard their approach as a radical break with all branches of traditional sociology because they have rejected the basic assumption of empirical sociology that there is a real social and cultural world capable of being objectively studied by scientific methods, rather they would lay emphasis on the ways or situations as created by participants who are viewed as having much freedom to alter, reinterpret and change their social environment by acts of will.

The ethnomethodologists challenge traditional sociology's assumption that there is sufficiently stable system of shared meanings in society to provide a basis for meaningful responses to questionnaires or interview in which research would generally fit subject's responses into pre-determined categories. So this approach is generally sceptical about generalizations.

10.7 QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

1. Discuss the major postulates of ethnomethodology.

2. List three key analytical methods used by ethnomethodologists to conduct research.

3. Critically evaluate the ethnomethodological approach to sociological studies.

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