Foundations of Sociological Theory

Postgraduate Programme in Sociology

SELF LEARNING MATERIAL

COURSE CODE: M21SO01DC

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

The State University for Education, Training and Research in Blended Format, Kerala

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To increase access of potential learners of all categories to higher education, research and training, and ensure equity through delivery of high quality processes and outcomes fostering inclusive educational empowerment for social advancement.

Mission

To be benchmarked as a model for conservation and dissemination of knowledge and skill on blended and virtual mode in education, training and research for normal, continuing, and adult learners.

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Access and Quality define Equity.

Foundations of Sociological Theory
Course Code: M21SO01DC
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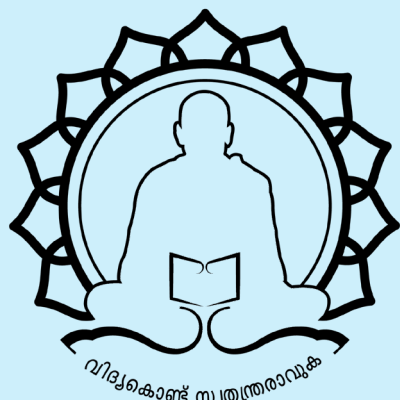## Master of Arts
Sociology
Self Learning Material

SREENARAYANAGURU
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Message from Vice Chancellor

Dear

    I greet all of you with deep delight and great excitement. I welcome you to the Sreenarayanaguru Open University.
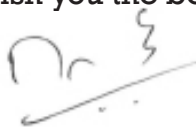
    Sreenarayanaguru Open University was established in September 2020 as a state initiative for fostering higher education in open and distance mode. We shaped our dreams through a pathway defined by a dictum 'access and quality define equity'. It provides all reasons to us for the celebration of quality in the process of education. I am overwhelmed to let you know that we have resolved not to become ourselves a reason or cause a reason for the dissemination of inferior education. It sets the pace as well as the destination. The name of the University centers around the aura of Sreenarayanaguru, the great renaissance thinker of modern India. His name is a reminder for us to ensure quality in the delivery of all academic endeavors.

    Sreenarayanaguru Open University rests on the practical framework of the popularly known "blended format". Learner on distance mode obviously has limitations in getting exposed to the full potential of classroom learning experience. Our pedagogical basket has three entities viz Self Learning Material, Classroom Counselling and Virtual modes. This combination is expected to provide high voltage in learning as well as teaching experiences. Care has been taken to ensure quality endeavours across all the entities.

    The university is committed to provide you stimulating learning experience. The PG programme in Sociology is a logical development of the grammar of our UG programme. It is considered to be a progression of the finer aspects of theories and practices. The discussions are meant to arouse interest among the learners in understanding the discipline in the real context and therefore, the examples are drawn heavily from the real life experiences. The provision for empirical evidences integrated endeavour of the academic content makes this programme special and relevant. We assure you that the university student support services will closely stay with you for the redressal of your grievances during your studentship.

    Feel free to write to us about anything that seems relevant regarding the academic programme.

    Wish you the best.

    Regards,

Dr. P.M. Mubarak Pasha   01.03.2023

Contents

Origin and Development of Theory and Classical Traditions

BLOCK-01

Theory:
Definition and Elements

Learning Objectives

♦ To discuss the theoretical and scientific background of the subject Sociology
♦ To elaborate the various theoretical traditions and the post-modern theories, which are relevant in this post-modern society
♦ To critically evaluate the theory and how the theory is developed

Background

A theory is a set of ideas that provide an explanation about something. A theory is a plausible explanation of social phenomena or a class of social phenomena, logically constructed and systematically organised that defines the relationship between two variables. Theory is more than a hypothesis but not a scientific law either; rather a theory is contrasted against a law, fact or practice.

Theory in Sociology differs from that of natural sciences and arts in that sociological theory provides a learned explanation about human society. In Sociology facts are the driving force of theory, without facts sociological theory would not hold ground. Yet a sociological theory is not an exhaustive explanation of reality. Theories are therefore selective in terms of their priorities and perspectives and the data they define as significant. Theory provides a partial and particular view of reality. The drastic social change in the 18th and 19th centuries had set into motion enlightenment, industrialisation, urbanisation and democratisation of states. These changes led to an overhaul in the traditional thought process and challenged age-old beliefs and traditions which paved the way for a newer and holistic understanding of society which is inclusive of communities, organisations and different forms of relationships. The oldest sociological theories are concerned with the changes that took place in the society as a result of these historical changes. Thereon sociological theories have come to encompass everything that is part of society.

Sociological theories broadly may be categorised as Speculative vs Grounded Theories, Grand Theories vs Miniature Theories and Macro Theories vs Micro

Theories. There are five mainstream categories of theories in Sociology: Evolutionary Theory, Structural - Functionalism, Conflict Theory, Symbolic Interactionism and Exchange Theory.

Keywords

Rationalism, Reason, Renaissance, French Revolution, Theoretical Formats, Social Theories

Discussion

Core of sociological theories

A theory tries to discuss things or facts. Sociological theories explain how the social world operates. This social world is made up of various things like organisations, institutions, conflicts, interactions and so on. Sociological theories mainly focus on interaction and organisation; these interactions are interpersonal behaviours and organisations are made up of these interactions. The subject matter of most of the sociological theories is organisation and interaction and some theories focus on human behaviour.

Empirical facets of Theory

Theorising this social world is concerned with the explanations as to why people interact and behave with others in a particular manner. Theory is more than just speculation, but it should be proven by assessing them against the facts of the empirical world to see if they are believable. This empirical study for proving the theory makes it scientific. As the theories are concerned with human interactions, organisations and human behaviours, there are various perceptions regarding these which lead to further discussions and criticisms.

Criticism of social theory

Critics argue that it is not possible to develop a scientific theory about the social world because it is concerned with human behaviour, which is not static but dynamic. Certain other critics take a different stance and argue that scientific theory is too value neutral, dispassionate, and detached from the problems of so cieties; instead of standing on the side-lines, Sociology should be moral, exposing social problems and proposing solutions to these problems.

Therefore, the scientific theorising of society and its different aspects is a question and matter of ongoing discussion. The first effort in this direction was taken by Auguste Comte by naming 'social physics' a branch of study specialising in society. Comte faced a lot of criticism as to whether or not there could be a scientific Sociology built around explanatory theories of the social universe . One way to put the controversy into a broader perspective is to outline the fundamental beliefs of scientific theory in a broader context of other belief systems. Science is a belief system, but it is obviously not the only set of beliefs that influence people's perceptions and judgments. There are different types of knowledge possessed by humans and science is only one of several types which means that science as a way of knowing about the world will sometimes clash with knowledge generated by other belief systems. There is a strong influence of science in the development of sociological theories.

Empiricism in Sociology

Since the inception of Sociology, it has striven to be established as the science of society which will provide a scientific explanation of the social facts and social action. Thus, the philosophical foundations of Sociology were embedded in positivism. Sociological theories consist of abstract and testable propositions about the society; this leads to an emphasis towards objectivity to overcome value judgments. The contemporary discipline of Sociology is theoretically multi - paradigmatic. Randall Collins categorises the theorists in the discipline into four traditional theoretical categories of functionalism, conflict, symbolic interactionism and utilitarianism.

Positivism

1.1.1 Definition of theory

The word "theory" evolved from the Greek word 'theoria', meaning a "well-focused mental outlook at something in order to grasp". Theories are explanatory thought and it is more of the contemplation of social phenomena. Theory refers to a preposition or a set of prepositions designed to express with reference to data and explanation of interrelation. Scientific explanations with scientific concepts are considered as theory. In Sociology, the concept of scientific theory is related to formal theory. It refers to the degree of confirmation to scientific norms.

Scientificity of theory

Social theory provides the necessary analytical and philosophical framework within which the social sciences

can develop and this also sustains the achievements of the past, identifies the needs and limitations of the present and leads the way to future research. It is difficult to define social theory because of its differences in various sociological traditions and its broad international framework i.e., Sociology is grabbed from local, national or civilizational circumstances. Sociological theory is a subset of this more general characterisation of 'social theory'. As mentioned above, it is difficult to define social theory as it undergoes various changes over time. Grand theories of large-scale change, middle range theories, modern theories and so on are different in their subject matter and so the definition of social theory is difficult and varying according to the circumstances.

<div style="float:left; color:red;">**Dimensions of social theory**</div>

Bramson distinguished between three fundamental meanings of social theory. Firstly, it means any attempt to understand the nature and workings of society. In Sociology "social theory has meant the effort to try to explain social phenomena in the same way in which the facts of the physical world were explained by the growing natural sciences". In short, social theory comprises the attempt of the social sciences such as economics, Sociology, and demography to explain social phenomena or "the social." Secondly, social theory is the development of normative theories of what would or should constitute a "good society." In this sense, social theories are not descriptive and explanatory but normative and prescriptive, trying to establish strategies to create a better world. Finally, Bramson noted that social theories are part and parcel of political ideologies. For instance, Lenin's theory of the party is a social theory of how politics works and how to organise revolutionary activity.

<div style="float:left; color:red;">**Fundamentals of social theory**</div>

Contemporary attempts to define social theories are there. According to Walter Wallace, theory was simply part of the general process of sociological inquiry involving methods, observations, empirical generalisations, hypotheses, and theories. The two crucial roles of the theory according to Wallace are: the researcher should be able to measure before the inquiry, and secondly theory serves as a common language after the research; i.e., the empirical generalisations may be translated for purposes of comparison and logical integration with the results of other researchers.

<div style="float:left; color:red;">**Defining social theory through its functionality**</div>

For sociologists, a theory is an explanation of the relationship between phenomena which not established as a law but it is more than a mere hypothesis, whereas others

argue that theory should be stated formally in a deductive - inductive system and should be verifiable. Sociological theories vary in terms of their characteristics like verifiability, precision, scope and predictive power. Abraham Kaplan defined theory as a way of making sense of a disturbing situation so as to allow us more effectively to bear our repertoire of habits and even more importantly to modify habits or discard them altogether, replacing them by new ones as the situation demands. In the reconstructed logic theory will appear as the device for interpreting, criticising, and unifying established laws, modifying them to fit data unanticipated in their formulation, and guiding the enterprise of discovering new and more powerful generalisations. To engage in theorising means not just to learn by experience but to take thought about what is there to be learned. Robert Merton provides a simpler definition stating that theory is a logically interconnected set of propositions from which empirical uniformities can be derived.

- **Theory as a deductive - inductive system**
- **Theory as a tool for interpreting**

Problematic aspects of social theory

Generally, it can be said that the major issues in social theory are as follows;- i) the relationship between theory and empirical research or between concepts and facts, ii) the relationship between theory and values or between scientific inquiry and judgement, and iii) the relationship between academic work and wider society or between theory and politics. These are the focal points of theory and we cannot place an accurate and exact definition for a theory.

1.1.2 Elements of theory

Theory is a mental activity revolving around the process of developing ideas that explain how and why events occur. Theory is constructed with several basic elements or building blocks:

  a. Concepts

  b. Definition

  c.   Variables

  d.   Statements

  e.   Formats

Elements that constitute a theory

There are different claims about the elements of a theory that is, what theory is or what a theory should be. The above four elements are common to all of them. Let us discuss each one of the building blocks.

a & b. Concepts and Definition

Concepts are the basic components of theory. Generally, concepts denote phenomena and isolate features in the world for analytical purposes. For instance, the concepts like power, production, interaction, socialisation, rules etc. are concepts related to the social world that are essential for different purposes.

Before discussing concepts, we have to understand the concept of definition as concepts are constructed from definitions. The term definition can be defined as a system of terms, such as the sentences of a language, the symbols of logic, or the notation of mathematics, that inform investigators as to the phenomenon denoted by a concept. For instance, the concept 'conflict' gains its meaning only when it is defined. Conflict can be defined as interaction among social units in which one unit seeks to prevent another from realising its goals.

Definitions help to visualise the phenomenon that is denoted by the concept. Definitions encourage the investigators to get the precise meaning of a concept. The concepts that are useful to build theory hold some special characteristics, that is they try to convey the same meaning to all those who use it. Concepts are frequently expressed with the words of everyday language and it is difficult to avoid words that connote varied meanings. In Sociology, the expression of such a special language is impossible and undesirable. Therefore, the verbal symbols used to develop the concept must be precisely defined for conveying the same message to all investigators. Abstractness is another characteristic of the concepts of the theory. This holds a problem as to how we attach abstract concepts to the ongoing, everyday events that we want to understand and explain.

b. Variables as an important type of concept

Two types of concepts can be distinguished while generating a theory: firstly those that simply label phenomena and secondly those that refer to phenomena that differ in degree. Concepts merely label a phenomenon (like dog, cat, social group, social class and so on) and not indicate its properties such as intensity, velocity, size, weight, density and so on which are important for the investigators to understand the differences in degree among phenomena. Those who are considering Sociology as other

Concept for analytical purposes in theory

understanding concept through definition

Symbolism

sciences require these variables to know the states that the concepts are varying. For instance, the concept of a social group has its properties like the cohesiveness of the group, size of the group, degree of differentiation of goals and so on. Only when these concepts are transformed into variables, the components of the scientific theory emerge. Those who are not interested in making Sociology a natural science never tried to transform the concepts into variables.

Therefore, those who need to measure and count the concepts translate the concepts into variables. Thus, they generate or build scientific theories with accurate and exact measurements. They would like to consider Sociology as a science.

c&d. Theoretical statements and Formats

The concepts of theory will be useful only when they are connected to one another. Such connections among concepts constitute theoretical statements. These statements convey how the concepts are interrelated and provide an interpretation of how and why events should be connected. When these theoretical statements are grouped together, they constitute a theoretical format. There are various ways to organise the theoretical statements into formats. One of the major theoretical controversies in Sociology is differences over the best way to develop theoretical statements and to group them together into a format. There are a wide range of opinions regarding the organisation of theoretical statements into formats. They are as follows:

i. Meta- theoretical schemes
ii. Analytical schemes
iii. Discursive schemes
iv. Propositional schemes, and
v. Modelling schemes

Concepts are constructed from definitions; theoretical statements link these concepts together; and statements are organised into five basic types of formats. However, these five formats can be accomplished in a variety of ways. So, in reality, there are more than just five strategies for developing theoretical statements and formats.

The following chart shows the elements of a theory and how the formats are divided into 5. The five categories in the format are again divided into other categories, which is displayed in another chart after the discussion.
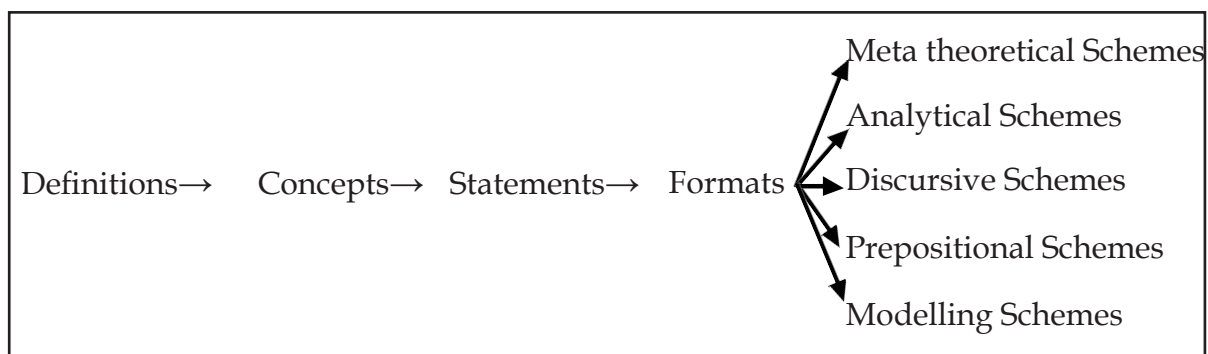
Accounting variable in Sociology

Categorising theoretical statements into different formats

Theoretic format of concepts

$$\text{Definitions} \rightarrow \text{Concepts} \rightarrow \text{Statements} \rightarrow \text{Formats} \begin{cases} \text{Meta theoretical Schemes} \\ \text{Analytical Schemes} \\ \text{Discursive Schemes} \\ \text{Prepositional Schemes} \\ \text{Modelling Schemes} \end{cases}$$

Fig 1.1.1 Elements of Theory

i) Meta theoretical Schemes

These are more comprehensive than ordinary theory. In sociological circles meta-theory is considered as the essential prerequisites to adequate theory building. Meta means 'occurring later' and 'in succession' to previous activities. In sociological theory, the advocates of meta-theory usually emphasise that we cannot develop theory until we have resolved these more fundamental epistemological and metaphysical questions. These questions are as follows:-

a) What is the basic nature of human activity about which we must develop a theory?

For example, what is the basic nature of human beings? What is the fundamental nature of society? What is the fundamental nature of the bonds that connect people to one another and to society?

b) What is the appropriate way to develop theory, and what kind of theory is possible?

For instance, can we build theories at a highly abstract level or theories with general concepts that can easily orient us to important processes? Can we rigorously test theories with precise measurement procedures, or must we use theories as interpretative frameworks that cannot be tested by the same procedures as in the natural sciences?

c) What is the critical problem on which social theory should concentrate?

For instance, the question arises on the focus point of the theory such as whether the theory should focus on social integration or social conflict, nature of social action among individuals or on structures of social organisation, and concentrate on the power of ideas (like values and beliefs) or on the material conditions of people's existence?

Meta - theorising is true to the meaning of 'meta' because this involves the reanalysis of the previous scholar's ideas in the light of these epistemological questions. The aim behind this is to know whether the schemes went wrong and where they still have utility. Meta - theorising also puts forward some recommendations for re-analysis as to how we should go about building theory and what this theory should be. Some meta-theorists convert the format of the theories that have been already stated into another format.

ii) Analytical Schemes

The theoretical activities in Sociology consist of concepts organised into a classification scheme that means the key properties, and interrelations among these properties, in the social universe. Different varieties of analytical schemes mainly focus on classifying basic properties of the social world. These concepts of the scheme break up the universe; then, the ordering of the concepts gives the social world a sense of order.

Here, we are discussing the two basic types of analytical schemes:

a) Naturalistic schemes

Naturalistic schemes try to develop a tightly woven system of categories that is supposed to capture the way in which the invariant properties of the universe are ordered. It is also known as positivistic schemes and this assumes that as physical and biological realms there are timeless and universal processes in the social universe. The goal of this scheme is to create an abstract conceptual typology that is similar in form and relations to these timeless processes.

b) Sensitizing schemes

Sensitizing schemes are loosely assembled congeries of concepts aimed to sensitize and orient researchers and theorists to certain critical processes. Sensitizing schemes are more sceptical about the timeless quality of social affairs. As a consequence of this scepticism, concepts and their linkages must always be provisional and sensitizing because the nature of human activity is to change those very arrangements denoted by the organisation of concepts into theoretical statements.

Analytical schemes are a necessary prerequisite for developing other forms of theory. It is difficult to develop

propositions and models about specific events in the absence of schemes that organise the properties of the universe. Analytical schemes are a useful way to begin theorising. Analytical framework is necessary for a theorist or a researcher to know what to examine.

iii) Discursive Schemes

Many of the sociological theories are stated discursively that are not highly formalised or ordered into propositions or other structured formats. These theories use everyday language, simply outlining and discursively explaining the ways in which they affect each other. The sociological theorists state the theories like this because they think that the formalizations are excessively artificial and unnecessary. The discursive schemes are easier to understand than the formal theories while in discursive schemes the relation between the variables are vague and imprecise. In this context, meta-theorising and analytical schemes are essential to extract the key arguments and formalise them in some manner.

iv) Propositional Schemes

A proposition is a theoretical statement that specifies the connection between two or more variables. It tells us how variation in one concept is marked by variation in another. Propositional schemes vary primarily along two dimensions: i) the level of abstraction, ii) the way propositions are organised into formats. By using these two dimensions, several different types of propositional schemes can be isolated, they are;-

a) Axiomatic formats

It involves elements such as concepts (abstract and concrete concepts), statements (describe the types and classes of situations in which the concepts and the propositions incorporate them apply). Propositional statements are stated in a hierarchical order. At the top of this hierarchy one placed axioms or highly abstract statements, from which all other theoretical statements are derived. Then come theorems that are logically derived in accordance with varying rules from the more abstract axioms. Axioms should be highly abstract and state the relationships among the abstract concepts.

b) Formal formats

Formal formats are the loose versions of axiomatic schemes. Here we develop highly abstract propositions that

are used to explain empirical events. Some highly abstract propositions are seen as higher-order laws; deductions from the laws are made but are much looser than axiomatic theories. Like axiomatic theories, formal theories are hierarchically ordered with relaxed restrictions. Most of the propositional schemes in Sociology are formal types.

c) Empirical formats

These consist of generalisations from specific events, particularly from empirical contexts. For example, Golden's Law states that "as industrialization increases, the level of literacy in the population increases." Such a proposition is not very abstract; it is filled with empirical content - industrialization and literacy- which have not existed in all times and places of human social organisation. Thus, the law is not about a timeless process, since industrialization is only a few hundred years old and literacy emerged, at best, only 6,000 years ago. Many such generalisations in Sociology are considered theoretical.

Propositional composition

V) Analytical Modelling Schemes

It is a diagrammatic representation of social events. The diagrammatic elements of any model include;- i) concepts that denote and highlight certain features of the universe; ii) the arrangement of these concepts in visual space so as to reflect the ordering of events in the universe; and iii) symbols that mark the connections among concepts, such as lines, arrows, vectors, and so on. The elements of a model may be sequentially organised to express events over time or they may represent complex patterns of relations. In order to represent the causal connections among the properties of the universe, diagrammatic models are constructed in Sociology. If the investigator needs to exhibit the causal interrelations between numerous variables, analytical models are constructed. In Sociology, generally two types of models are constructed;

Sequential organisation

a) Analytical models

Analytical models are more abstract and highlight more generic properties of the universe. They portray a complex set of connections among variables.

b) Causal models

These are more empirically grounded and are more likely to devote to particular properties of a specific empirical case.

They present a simple linear view of causality.

One of the great advantages of modelling is that it allows the presentation of complex relations among many variables in a reasonably ungenerous fashion. Modelling works as a tool that many theorists find preferable to alternative theoretical schemes. The categories of formats are exhibited in the following diagram.

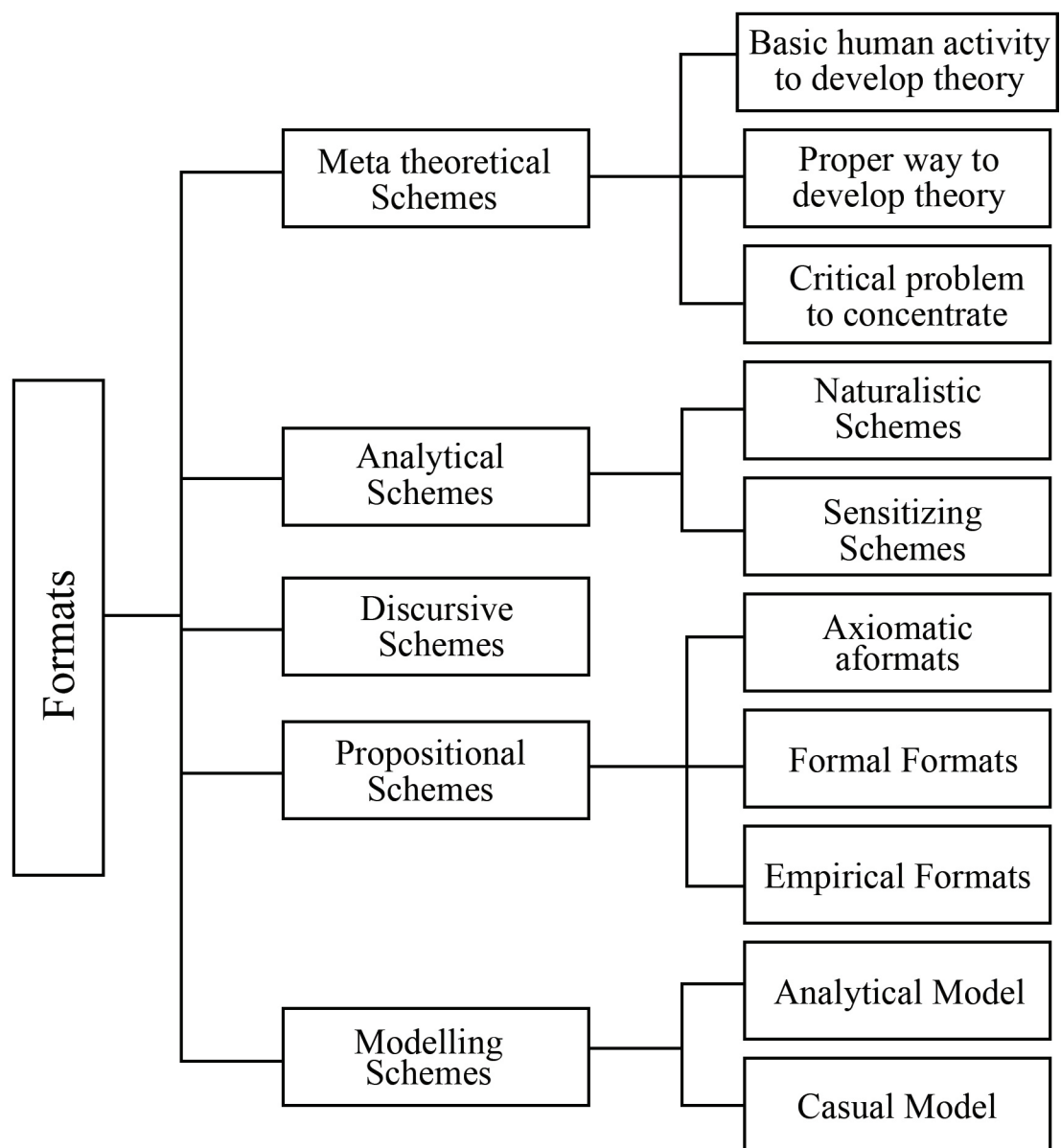| Formats		
	Meta theoretical Schemes	Basic human activity to develop theory
		Proper way to develop theory
		Critical problem to concentrate
	Analytical Schemes	Naturalistic Schemes
		Sensitizing Schemes
	Discursive Schemes	
	Propositional Schemes	Axiomatic aformats
		Formal Formats
		Empirical Formats
	Modelling Schemes	Analytical Model
		Casual Model

Fig 1.1.2 Different Types of Formats

Summarised Overview

Theories are defined in various ways and there is a strong influence of science in the development of theories. Social theories are concerned with social phenomena. Different scholars like Bramson, Wallace and so on tried to define theories. As social theories were formed to discuss and describe society and its social phenomena from a scientific point of view, it also deals with the issues of social theories. Four basic elements of theory are discussed; Concepts, Variables, Statements and Formats. The Formats are again categorised into five and these are explained with the help of a diagram.

Assignments

1. Discuss the disposition of theory in the positivist rooting of Sociology.
2. Explain the distribution of theoretical formats.
3. Describe the types of propositional schemes.
4. Examine the development of Sociology as an academic discipline.
5. Describe the dimensions of theory and concepts.
6. Discuss the different elements of theory.
7. Explain the organisation of theoretical statements into formats.
8. Distingush between social theory and sociological theory.
9. Explain the emergence of Sociology.
10. Describe the dimensions of Sociology as a scientific discipline.
11. Examine social theory and sociological theory.
12. How does Robert Merton define theory.
13. Describe briefly the importance of definition in concepts.
14. Explain the elements of a theory.
15. Describe the role of variable as a concept.

Suggested Reading

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2. Delaney T. (2008). *Contemporary Social Theory: Investigation and Application*. UK: Dorling Kindersley.
3. Ashley, D & Orenstein, D. (2004). *Sociological Theory: Classical Statements 6th ed.* New Delhi: Pearson.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding of the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

UNIT 2
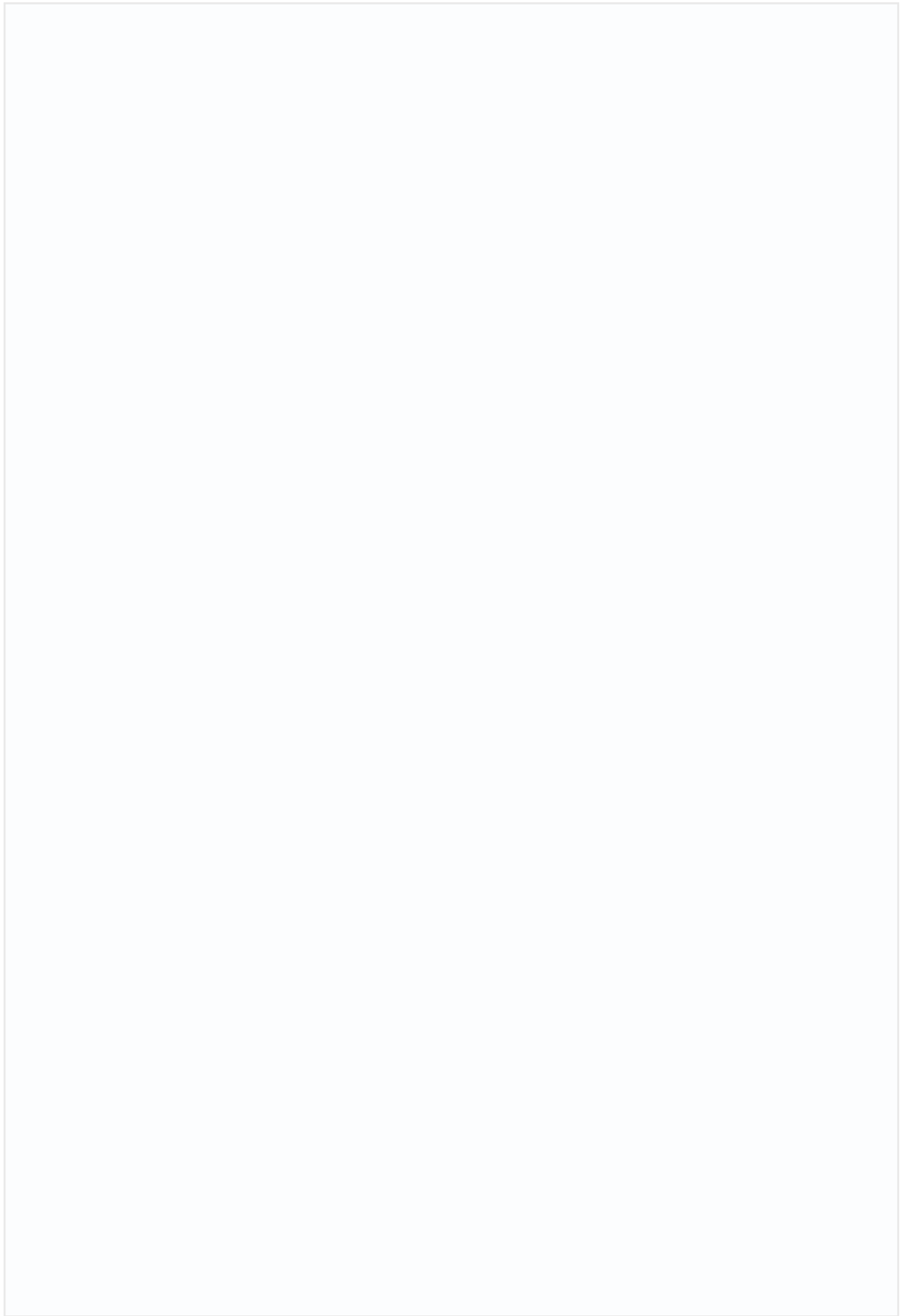
Positivist Traditions: Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer

Learning Objectives

- narrate the origin of positivist tradition in Sociology
- identify the characteristics of positivism in Sociology
- explain Comte and Spencer's positivism

Background

Sociological reasoning predates the inception of the discipline itself; social analysis as such had its origins in the common stock of Western knowledge and philosophy and has been in the works since the time of Plato. When Auguste Comte envisioned the discipline of Sociology he was looking to unify history, economics and psychology by scientifically understanding society. Shortly after the French Revolution, he proposed that social ills could be rectified through sociological positivism which he outlined in *The Course in Positive Philosophy* (1830 - 1842) and a *General View of Positivism* (1848). Comte upheld that a positivist approach will mark the final era of the theological and metaphysical understanding of human, social and societal nature.

In the initial stages, the notion of positivism dominated the discipline which broadly meant that understanding, learning and theorising about the society have to the carried out in the same way in which concepts and theories are formed in natural sciences. Since the inception of the discipline, sociological methods and frames of inquiry have significantly expanded and diversified. Comte laid the foundations of based on the discipline which Durkheim, Karl Marx and Max Weber have built the discipline further. The significant and rapid changes that were set into motion by Enlightenment, French Revolution, Urbanisation, Modernisation,all factored in the moulding of the sociological concepts and theories.

Keywords

Scientific methods, Evolution, Empirical, Knowledge

Discussion

1.2.1 Development of Social Theory

Social Forces held a critical role in the Development of Sociological Theory.There are various factors behind the development of social theories and these can be categorised into political, social, intellectual and so on. These are discussed in the following sessions.

a) Political Revolutions

The French Revolution (1789) became one of the immediate causes that let to the rise of Sociological theorising during the 19th century. The French Revolution resulted in both positive and negative changes in various societies. The negative changes due to the revolution grabbed the attention of the social theorists; they were concerned about the chaos and disorders in the society. Social theorists were united in the desire to restore the order of the society. Some of the thinkers believed that complete restoration is not possible due to the intensity of the changes that occurred. Therefore, they tried to find out a new social order for the society and this interest of the social theorists led to the formation of social theories.

Rationalisation

b) Industrial Revolution and the Rise of Capitalism

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, Industrial Revolution played an important role as political revolution did in the development of sociological theories. Due to the industrial revolution, the Western world underwent rapid changes in its whole structure transitioning from dominantly an agrarian economy to an industrial society. The changes in the society were far - reaching and intensive; technological developments, the rise of capitalist economy, changes in the market and basic social institutions are some of them. The negative impacts of the system such as exploitation of the labor force resulted in various labor movements and radical movements that aimed to throw out the capitalist system. Thinkers like Karl Marx, Max Weber, Emile Durkheim and so on devoted their whole lives to studying these problems and developed various programmes to solve the issues.

Capitalism and modernisation

c) The Rise of Socialism

Some of the social thinkers favoured socialism as a solution to the industrial and capitalist problems in society. Some of

the scholars opposed it and criticised it by arguing that it was a utopian idea. Karl Marx was the chief proponent of the idea of socialism and worked a lot for a political changes in society. Weber and Durkheim opposed the socialist alternative to capitalism and they feared that socialism would lead to the development of other sociological theories as a reaction against the Marxian theory of socialism.

Alternative

d) Feminism

The subordinated women recognised it and protested against that situation (Lerner, Gerda. 1993. *The Creation of Feminist Consciousness*. New York: Oxford University Press.) History of feminist thinking can be traced back to 1630's. Later during 1850s, mobilisation against slavery, massive mobilisation for the women's suffrage, industrial and civic right reforms etc. were started. All of these had an impact on the development of Sociology and various women such as Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Jane Addams, Florence Kelley etc. were associated with it. Feminist protests and their contributions to theories were pushed to the periphery and male - dominated academic endeavors assumed prominence.

Reform

e) Urbanisation

Large numbers of the rural population moved to urban settings as a result of industrialisation during the 19th and 20th centuries. This expansion of cities resulted in various new problems such as overcrowding, pollution, noise, traffic, and so forth. These issues attracted the attention of social theorists like Weber and Simmel. The first major school of American Sociology, the Chicago School was concerned about the city and its related problems.

Populous

f) Religious Changes

All the changes like social and political changes, industrial revolutions, urbanisation and so on had an intense effect on religiosity. Many of the early Sociologists came from the religious background; for instance, Saint Simon. These people wished to improve the lives of people and for some theorists (like Comte) Sociology was transformed into a religion. Durkheim published his major work on religion. Weber, Durkheim and Parsons also studied religion and morality. Karl Marx critically analysed religion.

Theological influence

g) The Growth of Science

During this period science acquired a prominent position and prestige. Science subjects like Physics, Biology and

Chemistry became successful sciences and some of the social theorists like Comte, Durkheim, Mead, Spencer and so on wanted to develop Sociology as a science. Immediately after this, a discussion emerged on the scientific background of science and the need for an alternative approach that concerned social life. Weber was the first person who identified society as a distinct area of study and advocated that society should not be studied scientifically.

Empiricism

1.2.2 Intellectual Forces and the Rise of Sociological Theory

Various intellectual forces like Renaissance played a significant role in shaping sociological theory. The intellectual forces cannot be separated from social forces. Some of the intellectual forces are discussed below.

a) The Enlightenment

The Enlightenment brought changes in philosophical thoughts. Prominent thinkers associated with the Enlightenment were French philosophers Charles Montesquieu and Rousseau. The influence of Enlightenment on sociological theory was indirect and negative rather than direct and positive. As Irving Zeitlin puts it, "Early Sociology developed as a reaction to Enlightenment''. Seventeenth century philosophy and science influenced the Enlightenment thinkers like René Descartes, Thomas Hobbes, and John Locke. They emphasised the creation of grand, general and very abstract systems of ideas that made rational sense, while the Enlightenment thinkers never rejected this and tried to derive the ideas from the real world and to test them there. By using the model of science, the Enlightenment thinkers tried to combine empirical research with reason. Here, we can see the use of scientific method for the study of social issues. Enlightenment thinkers had a practical goal, that was the creation of a 'better', more rational world. They rejected traditional authority, values and institutions as these were irrational.

Rational thought

b) Positivism

Positivism can be traced back to the works of British Philosopher Francis Bacon and other British empiricists like John Locke, Berkeley, and especially David Hume. British utilitarian theorists like Jeremy Bentham and J. S. Mill also supported positivism and developed theories to test human

Positive Philosophy

development and industrial and urban growth. Later, these developments became popular in Europe, especially after the industrial revolution. The terms Positivism and Positive Philosophy were probably first introduced by Henry de Saint Simon (1760-1825), who was a famous French philosopher. Saint Simon introduced positivism as a new perspective and scientific approach to understand complex social realities and this can be applied to social, educational, religious and political areas.

Scientific Development

There are three key phases in the history of positivism: firstly, the nineteenth-century positivism of Saint-Simon, Auguste Comte, and their followers; secondly, the logical positivism as developed in Vienna and Cambridge during the early twentieth century, and finally the deductive-nomological model of Ernest Nagel and Carl Hempel of the mid-twentieth century. Nineteenth-century positivism was strongly associated with the emergence and establishment of Sociology as an autonomous scientific discipline and as such preoccupied with questions about the nature of the scientific method and the distinctiveness of the sociological enterprise.

Positivist paradigm

The term Positivism had different meanings. Positivism refers to an articulated philosophical tradition that is logical positivism. It refers to a set of scientific research practices that are methodological positivism and for Comte and Durkheim, positivism can be a commitment to social evolution. Methodological positivism is a concept of knowledge, a concept of social reality and a concept of science.

Fundamental influence

French philosopher Auguste Comte, who was the student and collaborator of St. Simon, popularised and systematised the terms 'positivism' and 'positive philosophy'. Saint Simon's idea of 'science of society' influenced the development of Sociology and Economics as fields of scientific study. Both Comte and Saint Simon worked together for years and then they fell apart follower a controversy. Comte was highly influenced by Saint Simon and therefore, later Comte developed and elaborated the idea of Positivism.

Biographical Sketch of Auguste Comte (1798-1857)

Isidore Auguste Marie Francois Xavier Comte was born in Montpellier of southern France in a religious and aristocratic home on January 1, 1798. Auguste Comte is considered the father of Sociology. His father was a government official and he expected his son's future in politics. At the age of 9, he entered the respected imperial lycee in his hometown and there he rose to leadership both in academic affairs and rebelliousness. In 1814, Comte entered Ecole Polytechnique in Paris, where he studied Mathematics and Natural Sciences. Comte was interested in the liberation of society through a scientific development of human consciousness. His primary priority was given to the improvement of society and for this it was necessary to develop a theoretical science of society. Due to his rebelliousness he left the school and at the age of 19, he become the secretary of Henri de Saint Simon in the production of the progressive periodical Industrie Unfortunately, both were separated in 1824 and later, the intensity of the conflict increased due to the publication of a work. Comte could not get a regular position at the Ecole Polytechnique and got a minor position as a teaching assistant there in 1832. In 1837, he was given the post of additional examiner and this, for the first time, gave him an adequate income. In 1825 Comte married Caroline Massin and this relationship did not last for long. A series of lectures offered Comte made him famous and this attracted by scholars of Ecole and numerous industrial workers. Between 1830 and 1842, he wrote his magnum opus *Cours de Philosophie Positive*. He published other works too. By 1851 he had completed the four-volume *Systeme de Politique Positive* and on September 5, 1857, at the age of 59, he died.

Comte used the term 'social physics' to refer to the positive science of

1.2.3 Theoretical Contributions of Auguste Comte

Social Physics to Sociology

society; later he came to know that this term was used in a different meaning by other scholars. Therefore he used the term 'Sociology' to denote the positive science of society. Comte is considered the founding father of Sociology. The word Sociology is the combination of two words. The Latin word 'Socius' means society and the Greek word 'Logos' means study or science.

Major Theories

♦ Theory of Evolution and Progress
♦ Law of Three Stages
♦ Hierarchy of Sciences
♦ True Science of Humanity
♦ Social Statics and Social Dynamics
♦ Positivism
♦ Scientific Theory of Morality

Major Works

♦ *The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte (1830-42, in 6 volumes)*
♦ *The System of Positive Polity (1851-54, 4 volumes)*
♦ *The Early Writings (1820-29)*
♦ *Religion of Humanity (1856)*
♦ *Appeal to Conservatives (1889)*
♦ *The Catechism of Positive Religion (1891)*

a) Positivism

Scientific knowledge in Sociology

Comte holds that historical analysis is an indispensable component in sociological methodology. Historical evolution is significant in the study of Sociology. Comte argued that the new science of human society should be studied scientifically, that is, the methodology known as 'positivism'. He said that positive knowledge can be gained by Sociology in applying a three - step methodology. They are observation, which must be guided by a theory of social phenomena; experimentation in Sociology meaning controlled observation of phenomena. The third step is the comparison of human to animal, society to society and so on. For Comte Sociology must use the conventional methods of science- observation, experimentation and comparison and these must be used in combination with historical methods.

The fundamental tenants of positivism include;-

- Science is the only valid knowledge.
- Fact is the object of knowledge.
- Philosophy does not possess a method different from science.
- The task of philosophy is to find the general principles common to all sciences and to use these principles as guides to human conduct and as the basis of social organisation.

b) Theory of Evolution and Progress

Comte believed that the division of labour and population growth are consequences of intellectual evolution, which is the predominant principle of social development. Comte believed that the evolution of the human mind parallels that of the development of an individual's intellect. Comte called these "phylogeny" that means the development of the species and "ontogeny" that is the development of the individual. Simply, it can be said that the individual mind, human activity and society pass through successive stages of historical evolution leading to some final stage of perfection. He proposed that this evolution follows certain stages which are narrated in the law of three stages.

c) Law of Three Stages

Law of Three Stages is the evolutionary theory proposed by Comte. While looking at history, the world has gone through three intellectual stages. According to Comte, not only society, but groups, science, individuals and even minds go through the same three processes. Being a true science, Sociology is always in search of laws - laws that are to be applied to the society so that society's past can be understood and predict the future. The three main stages propounded by Comte are discussed below:-

1) The Theological or Fictitious Stage

2) The Metaphysical or Abstract Stage

3) The Positive or Scientific Stage

The theological of Fictitious stage characterised the world prior to 1300. During this period, the supernatural powers and the religious figures dominated the society and the social unit was family. They believed that the social and physical worlds were the creation of God. This stage was dominated by priests and the military power and all phenomena in

nature were attributed to the supernatural power. According to Comte, the theological stage went through three phases; fetishism (belief in some living spirits in the non-living objects), polytheism (belief in multiple gods as well as natural and human forces) and monotheism (belief in one god who is supreme).

The meta-physical or abstract stage occurred roughly between 1300 AD and 1800 AD. This stage is characterised by the belief that abstract forces like 'nature', rather than personalised Gods, were the dominating power and creators of all. This stage was dominated by churchmen and lawyers and the social unit was state.

The positive or scientific stage is the period from 1800 AD and this stage is characterised by the belief in science. In this stage 'observation predominates over imagination' and all theoretical concepts have become positive. This final stage is dominated by industrial administrators and scientists and the basic unit is race. In this stage, the nature of the human mind stopped from its childish search for absolute notions, origins and destinations of the universe and its causes but it seeks to establish scientific principles governing phenomena.

The theological and meta-physical stages are dominated by military values; though the former is characterised by conquest and the latter by defence. The positive stage represents the industrial society. Comte identified three types of societies and the positive society emerged during his lifetime and this period is dominated by the scientists. New morals and intellectual power emerged during this time. Comte believed that the new scientific- industrial society would become the society of all mankind. Human mind and society have passed during these successive stages and the new system destroyed the old one, with the process of evolution. Comte believed that through the final stage, emancipation and progress of the human mind would happen. This theory is often referred to as the unilinear theory of evolution, because of the development of the human race in a single design.

d) Hierarchy of Sciences

Another contribution of Comte the hierarchy of sciences or classification of science, is closely connected with the law of three stages. Just like the human mind, intellect, and society are passing through evolutionary stages, scientific knowledge also passes through similar stages of

Impersonal Forces rather than supernatural narrative

Rationalisation over imagination

Positive stage as the society of all mankind

development.

Comte arranged the subjects in a hierarchical form; when the hierarchy moved upward, the degree of complexity increases and moving downward the degree of generality decreases. The abstract and theoretical sciences form a hierarchy in which the more concrete and complex sciences succeed the more general and abstract sciences. This hierarchy is determined by the natural law of mental progress, and it is based on the order in which positive methods come to be adopted in the discipline. The base of the hierarchy is mathematics followed by astronomy; it is because these are the sciences that the scientific methods applied firstly. These disciplines are followed by mechanics, physics, chemistry, later biology, and finally Sociology. Each science in this series depends for its emergence on the prior developments of its predecessors in a hierarchy marked by the law of increasing complexity and decreasing generality. According to Comte, one can acquire effective knowledge only through the study of science in the order that is mentioned in the hierarchy. Sociology cannot be understood without knowledge of the anterior sciences. The hierarchy, according to Comte, is displayed below.
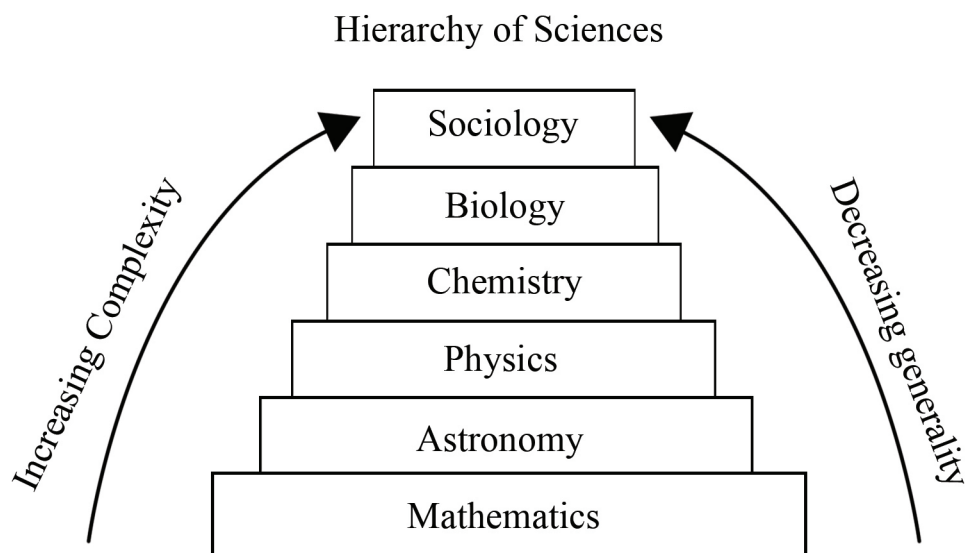
Sociology as the epitome of intellectual discipline

Hierarchy of Sciences

Fig 1.2.1 Comte's Hierarchy of Sciences

Comte placed the social sciences at the top of the hierarchy because they enjoy all the resources of the anterior sciences. Comte distinguished the methodological characteristics of the various disciplines in this theory. Beginning with biology, the discipline that immediately precedes social science, there is a crucial reversal in methodology- the sciences have become holistic in character. Sciences are not analytic but synthetic and holistic. Physics and Chemistry analyse the elements of inorganic matter and establish laws among isolated phenomena, while Biology takes a holistic approach and studies organic whole. Comte argued that the inorganic sciences are known to us more than the organic sciences and so it is said that the disciplines must proceed from simple to compound. Just as Biology, Sociology cannot explain a phenomenon without reference to the total context.

Hierarchical arrangement from simple to compound

Through the theory of hierarchy of sciences, Comte tried to place Sociology along with other science subjects.

e) The True Science of Humanity

Comte differed in his key points and ideas even though he received training from the Ecole. For instance, Comte argued that man will never be prompted by anything stronger and more fundamental than his own emotions. Feelings rather than reason rule the mind. He argued that the human mind should be governed by more unselfish feelings and less egoistic thinking. A scientific mind can govern the feelings effectively and there is no necessity that a scientist should be more rational than other men, but he governs his emotions more constructively for the corporate good.

Scientific mind must be governed by reason than emotion

Man is not and cannot be a positivist - his emotions are more likely to be governed by superstition and fear than by cool analysis and logical description. Comte said that basically man is not scientific and he becomes so through the evolution and progress of human mind and society. According to Comte, one can be a positivist by discovering the laws governing the phenomena, and time is needed to collect such understanding through observation and experimentation.

Positivism as a state of mind may be attained through evolution

For Comte, there is a direct correlation between the progress of the human mind and the evolution of human society; as one develops the other develops along with it. Human history is the history of the progress of the mind and society. The 'true science of human mind' as imagined by

Comte is what is called the 'Sociology of Knowledge'. This true science- 'social physic' or 'Sociology' consists of the observation, analysis and comprehension of the capabilities of the human mind. The mind is both social and historical entity, in each age, the mind of the scientist functions as in a social matrix. Comte tried to understand the creative interfacing of mind and society in a historical process. Comte aimed to create a naturalistic science of society which could explain the past development of mankind and predict its future advancements. In his work, Positive Philosophy he said that the new science of Sociology was the study of the totality of human intellect and its resulting social action through time. The ultimate aim of Comte's life was to establish Sociology as the abstract theoretical science of social phenomena and this science, for him to be the culmination of all science.

f) Social Statics and Social Dynamics

Auguste Comte divided Sociology into two primary categories: static Sociology and dynamic Sociology. The idea behind this division was gained by Comte from Biology and the Hierarchy of disciplines. Comte suggested that the Static may be divided into two; the study of social nature and the structure of human nature. The Law of Three Stages, the notion of Progress and the inevitable evolution of order are all part of the dynamic concept. Therefore, social dynamics investigates the rule of succession whereas social static analyses cohabitation.

Social statics and dynamics are the two fundamentals of Comte's study of social progress and human development. Social statics and social dynamics cannot be studied separately but are inseparable parts of the same theory. Both are complementary to each other; static is the study when society is in equilibrium and dynamics is the study of evolution which is a slow and steady process. Social statics is the study of the conditions of society's existence at any given moment which is analysed by means of a theory of social order. Social dynamics is the study of continuous movements in social phenomena through time by means of a theory of social progress. Comte found a dialectical tension in the socio-political activities of his time between order and progress within society. A true science of humanity, of social life, must discover the laws that make order and progress possible.

Sociologists can understand the essential components that are needed for the existence of society by studying order

Sociology: Scientific and absolute science

Division of Sociology

Equilibrium and dynamic state of society

and by studying progress, a better understanding of social movements is made; both are essential. For Comte, the basic fact of social order is established by the laws of nature and it is called Consensus Universalis. Consensus Universalis is universal agreement among all societies of the dialectically creative role of order and progress. Consensus Universalis exists in all social components of life like art, science, politics, values, ideas and so on. It is the foundation of solidarity in a society. In this context, Comte eliminated the study of individuals, and was concerned about the groups. He argued that Sociology is the study of social systems consisting of homogeneous elements. Comte considered family as the basic social unit and so he always worked in the social versus individual relations.

**Social construct over individualisation**

Criticism

One of the major criticisms of the ideas of Comte is that he just propounded the idea of positivism and never tried to conduct a study in a scientific way. His law of three stages cannot be exact as he put it, there are changes in the evolution of society and cannot be bound into these three stages. All of the theories of Comte received criticism.

♦ Though, Comte claimed to be the father of positivism or scientific approach he himself was not committed to it.

♦ Timasheff opines, Comte's sociological theories represent a premature jump from the level of observation and inferences to the level of theory.

♦ According to John Stuart Mill, Comtes 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. Auguste Comte gave maximum importance to the scientific method.

The theories of Auguste Comte laid the foundation to the building of the subject Sociology. The influence of Positivism is visible in the field of advanced research in Sociology. Comte's ideas of Progress, Evolution and Hierarchy are relevant in this dynamic society.

Biographical Sketch of Herbert Spencer (1820- 1903)
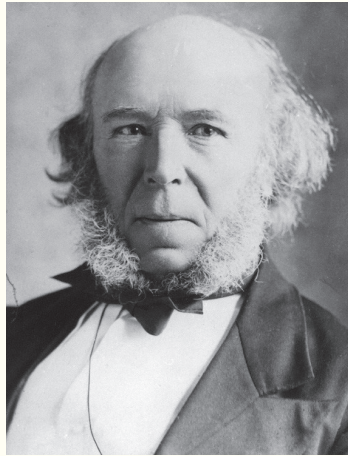
An English man named Herbert Spencer, who lived during Auguste Comte's time contributed a number of important concepts to the study of Sociology. Similar to Comte, his attempt was to enshrine Sociology as the study of society. Spencer had come into contact with Comte's ideas but he did not accept the ideas. Instead, he caused a change in the way society was studied. Let us begin by discussing the biographical sketch and the social sphere it belongs to.

Spencer was born in England on April 27, 1820. He was the eldest of nine children, and the only child who survived to adulthood. His father George was a school teacher and taught his son at home till the age of 13 and then he started training with his uncle. From the age of 17, he started a job as a railway engineer and it continued only for four years. After that he worked as a journalist and writer until the departure of his uncle. His uncle left him with enough money and so Spencer did not want to earn money for a livelihood. Therefore, he lived as a private intellectual.

By 1850, he published his first book *Social Statics*. Spencer's works were sold quickly and were in high demand. His works formed the foundation for many intellectual disciplines like biology, psychology, Sociology, physics and education. After a long period of ill-health, Spencer died on December 8, 1903.

Spencer was primarily concerned with how societies change and function. He wanted to understand what the basic parts of society do, how they relate to one another, and what forces push societies to change. Spencer was mainly concerned with explaining modern societies and their change in the most general terms.

Major Theories

♦ Organismic analogy
♦ Requisite needs
♦ Differentiation
♦ Specialisation
♦ Military and industrial societies
♦ Social system and social institutions
♦ Social Darwinism
♦ Theory of Evolution

Major Works

♦ *Social Statics (1851)*
♦ *Principles of Sociology (1898)*
♦ *Principles of Psychology (1867)*
♦ *Principles of Biology (1896)*
♦ *The Study of Sociology (1873)*

a) Spencer's Scientific Method

Objectivity in Sociology

Spencer was aware of the issue of objectivity that is the role of investigator in the process of investigation. Therefore, Spencer suggested the deliberate effort to be free from biases and sentiments. In his work, *The Study of Sociology* he discussed the methodological difficulties of social sciences and analysed the sources of bias that faced by sociologists. Spencer developed a Sociology of knowledge and some parameters for the investigation of social sciences which made him one of the early founders of Sociology of knowledge.

Phases of society

Spencer heavily focused on the comparative analysis of societies, past and present, like and unlike and so on. In 1860, Spencer wrote that Sociology dealt with general facts, structural and functional, as gathered from a survey of societies and their changes. Simply saying, it is the empirical generalisations that are arrived at by comparing the different societies, and successive phases of the same society.

b) Social Evolution

Analysing historic evolution

Spencer wrote extensively on the subject but never gave a comprehensive explanation of what Sociology is. He argues that because social processes are unique from other processes, Sociology as a field of study must define the present evolution, rules and how they might be used to

improve society. Therefore, the evolutionary theory serves as the foundation to his argument. We will explain this concept and then go through how it relates to organic analogy. You will learn about Spencer's clarification of societies according to their place in social evolution.

In Spencer's idea of social evolution, he put forward various concepts such as differentiation, specialisation, integration, militaristic and industrial societies, system needs, secondary propositions and laws, simple society, compound society, doubly compound society, trebly compound society and so on. All these concepts are discussed in the context of social evolution by Spencer, which are discussed in this section.

Social scientists of the eighteenth or nineteenth century reflected on the idea of evolutionary process. Comte, Durkheim, Karl Marx and Spencer, in one way or another discussed the evolution of society, individual, organism, human intellect, economy and so on. Herbert Spencer perceived evolution in terms of positive progress coming out of social evolution in general and industrial revolution in particular. Spencer viewed evolution as a movement from simple to complex forms with a high degree of adaptability. This view is a reflection of the social circumstances of his life because Spencer was born and brought up in England and he witnessed slow and steady growth of different areas of society like social, economic and political arenas. This reflection can be seen in his works that is a gradual and peaceful change. At that time, British people considered that their place as the highpoint of social evolution and so capitalism and industrial revolution were seen as the expressions of this superiority. Spencer therefore saw laissez-faire capitalism, the division of labour, free markets, and social competition as part of the survival of the fittest, which is one of his major thoughts.

There are two major evolutionary perspectives in Spencer's work. The first one is related to the idea of increasing the size of society. The size of the society increases through the multiplication of individuals and the union of groups. This increased size of the society led to the differentiation of functions that one wanted to perform and large and more differentiated social structures. According to Spencer, by unifying more and more adjoining groups, society becomes compound and thus its size increases. Thus, Spencer discussed the evolutionary movement from simple to compound, doubly-compound, and trebly-compound societies, which means movement from very simple society

to more complex societies. Secondly, Spencer put forward another evolutionary perspective on the development of societies from militant to industrial, which is discussed later in this chapter. In the moral and political writing of Spencer, he talked about the evolution of society, that is society progressing toward an ideal or perfect moral state. He also argues for the fittest society, which means the fittest society survived and others could not survive and perished.

Spencer wrote 'Evolution' as an "integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of notion during which the matter passes from an indefinite, coherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity and during which the retained notion undergoes a parallel transformation". In this framework of universal evolution, Spencer developed his 'three basic laws' and 'four secondary propositions'. Each one of these builds up on each other and all of these laws and principles upon the doctrine of evolution. The three basic laws are:-

Law of evolution

i)   The law of persistence of force (some ultimate cause that transcends knowledge)

ii) The law of the indestructibility of matter (disproven by modern physics)

iii) The law of continuity of motion (energy passes from one form to another but always persist)

The four secondary propositions are:-

i)   Persistence of the relationship between the force (uniformity of law)

ii) Transformation and equivalence of forces

iii) Tendency of everything to move along the line of least resistance and greatest attraction

iv) The principle of the alternation or rhythm of motion (Abraham & Morgan, 1985)

Spencer's theory of evolution involves two discernible and interrelated strains of thought:-

i)   The movement from simple societies to various levels of compound societies. Spencer put forward four types of societies in terms of their evolutionary stages - simple, compound, doubly compound and trebly compound. Each of these can be distinguished

on the basis of the more or less complexity of their social structures and functions. In all systems there is an inherent tendency for the homogenous to become heterogeneous and for the uniform to become multiform. The totality of simple societies which consists of families gave rise to compound societies. This aggregation of compound societies which consisted of families unified into clans and formed doubly compound societies. The aggregation of this doubly compound societies which consisted of clans unified into tribes and formulated trebly compound societies and the tribes were organised into nation states. Spencer argued that here the universal evolution of societies happened with increased specialisation and differentiation, which inevitably led to the need for integration.

ii) Change from military (or militant) to industrial society. This classification of society is based on the type of internal regulation within societies. A Military society is characterised by compulsory cooperation and the industrial society is based on voluntary cooperation. The following table exhibits the major differences between the militant and industrial societies:

Characteristics	Militant Society	Industrial Society
Dominant function	Corporate defensive and offensive activity	Peaceful, mutual rendering services
Principles of social coordination	Compulsory cooperation	Voluntary cooperation, regulation by contract and principles of justice
The relation between the state and the individual	Individuals exist for the benefit of the state, restrictions on freedom, mobility and property	The state exists for the benefit of individuals, freedom and few restrictions on mobility, property, etc…
The structure of the state	Centralised state	Decentralised form/ structure

Nature of social stratification	Fixity of ranks, occupation, locality, inheritance of positions	Openness of ranks, occupation, locality, etc…
Type of economic activity	Economic autonomy, self-sufficiency, little external trade, protectionism.	Loss of economic independence, interdependence from peaceful trade
Values and personal characteristics	Patriotism, loyalty, obedience, faith in authority, discipline.	Independence, respect for others, resistance to force or coercion, individual initiative.

Table 1.2.1 Differences between Militant and Industrial Society

Theory of social evolution

Thus Spencer put forward rich and multiple ideas about social evolution. These theories were well accepted at that time and then criticism emerged on his ideas.

c) Differentiation, Specialization and Integration

According to Spencer, evolution involves three phases:- Differentiation, Specialisation and Integration. The basic principle put forward by Spencer regarding this is that complex organisms have a greater chance of survival. Here, complexity is defined in terms of structure and function. More complex organisms contain a large number of specialised structures and these structures help to fulfil the requisite functions of regulation, operation and distribution. The instability of homogeneous units, segmentation, and multiplication of effects push the organisms to differentiate and specialise; once an organism has multiple structures performing specialised tasks, integration becomes a need. For instance, there is no need for integration and nothing to integrate for amoebas because it is single celled, while the human body is a system with multiple organs and its specialised tasks to perform and so integration is necessary to maintain the system. There is a chance to move to different directions by an organism if it has differentiated and specialised structures. In this context integration is necessary. In the human body, the central nervous system integrates the whole body, its different structures and

subsystems. Social structures are made up of connections among sets of positions that form a network. The interrelated sets of positions in society are generally defined in terms of status positions, roles, and norms. These social and cultural elements create and manage the connections among people, and it is the connections that form the structure. When the society becomes heterogeneous, complex and functionally specialised, structural differentiation occurs. This structural differentiation, specialisation and integration were discussed earlier.

d) Science and Society

Like Comte, Spencer also believed in and worked for a science of society and both argued that it is possible because there is an order of coexistence and progress in society. Spencer said that where there is order, the components of that order may form the subject of a science. This science, that is Sociology, is super organic for Spencer which means social evolution. All phenomena in the universe can be categorised into three, according to Spencer; inorganic, organic and super organic and he placed these three in the evolutionary scale. For both Comte and Spencer science of society is a positive science of natural phenomena and Sociology is a true science, while their perception towards the true science is different. Comte believed that Sociology would guide men in building a better society in which to live. Spencer argued that the new science should demonstrate to the modern state that mankind should not interfere or tamper with the natural processes occurring within the society. Spencer believed that a pure laissez-faire social policy serves society's interests best and Sociology demonstrates how and why that is true.

There is an innate tendency in all natural phenomena as well as in society to improve itself. In this context, Spencer asks for the service of history to the new science. There is a close relation between history and Sociology and Spencer says that the only history is that of practical history, which he called descriptive Sociology. As evolution is the universal character of all things, Spencer holds that historians and sociologists can work together to assess, predict and understand the present structure. All social phenomena (inorganic, organic and super organic) have an innate tendency to improve and advance and so historians and sociologists should observe, describe and compare the nature of social phenomena in evolutionary change.

In all of the ideas and theories of Spencer, we can identify the elements of evolution, especially progressive evolution. He considered Sociology as a science which study social phenomena in an evolutionary perspective.

e) Organic Analogy

In this theory of Spencer, he tries to identify the society with a biological organism. As the first step towards the theory of evolution, Spencer recognises the similarities between society and an organism. Spencer argues that both society and organisms are arranged in the same manner. Spencer perceives that both society and organisms transform through the stages of growth, maturity and decay. When society and organisms increase in size, they increase in structure too. Both society and organisms undergo growth; their parts are interrelated and their functions are reciprocal. As they grow in size, they increase in complexity of structure and their parts become more differentiated.

Spencer argues that there are not only similarities between society and organisms, there are differences too. The parts of an animal form a concrete whole, while the parts of society form a discrete whole. Simply, the organism is a concrete, integrated whole whereas society is a whole composed of discrete and dispersed elements. In an organism, consciousness is concentrated in a small part of the aggregate, while in society it is diffused throughout the aggregate and each unit possesses consciousness to a different degree.

Spencer made an elaborate attempt to draw the similarities and differences between an organism and society, and later this was used as the foundation to build the theory of evolution.

f) Social Darwinism

The idea of social Darwinism profoundly influenced the development of early Sociology. Even so, this theory was short-lived due to the multiple and strong criticisms. It is an attempt by Spencer to apply Darwin's theory of evolution which deals with development of plants and animals to social phenomena. Herbert Spencer and William Graham Sumner were the two advocates of social Darwinism in Sociology. Spencer's social Darwinism is based on two fundamental principles:-

I. Principle of the survival of the fittest

Spencer considered the process of conflict and survival to be a biologically purifying process. According to him, there is a tendency in nature to get rid of the unfit and make space for the better. Simply, it is the law of nature that the weak should be eliminated for the sake of the strong. By the less fit, Spencer meant the less healthy and less intelligent than the social norm. Spencer opposed the assistance by the government to the less fit persons. Spencer suggested that individuals should be allowed to seek his own private interests and the state should not intervene in the economy.

II. The principle of non-interference

Spencer was an ardent advocate of individualism and laissez-faire politics. He opposed all form of state interference with private activity. He proposed that the state had no duty in education, health and sanitation, postal service, money and banking, regulation of housing conditions or the elimination of poverty. Spencer advocated that the money used for these purposes should be spent in the works like land-drainage, machine building and to support the labourers in the new reproductive works. The only duty of the state should be the protection of the rights of the individual and the defence of its citizens against external aggression.

Spencer argued that nature is more intelligent than man and it does not interfere in the affairs of nature; if you do so the consequences are not predictable. He also argued that the duty of the sociologists is to convince the state and the citizens not to intervene in the natural process of selection operating in society.

g) Functionalism and Individualism

Spencer was a functionalist and evolutionist. Spencer has already opened the idea of functionalism in his book *The Principles of Sociology*, even before the emergence of the tradition of structural functionalism. In 1876 he wrote, 'there can be no true conception of structure without a true conception of its function'. Spencer emphasised that the change in structure cannot occur without changes in functions, and that increases in size of social units necessarily bring progressive differentiations in social activities.

Spencer was not only a functionalist but also a radical individualist, believing that the real or essential characteristics of the component parts of a society determine the characteristics of the whole society, and that fundamental character is the individual. Spencer considered society as a

Principles of evolution

Survival of the fittest

Functionalism and structure

Functions of components of society

vehicle for the enhancement of individuals' purposes and this was discussed in his work *The Study of Sociology*. Spencer said that the best society is a society that least controls the individual and the state should not interfere in the individual affairs.

h) Social Institutions

Characteristics of social institution

Spencer's famous work *The Principles of Sociology* solely deals with the analysis of social institutions but he never provided a clear definition of social institutions. From the description of Spencer, some of the characteristics of social phenomena are derived and they are as follows. Institutions work as the collective solutions to survival needs that provide predetermined meanings, legitimations and scripts for behaviour. Institutions are not reducible for individual actions or agency. Institutions resist modification by the individual or even groups of individuals. Social institutions tend to be wrapped in morality; institutions are moral phenomena. Spencer described various types of institutions and they are described below.

i) Domestic Institutions

Functions of domestic institution

The domestic institution, kinship or family, is considered the most important social institution. Its major function is to facilitate biological reproduction. In the long run the functions are expanded to space for socialisation, lines of inheritance, emotional and physical support and so on.

Transitioning of domestic institution

Spencer argued that in the beginning of human history, complete and universal promiscuity existed. Under this general promiscuity, social bonds were weak and political subordination and control limited. In the case of religion, ancestor worship was in the beginning stage. Later this general promiscuity moved to polyandry (one woman with many husbands) and polygyny (one man with many wives). Gradually the system moved to monogamy (one woman for one man).

ii) Ceremonial Institutions

Spencer argues that there are mainly three kinds of social control; ceremonial, ecclesiastical, and political. Political entities govern human behaviour externally through laws, coercive force, and authority. Religious, or ecclesiastical, institutions bring about social control internally rather than externally and religion gives us a set of ideas about right and wrong behaviours.

One type of social control according to Spencer is ceremonial institutions. Ceremonies are formal or informal acts or series of acts that link people together hierarchically. Ceremonies may be simple, as in an act of politeness, or quite elaborate, as in prescribed rituals. Spencer said that the titles (Doctor, Professor, Captain and so on) and emblems of honour, forms of dress etc. reproduce the hierarchical system of authority and control. For Spencer, ceremonial institutions are the first general form of social control. Spencer argued that later society began to use ecclesiastical and political means of control and ceremonial became less used in course of time.

Symbols of authority and control

iii) Political Institutions

The basic political division in society is based on strength and age; the young and weak on the one side and the older and stronger on the other side. In Spencer's primitive form of political structure, there are the masses of young and weak, those who are strong and/or experienced, and those elite few who combine the best balance of strength and experience.

Primitive form on the basis of strength and age

iv) Ecclesiastical Institutions

Religion functions are an agent of social control and they infuse value and morals with supernatural power. According to Spencer, religion also functions to reinforce and justify existing social structures, particularly those built around inequality. This control of the religion on human beings is termed as ecclesiastical institutions by Spencer.

Agent of social control

Criticism

Spencer's critics argue that he is in a 'naturalistic fallacy'; that means he committed a mistake to derive morality and ethics from nature. They criticise the idea that the progressive society would be a peaceful society. Pamela Lyon criticised Spencer in his theory of the 'Survival of the fittest' where he saw nature as beneficent rather than seeing it cruel. Theory of evolution is also criticised on a massive level. The comparison of society with the biological organism, that is the organic analogy, faced criticisms contending that both systems are different and cannot be compared.

Incomparable systems

Spencer contributed a lot to Sociology and all of his contributions laid a strong foundation to the development of the subject. Therefore, Spencer is considered the second founding father of Sociology.

Summarised Overview

Various forces have lead to the development of Sociology like social, economic, political, intellectual and so on. Society undergoes drastic changes and this leads to the emergence of social science subjects, then Sociology. The influence of science in various fields such as industrialisation cannot be detached from discussion. French Revolution, Industrial Revolution and Urbanisation, Feminism, Renaissance etc. facilitated the emergence of the subject. Due to the influence of Science, theorists argued for the scientific study of society through the methods of science like observation, experimentation and comparison. This idea was termed "Positivism". Comte tried to establish a positive social physics and perceived that the function of the new social science is to understand the necessary, indispensable and inevitable course of history in the formation of a new social order. Comte wanted to establish a science called Sociology, which is the history of the human race as a whole. He also wanted to establish a religion of humanity which is based on science. Spencer was a champion of individualism and tried to develop a methodology to study social science subjects. Spencer was also concerned about the methodological issues of the subject. He discussed the issues in objective studies of social science subjects. Spencer discussed the methodological issues in the social sciences elaborately. He was heavily influenced by Charles Darwin and developed the theory of social evolution. Spencer proposed three basic laws and four propositions upon the theory of evolution. He divided societies into militant and industrial societies. Spencer also argued for a science of society. Spencer considered society as an organism and introduced the theory of organic analogy. Spencer was a functionalist and he analysed different institutions in society and its functions. Both Herbert Spencer and Auguste Comte were successful in advancing Sociology to the level of a social science.

Assignments

1. Examine the theoretical contribution by Auguste Comte in the establishment of Sociology.
2. Evaluate critically the concept of positivism in Sociology.
3. Describe how Herbert Spencer identified society with a biological organism.
4. Discuss Spencer's types of society.
5. Evaluate critically the law of three stages and Spencer's evolution theory.
6. Describe the principles of social Darwinism as put by Herbert Spencer.\
7. What is positivist methodology.
8. What are the four evolutionary stages of society according to Spencer.

Suggested Readings

1. Bierstedt, R. (1959). *The Making of Society: An Outline of Sociology.* USA: Random House Inc.
2. Andersen, H., & Kaspersen, L. B. (2000). *Classical and modern social theory.* New York: Blackwell Publishing.
3. Ritzer, G., & Goodman, D. (2001). *Postmodern social theory. In the Handbook of sociological theory (pp. 151-169).* New York: Springer.

References

1. Abraham, F.M. (2018). *Contemporary Sociology - An Introduction to Concepts and Theories.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2. Craib, I. (1997). *Classical Theory.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
3. Coser, L. A. (2012). *Masters of sociological thought.* New Delhi: Rawat Publications.
4. Ritzer, G. (2011). S*ociological Theory (8th Ed).* New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding of the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

UNIT 3

Functionalist Tradition: Emile Durkheim

Background

Classical theories of Sociology in the early stage were rooted in biological analogy and notions of evolution. Functionalist thought was particularly inclined towards biology as the closest science. The basic principle is that society and its system, like a biological organism, are composed of different parts and must function in cohesion to one another. Herbert Spencer was a core propounder of this principle. The perspective was present in the original sociological positivism of Comte but was fully theorised by Durkheim. Functionalism is put forth as a logical extension of organic analogies for a society. Functionalism also has an anthropological basis.

Functionalism is the oldest theoretical perspective in sociology. In this approach all social phenomena are analysed in terms of its functions towards maintaining the society. Spencer and Durkheim are the early functionalists. Functionalist perspective is built up on two emphasis; application of the scientific method to the objective social world and use of an analogy between the individual organism and society. In this unit we shall further learn of the application of functional perspective in the theories that Durkheim had formulated.

Keywords

Functionalism, Social fact, Society, Specialisation

Discussion

1.3.1 Functionalism

Roots of Functionalism

Functionalism is the oldest and still relevant theoretical perspective in Sociology and other social sciences. In this approach, a social phenomenon is analysed in terms of its functions towards maintaining its social unity. This idea mainly emerged from biological theories and the functioning of organisms. While analysing the emergence of functionalism, it is traced back to Spencer and Durkheim. Emile Durkheim borrowed many ideas from Spencer. For instance, Durkheim, like Spencer, emphasised the basic relationship between population and structural differentiation. However, there were contrasting ideas that also arose between them. Comte's ideas also influenced Durkheim. Durkheim, by accepting ideas from Comte and Spencer, developed functionalism. While, after the death of Durkheim in the second half of the 20th century, functionalism was dead in Sociology, but anthropologists like Bronislaw Kasper Malinowsi and Radcliffe-Brown worked on it and revived it and went on to become a prominent theoretical perspective in Sociology, at least for a short period of time. Turner in his book listed out the key elements of functionalism, which are as follows:-

1. Social systems are composed of interrelated parts

2. These systems reveal both internal and external problems of adaptation to their environments that must be resolved if the system is to endure. These problems can come from:-

Elements of Functionalism

   a) External changes in the physical and bio-ecological environment of a society

   b) External relations with other populations

   c) Internal environments generated by the growth and differentiation of societies

3. Whether from external or internal sources, these problems of survival and adaptation can be visualised as system "needs" or "requisites" that must be met; depending upon the theorists, these requisites are typically seen to revolve around such adaptive problems as:

a) Integration within and among differentiated units of diverse institutional systems like economy, family, government and so on. Secondly, diverse classes and strata created by the stratification of inequalities in resource distributions.

b) Coordination and control of differentiated actors through firstly, by consolidation and use of power and law as social control mechanisms. Secondly, the development of common symbol systems and totems marking the sanctity of the entire social system and toward which emotion-arousing rituals are performed, and finally, the development of new mechanisms of structural interdependence that connect differentiated units.

<div style="float:left; color:#a00;">Requisites of social system</div>

c) Production of necessary resources to support members of the population, especially population's and society's growth.

d) Reproduction of members and the new, more complex social units organising their activities evolve with system growth.

e) Distribution of resources, individuals, and social structural units, cultural symbols and information to more differentiated social units and across the expanded territories of a system as it grows.

4. Understanding of social systems as a whole and their constituent parts is only possible by analysing the need(s) or requisite(s) of the system that any given part of a society meets.

<div style="float:left; color:#a00;">Defining Functionalism</div>

Functionalism can be defined in weak sense and strong sense. When Kingsley Davis said that all sociologists are functionalists, he referred to this in a weak sense. Davis defined functionalism as an approach that attempts to relate the parts of society to the whole, and to relate one part to another. A strong definition of functionalism was given by Jonathan H. Turner and A. Z. Maryanski is an approach based on seeing society as similar to a biological organism and attempts to explain particular social structures in terms of the needs of society as a whole. According to this stronger definition of functionalism, Durkheim was an accidental functionalist. Durkheim opposed drawing analogies between society and organisms.

Functionalist perspective is built up on two emphases;

application of the scientific method to the objective social world and use of an analogy between the individual organism and society. The functioning of the human body is analysed in terms of the functioning of its various organs in relation to each other and as the organism as a whole. The same principle is adopted in functionalism. It is considered that society is made up of various parts and these parts are interrelated to make up the complete system. Functionalists consider society as a system made up of interrelated parts and these parts contribute to the overall functioning of the system. The primary concern of the functionalists is the survival of the social system and they assume that integration, order and stability are essential for its survival. Simply, explanation of the origin and stability of the social system is the concern of the functionalists.

Society as parts that function together

Biographical Sketch of Emile Durkheim (1858-1917)
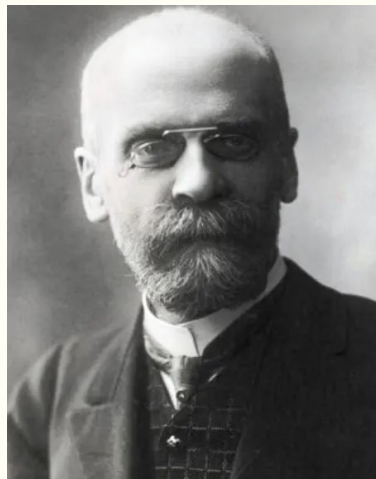
    David Emile Durkheim was born in Epinal, France, on April 15, 1858. His mother was a merchant's daughter and his father was a priest. It may be because of his father's influence, he was interested in religion; not theological but academic. Durkheim was not satisfied with the religious training and the general education he received because of the emphasis on aesthetic and literary matters. Durkheim did well in high school and attended the prestigious École Normale Supérieure in Paris, the training ground for the new French intellectual elite. He emphasised the importance of scientific training needed to contribute to the moral guidance of society. He was interested in developing a scientific Sociology. During his first years after finishing school (1882–1887), Durkheim taught philosophy in Paris, but he felt philosophy was a poor approach to solving the social ills that

surrounded him (Kenneth Allan). In 1887, he became the first teacher in Sociology in the French system and he married Louise Dreyfus in the same year.

In 1902, Durkheim took a post at the Sorbonne and by 1906 was appointed Professor of the Science of Education, a title later changed to Professor of Science of Education and Sociology, where he was responsible for training the future teachers of France and served as chief advisor to the Ministry of Education. After the demise of his son, Durkheim withdrew to silence and then he suffered a stroke. On November 15, 1917, at the age of 59, Durkheim passed away.

1.3.2 Theoretical Contributions of Emile Durkheim

Major Theories

- Social facts
- Suicide
- Religion
- Division of Labor

Major Works

- *The Division of Labor in Society (1893)*
- *The Rules of Sociological Methods (1895)*
- *Suicide (1897)*
- *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life (1912)*

a) Social Facts

In order to help Sociology to move away from philosophy and to give a clear and separate identity, Durkheim (Durkheim, 1895) proposed that the subject matter of Sociology should be the study of social facts. Briefly, social facts are social structures and cultural norms and values that are external to, and coercive of, actors. According to Emile Durkheim 'A social fact is every way of acting, fixed or not, capable of exercising on the individual an external constraint; or gain, 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.

Sociology as a study of social facts

Social facts are treated as 'things' in order to separate Sociology from philosophy and studied empirically. We should study social facts by collecting data from outside of our own minds through observation and experimentation. This effort to conduct an empirical study of social facts as

Social facts as things 'away' from the individual

things separate Durkheimian Sociology from philosophical approaches.

Social facts are external

In order to distinguish Sociology from psychology, Durkheim defined social facts as an external constraint rather than an internal drive. Secondly, social facts are general throughout society and it is not attached to any particular individual.

Social fact as sui generis

Durkheim argued that social facts cannot be reduced to individuals, but must be studied as their own reality. He referred to social facts to the Latin word 'sui generis' which means 'unique'. He used this term to prove that social facts have their own unique character and cannot be reduced to individual consciousness. Social facts can be explained only with other facts. To summarise, social facts can be empirically studied, are external to the individual, are coercive of the individual, and are explained by other social facts.

Dimensions of social facts

Durkheim provided various examples for social facts like language, legal rules, moral obligations and social conventions. For making it clear, take language as an example of social fact. Language is a 'thing' which should be studied empirically. All languages have some logical rules regarding grammar, pronunciation, spelling and so on. All languages have some exceptions to these logical rules. What follow the rules and what are the exemptions must be studied empirically by studying actual language use, especially since language use changes over time in ways that are not completely predictable. Secondly language is external to the individual because language is used by individuals and it is not created and defined by individuals. Thirdly, language is coercive to individuals because the language that we use makes some things extremely difficult to say. Finally, changes in language can be explained only by other social facts and never by one individual's intentions.

Some critics are of the opinion that Durkheim took an extremist position to separate Sociology from other social sciences.

Characteristics of Social Facts

i) Social facts may be considered as things and they must exercise constraint and be external to the individual

ii) Not amenable to explanation on either the biological or psychological level

iii) Social facts endowed with coercive power and independent of individual will

iv) It is equally implied and applied on the various members of the society irrespective of social differences

Types of Social Facts

Durkheim differentiated between two types of facts- Material and Non-material facts. They are discussed below.

Material Social Facts

Material social facts are directly observable things such as forms of technology, styles of architecture and legal codes. Such things are external to individuals and coercive over them.

Non-material Social Facts

The heart of Durkheim's Sociology lies in the study of nonmaterial social facts. For Durkheim, the social values and norms are best examples of non-material social facts. But this idea generates problems like, is it external to, coercive of individuals? Durkheim recognised that non-material social facts, to an extent, lie in the minds of the individuals. However, when people interact in large groups, their interaction will 'obey laws all their own'.

External and coercive

Types of non-material social facts

Durkheim studied various types of non-material social facts and here let us briefly discuss four of them; morality, collective conscience, collective representation and social currents.

coerciveness of social facts

Morality is external to individuals, it is a social fact and can be studied empirically and coercively to individuals. He viewed that people were in danger of a 'pathological' loosening of moral bonds and he gave importance to morality. Therefore, he studies morality as a social fact. Collective conscience is another nonmaterial social fact studied by Durkheim. In French, the word conscience means both 'consciousness' and 'moral conscience.' It is defined as the totality of beliefs and sentiments common to average citizens of the same society that forms a determinate system which has its own life. Collective conscience is the general structure of shared understandings, norms and beliefs. Durkheim used this concept to say that the primitive societies had a stronger collective conscience than modern societies.

The French word "representation" means 'idea'. Durkheim used the term "collective representation" to denote both a collective concept and a social 'force'. Examples for collective representations are religious symbols, myths and popular legends. Those social facts that do not present themselves in this already crystallised form are called social currents. As an example of social current, Durkheim points out the great waves of enthusiasm, indignation and pity that are produced in public gatherings.

<div style="text-align: left; color: #c0392b;">Aspects of Non material social facts</div>

b) The Division of Labour

In the preface of the book *The Division of Labour in Society*, Durkheim writes, "This book is above all an attempt to treat the facts of moral life according to the methods of the positive sciences."In this work, Durkheim traced the development of the modern relation between individual and society. This work was the thesis submitted by Durkheim and it says that modern society is not held together by the similarities between people who do basically similar things, instead, it is the division of labour itself that pulls people together to be dependent on each other. It may seem that the division of labour is an economic necessity that destroys the feeling of solidarity, but Durkheim argued that "the economic services that it can render are insignificant compared with the moral effect that it produces and its true function is to create between two or more people a feeling of solidarity". Durkheim put forward two types of solidarity in society; they are as follows:-

<div style="text-align: left; color: #c0392b;">Invoking solidarity between individual and society</div>

Mechanical and Organic Solidarity

One of the determining factors of the whole structure of society is division of labour. Durkheim was interested in studing the changed way in which society is held together and how its members see themselves as part of a whole. To understand this difference, Durkheim talked about two types of solidarity-mechanical and organic. A society characterised by mechanical solidarity is unified because all people are generalists. The unifying bond among these people is that they are all engaged in similar activities and similar responsibilities. However, a society characterised by organic solidarity is held together by the differences among people, and all have different tasks and responsibilities.

<div style="text-align: left; color: #c0392b;">Dictating activities and responsibilities</div>

People in modern societies perform a relatively narrow range of tasks. They need many other people to survive like baker, butcher, police, nursing professionals and so on. While

a primitive family headed by father-hunter and mother-food gatherer is self- sufficient, modern society, in Durkheim's view, is held together by the specialisation of people and need for the services of many others. This specialisation is not only of individuals but also of groups, structures and institutions.

Durkheim argued that primitive societies had more collective conscience, that is more shared understandings, norms and beliefs. Increasing division of labour reduces the collective conscience and it is less significant in a society with organic solidarity. People in modern societies are held together on the basis of division of labour and each one depended on their functions and roles to perform. Organic societies have a collective consciousness, though in a weaker form that allows for more individual differences.

Solidarity	Volume	Intensity	Rigidity	Content
Mechanical	Entire society	High	High	Religious
Organic	Particular group	Low	Low	Moral individualism

Table 1.3.1 The Four Dimensions of the collective conscience

The above table points out the collective conscience in two types of societies and it was subtracted by Anthony Giddens. Volume refers to the number of people enveloped by the collective conscience; intensity, to how deeply the individuals feel about it; rigidity, to how clearly it is defined; and content, to the form that the collective conscience takes in the two types of society. A society characterised by mechanical solidarity, the collective conscience covers virtually the entire society and all its members; it is believed in with great intensity; it is extremely rigid; and its content is highly religious in character. In a society with organic solidarity, the collective conscience is limited to particular groups; it follows with less intensity; it is not very rigid; and its content is the elevation of the importance of the individual to a moral precept.

Dynamic density is another concept by Durkheim. According to Durkheim, competition increases the overall division of labor. This competition is not a result of individual desires or free markets, but the result of what Durkheim variously calls dynamic, moral, or physical density. The level of dynamic density is a result of increased population density,

Physical density and interaction between units

which is a function of population growth and ecological barriers. Dynamic density refers to the number of people in a society and amount of interaction that occurs among them. Increased population always competes for the attainment of scarce resources and more interaction leads to more intense struggle for survival among the basically similar components of society. Durkheim's Division of Labor is based on three social factors such as the volume, the material density and the moral density of the society.

Aspects of organic solidarity

Societies with organic solidarity is featured with less competition and more differentiation and allow people to cooperate more and have more solidarity and more individuality than the society with mechanical solidarity.

Repressive and restitutive law

Durkheim, in his work *The Division of Labour in Society* studied the law in societies with mechanical and organic solidarity, that is, repressive law and restitutive law. Durkheim's interest is to analyse the nonmaterial social facts, while the division of labour and dynamic density are material social facts. He says that it is difficult to study the nonmaterial social facts directly, especially general ideas like collective conscience. In order to study the nonmaterial social facts scientifically, sociologists should examine the material social facts as the material social facts exhibit the nature of, and changes in, the nonmaterial social facts.

According to Durkheim, society characterised by mechanical solidarity has repressive laws because it is inclusive of similar people and they believe in a common morality and any offence to their value system significantly influences the individual. Minor offences against the moral system are severely punished in repressive law; for example, theft might lead to the cutting off of the offender's hand. In contrast, society with organic solidarity is characterised by restitutive law, which requires offenders to make restitution for their crimes. Here, offences are committed against the individuals or segments of society and not against the moral system. There is a weak common morality and most people do not react emotionally to the violation of law. Instead of severe punishments, restitutive law punishes a person by paying a compensation to the harmed ones. Repressive laws are sometimes enacted in society with organic solidarity like death penalty and restitutive laws predominates for minor offences.

Mechanical and Organic solidarity follow repressive and restitutive law

In summary, Durkheim said that the Division of labor

changed in modern society but not disappeared and there emerged a new form of solidarity. Durkheim argued that this new form of solidarity is prone to certain kinds of social pathologies.

Normal and Pathological

Durkheim claimed that Sociology must be able to distinguish between healthy and pathological societies. He claimed that a healthy society can be recognized because the sociologist will find similar conditions in other societies in similar stages. If a society departs from what is normally found, it is probably pathological. He used the concept of pathology to criticise some abnormal forms of division of labour in modern society. Durkheim identified three abnormal forms of division of labour; i) the anomic division of labour ii) forced division of labour, and iii) the poorly coordinated division of labour. The anomic division of labour refers to the lack of regulation in a society that celebrates isolated individuality and refrains from telling people what they should do. Durkheim, further developed this concept of 'anomie' in his book *Suicide*. Durkheim strongly believed that there is a need for rules and regulations to tell what to do; forced division of labour as an abnormal form pointed to a kind of rule that could lead to conflict and isolation and increase anomie. When the specialised function is performed by poorly coordinated people, that is the third form of division of labor.

In the book *The Division of Labour in Society*, Durkheim put forward multiple ideas and new concepts regarding the primitive and modern societies and he made this classification on the basis of division of labour in society. In the modern society, the complexity due to increased population and its density increases, and the division of labour emerges. The concepts introduced in this work were further developed by Durkheim in other works.

e) Suicide

Suicide is one of the most famous and well discussed works by Durkheim. Merton opined that *Suicide* is a paradigmatic example of how a sociologist should connect theory and research (Merton, 1949/1968). In the preface of the book Durkheim writes that this work not only addresses a social problem but it is also an example of his new sociological method. Durkheim selected 'suicide' as a topic of study because of the availability of data and to prove the power of

Theory and research

the new science of Sociology. Durkheim is considered the first theorist who conducted a study scientifically. Before him, the theorists like Comte and Spencer put forward ideas of scientific study but they failed to prove it with examples. Therefore, *Suicide* is considered the first scientific study in Sociology.

Suicide and social fact

Durkheim believed that it is the duty of the sociologist to study the reason behind suicide. He studied the differences in suicide rates and focused on why one group had the highest and others the lowest rates of suicide. Durkheim searched for the social facts behind suicide and their variations in different societies.

Evaluating in collectivity

Durkheim proposed two related ways to evaluate the rates of suicide. One way is to compare different societies or other types of collectivies and second way is to look at the changes in suicide rates in the same collective over time. Durkheim argued that the individuals may have different reasons for suicide and these are not the real causes; there are various social currents behind suicide (Ritzer, 2011; Abraham & Morgan, 1985).

Durkheim concluded that different societies hold different collective sentiments, which produce different currents. These social currents affect the individual to make decision to commit suicide. Simply saying, changes in the collective sentiment lead to changes in the social current, which lead to changes in the suicide rates.

Types of Suicide

In his work *Suicide*, Durkheim discussed the two underlying social facts - integration and regulation. The strength of attachment that we have to society is termed as integration, and regulation refers to the degree of external constraint on people. The two social currents (integration and regulation) are continuous variables and suicide rate increases when any of these currents is too low or too high.

Strength of integration and regulation

On the basis of these social currents and their variations (high or low), there are four types of suicides (egoistic, altruistic, anomic and fatalistic) which are discussed below.

i) Egoistic Suicide

When the individual is not well attached or integrated to the larger social unit, egoistic suicide occurs. Lack of

integration creates a feeling that the individual is not a part of the society and it also means that the society is not part of the individual. Durkheim believed that the best part of human beings like morality, values, norms etc. come from society. An integrated society provides us with these things and provides moral support and this helps an individual to move away to recover from disappointments. Without this, people are prone to commit suicide even for peripheral issues. Strongly integrated societies discourage suicide, protect and envelop people from suicide. Durkheim analysed the role of religion in it and argued that not all religions protect people to the same degree. For example, protestant religion provides less protection. He never concentrated on religion, but integration. Durkheim's study revealed that suicide rate is high among unmarried and less integrated to family and also found that the suicide rate is less during the time of war and revolutions because, these make a sense of living together among people.

Degree of integration

ii) Altruistic Suicide

Altruistic suicide occurs when social integration is too strong (Durkheim, Suicide, 1897/1951). Those who commit altruistic suicide believe that it is their duty to destroy themselves. Suicide of people due to the demise of a charismatic leader is an example of altruistic suicide. When integration is low, people will commit suicide because they have no greater good to sustain them. When integration is high, they commit suicide in the name of that greater good.

Stronger integration and commitment

iii) Anomic Suicide

Anomic suicide is more likely to occur when the regulative powers of society are disrupted. These disruptions allow the individuals to live in their own passion and desires and this creates dissatisfaction. Rates of anomic suicide are likely to rise whether the nature of the disruption is positive (for example, an economic boom) or negative (an economic depression). Both types of disruption reduce the collectivity temporarily and are incapable of exercising their authority over individuals. Such situations bring people into a condition that the old norms and values are disrupted, while the new ones have yet to develop. As above mentioned, economic boom results in sudden success and this makes individuals deviate from traditional structures. Economic depression leads to the closing of factories and loss of jobs; this also makes anomie among people. Both situations result in less regulations and individual becomes in a state of anomie and may commit suicide.

Positive or negative disruption

iv) Fatalistic Suicide

It is a little-mentioned type of suicide by Durkheim. Fatalistic suicide occurs when regulation is too high or excessive. A classic example is the suicide of a slave because of the hopelessness associated with the oppressive regulation of his every action.

Integration	Low	Egoistic
	High	Altruistic
Regulation	Low	Anomic
	High	Fatalistic

Table 1.3.2 These four types of suicides are arranged in a format as displayed below

The above table exhibits the two types of social currents (integration and regulation) and the types of suicides that occur due to the high and low situations of the social currents. When Integration is high egoistic suicide and integration is low altruistic suicide occur. Low regulation leads to anomic suicide and high regulation creates fatalistic suicide.

f) The Elementary Forms of Religious Life

Raymond Aron commented that *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* is Durkhiem's most important, most profound and most original work. He analysed the functional role of religion in society in this work. He tried to understand the basic forms of religious life for all societies and analysed why it is a permanent institution. For this book, Durkheim studied the religion of the Arunta tribe of Australian aborigines. This book is a compiled form of Sociology of religion and theory of knowledge. Sociology of religion tried to identify the enduring essence of religion through an analysis of its most primitive forms. His theory of knowledge attempted to connect the fundamental categories of human thought to their social origins. Durkheim identified the sociological connection between these two (Sociology of religion and theory of knowledge). In brief, Durkheim found the enduring essence of religion in setting apart the sacred from the profane. For Durkheim, the sacred is created through the rituals that transform the moral power of society into religious symbols and this binds the individuals to a group. Sacred things possess some intrinsic qualities. For example; Bible, Quran and Bhagavatgita are considered as sacred

things. Humans used things like water, crosses, some birds and plants, flags etc. as sacred things. Durkheim argued that this moral bond becomes a cognitive bond because the categories for understanding such as classification, time, space, and causation are also derived from religious rituals.

Durkheim's theory of religion states that society, through the individuals, creates religion by defining certain phenomena as sacred and others as profane. Durkheim refused the idea that all religion is nothing but an illusion. For Durkheim, religion is essentially social, a product of the collective life and an embodiment of the moral requisites of human existence. For him, humans are religious because they are the part of collectivities and religion as an expression of social cohesion. Durkheim says that religion is not imaginary, it is real and an expression of society itself and there is no society without religion. Religion is an expression of collective consciousness, which is the fusion of all of our individual consciousness, which then creates a reality of its own. In functional terms, religion unites all societies.

Durkheim proposed three conditions needed for the development of religion. First one is beliefs that mean "the representations which express the nature of sacred things and the relations which they sustain, either with each other or with profane things". Secondly, a set of religious rituals is necessary, these are "the rules of conduct which prescribe how a man should comport himself in the presence of these sacred objects." Finally, a religion requires a church or a single overarching moral community. The interrelationships among the sacred, beliefs, rituals, and church led Durkheim to the following definition of a religion: "A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them."

Durkheim selected the Arunta tribe because it is primitive and the reasons behind the selection of the primitive are as follows: - the essential nature of religion can be drawn from the primitive culture. He studied primitive religion in order to understand and shed light on the modern religion. Durkheim concentrated on totemism of the Arunta tribe. Totemism is a religious system in which certain things such as animals and plants are considered as sacred things and become emblems of the clan. He believed that totemism is the simplest and most primitive form of religion. A totem is the representation of the clan and totems are the material representations of the

Functional role of religion

Social and moral implication of religion

Development of religion

Totemism as religious system

non-material forces. Both totem and religion are derived from the collective morality and become impersonal forces.

g) Sociology of Knowledge

Sociology as true knowledge of social forces

Early Durkheim tried to differentiate Sociology from philosophy; later he answered some philosophical questions through Sociology. Durkheim offers a more powerful Sociology of knowledge that explains 'true' knowledge in terms of social forces.

Criticism

Re-evaluating sociological interpretation of Durkheim

Social facts cannot be approached in an objective manner as Durkheim recommends. Regarding Suicide, we cannot assume the reason for suicide and the results of the study 'Suicide' are accumulated interpretations. The evidences given to social facts are approached as interpretations. Many of them criticised the idea of social consciousness. Over - emphasis on morality is also criticised.

Summarised Overview

Durkheim contributed a lot to the development and expansion of the subject-Sociology. He is known as the father of modern Sociology because he conducted scientific study in society and made a model for scientific studies. Durkheim developed the idea of social facts in order to separate Sociology from philosophy and psychology. Contributions of Durkheim are far reaching and helped to gain a methodology for sociological studies. He divided societies into two; mechanical and organic and he assigned different characteristics to these types of societies. Another study *Suicide* is considered an important work by Durkheim. He collected huge data from society and compiled and analysed them. Then he reached the conclusion which is the first example of a scientific sociological study. The final work by Durkheim is *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* and many theorists commented that a huge shift in the ideas of Durkheim is visible in this work. In this work Durkheim tried to analyse the functional role of religion in society. He is the chief proponent of functionalism and his contributions are important even in the present society.

In order to separate Sociology from philosophy and psychology, Durkheim advocated empirical study of society and considered social facts as things. Durkheim divided social facts into two; material and nonmaterial social facts. He argued that modern society is characterised by division of labour and discussed the mechanical and organic solidarities in society. He proposed two types of laws in these societies; restitutive and repressive laws. Suicide is one of the important

studies, which is considered the first scientific study in the field of Sociology. On the basis of the high and low levels of social regulation and social integration he categorised suicide in to four. *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* is the most profound work by Durkheim, where he studied the primitive religion of the Arunta tribe of Australia.

Assignments

1. Analyse the different theoretical perspectives in Sociology.
2. Evaluate critically Durkheim's practical establishment of positivism in Sociology.
3. Evaluate the contribution of Durkheim in the development of scientific study of society.
4. Conduct a study on 'Suicide' in your society and draw different types of suicides.
5. Evaluate the theory of suicide in light of the global covid outbreak.
6. Examine why Durkheim is portrayed as the father of modern Sociology.
7. Distinguish between mechanical and organic solidarity.
8. Describe Durkheim's interpretation of social facts.
9. Explain the two social currents proposed by Durkheim to describe suicide.
10. In your own words describe what are the four types of suicide according to Durkheim.
11. Examine Durkheim's study of primitive religion.

Suggested Readings

1. Swingewood, A. (1984). *Sociological Thought*. USA: MacMillan.
2. Craib, Ian. (1997). *Classical Social Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
3. Durkheim, E. (1964). *The Rules of Sociological Method (8th ed)*. USA: Macmillan Publishers.

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1. Ritzer, G. (2011). *Sociological Theory*. New York: Mc-Graw Hill.
2. Abraham, F., & Morgan, J. H. (1985). *Sociological Thought.* Chennai: MacMillan.
3. Alan, K. (2014). *The Social Lens*. USA: Sage.
4. Turner, J. H. (2002). *The Emergence of Sociological Theory*. Wadsworth: Belmont Calif.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding of the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.
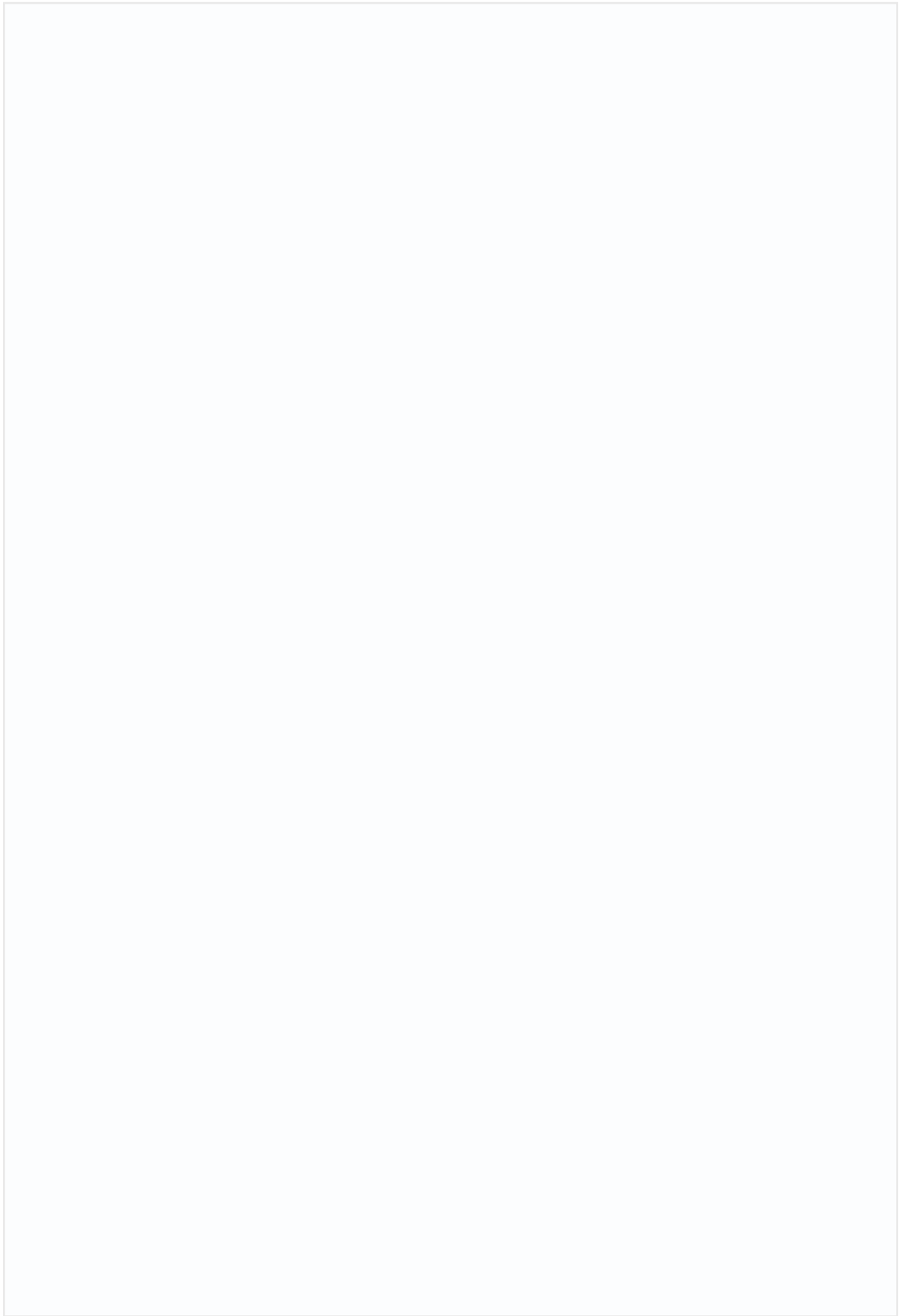
Karl Marx: Materialist Dialectics

Historical Materialism, Mode of Production

Learning Objectives

♦ To understand the social and intellectual backgrounds of Karl Marx
♦ To critically narrate the social and economic conditions underlying Marxist ideology

Background

Karl Marx was born on in a small city of Trier in the southern part of German Rhineland May 5th 1818. Belonging to a middle-class Jewish family his father converted to Lutheranism due to the hostile environment the Jewish faced in Germany. Marx's father was a lawyer and was much influential in introducing young Marx to the writing and works of Voltaire, Rousseau and other writers who made significant contributions towards individualism and human progress. Having married into an upper-class Prussian family, Marx was introduced to German writers such as Johann Goethe and Friedrich Schiller and several classical Greek philosophers through his father in law.

After having received his doctorate from the University of Berlin in 1841 he returned to Bonn in search of academic work. When he was unable to find work in the academic field he resorted to working as a journalist. It was while in Berlin that Marx first read the works of Georg Hegel, which went on to shape and influence his works later on. While working as a journalist, he published his first work in 1842 in Deutsche Jahrbucher which went on to publish many of his critical works. Later, Marx's works were based upon the criticism of Hegel and his philosophy as he went on to produce 2 major works: *A Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* and *On the Jewish Question*. These works remained unpublished at the time due to Prussian censorship, but these works established Marx's indifference to the Hegelian philosophy.

While in Germany Karl Marx met with Young Hegelians as they called themselves as they did not conform to the dominant German values and norms and were invested in interpreting the Hegelian ideology and philosophy. This largely influenced Marx's sociological contributions. Hegel put forth a very
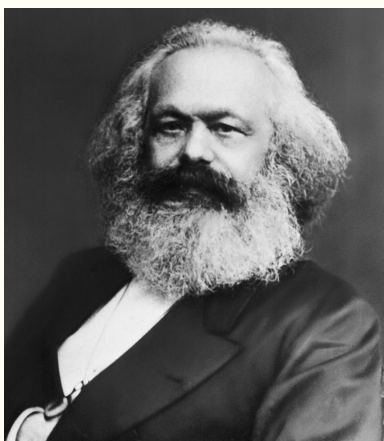
comprehensive and complicated doctrine in Philosophy. Marx there forth built upon Hegel's philosophy that was based on the dialectics of idealism and transformed it into the dialectics of materialism that is deeply rooted in the economic doctrine.

Keywords

Materialism, Idealism, Capitalism, Socialism

Discussion

Biographical Sketch of Karl Marx (1818 - 1883)

Karl Marx was born in 1818, one of nine kids. His family lived in the Rhineland district of Prussia, beforehand under French rule. Both of his folks came from Jewish families with recognized rabbinical heredities. Marx's father was a legal counsellor who changed to Christianity when it became essential for him to proceed with his legitimate vocation.

Following an average schooling, Marx concentrated on law and philosophy at the colleges of Bonn and Berlin. His doctoral proposal was in ancient philosophy which had an antiquated way of thinking, looking at the methods of reasoning of nature of Democritus (c.460-370 BCE) and Epicurus (341-270 BCE). From mid 1842, he started his career as an journalist with an radical approach adding to, and afterward altering, the Rheinische Zeitung, until the paper was closed down by the Prussian experts in April 1843.

Marx married his childhood sweetheart Jenny von Westphalen (1814-

1881), in June 1843. They have seven children out of which only three girls survived and made it to adulthood, they are — Jenny (1844-1883), Laura (1845-1911), and Eleanor (1855-1898). Marx is also known to have fathered a son — Frederick Demuth (1851-1929) — with Helene Demuth (1820-1890), maid and companion of the Marx family.

Marx's adulthood can be consolidated in terms of his intellectual scholarship, political action, and financial spectrum. The existing political circumstances were such that in order to flourish and express his political and intellectual thoughts he had to live outside of Germany. Marx spent his exile period in three progressive capitals: France, Belgium, and Britain.

Towards the end, after the death of his wife, in 1881, Marx's life was dominated by illness, and travel aimed at improving his health. Marx died in March 1883, two months after the death of his eldest daughter. His estate was valued at £250.

2.1.1 Intellectual Influences

The intellectual underpinnings of Karl Marx was prominently influenced by three academic scholars namely Ludwig Feuerbach, Adam Smith and Engels. Their ideology and teachings laid the foundation and influenced Marx to set forth his own critique and interpretations. Through Feuerbach, Marx was introduced to the Hegelian philosophy, Adam Smith set in motion the Economic doctrine and Engels was detrimental in furthering the doctrine of materialism using the methodology of dialectics. Let us further explore the contributions of each and how they influenced Karl Marx.

a) Ludwig Feuerbach and Karl Marx

While at the University of Berlin. Marx met the young Hegelians who were thought of as the academic interpreters of the Hegelian philosophy which dominated the German intellectual life at the time. Among the young Hegelians was Ludwig Feuerbach who had much influence on Marx. The interpretation of Hegelian philosophy by the young Hegelians were rooted more in religion and religious interpretation. They correlated the Christian doctrine with the political oppression that existed.

Young Hegelians

Feuerbach in his book *The Essence of Christianity (1841)* argued that religious beliefs were a manifestation of their

own 'unconscious deification'. According to him man associates all that are good in them as characteristics of God and all that are bad as non divine. The true essence of religion he believed, could be found in Anthropology. Feuerbach was a materialist and he believed that people's consciousness of the world was the product of their brains and hence of physical matter. This appealed to Marx and exhibited itself as an alternative to Hegel's Idealism.

Interpretations of Idealism

It was in Feurbach's argument that Marx found the key to his criticism of Hegel. He found that Feuerbach's analysis of religion as an expression of human desire can be generalized to other social institutions and relationships and to any other phenomenon where human beings were being ruled by their own consciousness. Thus Marx reversed Hegel's argument that the state emerged from the spirit with the argument that modern state emerged from capitalist social relationships. Marx's social theory follows the fundamental insight that if the state is the product of human action then it may be changed by human action.

Human action

b) Adam Smith and Karl Marx

England at that time was partially industrialized and functioning as a capitalist society. The scholars and economists of the time such as Adam Smith, David Ricardo and others developed "political economy", in order to understand the characteristics of capitalism and the industry being built thereafter. Engels introduced Marx to "Political Economy". By the use of this Marx was able to analyse and academically narrate the origin of value, commodity, profit, the role of land in capitalist economy and accumulation of capital. These later on consolidated to one of his greatest works known as *Capital*. Marx regarded political economy as a bourgeois ideology where focus was on defending status quo. Marx had learned from Hegel and Feuerbach that history followed a dialectical pattern. As a result Marx saw capitalism as a historically unique pattern of social relationship that would inevitably be supplanted in the future. Thus Marx set himself to the task of developing a scientific analysis of capitalist society that would cause both its development and demise.

Political Economy

c) Engels and Karl Marx

Engels heavily criticized the method of political economy as that of private economy which emphasized much on private property and private control of the means of production. For Engels a society based upon private ownership of property

was inhumane, alienating and inefficient. He considered it inhumane for two reasons. Firstly, people could not trust each other as trade and competition become the priority in one's life. Secondly capitalism or the factory system leads to increased division of labor. Thus, Engels remarked that the capitalist society is one that is inhumane and exploitative dividing the society into two groups of those who own the means of production and those who do not. Moreover, Engels believes that such a capitalist society leads to alienation with the lack of community fuels and more alienation as it is a competitive society where one person's interests are in opposition to another.

Criticism of political economy

However, it is Engels' belief that the existence of a capitalist society is essential for a communist society to be possible. Marx was unfamiliar with political economy. It was Engel's essay ("Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy") that introduced him to the topic and made him realize the need to develop a theory of society. This essay set Marx on a 20 year long intensive study to outline a theory of society.

Introducing to political economy

2.1.4 Hegel's Idealism

Hegel's philosophical following came from that of Plato which emphasized that true reality is contained in that which is discovered through reason. From this point of view, the objects that our senses perceive as real are not real but rather a manifestation of a collective reality. Hegel in the 19th century dominated the philosophy scholarship and his doctrine is referred to as the philosophical idealism. This philosophical idealism was based on the fact that the facets of human existence had to be explored in terms of certain philosophical categories such as being, reason, history and spirit.

Idealism

A fundamental observation by Hegel regarding the world was that he understood existence and being as interrelated processes rather than seeing individual and history as free standing and separate entities. The abstract philosophical categories such as being, reason, history and spirit were utilized to denote the interrelations between individual and history.

Abstract philosophical categories

Hegel declared that the abstract philosophical categories of history, spirit, being and reason were the ultimate subject matter of philosophical investigation; thus everyday

experiences cannot be considered philosophical construct. Marx rejected this philosophical pursuit of Hegel as it questioned the basis of philosophy and its explanation of human existence.

Contrary to Hegel's philosophical conception that was demarked between the individual and history, Marx sought to develop an understanding between reality and history. For this purpose, Marx began to interpret social existence in terms of economic necessity.

Marx outlined his rejection of philosophical idealism in four postulates:

1. Marx rejected Hegel's proposition of finite and empirical phenomena as ultimate reality.

2. Hegel's emphasis on ultimate reality led him to misperceive some of the essential characteristics of human beings.

3. Marx rejected the religious elements that pervaded Hegel's works.

4. Marx criticized Hegel's idealism as conservative rather than revolutionary.

Rejection of Idealism – Acceptance of Dialectical Method

Marx rejected Hegel's Idealism but used the method of Dialectics. Hegel used this method from a mystic and theological perspective. Marx however sought to reject the idealistic and abstract doctrine rooted in theology, he applied dialectics with emphasis on the historic economic evolution that society underwent. Thus Marx sought dialectical method where nothing can be final, absolute or sacred but rather where everything is transitory and conflict is everywhere.

2.1.5 Dialectical Materialism

Origin of
Dialectics

The term dialectics has Greek origins with the Greek indicating it as a method of dialogue. Dialectics was utilized as a method to get truth which otherwise could not be obtained through method of observation. Dialectics became popular in the 18th and 19th centuries when Hegel used the method to showcase interconnectedness between history, spirit and consciousness.

Hegel's Dialectics

Hegel's dialectic put forward a theory of development which stated that all things are interconnected, in a continuous state of motion and change and the general laws of motion are intrinsic to the development of history and the individual. An important aspect of Hegel's dialectics is that it viewed the world, its existence, and being as an interconnected process rather than seeing persons and things as separate and by themselves. This doctrine of interconnectedness became a theoretical basis for the dialectical view of history and reality.

Idealistic Dialectics

Dialectical materialism is often referred to as Hegelian dialectic and it is considered to be an idealistic dialectic of German philosophers with Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel. According to Hegel, human evolution consists of contrasts, negations and contradictions. Every stage in history gives birth to its opposite, the anti-thesis and out of conflict between thesis and anti-thesis results the synthesis which reconciles the opposite tendencies present in the earlier system on a new higher level. According to Hegel, "Contradiction is the moving principle of the world". Hegel's Dialectics makes sense of things in terms of their development through the resolution of contradictions and was applied to dialogues real or imagined, natural world and human history as well.

Hegel and Marx's Dialectics

Although Marx was initially influenced by the Hegelian philosophy, he criticized and rejected the Hegelian dialect as it was rooted in idealism and put forth his own doctrine of dialectics that was rooted in historical interpretation of history tracing the economic evolution that the society underwent. This dialectical materialism that Karl Marx put forward was in contradiction with Hegel's Dialectic. Marx never wrote a dedicated text on 'Dialectics', the Marxist developed a variety of interpretations on it.

The dialectical materialism developed by Marx seeks to explain everything in terms of contradictions of matter. From Hegel to Marx: "where contradiction is at work, there is the force of development"; this profound conception was first put forward by Hegel. For Hegel the process in the material world, in space and time, is nothing but the realization of the absolute idea, outside space and time. This idea develops, he thought, through a series of contradictions and which will manifest itself in the real world. Considering this, if things in space and time are forced to undergo a series of transformations and to arise and pass away one after another, that is because they are nothing but an

embodiment of a self-contradictory phase of the absolute idea. For Hegel the development of real things was due to the self-contradictoriness of their concepts. Where the concepts were self-contradictory the thing which realized that concept could not be stable but must eventually negate itself to turn into something else. Thus, instead of concepts of things in our minds, the things were themselves regarded as nothing but the realization of their concepts. Engels summed up the materialistic criticism of Hegel: "Hegel was not simply put aside. On the contrary, one started out from his revolutionary side, from the dialectical method but in its Hegelian form this method was unusable." Engels put forward the three major laws of dialectical materialism.

1. Law of unity and conflict of opposites
2. Law of transformation of quantity into quality
3. Law of negation of the negation

By criticizing Hegel's Dialectics did Engels arrive at the laws of dialectics. In order to understand the conceptual development of the laws; a contrast between the metaphysical – idealistic conception of materialism along with the dialectical materialism of Marx is essential. The following table is a representation of the same.

	Metaphysical	**Dialectical**
Are Phenomena interconnected? Is the world integral?	Objects and phenomena in nature and society are isolated, independent of each other	The world is an integral whole, where phenomena are mutually conditioned in accordance with the laws of matter in motion
Why does motion occur? What is the source of development?	The world moves solely due to the impact of an external force (impulse or God)	The source of the motion of matter lies in matter itself, development is a struggle of opposites: Law of the unity and conflict of opposites

Does anything new arise in the process of motion?	Nothing qualitatively new can arise, that which exists is only increased or reduced in quantitative terms	At a definite stage, quantitative changes lead to the emergence of a new quality: Law of the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa
What is the direction in motion and development?	Motion is circular, with perpetual repetitions of one and the same cycle	Development which seemingly repeats past stages but which in effect repeats them on a new and higher basis: Law of negation of the negation.

Table 2.1.1 Metaphysical and Dialectical Materialism

As Marx criticized and transitioned from the idealistic materialism of Hegel to dialectical materialism, Marx was able to renew and reinvent the dialectical method which is portrayed in Das Kapital:- "For Hegel the thought process is the creator of the real and for him the real is only the outward manifestation of the idea. In my view, on the other hand, the idea is nothing other than the material when it has been transformed and translated inside the human head. In Hegel's writings, dialectic stands on its head. You must turn it right way up again if you want to discover the rational kernel what is hidden away in the wrappings of mystification".

Here Marx called for a transition from the idealistic dialectics of German philosophers that was deeply rooted in the law of transformation of quantity into qualitative, law of interpenetration of opposites, the law of negation of negation, all three of which were developed by Hegel in his idealistic perspective as mere law of thoughts. The mistake as Marx put forth holds that the laws are foisted on nature and history as laws of thought rather than being deduced from them which is precisely how Marx put forward a scientific materialist dialectics

The philosophy of Marxism is that of Materialism. Marx did not stop at the 18th century materialism but rather raised it to a higher level. He enriched it with the learnings of the German classical philosophy of Hegel's system which in turn led to the materialism of Feuerbach. The main

accomplishment of this pursuit was the development of dialectics, that is the doctrine of development in its fullest, deepest and most comprehensive form. Marx developed the philosophical materialism to the full and extended the cognition of nature to include the cognition of human society as well. Marx's Historical materialism provided an alternative view regarding history and politics that is integral and scientifically harmonious theory which showcased the consequences of growth of forces of production and how out of one system of social life grows another higher system such as capitalism. For instance, capitalism grew out of Feudalism. That is just as man's knowledge is reflective of nature (developing matter) which exists independently of him and man's social knowledge (man's view on philosophical doctrines, religious, political and so forth) reflects the economic system of society.
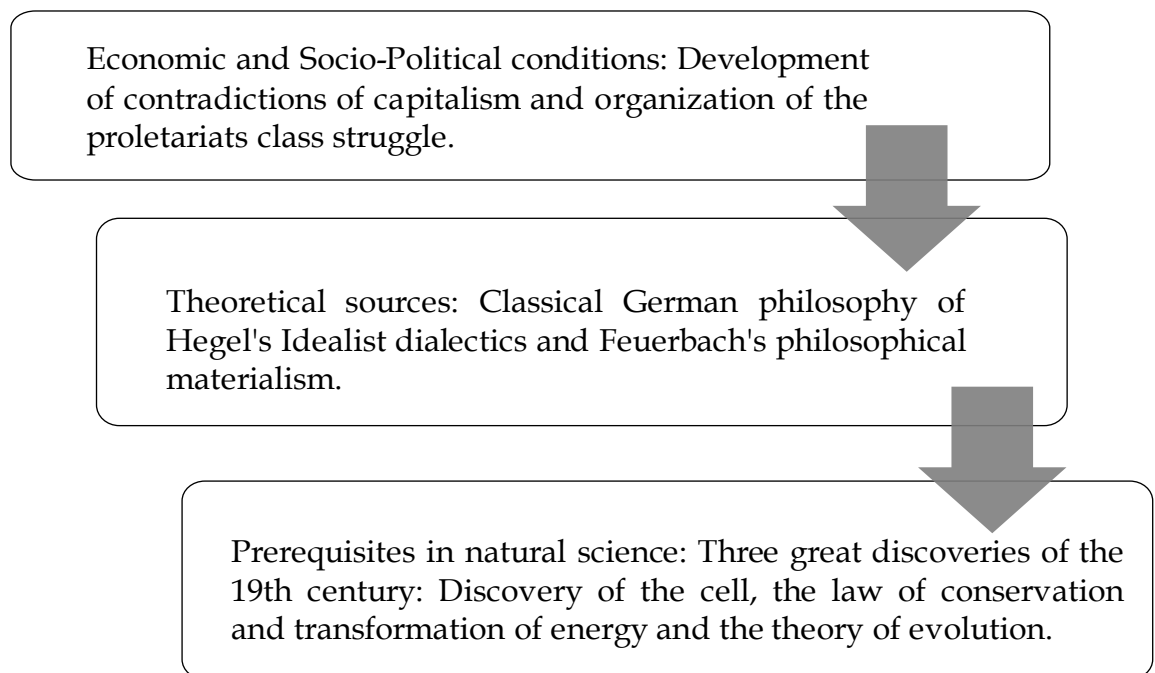
Alternative to Hegelian Dialectics

Economic and Socio-Political conditions: Development of contradictions of capitalism and organization of the proletariats class struggle.

Theoretical sources: Classical German philosophy of Hegel's Idealist dialectics and Feuerbach's philosophical materialism.

Prerequisites in natural science: Three great discoveries of the 19th century: Discovery of the cell, the law of conservation and transformation of energy and the theory of evolution.

Fig 2.1.1 Creation of Dialectical Materialism as a Revolution in Philosophy

2.1.4 Materialistic Interpretation of History

The Materialistic Interpretation of History is a philosophical approach to understanding the historical events and processes of human societies. This perspective argues that economic and material conditions are the driving forces of historical change, shaping the course of human civilization. According to this view, political, cultural, and ideological

factors are secondary to the material base of society. There are many examples of the materialistic interpretation of history. One such example is the rise of industrial capitalism in 18th and 19th centuries Europe, which led to the exploitation of the working class and the emergence of a new ruling class of industrialists and capitalists. The French Revolution is another example, as it was driven in large part by economic inequality and the rising discontent of the working class. The Marxist interpretation of the Russian Revolution also exemplifies this perspective, as it saw the Bolsheviks as a proletarian vanguard overthrowing the ruling class and establishing a socialist society.

With the varied criticism and interpretation that sought for an alternative for the idealistic dialectic by Hegel, Marx and Engels, more so Marx, utilized the dialectical methodology by Hegel to interpret history and explained the interconnectedness between the economic process and historical changes that the society underwent. This materialistic interpretation was outlined in his work *German Ideology*. Marx put forward three premises that led to his historical interpretation. First and foremost, Marx believed that the 'Act of Production' as a means to satisfy the basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter took precedence, secondly human beings distinguish themselves from animals as they are able to produce and satisfy their basic needs. Third the way in which humans engage in production depends on what they find in nature and what they need to produce in order to survive. On the basis of these three premises did Marx explain the social process by interlinking it with the economic processes of production in various historical stages.

Historical materialism is the terminology often used to describe the theoretical explanation of society and history by Marx. A quote from the preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (1859)* by Marx will showcase the scope of Marx's theory: "In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will. These relations of production correspond to a definite stage of the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, which is the real foundation on top of which arises a legal and political superstructure to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. It is not the consciousness of men, therefore, that determines their existence, but instead

their social existence determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development, the material forces of production in society come in conflict with the existing relations of production or what is but a legal expression of the same thing – with the property relations within which they had been at work before. From forms of development of forces of production these relations turn into their fetters. Then occurs a period of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed."

From the quote we can identify four concepts that are core to the materialist theory of history:-

1. Means of Production
2. Relations of Production
3. Mode of Production
4. Forces of Production

These form the basis for the materialistic theory of history

1) Means of Production

Each historical stage has had productive forces such as land, animals, tools and machinery which basically aid in satisfying their basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter. These are known as the means of production. For Marx any substance in the external world that can be used in the production of material needs and aid in sustenance is the means of production. By utilizing the means of production such as land or machinery the people in return get either food from the land or wage for the operation of machinery thus they are able to satisfy their needs. Man can only meet their economic needs by engaging with the means of production. Historically these means of production have determined the dominant class, as those who own the means of production have monopoly. The ownership of means of production is the fundamental determining factor of the materialistic theory of history as it leads to division of society into varying economic classes. Means of production divides the society into owners and non-owners of the means of production. According to Marx the non-owners of the means of production lack access to means of production for satisfying their material needs and are subject to physical labor.

Utilization of means of production

2) Relations of Production

Relations of production form the second concept in the

materialist theory of history. This is of importance as it binds one class to another. Marx often used the term to denote the connection between the way a society produces and the social roles that are allotted to the individual in production. Marx believed that the ownership of means of production created two distinctive roles of producers and non-producers or owners and non-owners. The non-owners are forced to enter into relations of productions to satisfy their essential needs. Another aspect is that historically the non-owners are forced to perform economically in order to maintain the dominant class. Another significant feature of relations of production is that the usage of means of production is governed by the owners thus restricting their means to freely produce. Marx identified three features key to the materialist theory of history in terms of relations of production: 1) ability to be transformed into relation of domination 2) their ability become physical and economic fetters for one class and an economic advantage for another 3) their ability to be controlled by sanctions that are legitimated by the political and legal structure of society.

Relation between producers and non - producers

The relation of production always manifests in societies and according to Marx, it tends to do so at particular stages of economic development and it is in line with what the society produces, thus the name relations of production. In the ancient society the relation of production was between patrician and slave and in the feudal system it was lords and serfs. In the capitalist society they are known as capitalist and wage laborers; the wage laborers produce surplus value for the class which rules over them.

Manifestation of relation of production

3) Mode of Production

According to Karl Marx, the mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. Marx's mode of production consisted of means of production (productive forces) and relation of production. For Marx social relations were interlinked with productive forces. When acquiring a new productive force (i.e means of production or men/labor with skills, experience and knowledge) men change their mode of production and the change in mode of production reciprocates to a change in the way they earn and their social relations; for example the hand mill establishes a society with feudal lord and a steam mill establishes a society with an industrial capitalist.

Composition of mode of production

Marx used the term mode of production to identify the primary elements in each historical stage where he

identified the productive forces, the economic force and how these dictated the social relation of the time. From this point of view, mode of production may be considered as how production dictates and determines social relationships. That is the way the society interacts in terms of its social activities and social institutions.

A distinction between forces of production and relations of production as these together defines mode of production. Forces of production may constitute instruments, equipment, land or tools which are utilized to produce a livelihood. Forces of production can only be put to work but they become operational only when the people enter into a relation of production. Thus relation of production is basically about how the forces of production must be used to produce. A key idea regarding the relation of production is that one class will always have ownership of the means of production which they will have the other (those who do not own the means of production) engage in. This produces two major conditions regarding the relations of production, that is, those who own the means of production will exercise control over the labor and the products of the laborer. This exercise of power may be identified in each stage of history. In the ancient mode this meant that the dominant class or those who owned the means of production had control over the forces of production which made it possible for them to transform the non-dominant to slaves; Likewise in the feudal system, landlords and serfs and in the capitalist society owners and laborers.

Another characteristic of mode of production is the ability to determine social relationships. In the feudal system the primary source of necessities was through cultivation and hence two groups were created: that of the lords and serfs which displayed an unbalanced relation of production that is due to one class owning the forces of production. Mode of production aided Marx to visualize the primary economic elements that persisted in each historical stage and how it led to the formation of social relationship in each stage. He believed that the construction of each historical stage as those who own the means of production and those who do not own the means of production is a law of historical development. In order to prove this, he divided the society into three essential stages of ancient, feudal and capitalist. Each stage has three central tendencies:

1. They divide the society into classes, in which one class

Engaging mode of production

Forces of production

Determining social relationships

dominates the other.

2. This leads to social, political and economic inequalities.

3. In every stage the unequal social relations are supported by religion, law and the political structure.

Materialistic conception of history

Marx laid out the basic premise for the materialistic conception of history. He confirmed this by demarking and establishing the historical development of society from an economic perspective. Marx envisioned history as having different forms of ownership which he distinguished in all four stages of history: primitive (Hunting and gathering), ancient (slavery), feudal and capitalist modes of production. Marx held that each stage of historical development had three characteristics:

1. System of production and division of labor
2. Forms of property ownership
3. A system of class relations

Mode of production in primitive society

Primitive: in the first stage of history the system of production that existed was primitive and rudimentary. The idea of private property or ownership did not exist. People lived together and satisfied their basic needs through hunting and gathering. Social structure was derived from family and kinship. As property was communal there was no system of class relations. This stage had a classless society, the system of production was egalitarian as members were cooperative, with the means of production being collectively realized. Thus there was no exploitation as well.

Ancient society: this form arose from an association of tribes who formed an organization of association of city states which then gave rise to political and civil structures. The productive system is dominantly agrarian with a primitive industry that engaged in minimal trade and commerce. Private property and ownership of property in this stage gave rise to class relation. This led to the creation of classes, one of those who owned property and other who produced physical labor: citizens and slaves. The division into classes gave form to slave labor as the primary form of labor. This type of society had a vast territory with extensive division of labor. They also maintained civic, political and military authority as a result of the productive system. Ownership

Slave owners and slaves

was limited to a small class of military elite who maintained their power position with the acquisition of more territories thus having at their disposal an ever widening means of production. In this stage the prevailing relation was between the slave owners (elites) and slaves. As slaves died off they were replaced with new slaves from other newer territories. The elites or the slave owners enjoyed the labors of the slaves in the form of profit and grew their wealth.

Feudal society: Agriculture was the main occupation of this society. There were no means of industry. Here the prevailing relation was that of the aristocrats and serfs. Ownership of land and property was strictly limited to the aristocratic class. The serfs were engaged in physical labor for the aristocrats. The landholders were provided with social, political and legal backing which allowed the landholders (aristocrats) to exercise power over the class of serfs.

Lords and serfs

Capitalist society: The coming of the capitalist society led to the destruction of the feudal system, but the aristocrats still exercised control over the means of production as they transformed to industrialists, bourgeois and capitalists whereas the landless serfs were transformed to waged laborers who still engaged in labor for the capitalist in turn for a minimum wage. Here the productive system was based upon an advanced division of labor. Here towns were centers of economic activities. There was a shift from agriculture to industry with political and civil life developing around this facet. Private property and ownership led to a class system of capitalists who owned the means of production. The means of production in this stage consisted mostly of machinery, technology and the factory system. Ownership of economic forces. The capitalist class derived their wealth from the class of wage laborers (proletariat) who were the primary producers. Wage labor was the form of exploitation that existed in this stage.

Ownership of means of production

According to Marx the next stage would be when the economic contradiction inherent in the class system will be so great that the overworked and underpaid wage class (proletariat) will form a class constituting potential revolutionary change and this will set into motion the transition from capitalism to socialism.

Socialism

Summarised Overview

Karl Marx revolutionised the theory of society by interpreting it in terms of different historical stages. To do so Marx refined and reframed the dialectical methodology. In doing so, he demarked each historical stages in terms of the means of production, relation of production and modes of production. Marx was able to establish that the modes of production were detrimental in determining the social relation and hierarchy. As long as there is monopoly in the ownership of means of production the society will always be based upon inequalities and contradictions that will negate and reestablish the persisting system with a different stage that is dictated by a new relation of production. Karl Marx put forth social revolution as a solution with which the capitalist society may be replaced with a socialist society.

Assignments

1. Evaluate the different influences upon Marx that led to the historical interpretation of history.
2. Contrast and discuss the idealistic materialism and historical materialism.
3. Discuss the laws of dialectics.
4. Elaborate on the different stages of mode of production.
5. Explain the core concepts of the historical interpretation of history.

Suggested Readings

1. (1987). Marxist – Leninist Philosophy, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
2. (1984). Karl Marx – A biography, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
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Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

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Theory of Class and Class Struggle, Alienation, Commodity Fetishism

Learning Objectives

On completion the learner will be able to:

♦ To narrate the concept of class scientifically under different social circumstances
♦ To expose the underpinnings of alienation in modern society
♦ To make them aware of the nuances of a capitalist society

Background

By the middle of the 19th century, the capitalist mode of production had dominated Britain, France, and, to a significant extent, Germany. The rise of the capitalist mode of production logically led to the proletariat's emergence in the socio-political sphere. Through exploitation and alienation, the revolution resulted in this social change. Karl Marx's greatest contribution to modern understanding of social structure and change is his theory of social class. According to Marx, a social class is any group of people who work together to do the same activity in the production system. As capitalist relations of production developed, it became clear that they were antagonistic and that there were insurmountable contradictions between labour and capital. It led to the proletariat becoming a major socio-political force in the 1830s and 1840s. Karl Marx expressed his idea of class struggle between capitalists and workers in his work, *The Communist Manifesto.* In fact, Marxian Sociology is often called "the Sociology of class conflict." The idea of class war emerges from the theories of dialectical materialism, materialistic interpretation of history, and surplus value.

Keywords

Conflict, Antagonism, Revolution, Communism

Discussion

2.2.1 Theory of class struggle

Every stage in history witness war between class

According to Karl Marx; class war has shaped society as it has existed up until now. "Freeman and slave, patrician and plebian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, or, in other words, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another and engaged in an ongoing, occasional, hidden battle that frequently resulted in either the collective ruin of the contending classes or a revolutionary re-constitution of society." The modern capitalist society that has emerged from the ruins of feudal society has not eliminated class antagonisms, and this is where Marx formed his theory of class struggle.

Social class in Capitalist Society

Marx and Engels argued that society is divided into two hostile camps that are opposing each other: the bourgeoisie (capitalists) and the proletariat (workers). The class division of society under capitalism has its place in the historically established system of social production. People who produced goods and those who appropriated the products of others' labour were divided into owners and non-owners by private property. All the means of production are owned by the bourgeoisie, which is the predominant, ruling, and leading class; the working class, that owns the labour, ispredominantly subordinate or oppressed. Basically, one depicts the obsolescent mode of production, while the other represents the emerging order.

Importance of Property

To Marx, the most distinctive characteristic of any society is its system of property, and the crucial determinant of an individual's behaviour is his relation to property. Marx did not regard property only as a means for an owner to exercise their property rights or as the subject of such action, and he emphasised property as an essential relationship that has a central role in the complex system of class and social systems. Based on a person's relationship to the means of production, classes are established. According to Marx and Engels, changes in property forms characterise the successors of socio-economic formations. Based on a person's relationship to the means of production, classes are established.

The bourgeois epoch

History has shown that the bourgeoisie has significantly contributed to revolutions. The bourgeoisie cannot survive without continuously revolutionising the means of production and, through them, the production relations, and along with them, the entire set of social interactions. The bourgeoisie has removed the halo from the profession that was formerly honoured and held in respectful awe. It has turned scientists, doctors, lawyers, priests, and other professionals into its wage slaves. The bourgeoisie has ripped away the sentimental curtain of the family, reducing relationships to purely economic considerations. The bourgeoisie is constantly creating more powerful means of production. Even if the capitalist economy is able to generate more and more, the mass of people nevertheless lives in poverty. This contradiction eventually led to uncertainty and agitation. In short, the core features of a capitalist society are the dominance of commodity-money relations and private property, the existence of a well-developed social division of labour, an increase in the production process, the transformation of labour into a commodity, and the exploitation of hired labour capitalists.

Pauperisation of proletariat

In history's capitalist society, the "working class" is a class of hired labourers who live off the proceeds of their labour and generate the majority of the society's material wealth while also being exploited by the capitalist system. The proletarians tend to grow poorer and poorer as the forces of production are developed. As labour is exploited more and more, the proletariat becomes increasingly poor. The relative impoverishment of workers is an inherent feature of the capitalist system as a whole. According to Marx, the proletariat, which constitutes and is increasingly constituting the vast majority of the population, will evolve into a class, or a social group, with aspirations for power and a change in social relations.

Polarisation of classes

Pauperisation and exploitation of workers become a root cause of the revolutionary nature of the working class: the fact that it is deprived of ownership of the means of production and is thus the object of capitalist exploitation, as well as its subsequent subordination in the production process. Its effects lead to significant class polarisation in the capitalist society; the bourgeoisie and proletariat were the two great hostile camps. However, as class consciousness develops and at the height of the conflict, the petty bourgeois and lumpenproletariat will be drawn from their possessions and dream of joining the ranks of the proletariat.

Class antagonism

Class consciousness increases along with social relations' tendency to crystallise into two groups, internal class homogeneity, and the intensity of the class struggle. With the expansion of industry, the proletariat's position increased, not only in size. Instead, it became concentrated in the masses, its power increased, and the proletariat's various interests and living conditions became more and more equalised. However, as wealth and technology advance, the worker and the bourgeois become more vulnerable to conflict between the two groups.

Revolution

A violent revolution that brings down capitalist society comes at the height of class conflict. The revolution is most likely to occur at the height of economic crisis. Marx insisted that it will be brought about by the convergence of conflict between capitalist and new productive forces straining for freedom and less impersonally between higher and lower classes within the old order, until the exploited class and the new dominant class are the same at the level of the socialist revolution.

Dictatorship of proletariat

This led to the period of revolutionary transition of one society into another, which can be found between capitalism and communist societies. This was a period of political transition in which the state can only be the proletariat's revolutionary dictatorship. Although the revolution will be violent, there will not be widespread bourgeois murders; instead, the bourgeois will lose their position and power. In order to consolidate the victories of the revolution, a social dictatorship is thus established as a result of history's inevitability of destroying class division. Marx saw a social dictatorship as a sort of workers' democracy.

Communism

Marx believed that the state would eventually disappear and that society would become more classless. Everyone owns everything, yet nobody owns anything. Each person gives according to his or her capacity and receives in accordance with their needs. Communism is the real appropriation of human nature through and for man as it is the positive abolition of private property, of human self-alienation.

2.2.2 Marx's Theory of Alienation

Karl Marx's claims on economics and human nature inspired him to observe class struggle which further led to the formulation of his famous theory of alienation. Marx saw

alienation as a critique towards capitalism. According to Karl Marx, if capitalism is exploitative it is alienating too. At the most fundamental level, alienation can be conceptualised as the loss of control through the detachment from a vital aspect of the self, and more exactly, as the dissociation of an actor or agent from the prerequisites for meaningful agency.

The isolation of the majority of producers from the means of production is the most significant of these divisions in capitalist society, and it is the one that ultimately underlies many, if not most, other kinds. The majority of individuals lack the tools needed to manufacture things. In other words, they lack the resources needed to sustain and replicate their existence. Instead, a relatively small number of people own the means of production (capitalists). The majority of people only have access to the means of production when they are hired by the proprietors of those means to produce under circumstances that are not set by the producers themselves.

Marx does not intend for alienation to just denote a mind-set or a personal sense of helplessness. Although alienation can be experienced, understood, avoided, and even fought, Marx is not only interested in its subjective state. The objective pattern of experience and action in a capitalist society is alienation. Without it, a capitalist society is impossible. People must be integrated into this system, and even better, they must grow to see it as normal and right. This is a requirement of capitalism in its purest form. Eliminating the fundamental framework that separates producers from the means of production is the only way to end alienation.

a) Alienation Types

(i) **Alienation from labour:** The first sign of alienation is a lack of attachment to the labour result. In a capitalist society, the producer loses what is produced—the objectification of labour. "Objectification becomes the loss of the object," said Marx. The object is a loss in the very commonplace and human sense that it is produced and then becomes the property of someone else in the same act. In this instance, alienation takes the very particular historical form of the division of worker and owner. What a worker generates quickly passes from our control and into the possession of someone else. It can and frequently does become an external and independent power since the worker has no control over it.

In the capitalist notion majority are workers and hence the coming examples and explanations use 'I' in terms of the worker for better understanding.

Non-expressive labour

I lose control over my life-activity when I work, is the alienation from the action of labour. In addition to losing control over the product I create, I also lose control over the process of creating it. My work is not an act of self-expression. My actions have nothing to do with what I want to do, how I want to express myself, who I am or want to be, or any other aspect of who I am or want to be. The only connection between the activity and me is that it allows me to eat and have a roof over my head. Life-activity is not what I do with my life. It is only a tool for survival and self-preservation. According to Marx, in the case of alienated labour, people are dehumanised to the point of being treated like animals that just exist to fulfil physical needs.

Repetition of labour

Being cut off from my life's work also means that someone else is in charge of it. Someone else, the foreman, the engineer, the corporate headquarters, the board of directors, international competitors, the global market, and the very equipment I'm using decide what I'm going to do, how I'm going to do it, for how long, and with whom. What will be done with my product is likewise decided by someone else. And for the most, majority of my waking hours here on earth, I must perform my duty. What they claim I have agreed to do as a free worker and what might and should be free conscious work become forced labour. It is required because I have a need and the other person has the resources to meet all of my needs. Consequently, my relationship to my own behaviour makes it seem foreign to me and untruly my, which it isn't. When I keep doing the same thing over and over again to the point where I am only able to think or feel about the passing minutes till it is time to stop, I do not actually belong here. The true me yearns to be employed.

Fake humanism

Only in class society is there such an association between labour under conditions of alienation and anguish, and leisure under conditions of idleness or sloth. All of our talents are divided up into employable skills. We use pseudo-humanist lingo to express the same reality when we refer to "human resources" or youth as "our most valuable resource." Human labour is transformed into a commodity that can be bought and sold like any other.

My actions change into other people's activities. A division

between unnatural work and "leisure," which is for us an escape from working, occurs ultimately in life. Since our own life activity turns into an alien influence over our existence, activity as a whole obtains a bad reputation. In our "free time," even when we are alone, we frequently avoid it. Free time itself frequently becomes associated with freedom from activity due to the necessity of action. Freedom is frequently associated with consumerism, mindless entertainment, or simply blowing off steam, as opposed to action and production.

Even a tool or a slave can be employed for a variety of tasks. However, by the time capitalism reaches its pinnacle, human activities can become more dehumanised than those of a tool: you become an accessory to a machine, merely a component of a tool, a cog in the enormous machine of production.

(ii) Alienation from the product: The worker not only lose control over the product he/she manufactures when he/she produces anything as a commodity (for the owner of the means of production), but he/she also creates something that is incompatible to him/her. The capitalist has control over the customers/buyers because he/she owns the products that the proletariats make. Here, we're not just referring to products made for immediate consumption. In a nutshell, we are discussing the actual manufacture of the means of production. Workers produce the means of production, while owners have ultimate control over them.

In a way we all are workers, who work in one or other sector. Let us set an example. There is more productive power available for someone else to own and control the more we, the workers, produce. We give someone else the ability to control us. He/she exercises his/her authority over us by using what we have produced. They have more and we have less as we generate more. If I receive a salary, I may labour for forty or fifty years and still not have significantly more money at the end of it than I did at the beginning, and neither would any of my co-workers. Where did all of this labour go? While some has gone toward keeping us alive so that we may continue to work, a significant amount has gone into the wider reproduction of the means of production.

When I sell my labour, I give up control over the output; this also refers to the impersonal, inhuman force of the laws of

Freedom becomes an endowment

Control over the produced goods

Absence of the utility of labour

production. I am subject to the rules of capitalist production. The boss, the capitalist owner himself, can simply be seen as the agent of deeper, more mysterious, and hidden forces. When he tells me that I am no longer needed, his justification would be about the shutting down the business or issues of debt. Actually this gesture is not more than just an explanation or reason. The capitalist is not a god, but rather a priest who benefits greatly from serving the interests of capital. He must also jump when the god speaks, or else he will find himself in my position. Therefore, it's "nothing personal" between him (capitalist) and me. But this is the actual issue, not an explanation.

(iii) Alienation from the self: The third facet of alienation, which is the estrangement from the self or from the essence of humanity, is therefore a result of and is influenced by alienation from the product as well as from the action of labour. Not just the product develops into an alien force. Self-improvement does not have to turn into self-denial. A loss of self is internally tied to these people.

I Lose my life's work, which is my whole existence, by being compelled to sell it as a commodity on the open market. It is to make me into someone else. Sometimes we use language of the search for identity and authenticity, of not understanding who we are or not realising who we have become. Other times, we speak innocently enough of being beside ourselves or feeling distant from ourselves.

(iv) Alienation from society: As a result, we arrive at the fourth factor—alienation from society or other people. When the traditional community, which saw itself as natural, is destroyed, people essentially become potentially useful or dangerous objects. In a new sense, one can now have enemies. Only when primitive communism falls apart does man turn into a wolf to man. One of Hobbes's favourite aphorisms was "Man is a wolf to man" (homo homini lupus). In "primitive" societies and between such communities, "wolf-like" behaviour can and does happen, but it is not the guiding principle of those societies. Class societies do make it the main structuring principle. Although it is difficult to argue that there is a worsening of class conflict in the market, there is undoubtedly a rise in interpersonal conflict.

b) Dehumanization aspects of alienation

From a Marxian point of view, we are dealing with

something social and historical rather than something metaphysical or existential. At a deeper level still, our genuine loss of humanity—or, as Marx sometimes refers to it, our alienation from the human "species-being"—is expressed in our sense of loss of identity or purpose. Marxists refer to this as one aspect of de-humanization. Another facet of alienation from oneself that Marx touches on in the Manuscripts but ignores in his later writing is one that is nevertheless significant on an implicit level. And it might be most appropriate to talk about it in relation to self-alienation. This additional factor is alienation from sensuality.

Non-physical levels of alienation

Marx sees the development of human senses as one aspect of the history of human labour, among other things. Sensible experience changes into a changeable sign for things and relations that can be converted into money, the sign of everything, under alienated labour. We only consider things from the perspective of how they can be used because our activity has degraded to the point of mechanical subservience to basic requirements, or because we have perhaps become aesthetes in response. Or we start to associate something with a high price with beauty or aesthetic worth. The alleged aesthetic value of something can impress us because it is expensive.

Impressions and expensiveness

We no longer have an eye for the thing itself because we relate to everything, including the objects of sense and beauty, in terms of their utility to the further reproduction of capital. We are made to relate to ourselves and each other in this way because we are primarily oriented to parts of the world whose monetary value makes them essentially interchangeable. We start comparing how much money we can make to one another and to ourselves. Or certain aspects of ourselves can be ranked in this manner. Even while we are still capable of doing so, our capacity to perceive and value something's inherent features is declining. The dehumanisation of humans is not unrelated to the dehumanisation of the senses, perception, and judgement.

Comparisons and judgements

Eliminating the fundamental framework that separates producers from the means of production is the only way to end alienation. As a result, alienation has both objective and subjective aspects. Similar to how someone can experience alcoholism or schizophrenia without realising it, one can also experience it. However, this circumstance cannot be avoided in a capitalist society (without escaping capitalist society). Marx claims that even the capitalist suffers alienation, but

Alienation of capitalists

in a different way from how the worker does, which is as an "activity." However, because the capitalist's sense of alienation is unlikely to call into question the institutions that support that system, Marx pays little attention to it.

2.2.3 Commodity Fetishism

Economic relationships and social relationships

Marxist philosophy explains the concept of commodity fetishism in a unique and different way. The word fetishism indicates extravagant irrational devotion. Similar attraction is generated in people towards the products/commodities in a capitalist society. Hence commodity fetishism is defined as the economic relationships of production and exchange that exist as social relationships which occur among things like money and merchandise. It doesn't sustain like relationships that exist among people.

Imposed value

Fetishism in anthropology is defined as the primitive belief that godly powers/energy can exist in inanimate things, for example totems. (A totem is an object (such as an animal or plant) serving as the symbol of a family or clan and often as a notice of its ancestry.) Karl Marx borrowed this concept to make sense of 'commodity fetishism.' He says that commodity is simple and valuable as long as it possesses its use-value. Explaining a bit more, when a piece of rock transforms as a beautiful statue by human labour, its use-value is clear and in terms of a product, it remains good for the material use and aesthetic enjoyment. The fetishism that consumers have towards the statue is not for the labour it has undergone.

Value of labour

A commodity has a 'magical' quality, just like in the case of totem, which apparently elevates its existence. A thing "emerges as a commodity, it changes into a thing which transcends sensuousness," Marx says. When the statue (the produced commodity) reaches the hands of the consumer, it is not presented with the value of the real amount of labour implied on it. The product is detached from the history of its labour, which implies the rejection of the labourer.

Capitalist and labourers relationship

Marx explains, "The mysterious character of the commodity-form consists therefore simply in the fact that the commodity reflects the social characteristics of men's own labour as objective characteristics of the products of labour themselves, as the socio-natural properties of these things". The social relation between people capitalists and the exploited labourers could be assumed as a 'fantastic form of relation between things'.

Invisible labour force

The real producers or labourers of commodities remain largely invisible. The customers or consumers can approach the products of the proletariat (workers) only through the exchange of money. Money or profit hides the social nature/ character of private labour and the social relations between the individual workers appear as the relation between material objects.

Anonymity in capitalist society

In a capitalist society, gold and paper money are direct manifestations of all human labour, similar to the direct incarnation of holiness to a totem in primitive societies. Men are related to each other in the whole social process of production in an atomistic/individualistic way and become alienated because of their own relations of production. People in a capitalist society are made to believe that they are not in control of the market forces that appear to operate independent of any particular person, even if value eventually accrues as a result of human labour.

Materialistic obsessions

Thus by definition, commodity fetishism is the tendency of attributing a power to commodities (including money). Commodity fetishism is the condition in which production is no longer seen as a social endeavour. The production exists as the simple exchange of money and commodities: A concept coined by Marx denoting society's extreme obsession or mania with material objects.

Hidden aspects of labour

For example, the food commercials or other ads of today appear to be very personal and close to us as it infuses various cuisines and delicacies in the fast food era. We get to see a burger in its most appealing way with bun, lettuce, patty etc. We recognise it as an entity with a reasonable price, which comes with coke and fries. We don't get actual or direct tours of the industrial agricultural process that makes the production of burger happen. And if we did, we might not buy those burgers.

Whole world with a price tag

The world is dictated by commodities and their price tags and money is the most vital aspect of it. The basic levels of all production processes are hidden or concealed, rather we are not made to bother about it. Another important point is that commodities are in a competition to each other and they transform the whole social order to a uniform one. The 'world' becomes an entity with a price tag. Commodity fetishism is rather more complicating because it complicates the relationship of humans to production and the relationship of capitalists to workers.

Every class conflict, according to Marx, is a political conflict. This means that if the proletariat and capitalists are engaged in an economic conflict today, they will be forced to engage in a political conflict tomorrow in order to defend their respective class interests in a conflict with dual manifestations. According to Marxian class theory, an individual's position within a class hierarchy is defined by their function in the production process, and class position determines political and ideological consciousness. In a capitalist society, individuals engage in specific, essential interactions in the social production of their means of subsistence that are independent of their will and productive relationships that are related to a specific level of development of their material productive powers. The sum of these productive ties makes up society's economic structure, which is the true foundation from which a superstructure of law and government emerges and to which specific types of social consciousness are related. The manner in which the physical necessities of life are produced affects every aspect of social, political, and intellectual life.

Marx believed that class conflict was an expression of history's dialectical essence. As capitalism grows, the class conflict becomes more pronounced. In capitalist society, various manifestations of class antagonism are observed. First, there is an economic form. Through this kind of labourers' organisation, the proletariat fights the bourgeoisie. There is also a political form. In this arrangement, the proletariat has its own party and works to transform the system via democracy. There is also an ideological conflict. In this manner, the proletariat makes an effort to change the outdated political structure to fit modern social demands. Other types of conflict also exist. These forms exist and are not mutually exclusive.

Assignments

1. Prepare notes on the emergence of the proletarian class in capitalist society.
2. Critically evaluate the state of communism: "Everyone owns everything, yet nobody owns anything."
3. Explain the "exploitation of the proletariat" in a capitalist society.
4. Evaluate the fetishist tendencies of people in the current day life
5. Do commodities decide the aesthetic or fetishist sense of human beings.
6. Explain the alienation process in relation to Marxian theory.
7. What is the significance of the alienation from self according to Karl Marx's theory.

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UNIT 3

Theory of Social Change

Learning Objectives

♦ To understand the concept of social change and its influence in society
♦ To make aware of Marxian interpretation of social change
♦ To analyse the causes and consequences of social revolution

Background

We constantly deal with social change in our everyday lives. This is mainly due to the fact that our society is always evolving. Social change and the idea of social transformation are linked to each other. Marx found the idea of social change on the basis of his historical materialism – a materialistic view of history, that was already covered in the preceeding section. The theory of social change explains the answers to some issues such as, why does one society transform into another? How do society's controlling forces evolve? Are societal changes caused by accident, or are they imposed by need or unchanging laws? The simple class conflict model postulated that, an inherent conflict of interests between bourgeois and proletariat leads inevitably to a heightening of class consciousness and the possibility of revolutionary practice.

Keywords

Social Transformation, Revolution, Conflict, Economic force

2.3.1 Theory of Social Change

Capitalist society

Marx described capitalism as a system structured where the mode of production and the conflicts that result from the coexistence of privately owned economic forces and collective social relations of production are the dominant factors. The 'communist manifesto' uses the dichotomic structure of class forces to express this law, which attributes social development to internal contradictions within the 'base' and 'superstructure' models. According to this law, capitalist society is divided into two 'hostile camps' with irreconcilable interests.

Marx on dialectical and historical materialism

Thus, it is possible for the law of the falling rate of profit to co-exist with the rising total profit, and it is evident that Marx does not postulate a simple breakdown theory. Engel's understanding of historical materialism is that, the 'ultimate cause' of a society's economic development is in changes to its modes of production and exchange, labour division and division into rival social classes. Engel's described Marxism as the elimination of the creative human agent, economic determinism and the inevitable operations of society's infrastructure. This is obviously a misreading given to both Marx's methodological stance in capital and his reliance on the active role of ideas and the superstructure in the development of social change. Since historical laws only arise as a result of individual and collective human actions, social evolution is not always matched to the operation of economic laws. Of course, socio – historical laws can be analysed as objective results of extra -human forces; but such mystification and reification are external to Marx's thought. Although the positivist movement in the 9th century, had a significant impact on socialist thought, Engels was primarily responsible for rejecting the active role of agents in favour of economic determination. As a result, Marx's concept of diachronic historical laws is not positivist.

Marx and Positivism

Marx's theory of social change cannot be assimilated to this positivist reading; his theories of class formation, conflict and awareness continue to revolve around the active and creative function of the agent. Marx sees people as active producers of the social world who change the outside world as they change themselves, not as isolated individuals or as agents of their own free will, but as members of social groups and classes. And although he argues that the course of social development hinges on the objective application of

science and technology to production, it is humanity which ultimately changes the world.

> Marx writes, "nature builds no machines, no locomotives, railways…These are the products of human industry; natural material transformed into organs of the human will over nature or of human participation in nature. They are organs of the human brain, created by human hand; the power of knowledge objectified.

Evolution of society

Marx argues that capitalism successfully liberate civil society from the control of the state and encourages the development of distinct, independent spheres. The new industrial classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, create their own unique institutions, political organisations and modes of activity. The expansion of human practice made possible by capitalism as a mode of production allowed people to become reflective and active within their own unique institutions such as labour unions, political parties and cultural and economic organsations. The idea of modernity the relationship between proactive, self-aware individuals and novel modes of societal organization and society as a dynamic, complex system in development is implicit here.

2.3.2 Marx's theory of social change - functions

Functions of social change

1. There is a fundamental contradiction that exists in every society. In feudal society, this contradiction was between the agrarian landowning nobility and nascent, expanding bourgeoisie that was concentrated in urban areas and engaged in production and exchange activities that called for a market – oriented competitive society. In capitalism, socialised production and the exploitation of labour contain the womb of a new social order based on collectivism and socialist political organization. This is Marx's womb theory of social transformation when new forms of production come into conflict with old traditional ones.

2. The social structural level is a middle level made up of institutions, social classes and interpersonal conflicts.

3. The third level is the action level, which is concerned with people's capacities for inventive, purposeful and reflexive behaviours.

Social change and Human action

Marx noted for example that it was 'conscious life activity' which distinguished 'man from animal life-activity'. By including this in micro level, Marx introduced a 'probabilistic' element into his theory of social change: for if social change occurs solely at the system level, then it works through determining laws which allow for prediction on outcomes. But if human action is included then change is far less deterministic and predictable.

Society and social transformation

Marx thus defined society as a framework in which objective laws operate independently and frequently in opposition to the will of individuals. Marx emphasised that capitalism makes human practice control and planning possible as well as the active involvement of the human subject in historical development. According to Marx, rules are man-made, not nature and can thus be drastically altered by human action. Marx's sociological model includes human behaviour and practice into the systematic structure of collectivist and historically require forces, but it is these latter forces that tend to dominate his theory of social transformation.

Criticism on dialectics and historicist notions

This is the contradiction which lies at the heart of Marx's dialectical social theory illuminating the problems of the democratic strands in the theory of civil society – that change evolves through the collective, democratic actions or ordinary individuals seeking to develop their own social, political and cultural institutions – and the strongly collectivist elements of the capitalist social and economic order which suggest the eclipse of individuality and representative institutions. Marx failed to resolve the contradictions in his thought between the historicist notion of economic necessity and his humanist Sociology.

Hegel's idealism

According to Hegel, evolution proceeds according to a system of three stages, thesis, antithesis and synthesis. Hegel used this completely ideological presupposition to 'unveil' the historical process by which 'reason' or 'spirit' finds happiness in society. Hegel viewed 'spirit' as the driving force behind change where Marx substituted 'material' conditions or the 'economic' aspect. Hegel's idealism is opposed by his materialism.

According to Marx and Hegel, every social and cultural stage is unstable. For Hegel it is an inadequate manifestation of the spirit's desire for freedom and fulfilment, and for Marx, it is the economic order that depends on productive forces that takes on new forms. Each stage therefore contains

the seeds of its own decay, and they ripen into the opposing order of its antithesis, the counter movement which asserts those aspects denied by the former. However, the antithesis is also a development of what the thesis implied. It reaches a higher degree and creates the 'synthesis' of the two through suppression. Here is the eternal process of evolution. The most intriguing aspect of the entire Marxist theory is that, the mechanism of change that has worked through out history no longer works. We enter the era of liberty when classes and class conflict are abolished, when material forces no longer rule humanity, instead the human beings become the 'masters of themselves'.

Unstable social change

Summarised Overview

When individuals join into specific, necessary and autonomous relationships, they engage in social production. These relationships of production correspond to a specific stage of development of their material capacities of production. The whole of these production interactions makes up society's economic structure, which serves as the true base upon which the legal and political superstructures and distinct social consciousness are built. The way things are produced in the tangible world affects how people interact socially, politically, and spiritually. Contrary to popular belief, human social existence determines their consciousness rather than the other way round. The material forces of production in society eventually clash with the established production relations or to use the legal term for the same thing, with the property relations within which they had been operating. These relationships change from ways in which the forces of production evolve into their chains. Then comes the period of social revolution. The entire superstructure changes more or less quickly as the economic underpinning changes.

Assignments

1. Discuss Social Change.
2. Briefly discuss Marx's methodological explanation of superstructure model.
3. 'Marx's concept of diachronic historical laws is not Positivist'. Evaluate the statement.
4. Discuss Marxian perspective on 'Theory of Social change.'
5. Explain Marx's materialistic ideology on social evolution in society.

Suggested Readings

1. Morrison.(2007). K, Marx, Durkheim, Weber: Formations of Modern Social Thought, USA: Sage Publication.
2. Turner. J, Beeghley L and Powers. C. (2007). The Emergence of Sociological Theory 6th Edition, USA : Thomson Wadsworth.

References

1. Ebenstein, W. (1970). *Modern Political Thought: The Great Issues.* New York: Rinehart & Company.
2. Losurdo, D. (2016). *Class Struggle: A Political and Philosophical History.* United States: Palgrave Macmillan.
3. Hughes, John. et.al. (1995). *Understanding Classical Sociology: Marx, Weber, Durkheim.* USA: Sage Publication

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding of the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

Max Weber: Interpretivism

Verstehen and Ideal type, Types of Social Action

Learning Objectives

- ♦ To introduce the Verstehen method, Ideal type and types of social action of Max Weber
- ♦ To narrate the evolution and dimensions of the concept Verstehen
- ♦ To explain the characteristics of Ideal type
- ♦ To expose the types of social action

Background

18th century Europe witnessed radical intellectual, social and political upheavals. Changes influenced all walks of social life because of the harmonising rational and empirical methods of discovering truth announced by the scientific revolution. Reasoning and rationality gained importance and people began to observe the importance of the existence of 'man or woman' and his/her individuality. The ideas of John Locke, Rene Descartes and Thomas Hobbes brought the notions of democracy as subjects of public discourses. This threatened the monarchical power structure of the Church in European society. When science became the central piece of social discourse, it started getting circulated in common-man's spaces. "I think, therefore I am" said Rene Descartes; the French philosopher, mathematician and scientist. His notion encompasses the crux of 17th and 18th centuries humanitarian thoughts which were anti-religious. This accelerated the antipathy towards religious dogma which later resulted in the Protestant reformation.

By the late 17th century there had been a twofold development in academia which gave hope for the democratisation of scientific knowledge. By the end of the 18th century, Adam Smith's economic ideas provided the intellectual basis for the development of modern capitalism. Meanwhile, German sociologist Max Weber developed the notions of the spiritual affinity between Capitalism and religiosity. Weber observed that modern societies, especially Europe, had been obsessed with modernisation, industrialisation, efficiency

etc. Modernisation has the hazardous impulse to get things done, no matter what the questions of ethics or morality be. The lack of subjectivity, affection, empathy and understanding were slowly making the social life miserable and creating innumerable social problems. The Verstehen method and anti-positivist Sociology developed by the late 19th century identified the flaws in the cultural research. Till then, cultural research had been trying to imitate the same way of natural scientists.

Keywords

Anti-positivism, Pragmatism, Hermeneutics, Syncretism, Social reality, Empirical reality, Ideal type, Social action

Discussion

Methods to study society

From the earlier units you are familiar with the importance of the positivistic approach in Sociology. In the former units you have gone through Comte's and Durkheim's scientific method of studying society. Positivists wanted to give Sociology a position which is similar to natural science. But is it possible to study human beings and culture similar to the case of objective things? Can people be trialed in a workroom to learn their social interactions? The answer was 'yes' for positivist sociologists, whereas it is a 'no' for interpretivists. In this lesson, we first define the terms verstehen, Ideal type and social action broadly and then discuss its sociological significance and traits as they are mirrored in Max Weber's writing.

Just think of the situation of entering into the shoes of another one? Naturally we develop the wholesomeness of the travel, reflections and hardships. In simple terms, Weber's Verstehen refers to the method of understanding the meaning of social action (In Sociology, social action is also known as Weberian social action. It is an act which takes into account the actions and reactions of individuals or 'agents'). According to Max Weber, "Action is 'social' as its subjective meaning takes account of the behavior of others. Action is thereby oriented in its course." from the actor's point of view. Here the actor is treated as a subject. He/she is not an object of observation. This points to the interesting fact that human beings are not

just the result of social experiments, happenings, pulls and pushes of external forces. Individuals create the world by their understanding and give it a meaning. If a sociologist studies social beings without considering the meanings they attribute to their social actions; it means that social beings are treated as objects.

Interesting facts about Weber

Weber's father was an aspiring liberal politician and Weber's mother was raised in Calvinist orthodoxy. Inner agonies that haunted Weber in his adult life, are the result of the conflicts between his parents.

Biographical Sketch

Max Weber (1864–1920) is a notable sociological thinker. He was an accomplished writer and voracious reader. He began his career in Sociology as a lawyer and went on to become one of the most influential sociologists of the 20th century. Max Weber was born in Erfurt, Germany, into a reasonably Protestant family. He spent the majority of his early years in Berlin. His father was a bureaucrat who achieved great political success. He belonged to the political elite and identified more as a hedonist than a Protestant. Weber's mother was a devoted Calvinist who attempted to live an ascetic lifestyle. These sharp differences between the parents led to his miserable experience. Between his mother's religiosity and his father's bureaucratic intellect, there was conflict in Weber's life and, more significantly, in his work. As it did in his personal life, this unresolved conflict infuses Weber's writing. After completing his elementary schooling, at the age of 18, Weber began studying law at the University of Heidelberg. He was primarily a law student, but he also showed interest in mediaeval history, philosophy, and theology. He also studied Roman institutions and theology and attended economics courses. In his life, Weber earned varied experiences as a soldier, professor, politician, legal expert, and also as a sociologist. In the last three years of his life, 1918–1920, he gave lectures at Munich and Vienna universities. "Politics as a Profession" and "Science as a Vocation" were two of his well-known lectures. He participated in politics extensively for the last three years of his life. He passed away on June 14, 1920.

Weber's contributions like *Economy and Society*, *The Protestant Ethics and The Spirit of Capitalism*, *The City*, *Bureaucracy*, *The Organisation*, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation*, etc., are always important in sociological studies. In 1910, he provided the basis for German sociological society. In the prestigious social science magazine *Archivfür Sozialwissenschaft*, he

published a number of study reports, essays, and articles. Although Weber often entered politics, he remained a great scholar and was not merely a politician. Many intellectuals gathered in his home, including sociologists like George Simmel, Robert Michaels, and George Lukas. Despite everything, "he was foremost his own man."

3.1.1 Evolution of the Concept of Verstehen

Understanding society

Introduction of the concept of Verstehen in philosophy and human sciences was done by German historian and philosopher Johann Gustav Droysen.Weber's methodology was of classifying nature and history in terms of the categories of space and time. He said that the method of natural sciences is explanation, and the method of history is understanding, i.e. Verstehen.

Third-person perspective of explanation

Later on, the concept of Verstehen was used by German philosopher Wihelm Dilthey. He developed the theory and practice of interpretation. The practice of interpretation is to be understood in the context of hermeneutics (the branch of knowledge that deals with the interpretation). He contrasted the third-person perspective of explanation which is externally objectivising. The external objectification obviously analyses human agency, subjectivity and related products as just effects of impersonal natural forces and social structures in Sociology.

Hermeneutics

Later the German philosophers Martin Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadamer identified and criticised the romantic and subjective character of Verstehen in Dilthey's perspective. Dilthey and Heidegger had similar aspects of 'understanding'. Both explained 'facticity' (state of being a fact) and 'life-context' of understanding. They tried to universalise it. 'Lifeworld' concept of Edmund Husserl and Alfred Schutz was also influenced by the Verstehen method. Habermas and Karl-Otto Apel further transformed the concept of Verstehen by reformulating it on the basis of the theory of communicative action and transcendental-pragmatic philosophy of language.

Since the late 19th century, in English and in German, the term Verstehen has been used with the meaning 'interpretive or participatory'. As the name denotes, the Verstehen method is the interpretive examination of social phenomena.

The major contributor to this stream of thought, Max Weber suggests this as an alternative to sociological positivism and economic determinism, deep-rooted in the analysis of social action.Weber's approach is predicated on his belief that social scientists can comprehend meaningful relationships. His approach is referred to as Verstehen, which is a synonym for sympathetic introspection or comprehension of the level of meaning. Verstehen facilitates social behaviour research in two different ways.

Examining social phenomena

1. It makes it easier to appreciate the arbitrary significance of human behaviours through first hand observation.
2. It makes the underlying motivation easier to understand.

Verstehen is now seen as a concept as well as a method that disconnects from positivist social science. Verstehen is well applied in Anthropology which specifically studies culture. In anthropological terms this is sometimes described as cultural relativism (The idea of seeing a culture's ideas, values, and practices from the perspective of that culture itself is known as cultural relativism). The process of systematic interpretation of an outside observer and the attempts to relate to a particular culture and understand others are very crucial in studying culture. Throughout history much of the methodological concern in the social sciences has been on establishing their scientific credentials. A valid methodology is inevitable for a conceptual and logical research procedure by which knowledge is developed. Max Weber's work on the Verstehen method is a sturdy effort at providing a scientific base for the interpretive understanding of society.

Participatory method

3.1.2 Response to Weber's Work

In physical and natural sciences, knowledge acquired is based on scientific evidence and experiments. In the cultural world, a higher level of interpretive understanding is required for analysing it. Meanwhile, it can easily be debated that even the full participant in a culture does not fully understand it in every context. Critics say that a sociologist's duty is to observe what people do, share and think about social reality. The Verstehen method adopts subjective thoughts and feelings which are to be controlled

Observing social world

and made free from bias, while doing sociological research; which is rather very risky.

Since the 20th century, there have been advancements in the concept of the Verstehen method. Fundamentally, Verstehen in everyday life strictly differs from Verstehen in research or sociological methods. The sociological Verstehen relies on a framework of specialist professional knowledge. In everyday practice Verstehen is a routine activity guided by the principles of pragmatism. Verstehen is used as a socio-scientific method to uncover the structures and functions of individuals' knowledge and experience of the social world. The evolution of the method has led to the development of the methodological orientation called Verstehen Sociology or interpretive Sociology.

Socio-scientific method

3.1.3 Ideal type

Tool for studying society

It is natural to develop doubt on how to study social actions using interpretive methods. As interpretation and empathy on other's actions could be relative and subjective, the method demands an efficient conceptual tool to analyse social actions. Thus 'Ideal type' becomes Weber's best known contribution to contemporary Sociology. It has a very important place in his methodology. Weber believed that it was the obligation of sociologists to develop conceptual tools.

Standardised type

The most important contribution from Weber's side is the Ideal type. The literal meaning of 'Ideal' as per the New Webster's Dictionary (1985) is "conception or a standard of something in its highest perfection." It indicates a mental image or conception rather than a material object. Similarly, the term type has the meaning of a class, group or category. Thus Ideal type can be conceptualised as a category of objects or persons with a particular character or features.

Methodological tool to measure social reality

Coming on to the Weberian perception of Ideal type, it is a mental construct, similar to a model which is used to scrutinise and systematically characterise a concrete situation. Weber used the Ideal type as a methodological tool to analyse social situations and social reality. Ideal type is used in a specific sense by Weber. He views Ideal type as a mental construct, similar to a model, for the analysis and methodical characterisation of a certain circumstance. To understand and analyse social reality, he did in fact use

an Ideal type as a scientific instrument. Weber says, "The Ideal typical concept will develop our skill in imputation in research. It is not a description of reality but it aims to give unambiguous means of expression to such a description."

The question of objectivity was an important matter of academics for Max Weber because scientific understanding was the element that gives Sociology its absolute existence as a 'science'. Ideal type scrutinises, classifies, systemises and defines social reality. This analysis is done without subjective bias. The function of an Ideal type is classification and comparison of social events. It has no role or connection to values. Natural sciences construct instruments and laboratory equipment to experiment and analyse nature. Similarly, a social scientist creates a methodological device or tool to analyse, experiment and understand any social problem. Ideal types are concepts framed on the basis of facts collected carefully and analytically for empirical research.

Based on the degree of abstraction, Max Weber created three different sorts of Ideal types.

1. Ideal historical particulars refer to certain historical realities, such as modern capitalism or protestant ethics.

2. Ideal types, refer to observable, abstract aspects of historical reality that can be found across various historical and cultural settings. Feudalism or bureaucracy, for instance.

3. Ideal types that constitute rationalising reconstructions of a particular kind of behavior.

Examples of Ideal types by Max Weber

(a) Spirit of capitalism

(b) Worldly asceticism

(c) Rationalisation

Social scientists systematise and comprehend individual facts to measure social reality. Social reality is the collective agreement of opinions and beliefs common to all members of a group. Ideal type helps to separate social reality from empirical reality. Empirical reality is related to observations and experiments rather than theory. Moreover, it is relative and subjective. In measuring reality, the Ideal type serves

Defining social reality

Measure rod of reality

as a rod of reality. Its aim is not to compare an empirical situation with the Ideal type, but to compare several empirical situations with one another. Through the tool or medium of Ideal type a sociologist could come up with a testable hypothesis which is helpful in evaluating social situations. In short, Ideal types help to monitor and structure comparative research.

Ambiguous nature of Ideal type

According to Max Weber, society is a collection of social action and social behaviour. Sociology studies social action and behaviours provided, every social action has an 'ideal'. French philosopher and sociologist Julien Freund writes "By the Ideal type the sociologist is able to measure the gap between the ideal typical objectively possible action and the empirical action and ascertain the part played by irrationality and chance or by the intrusion of accidental, emotional and other elements." An Ideal type does not refer to perfect things, ideals of morality or the average of events. It is not a hypothesis or the importance given to the common elements in a given phenomenon.

Maintenance of social order

For Max Weber Ideal type refers to the world of ideas (German: Gedankenbilder, "mental images"). Weberian Ideal types are idea-constructs that help to create social order amidst chaos of social reality. At its most basic level, an Ideal type is a concept constructed by a social scientist on the basis of his interests and theoretical orientation to capture the important features of social phenomenon. The Ideal type, one of the most significant concepts of Weber, represents the reasonable conclusion of several inclinations of Weberian thought. But Weber was not totally consistent in the ways he used the Ideal type.

Synthesis of social events

According to Weber "An Ideal type is formed by the one-side accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent, concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasised viewpoints into a unified analytical construct …. In its conceptual purity, this mental construct…. cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality."

Weber was completely aware of the risks in the launch of his concept of 'Ideal type'. He knew that it has a fictional nature or rather it would be bracketed into it by other theoreticians. Therefore, Weber states that Ideal type never seeks to claim its validity in terms of reproduction or correspondence of

social reality. Weber insisted that the validity of an Ideal type can be ascertained only in terms of its adequacy. Adequacy is the component which was completely and conveniently ignored by the positivists while studying society.

Ideal types are created by abstracting and combining an infinite number of elements that, while present in reality, are almost ever or never found in a particular combination. The sociologist chooses a fixed number of qualities from the complex and opaque whole in order to form an understandable entity for the building of Ideal types. For example, if we wish to study the mixed economy in India, then the first task will be to define the concept of a mixed economy with the help of its essential and typical characteristics. The protection of private property, letting the free market and the rules of supply and demand decide prices, and the fact that it is driven by people's self-interest are only a few of the important qualities of a mixed economy that we may discuss here. Any departure or adherence to it will cause the reality to emerge. Therefore, Ideal types emphasise the typical and essential traits rather than the common or average characteristics.

Fragile nature of
the concept- Ideal
type

Now a question will arise namely, how can objectivity be achieved? It cannot be gained by 'weighing the various evaluations against one another and making a 'statesman-like' compromise among them.' It is usually observed that sociologists who follow Weberian methodology take up the above mentioned 'statesman-like' compromises while dealing with social reality. Such practices are called "syncretism". Weber says it is unethical and impossible because it avoids the practical duty to stand up for our own ideals.

Raymond Aron writes, "The construction of Ideal type is an expression of the attempt, characteristic of all scientific disciplines to render subject matter intelligible by revealing or constructing its internal rationality." Every Ideal type is an organisation of intelligible relations within a historical unit or arrangement of events. The Ideal type is related to a characteristic of both our society and our science, namely the method of rationalisation.

Ideal type is also related to the analytic conception of causality (inter-connection). It helps us to understand historical elements or entities, but it is so as to express a partial comprehension of a total whole. Ideal types are ideal

in the logical sense. Imagination and comprehension influence Ideal types. Do not confuse the sense of ethical goodness or righteousness with Ideal type. Ideal types implicate 'pure' or 'abstract' types.

Weber says that Ideal types have "no connection at all with value judgement and it has nothing to do with any type of perfection there than a purely logical one." They are not fixed or rigid. They are subjected to changes from time to time in response to changes in social realities. The 'Ideal type' is an obviously constructed ideal model of the specific set of social relationships of which an understanding and causal explanation is required.

(a) Kinds of Ideal types in Weber's Work

Ideal type is fundamentally a "one sided" model. It is one sided in the sense that it intentionally emphasises those imputation thoughts which are worth postulating and testing. In this sense, it is purely selective and of the nature of experiment. Ideal types also help in attaining general propositions and in comparative analyses.

From the three levels of abstraction, Weber used Ideal types in three different ways. The first kind of Ideal type refers to the phenomena that appear only in specific cultural areas and in particular historical periods. They are rooted in the historical particularities. For example, Protestant ethics, capitalism, western cities etc. The second kind of Ideal types are found in a variety of cultural and historical contexts. The elements of social reality are related to abstract elements of social reality. For example, the concept of bureaucracy and feudalism. The third kind of Ideal type is related to the reconstruction of a particular kind of behaviour. For example, the propositions in economic theory fall into this type because they are ideal distinctive constructions of the ways people perform as wholesome economic subjects.

(b) Ideal type and Capitalism

Weber observed that Capitalism had been flourishing in modern western societies. He constructed an Ideal type of Capitalism through different stages. He selected a certain number of traits from the historical whole to create an intelligible entity. He found out that there was a spiritual affinity between Calvinism and the economic ethics of modern Capitalist activity. Max Weber started a comprehensive investigation into world religions. He conducted in-depth

research on ancient Judaism, Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism, and other religions. He also wrote extensively about the influence of Christianity on western history. Weber demonstrates the intimate ties between a certain social class—the growing Capitalist class—and a specific type of religion, asceticism in Protestantism, in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.

Relationship between Religion and capitalism

Protestants form a group in Christianity that follows the principles of Calvin, Luther etc. They believed that good deeds and faith in God were inevitable to get into heaven. Weber identified those components of Calvinist doctrine which Weber considered as a particular and momentous importance in the formation of capitalist spirit. The spirit of working harder, accumulating wealth and attaining maximum profit as per religious guidance contribute to the rational organisation of work and production. Thus, Western Capitalism happened to be the combination of desire for profit and rational discipline of religion. This constitutes the historically unique feature of Western Capitalism.

Unintended contribution of religious beliefs to capital generation

As religion was acting as an affirmation of the social actions, the desire of profit is fulfilled not by assumptions or conquest or adventure, but by mere discipline and rationality. This is otherwise only possible with the help of legal administration of the modern state or rational bureaucracy. Therefore, Capitalism is defined as an enterprise working towards infinite gathering of profit and functioning according to bureaucratic rationality.

Nature of capitalism

There is a very close affinity between economic activity and the religious doctrine of Protestants or Calvinists. Calvinists believed that God was very powerful and overpowered the common man. To gain glory on earth one has to toil, hard work and labour all means the same thing. The true calling of a religious individual is to fulfil his duty to God. The moral conduct of a person's day to day life is based on 'work is worship' ideology and there is no room for idleness and laziness. The explicit character of Calvinist belief accounted for the connection between Calvinist doctrine and the spirit of capitalism as both are characterised by a unique devotion to the producing of wealth through valid economic activity. This is rooted in a belief in the value of competent performance in the chosen vocation as a duty and a virtue.

Spiritual affinity

One of the important aspects is that the affinity between capitalist economic regime and religion came

Modern capitalist ethics

up only in the west which made it a historically exclusive phenomenon. What makes the difference in Calvinism? Why is the religious factor not found effective in other places to generate Capitalism? Weber made a comparative analysis of Hinduism, Confucianism, Judaism, Buddhism, Catholicism etc. He found out that in Protestant or Calvinist religious and economic activities were combined in a way very dissimilar to other religions.

3.1.4 Types of Social Action

Social action

You have understood that Max Weber defined Sociology as the study of social actions. According to Max weber Sociology, is "a science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action in order to arrive at a causal explanation of its course and effects." 'Social action' is carried out by an individual. This individual attaches a meaning to social action. Any action that a person does not think about, cannot be a social action. All human behaviour is social action. Social action gives it a subjective interpretation. The performing person or people consider how other people behave and social action is oriented in its course.

Based on these perceptions Weber classified social actions into various types:There are four types of social acts according to Weber. They are Zweckrational (or rational action with reference to aims), Wertrational (or rational action with regard to values), Traditional (or conventional) Action, and Affective (or emotional) Action.

(a) Zweckrational actions or Rational-purposeful action:

Instrumental social action

Let us take a real-life example. Consider two employees at a workplace. Both are trying to maximise their income within one year. One of them has been using far more effective means to achieve his goal. One might engage in actions like cheating on the tax returns or look for a second/parallel job etc. The person might also do mischievous actions like sell drugs or do tasks that get him to the maximisation of income. This is more purposely rational than the other one. The other one who sticks on only to the existing job and keeps less money. Based on logical or scientific grounds, this action performed by the person who maximises money is rationally useful. This action involves a plurality of means and ends which is complicated. The ends or goals or values of actions

are treated as concrete. In this case social action becomes purely instrumental. There are various levels or degrees of rationality that various individuals show or perform.

Rational actions

In the above-mentioned example, the tendency of individuals to maximise their income is focused. The goal or end is fixed. This goal is a means or way to achieving other goals too. For example, maximisation of profit would enable buying a new car or house, going for a world tour etc. Within the range of zweckrational actions, the degrees of rationality exhibited by various individuals also could be studied. Zweckrational actions treat individuals as rationally purposeful.

Purposeful actions

This is quite similar to classical economic theory. A group of individuals who try to maximise their utility is instituted here. Action cannot be meaningful if it is not goal oriented. Rational action in relation to a goal is important here. This corresponds roughly to Pareto's logical action. The actors conceive their goal which is very clear and combines goals to achieve it. Exemplifying, it is the action of the engineer who is building a bridge or the general who wants to win a victory.

(b) Wert rational actions or value-rational action:

Value oriented action

See the example of a soldier laying down his life for the country. His action is not focused towards attaining specific material goals like wealth or alike. It is for the sake of certain values like reputation and patriotism. Weber says that when individuals are value rational, they make commitments to certain goals which are subjective and adopt means or ways that are effective in attaining these ends. Here, action is rational in relation to a specific value.

Subjectively meaningful actions

Wert rational actions occur when individuals use rational means which are defined in terms of subjective meaning. In this case, means are chosen for their effectiveness. At the same time, ends are determined by value. Weber differentiates the basic types of rational actions. One is the Means-End rationality. Second is Value rationality. Means-End rationality is determined by expectations of the objects/ human beings included in the environment. These expectations are used as 'conditions' or 'means' for the attainment of the goals. These goals are the ones personally pursued and calculated by individuals. In the case of Value rationality or Value action, social action is not determined

by societal influences. Conscious beliefs have their own value of some ethical, aesthetic or other forms of behaviour independent of their projections for success.

(c) Emotional or Affective action

Impulsive actions

To understand this type of action, let us see a very common social affair, which is rather disturbing. Suppose someone is teasing a girl on a bus. She may tolerate it for a while due to fear or anxiety. But finally, she may get so irritated that she may slap the antisocial person. She has been triggered so much that she has responded violently and with reflex. In this example, it is clear that the action is defined not with reference to a goal or system of values. The action is clearly by the emotional reaction of an actor placed in a given set of situations. These types of actions fuse means and end together. These actions become emotional and impulsive. Such action is the antithesis of rationality.

Emotive actions

The individual who performs the affective action cannot be calm and think about the relationship between the means and actions of the social action. The actor is usually dispassionate about the relation between means and ends. The means or path itself is emotionally fulfilling and ends in themselves. This type of action is the result of the emotional state and mind of the actor.

(d) Traditional actions

Conclusive actions

We can discuss an example; an upper-class religious Partriarchal family sets a young boy as the head of the family, soon after the death of his father. No one in the family questions it or opposes it. They follow it as per the belief and as an obligation to their religious system and legacy. Similarly, it is observed that some so-called primitive societies have very strict rites for group leaders. Traditional actions are those actions where the ends of actions are taken for granted.

Second nature or habit

Within the group those actions appear very natural and suiting the norms. These actions are followed because actors/individuals are unable to comprehend the possibility of alternative or substitute ends. This is an action which is directed by customs and long standing beliefs which become second nature or habit. The best example that suits this type of action is traditional Indian Society doing 'namaskaram' or 'pranamam' to elders which is almost second nature. These actions need no prompting or compelling.

(a) Social Influences of Different Social Types

The consequences of the types of social action naturally creates tensions and conflicts within the group of individuals. Weber pointed out that in traditional societies most of the social actions are highly routinised with no probability of rethinking. They perform those because they are so obliged to the practices, and they never reconsider as they are never compelled to do those action. Meanwhile in modern societies actors are keen in seeing the ends of social actions. In the case of modern individuals, the ends of social actions are detached from the specific rules and norms of everyday behaviour. To adapt to many complex social situations and specific roles, actors shift perceptions and adherences. They opt for zweckrational or Wertrational actions.

Types of social actions	Features	Example
Zweckrational action	a) Rationally purposeful action b) With reference to goals	♦ Engaging in social practices (even illegal) to gain more money
Wertrational action	(a) Value based rational action (b) With reference to values	♦ A soldier's actions for the country ♦ An artist's commitment to his/her art
Affective action	(a) Based on reflexes and emotions (b) Affectual orientation	♦ Crying due to overjoy at a victory or crying at a funeral
Traditional action	(a) Customs and habits based rational action (b) With reference to traditional practices	♦ Practising patriarchy ♦ Taboos related to menstruation

Table No. 3.1.1 The sum total of Weber's social type is shown in the table below:

The social action theory is not a mere imitation of what an individual performs with behaviour. Repetition and imitation are not the areas of social action theory. It goes beyond imitation. Hence social action takes an exclusive meaning where it acquires a subjective form. It guides us to a theoretical study to understand human actions and to show how behaviour stems from subjectivity. This behaviour has the capability to influence other human beings also. A group of people follows similar behaviours without neglecting one's own personality. Weber explains that ways of thinking and acting in communities that start from an individual and are generalised by others (society) and cultures are formed. These social actions have endured alterations and amendments as times have changed.

Complex social situations

Summarised Overview

In the overall view, Weber's methodological approach was to clearly highlight his aspiration to use full-bodied 'scientific' approach to comprehend social reality. Further analysis shows that he wanted to merge the scientific approach and the importance of Geist, i.e. German Idealism and the Austrian School of economics. The "verstehen" method and ideal method have been used by social researchers in multiple ways. The direct observational method and explanatory method are a few of those. Weber's remarks of his method as 'reproducible in inner experience' have literal and much speculative importance till date.

Assignments

1. How is the Verstehen method different from positivism?
2. Describe the 18th century European society that led to the enlightenment and democratic discourses.
3. Explain the evolutionary stages of the concept 'Verstehen'.
4. What are the major criticisms of Weberian methodology?
5. Briefly note the relationship of religiosity and capitalism.
6. Explain types of social actions with everyday examples.
7. Critically evaluate the concept "Ideal type".
8. Relate 18th century German society and the relevance of Weber's methodology.
9. Prepare a list of social actions according to Max Weber's theory.

10. Why did Weber become apprehensive about the fictional nature of the concept 'Ideal type'?

11. "Verstehen is sympathetic introspection or level of meaning comprehension." Explain the statements! and elaborate Weber's method for comprehending society.

Suggested Readings

1. Ritzer, G., Stepnisky, J. (2017). *Sociological Theory*. India: Sage.
2. Andersen, H., & Kaspersen, L. B. (2000). *Classical and Modern Social Theory*. UK: Wiley.
3. Weber, M. (1978). *Max Weber: Selections in Translation*. UK: Cambridge University Press.

References

1. Weber, M. (2017). *Max Weber: A Biography*. UK: Routledge.
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3. Bendix, R. (2000). *Max Weber*. Argentina: Amorrortu Editores.
4. Weber, M. (2009). *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. UK: Routledge.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. The Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding with the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

UNIT 2

Stratification, Authority, Bureaucracy

Learning Objectives

- To introduce the aspects of Weber's stratification
- To narrate the means and types of Weber's concept - Authority
- To explain the characteristics of Weber's Bureaucracy and its dimensions

Background

Max Weber's works were the extension and rejoinder to the works of positivists like Emile Durkheim and Karl Marx. These theoreticians reacted to the social developments of 17th and 18th centuries Europe. Enlightenment and political amendments were gaining momentum; at the same time, monopoly of religion was losing its grip. All these created chaos, which needed social treatment. When Emile Durkheim analysed the social forces that affected individual behaviour; Max Weber researched on the meanings people put on every social action.

The discussion on stratification begins with the criticisms of the one dimensional idea of stratification. Weber corrected Marx's mono-dimensional approach of economic determinism. He replaced it with the multi-dimensional approach by emphasising social status and power. Weber believed that Karl Marx's approach to social class was so limited. Weber untangled a number of separate variables and added a few more to the list.He tried to replace Marx's socio-structural analysis by social-action analysis. Weber also emphasised the significance of attitudes, values and aspirations. These aspects were given least emphasis by Marx as he was focusing on rationality. To quote Weber, "irrational and non- logical motivation and other attitudes are important considerations for the theory of stratification."

Discussion

3.2.1 Stratification

Max Weber observed that people belonging to the same class enjoy the same lifestyle and are provided with the same number of opportunities for growth. For example, groups of medical practitioners, lawyers, and industrialists share the same values in society. Weber related stratification to class classification. Weber identified three components of stratification namely

Elements of social stratum

(a) Power

(b) Class

(c) Status

Max Weber analytically separates society into three orders: economic, social, and political, which correspond to the three dimensions of stratifications that have been identified: class, status, and power.

Levels of stratification

A class can be described as a sizable collection of individuals who share economic resources, which have a significant impact on the lifestyle choices they can make. A class, in Marx's view, is a collection of individuals who share a connection to the means of production. Max Weber was definitely worried about the pathetic condition of the workers and poor employees. Weber observed that social control was in the hands of people who could earn maximum profit and production. The category of people in the 'survival group' was of those who could not afford much in production. He finds out an important reason for social stratification; viz, men/women in the society will always thrive for power and it results in social stratification.

Max Weber says that power is the ability to exercise one's will over others. Power affects more than personal

relationships; it figures larger dynamics like social groups, professional organisations, and governments. Weber contemplates status honour to be a more vital basis for people forming themselves into groups or communities. Or communities may be formed, and this community and its mode of behavior and norms become the base for status honour in this community.

Karl Marx viewed society in a capitalist view; as managers, landlords, and administrators etc. who possessed upper positions in society. Peasants and tenants were the subordinates who occupied the lower strata of society. Weber presented social categorisation in four ways, unlike Karl Marx's two-way classification of society. Weber defined class as a group of people who shared a similar position in a market economy and as a result received similar economic rewards. Accordingly, a person's class situation is essentially his/her market situation. He contends that classes develop a market economy in which individuals compete for economic gain. In a Capitalist society, he recognised the following class divisions:

1. The propertied upper class.

2. The property-less white- collar workers

3. The petty bourgeoisie

4. The manual working class.

First one is the propertied upper class who held immense amounts of property. The authority collected revenues from tenants. For example, the landlords collected revenue from the tenants when they gave their land to them. The second one is the property-less white-collar workers who belong to the category of skilled laborers sitting behind the tables to make a salary. The third category is called the "Petty Bourgeoisie" who belong to the lower-class people. Karl Marx was confined to and most interested in highlighting their diminishing position in society. The fourth category is the Manual working class. They are otherwise called the lower class medium or blue-collar jobs. They have to undergo severe turmoil, manual hard work and are paid less than the basic necessity.

Social stratification

Till then class and status were considered as a major form of stratification. The minute chances of development for the weaker sections were eaten up by the 'stratification' mechanism existing in the society. This aspect was explained by class-conflict theories. It was Max Weber who identified major factors of social stratification as the class, status and power. Coming on to the social status section, Max Weber explained that, at times, a community does not share the same economic level, but they acquire the same status due to prestige and position in the society. In the context of power, the dealings are with political powers. For instance, in the times of revolutions. Churches held an immense position in society and they possessed the power of decision making.

3.2.2 Authority

Usage of power

Suppose you are riding a car and suddenly you see a police car chasing your vehicle. Naturally you become alarmed and take a look at the speed limit and seat belt. You make sure of doing almost all traffic rules. When the police vehicle asks you to stop the vehicle and get down, you naturally become polite and expect not to get a penalty. If you're fined for violating any of the traffic rules, you do it not to cause further chaos. In these sequences power plays an important role and hence power refers to the ability to have one's will carried out notwithstanding the resistance of others. This is a striking example of raw power. When parents insist children to be at home before midnight, it is the perfect example of parental power. The abusive partner's threatening and compulsions are also an example of the use of power, or, in this case the misuse of power.

According to theorist Wrong's observation, power studied by social scientists is both grander and often more invisible. Much of the distribution of power occurs behind the scenes,

and scholars continue to debate on the wielders and for whose benefit they wield it. According to the nature of society some people or a group make decisions completely to benefit themselves and make these decisions to benefit society as a whole. The central point here is that some individuals and groups have more power than others.

Marx Weber asserts that one key element of power in contemporary cultures is the establishment of parties. Parties, according to him, are groups of people who collaborate because they have similar goals, ideologies, or interests. Parties may advocate for interests based on a person's rank or class. Weber was convinced that the way in which lawful authority was channelled through bureaucratic coordination was a noteworthy feature of modern society. Weber was careful to name three ideal forms of legal authority and describe each one.

Max Weber distinguished legitimate authority as a system which imposes a special type of power. Weber says that as societies evolved from simple to complex ones, different types of authorities suited different types of social systems. Weber identified the three types of authority as traditional, rational-legal and charismatic. The above-mentioned example of the police car is a good example for legitimate authority. Weber said that power is considered just and appropriate by those over whom the power is exercised. If a society approves the exercise of power in a particular way, then that power is legitimate authority.

Weber's classification is as follows:

(a) Traditional Authority

The authority of King, Queen, Church, Priest or Patriarch is continued and passed on to successors only because of the faith in traditional beliefs and practices. There is no right or wrong debates possible, nor is democracy involved. As the name implies, traditional authority is power rooted in traditional or long-lasting beliefs and practices of a society. It existed in pre- industrial societies, and of course, still exists in religious-irrational communities. This authority assigns special powers and privileges to particular individuals. Individuals enjoy traditional authority for some reasons. One important reason is inheritance. Individuals are granted traditional authority because they are the blood or affinal relatives to the authority. Second reason is religiosity. People believe that their authority is decided by God or the Gods,

depending on the society's religious beliefs, which would ultimately lead the society.

In some modern monarchies, the King, Queen or Prince enjoys power because he or she comes from a royal family. Regardless of their qualifications, traditional authority is granted to individuals. No special skills are needed to receive and wield their authority. They claim that it is merely based on bloodline or supposed divine designation. An individual granted with traditional authority could be intelligent or dull, capricious or fair, biased or impartial, stimulating or tedious. Not all individuals granted with traditional authority are qualified and deserving, in most cases they are not up to the job.

Divine designation

(b) Rational-Legal Authority

In 1963, John F. Kennedy was assassinated. The authority had to be replaced immediately. Vice president Lyndon Johnson was immediately sworn in as the next president of the U.S. Similarly when Richard Nixon had to resign his office in disgrace in 1974, Vice President Gerald Ford became president. The U.S. Constitution provided facilities for the transfer of power as it happened in 1963 and 1974, as it was in the rational legal authority. This type of authority has nothing to do with tradition. Rational-legal authority derives from law and is based on the belief of societal rules and laws.

Lawful authority

The right of leaders is to make decisions and set policy. In modern democracy, power is in the hands of common people who cast votes and elect members. The power is set forth in a constitution or in a written document. In the case of traditional authority, an individual gets designation, only because of inheritance or divine designation; which is not at all possible in rational-legal authority. This authority resides in the office where the individual exists. That is, the authority of the president of the U.S exists in the office of the Presidency, not in the individual who is elected as the president. When one president leaves the office, the authority is transferred to the next president. The shift of authority is generally smooth and stable as the officeholders are decided by elections at necessary intervals. The authority may not be a person preferred by each and every individual. But when a President comes to power, people accept the authority.

Democratic power

(c) Charismatic Authority

Just go through the list of charismatic leaders: Jesus Christ,

Joan of Arc, Adolf Hitler, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Muhammad, and Buddha. This type of authority can exercise authority for good or for bad. It stems from an individual's extraordinary personal qualities. People get attracted by the extraordinary personal qualities of the leaders. Charismatic authority may have a whole society or a group of people who follow them. In the case of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., he possessed extraordinary speaking skills and other personal qualities that accounted for his charismatic authority.

Personal charm

When we analyse history, several Kings and Queens of England and European countries were charismatic individuals. U.S. presidents like Washington, Lincoln, Roosevelt, Kennedy, Reagan etc. influenced and united people with their oration and activist skills. US president Ronald Reagan was often stated as 'the Teflon president'. It is because he was so loved by the public and any allegations of ineffectiveness did not stick to him. One of the important facts that Weber observes about Charismatic authority is that it is very unstable. It is because of this aspect that the authority resides in a single person's personality and it has no rational-legal or traditional support system.

Unstable and non-continuous

When a charismatic leader dies, no one can replace the space, as the influencer aspect is a single leader's magnetism or personality. It is very difficult for another person to continue with the leader's charisma. Just take a look at the earlier mentioned examples to validate this. In most cases the leader's charisma will be memorised and cherished by the public even after the end of his/her era. People show their love as devotion. It may not have any rational nature.

Piety and perseverance

Usually, charismatic leaders recognise their eventual death which will surely undermine the nation; they often entitle somebody for replacement. This new leader may be a grown child of the charismatic leader or someone else the leader trusts and knows. History has shown that the successors of charismatic authority lack sufficient charisma which is essential to evolve as a leader. For this reason, Weber explains that charismatic authority ultimately becomes more stable when it evolves into traditional or rational-legal authority. The transformation from charismatic to traditional authority can only happen when charismatic leaders' authority is accepted as a legacy. Then the authority can be passed to their children and then to their grandchildren. Transformation to rational-legal authority can only happen when the society

Extraordinary personal qualities

develops rules and bureaucratic structures associated with a government. The term "routinisation of charisma" refers to the change of charismatic authority in either of these ways; i.e. charismatic to traditional or charismatic to rational-legal.

3.2.3 Bureaucracy

Necessity for organised social system

Max Weber wrote the book *Protestant Ethics and Spirit of Capitalism* by the end of the 19th century. Weber described the term bureaucracy for the first time in this book. Weber posited it as bureaucratic theory of management, bureaucratic management theory or the Max Weber theory. Max Weber was of the view that bureaucracy was the most efficient way to set up an organisation and administration. In this system workers will be aware of their role and worth in the social system or organisation, and also what is expected of them.Most contemporary organisations have a bureaucratic structure. It is the official rule. Initially, it was exclusively used to refer to government employees, but over time, it was expanded to refer to huge organisations in general.

Specialisation of skills

According to him bureaucracy was the only better structure than traditional structure. A system becomes efficient only when everyone is treated equally and the division of labour is fixed and clearly described for each employee. According to Max Weber, "Bureaucracy is an organisational structure that is characterised by many rules, standardised processes, procedures and requirements, number of desks, meticulous division of labour and responsibility, clear hierarchies and professional, almost impersonal interactions between employees." Such a social structure is indispensable in large organisations. In bureaucratic organisations, a great number of employees are structurally performing all tasks.

Maximum efficiency

Selection and promotion can only occur on the basis of technical qualifications. As per the bureaucratic theory, there are three types of power namely, traditional power, charismatic power and legal power. The rational-legal power is related to bureaucracy. The principle of established jurisdiction succeeded along with the organised functioning of basic rules and laws. There are a few elements that support bureaucratic management:

i) The official duties are regular, systematic without any interpersonal aspects

ii) Rules are imposed by the management

iii) Methods are established and rules are respected

a) Bureaucratic Organisation

According to the bureaucratic theory of Max Weber, bureaucracy is the basis for the systematic formation of any organisation and is designed to ensure efficiency and economic effectiveness. Max Weber establishes the basic principles of bureaucracy and emphasises the division of labour, hierarchy, rules and impersonal relationship between people.

Characteristics of Bureaucracy

i) Task Specialisation

Each and every worker in a work system within an organisation is expected to completely focus on his/her space of expertise. Taking up the tasks of colleagues and going beyond the assigned responsibilities are not allowed within a bureaucratic system. Works are divided into simple and routine categories on the basis of competencies and functional specialisations. Each and every worker/employee is responsible for what he/she does and performs the best. In addition, every employee knows exactly what is expected of him/her and also aware of their powers within the organisation. As there is a clear delineation or definition of tasks, employers/ managers can approach their employees more easily when they do not stick to their tasks.

Functional specialisation

ii) Hierarchical Layers of authority

Hierarchical positions are assigned for managers. Each manager is allotted the charge of the staff and their overall performance. In bureaucratic organisational structures, there are countless hierarchical positions. This is the main constituent and characteristic of a functional bureaucracy. Different positions are related in order of preference. Naturally, the highest rank in the hierarchical ladder takes the greatest power. The lower or bottom layers are always subjected to supervision and it controls the higher layers. The division of powers and responsibilities manifests lines of bureaucratic communication and grade of delegation.

Grade of delegation

iii) Formal selection

Formal selection is inevitable and the assortment is based on technical skills and competencies acquired through exercise, educational training and experience. The workers are paid for their services and the level of salary is dependent on their position. Their contract terms are decided by organisational rules. The functioning is completely related to the function and the employee has no chance of ownership-interest in the company.

Achieved status

iv) Rules and requirements

Better harmonisation

Inside an organisational system, formal rules and requirements are essential to ensure regularity so that employees know what is expected from them. Rules and requirements are predictable and administrative processes are demarcated in the official rules. When these rules are enforced, the organisation achieves uniformity and all employee efforts are better coordinated.

Regularity

The rules and requirements are predictable and all administrative procedures are better coordinated by official rules. When strict rules are enforced, organisation can easily achieve uniformity and all employee efforts could be better harmonised. Official reports are the documents in which the rules and requirements are stabilised. If amendments of rules are anticipated, senior employees in the hierarchy are responsible for this.

Examples of Bureaucratic organisation are Power Authorities, Schools, Government, Colleges and Universities, Police Departments, Motor Vehicle Departments, The registrar's office, Fire Department and Health Institutions etc.

There are many advantages for Bureaucracy according to Max Weber. They are:

1. Hierarchy of authority
2. Division of work
3. Rules and regulations
4. Impersonal relations
5. Rationality
6. Rule of law

Simultaneously, there are disadvantages for Bureaucracy. A few are:

1. Tight hierarchical compartmentalisation
2. Huge variations or extremities in the salary of employees
3. Projects are determined by the expenditure
4. Nepotism and favoritism

(b) Criticism on Bureaucratic theory

Critical views

Many theorists have criticised Weber's theories. Robert K. Merton says that some characteristics of bureaucratic practice may be dysfunctional to the organisation. According to Peter Blau, Weber's strategy solely focuses on formal organisation. Weber makes only passing references to the informal group. Thompson notes that in modern bureaucratic organisations authority is centralised but ability is decentralised. More current theorists find out the misinterpretations and misreading of Weberian theories and distortion of Weber's views. Weber was explaining a formal rationality that was not necessarily finest for efficiency. Weber comprehended that formalisation could degenerate into formalism, and that bureaucratic forms focused power at the top and could cause an "iron cage" to imprison the low-level worker in anonymity and dull status.

Summarised Overview

In short, Weber's writings exist as the most influential work including the multi dimensions of modern leadership theory. Critical evaluations and nuances of charismatic leadership in the capitalist and neo-capitalist society have been identified and explored using Weberian theory. The meaning allocated by supporters while following the norms and rules of various authorities explore the social revisions inevitable for maintaining social order. Weber's belief that bureaucracies are unavoidable in modernising societies and no state can function without it is pertinent till time. As bureaucracy checks interest-driven privatisation it is beneficial for overall social development.

Assignments

1. Critically analyse Max Weber's and Karl Marx's theory of stratification
2. Which are the categories of social strata according to Weber?
3. Why is Bureaucracy considered as the most efficient way of social organisation?
4. What are the distinctive characteristics of the Bureaucratic system?
5. Identify and illustrate the three components of stratification, according to Weber.
6. Set illustrative descriptions of the types of authority with examples

7. Critically evaluate the condition of a non-bureaucratic social system.
8. Critically evaluate the limitations of Charismatic authority.

Suggested Readings

1. Stepnisky, J. N., Ritzer, G. (2021). *Sociological Theory*. UK: Sage.
2. Law, A. (2010). *Key Concepts in Classical Social Theory*. UK: Sage.
3. Coser, L. A. (2003). *Masters of Sociological Thought: Ideas in Historical and Social Context*. US: Waveland Press.

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1. Beetham, D. (2018). *Max Weber and the Theory of Modern Politics*. Germany: Polity Press.
2. Giddens, A. (1971). *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory: An Analysis of the Writings of Marx, Durkheim and Max Weber*. UK: Cambridge University Press.
3. Randall, C., Collins, R., Collins, P. o. S. R. (1986). *Weberian Sociological Theory*. UK: Cambridge University Press.
4. Weber, M. (2013). *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. UK: Taylor & Francis.
5. Brennan, C. (2020). *Max Weber on Power and Social Stratification: An Interpretation and Critique*. UK: Taylor & Francis.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

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UNIT 3

Protestant Ethics and Spirit of Capitalism

Learning Objectives

♦ To narrate the early phase of Protestantism in Germany
♦ To familiarise the ethics of Protestantism and the spirit of capitalism
♦ To expose the relevance of Weberian perspectives on capitalism

Background

Have you ever thought about how imperative sins are, in our social life? Or what is your perspective on sins or ways of right and wrong doing? These questions are so relevant for a sociologist, because it directly relates to social actions. Whatever be the personal opinion, the 16th century Catholic Church had a clear vision on 'sins' and the plenary indulgences.According to the Roman Catholic Church, "sin is an offense against reason, truth, and right conscience; it is a failure in genuine love for God and neighbour caused by a perverse attachment to certain goods." St Augustine defines sins as "an utterance, a deed, or a desire contrary to the eternal law." Religion is defined as a set of theories and convictions regarding the "supernatural" and how it affects people's lives are referred to as "religion."Believers practiced all the instructions imposed by the Church as they feared the penalties followed by the sins.

In 1517, Martin Luther, a professor of moral theology at the University of Wittenberg, Germany published a work titled as 'The Ninety-five Theses" or Disputation on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences. The province, then, was controlled by the Electorate of Saxony, i.e. Roman Catholic Church. The work alarmed the Church as it was a direct criticism of the abuses made by the Clergy for selling plenary indulgences.Plenary indulgence (i.e. confessing one's sins before a priest who offers absolution) had been performed by the believers to escape the punishment from sins. Luther observed that plenary indulgences were considered as 'certificates' to lessen the temporal punishment in suffering for sins committed by the purchasers or their loved ones. The Author debated that indulgences led Christians to avoid true regret and sorrow for sin. They

believed that they could forgo it by obtaining an indulgence.Luther had a spiritual level in explaining sins and repentance (sorrow). The repentance as per Christ requires an inner absolution; not just external sacramental confession. When Church clergy keep the plenary indulgences for sale, believers are discouraged to do any kind deed. If any of the sins get an excuse, people would naturally destroy the concern on the virtue of the deed. This restricts responsible social acts and merciful life.Luther's Theses are framed as suggestions to be argued in debate rather than necessarily representing his opinions. This work gave a new direction to the beliefs that existed and challenged the Church monopoly. Thus, the religion of Protestantism, a form of Christianity emerged in Germany in the 16th century. The movement was later carried forward by John Calvin.

Keywords

Plenary indulgence, Calvinism, Protestants, Puritan Theology

Discussion

Interesting facts about Roman catholic theology

As per the Roman Catholic theology, there are seven deadly sins. The sins are typically ordered as: Pride, Greed, Lust, Envy, Gluttony, Wrath and Sloth.

Functioning of society

You have been learning about Weber's theory of the Ideal type, social action and bureaucracy in the earlier lessons. You will see how Weber's analysis of religion and economy is important in studying society. Max Weber asserted that there were certain similarities between the Protestant theological principles and the capitalism-based economic system. According to Weber, these affinities contributed to the expansion of Capitalism in the West.A community must provide for certain fundamental physical necessities in order to thrive. Life is not possible without food, clothing, and shelter. The arrangements made by society for the production, consumption, and distribution of goods and services are referred to as the economy or economic system.

There is a discussion of the main contention in Max Weber's well-known work, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit*

of Capitalism, to make the interrelationship between them very evident. Max Weber's *Protestant Ethics and Spirit of Capitalism* could be analysed only from the origin of German Protestantism. The historical relevance of Protestantism is that of a religious upheaval which broke the tradition of over-emphasising the bible by Roman Catholicism. Martin Luther questioned the existing power structures of the Church and criticised Roman mass. This attempt probed a reaffirmation of the importance of the faith in good works. This initiated an ideological division between German Protestant sects and other Christian denominations. This movement against the German Catholic Church highlighted the closure of Catholic ritualistic mass and the rejection of clerical celibacy.

Clerical celibacy

According to Weber, "The Protestant Ethics proposes that an 'inner' relationship or 'intimate' connection, (elective) 'affinity', and 'strong congruence' exist between ascetic Protestantism, notably Calvinism as its prototype, and the spirit of modern Capitalism". Weber suggests that the relationship between Protestant ethics and Capitalism is in the following way. The 'essential elements' of the spirit of Capitalism are the same as the 'content' of Protestant asceticism only 'without the religious basis'. A type of inner relationship or affinity between Protestantism and Capitalism exists.

Internal link between Protestantism and capital spirits

Protestantism gave the spirit of Capitalism its liability to profit and thus helped to legitimate Capitalism. Its religious asceticism also created personalities well-suited for work discipline. Weber argues that the religious ideas of Protestant groups such as the Calvinists played a role in generating the capitalistic spirit. Calvinism focuses on the doctrine of predestination (destiny) and such aspects of Christian religion. Weber analysed and criticised the absolute omnipotent God as pitiless, gloomy, harsh, unjust and exceptionally inhuman.

Capitalist force

3.3.1 Protestant Ethics

In the early stages of European capitalism, worldly economic success was a sign of eternal salvation. Calvinism, a form of Protestantism, emphasised the religious duty which makes use of God-given or divine resources. The orderliness and systematic nature of life pattern according to Protestant beliefs turn out as economically significant

Divine resources

aspects of capitalism. In sociological perspective, Protestant ethics have values of efficiency, thrift and hard work attached to an individual's worldly calling. These acts were considered as signs of an individual's eternal salvation. The protestant reformation of the 16th century fostered the ethics of acquisitive effort, vigorous hard work and frugality with strong religious sanction. Economic inequality was justified by the belief that it is because of the aloofness of the poor; they remain poor. Wealthy people were even considered virtuous.

Work worship

Weber says that protestant ethics influenced a large number of people to engage in continuous works. They work in a secular world, develop their own enterprises, engage in trade and accumulate wealth for investment. In this manner, Protestant beliefs and work ethics became an important force behind the tremendous growth of capitalism. The growth was unplanned and uncoordinated. Protestants' ethics glorify work and regard it as worship.

3.3.2 Spirit of Capitalism

Accumulated capital

It was by the 18th century, capitalist development shifted from commerce to industry in England. The technical knowledge acquired during the Industrial revolution led to the steady accumulation of capital. Scottish economist and philosopher Adam Smith recommended leaving economic decisions to the free play of self-regulating market forces. Smith's policies were widely put into practice after the French Revolution and Napoleonic wars. Feudalism and its remnants were fading considerably. The 19th century witnessed political liberalism which included free trade, sufficient and sound money, balanced budgets and minimum levels of poor relief. The development of the factory system created a new class of industrial workers. They had very miserable working conditions and livelihood. Their existence inspired the revolutionary theory of Karl Marx.

Spirit of labour

Weber observed the German society and noted the statistical correlation between interest and success in capitalism and related ventures. The 'spirit of capitalism' does not denote the spirit in the theoretical sense but rather a set of values, the spirit of hard work and growth. Weber argues that religious devotion is usually escorted by a rejection of worldly affairs, including the pursuit of wealth and possessions.

3.3.3 Relation between Protestant Ethics and Capitalism

Wealth and fanaticism

The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (*German: Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus*) is a book considered a founding text in economic Sociology and a breakthrough contribution to sociological thought in general. The social examination led Weber to the reflection of Protestant background of society. Weber attributed the relation between Capitalism and Protestantism in connection with the notions of predestination and named it 'Puritan Theology'.

Psychology of belief

Weber states that there exists an accidental psychological consequence which loops religious beliefs and capitalism. In the Protestant ethics or Calvinism; the doctrine of predestination sets the belief strands of 'hell-fire' for sinful humanity. Nobody could know why and to whom God extends the grace of salvation. Weber observed this 'psychological insecurity' imposed on Calvinist believers. They vigorously looked for signs that indicated the direction of God's will in everyday life. Any lapse in the commitment to work, made them fear about their fall from the grace of God. This made them believe in the ethic of unceasing commitment to worldly calling and severe self-denial from all types of enjoyment.

Timeline of capitalist growth

The way believers performed their worldly chores practically resulted in the rapid possible accumulation of capital. We should never think that Weber was unaware of the preconditions of capitalism. Weber was completely aware about the material and psychological conditions that contributed to the growth of modern Capitalism. Weber coded the three aspects of Capitalism in the following way: Calvinism to capital enterprise to wealth accumulation... This points to the important fact that Capitalism is always tied or bound to the prevalent religious order.

Puritan Theology

Now you may be thinking of the capitalists who have escaped the guilt feelings dictated by the religion because of their scepticism. If they were able to escape the guilt feelings that the prevailing religious ethos dictated, it was yet a fact that no other religious tradition had ever caused people to see the building-up of capital (saving money) as a sign of God's everlasting grace.

The acceptance of worldly asceticism by the Puritans or Calvinists was voluntary. It was a means of lessening unbearable spiritual burdens. They created an enormous structure of modern capitalist and economic institutions. The way of their life decided the values of everyone born into it. Weber's political Sociology has the academic inheritance of poet Stefan George, Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud and Slavic cultural ideals from the works of Leo Tolstoy and Fyodor Dostoyevsky.

The period when the book *Protestant Ethics and Spirit of Capitalism* got published, the middle-class German culture in which Weber had been raised, witnessed first ripples of disintegration. Weber's works on the types of authority are related to his observations on capitalist monopoly. Notions of Nietzsche had influenced Weber while developing the theory of charisma or charismatic authority. Weber observed the power of religion, religious prophets or political leaders. Weber had an interest in mysticism, which is not much acceptable in terms of rationality to the modern world. Weber's interest in human psychology and social phenomena helped him to find the correlation between religion and capitalism and ascetic and mystical modes of religiosity. In 1910, European middle-class society crumbled and critical importance of those societal changes later influenced his works. In his last decade he spellt out his enduring examination of the conditions and significance of the rationalisation of Western political and economic life in *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (1922; *Economy and Society*) and in journal articles.

Some academics believe that Weber focused very selectively and interpreted religious ethics very narrowly in order to make them fit his thesis. For instance, Weber over-emphasised the fatalistic and passive aspects of the Hindu ethics in his studies, seeing only one element of it. Some scholars contend that the concepts of "Karma" and "Dharma" truly motivate people to act, carry out their tasks, and live up to their responsibilities. The idea of calling, which serves as the very cornerstone of the spirit of capitalism, is noted as being present in Hinduism as well. The Bhagavad Gita's guiding philosophy of performing one's duties without considering personal gain is comparable to the West's central doctrine of calling.

In Weber's study of the top businessmen in the city of Madras, Milton Singer provided an Indian version of

the Protestant ethic. According to him, caste background and tradition may also be appropriate for India's economic development. The division of labour based on caste has been utilised effectively to specialise industrial workers. Singer noted that many businessmen kept their work commitments and ceremonial obligations separate or in discrete compartments through the process of "compartmentalisation." Consequently, there was no conflict between a person's function as a businessperson and their religious beliefs. Milton Singer said that if capitalism is to be established in India, it cannot be done at the expense of the country's traditional way of life. India's capitalism can more easily grow inside the institutions and cultural norms that already exist in our society.

Indian form of Protestant ethics

Protestant Ethics and Spirit of Capitalism Weber's best known and most controversial work, and this work illustrates the general trend of his thinking. Weber had published his thesis on the Protestant ethic in the journal he had just begun to edit, *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* ("*Archives for Social Science and Social Welfare*"). Weber could most powerfully impact on his contemporaries who came in the last years of his life. From 1916 to 1918, Weber argued powerfully against Germany's annexationist war goals and in support of a reinforced parliament.

Political aspects of the theory

Summarised Overview

To conclude, in 1998, the International Sociological Association listed Weber's work on Protestants and Capitalism as the fourth most important sociological book of the 20th century. It is the 8th most cited book in the social sciences published before 1950. Weber's work was subjected to various criticisms from 1905 to 1910. Weber published a number of exchanges between himself and critics of his thesis in the Archive. He never denied his critics' claims which pointed out that highly developed capitalist enterprises existed centuries before Calvin.

Weber was also mindful of other prerequisites, both material and psychological, that backed the development of modern Capitalism. Weber's later essays (*Theorie der Stufen und Richtungen religioser Weltablehnung, 1916; "Religious Rejections of the World and Their Directions''*) contain an analysis of the conflicting relations between eroticism, ascetic and spiritual modes of religiosity, and the overall process of rationalisation.

Assignments

1. Evaluate the emergence of Protestantism in Germany.
2. Role of Weberian perspectives on religion and capitalism in Sociology.
3. Critically evaluate the relation between religion and capitalism.
4. What do you mean by the spirit of capitalism?
5. Describe the 'psychological insecurity' that Weber observed among Calvinists.
6. Make a brief note on German Protestantism followed by the social changes.
7. Had Weber not developed the theory on religion and capitalism; what would be the void generated in the German sociological sphere?
8. How is the spirit of capitalism related to the capitalist economy? Illustrate the importance of Weber's theory of the "spirit of capitalism" in modern consumer society.

Suggested Readings

1. Weber, M. (2013). *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. UK: Taylor & Francis.
2. Stepnisky, J. N., Ritzer, G. (2017). *Sociological Theory*. US: Sage Publications.
3. Coser, L. A. (2003). *Masters of Sociological Thought: Ideas in Historical and Social Context*. US: Waveland Press.

References

1. Weber, M. (2007). *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (Norton Critical Editions)*. UK: W.W. Norton.
2. Ghosh, P. (2008). *A Historian Reads Max Weber: Essays on the Protestant Ethic*. Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag.
3. Balserak, J. (2016). *Calvinism: A Very Short Introduction*. UK: Oxford University Press.
4. Weber, M., Parsons, T. (1999). *The Sociology of Religion*. US: Beacon Press.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. The Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding with the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

Georg Simmel: Formalism

BLOCK-04

UNIT 1

Forms and Types of Interactions

Learning Objectives

♦ To have a precise account of Georg Simmel's social theory
♦ To narrate an overview of Simmel's approach to the study of society and his development of Formal Sociology
♦ Be familiarise with Simmel's micro-Sociology, interaction and society from sociological underpinnings.

Background

Do you think that social contact has a structure? Or is the content of social interaction more important than its structure? Georg Simmel, a best-known German Micro-sociologist, founding theorist and philosopher, lived across the late 19th and early 20th century; researched on the structure of social contact to study society. Simmel's fundamental methodology is known as "methodological relationism" since it is based on the principle that everything interacts with everything else in some way. Simmel made it apparent that one of his main areas of interest was association among conscious actors, and that his goal was to examine a wide range of interactions that could occasionally appear insignificant but are often of utmost significance. As mentioned earlier, the structure of social contact, as opposed to its content, was one of Simmel's main interests. According to Simmel, the task of the sociologist is to establish a limited number of forms on social reality and to identify commonalities in a variety of particular encounters.

To Simmel, one could understand the study of Sociology beyond the physical world. It could not be studied in the same way as that of biological approaches or based on any natural laws. Simmel's unique standpoint is that 'society is made up of the interactions between individuals and hence it is essential to study the patterns which interconnect these interactions. Simmel's Sociology proved attractive in his micro sociological framework on the forms of interaction that were broadly embedded in the theory of relations that stood between individuals and the larger society. Simmel advanced in his conception of viewing society as a 'web of patterned interactions' and remarked that understanding the forms of these interactions is the central task of Sociology.

Discussion

Dynamic dialectics between individual and society

Georg Simmel as a Micro-sociologist is best recognised for his contributions to the development of small-group research. Because Simmel operates on the idea that everything interacts in some way with everything else, Simmel's core approach might be defined as "methodological relationism" or he was a "Methodological Relationist." By listening to the usage, do you have any idea what it means? Let us look at this in its depth. The principle explains that everything interacts in some way or other with everything else that we see in society. Individual never lives in isolation; he/she constantly interacts with his/her fellow beings in social settings. We always live in the company of other people. Do you agree with this? For Simmel, there is a dynamic or dialectical tension between the individual and society. Individuals are free and creative spirits, but they are also part of the socialisation process. As we look around, rather than individuality there is always dialectics. Simmel focused on very different aspects of the social world and speculated about a very different image of the world and its future in his approach.

Functioning of society

Simmel embraced a broad - spectrum of approach to the study of Sociology starting from the basic interaction in human life to the significance of money and fashion to the emergence of metropolis and the cities to the strangers and objective cultures and its broader sense question, "How is society possible?" lies at the heart of Simmel's sociological methodology. Society is made up of a large number of individuals and groups, each pursuing their own interests and concerns with little regard for the interests of others (beyond, close friends and regular acquaintances). The result of the individual behaviours, however, is a societal whole that is stable, organised, and typically predictable. Simmel wishes to account for this consistency. Simmel emphasises that the unity of society does not depend upon the presence of an outside observer. Rather, society's unity is dependent on everyone's active engagement. Simmel sees

that society's constituents (human beings) are conscious and creative beings. Humans anticipate order, stability, and even inevitability in society, as if it were designed specifically for them.

Social interaction in groups

You will see these interests of Simmel's one by one in the following sections. For Simmel, society is viewed as interaction; hence the ultimate task of Sociology was to study the inter-relations and interactive webs into which people entered. In the subsequent text, you see how a clear distinction has been made with the size of groups (dyads and triads), and the social interactions at the individual and small group levels become the primary concern of Sociology. Simmel's influence may be seen in much of today's Sociology, which examines various forms of interaction.

Forms of Sociation

There are three types of Sociology, as put by Simmel. General Sociology is a methodological programme that examines "the totality of historical life as it is created societally." Formal Sociology investigates "the societal formations themselves"—"Sociation-al forms." Finally, there's Philosophical Sociology, which he characterises as "social science philosophy." Simmel wrote most frequently about the second form: Formal Sociology, which might be considered the heart of his endeavour. The 'forms of sociation' are the different ways in which we engage and interact.

Simmel's sociological perspective

Like Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer, Georg Simmel believed that the underlying uniformities in social life could be finely discovered. In other terms, social laws can be determined. For Georg Simmel, these uniformities occur in the forms of interaction, such as the relation of super ordination, or dominance over others, and subordination, or being controlled by others. Simmel's sociological approach is defined by his preoccupation with the kinds of interaction that underpin all social, political, economic, religious, and other activities.

At the time, Simmel was widely seen as having a comprehensive or integrated theory of society. In contemporary Sociology, however, his insights into how social forms arise at the micro-level of interaction and how they link to macro-level events are still useful. Simmel's Sociology was concerned with the central issue, "How is society possible?" Simmel's response inspired him to advance what he called formal Sociology, or the Sociology of social forms. Simmel thus comes to an unusual conclusion in his article *The Problem of Sociology*: where Simmel explains that "There is no such

thing as society 'as such.' The extraordinary diversity and variety of interactions [that] function at any given instant" is referred to as "society". This is the fundamental concept of Micro-sociology for Simmel. Therefore, Simmel asks a few of the fundamental questions in his enquiry of this primary concern: "How do the forms of social life persist? "How did they emerge in the first place? "What happens when they are fixed and permanent"? In the following sections, we discuss Simmel's Formal dimensions of Interaction. Now, are you able to remember what you have learned before going into the details of Simmel's thought?

Simmel's Fundamentals of Micro Sociology

GEORG SIMMEL-Biographical Sketch

Georg Simmel (1858- 1918), a German philosopher and an early sociologist born in Berlin, Germany is renowned for his role as an innovator of ideas, a spectacular lecturer and propounder of many of the theoretical leads. He is also well- known as a structural theorist who made great contributions to urban life and the metropolis. He had his studies at the University of Berlin and received his doctorate in Philosophy in 1881 which centres around the study of Immanuel Kant's theories pertaining to philosophy. From his earlier age as a student itself, his interest led his talent to spread across the disciplines of history, philosophy, psychology and social sciences. At the University of Berlin, he studied history and philosophy. During that time the scope of Sociology as a discipline had not fully emerged and was beginning to take its position in academics.

After his degree, he began to teach philosophy, psychology and early Sociology courses. Simmel began his academic career as a professor at the University of Strasbourg where he drew great significance in his public lectures with even international followers. He grew renowned as a public sociologist and he was an excellent academician with a large student audience as well as public intellectuals His style became well popular in academic circles. His popular writings, articles in numerous newspapers and magazines made him sound and respected across various states.

Though Simmel's ground-breaking approaches rise alongside his contemporaries Marx, Durkheim and Weber, he was recognised for fostering his apprehension to break the then- accepted scientific methodology to understand the society. Thus, he was famous for producing social theories to study the society that broke with the scientific method to examine the natural world. Simmel was greatly influenced by intellectual figures like Hegel, Kant, Spencer and Comte. He was the pioneer of introducing a new analytical approach to Sociology and is regarded as the founding father of Formal Sociology.

In modern Sociology, Simmel is most renowned for his contributions to our understanding of patterns or forms of social interaction. Simmel played a significant role in the development of small-group research. He made productive and noteworthy contributions to the classical traditions of sociological theory, wherein his works illustrate the convergence of several philosophical movements, including Neo-Kantianism. He was influential to both academia and society as were the earlier social thinkers. Simmel belongs to the record of one of the first generation 'German Sociologists 'of that time. Some academics also label him as belonging to the phenomenological school for his search of an individual theory that truly indicates the transformation of the self or inner world induced by modernity.

First generation 'German sociologist'

Simmel's contribution concerns analysing phenomena from their historical, philosophical and sociological perspectives, each of which features the surface of life which is taught to reveal a deeper meaning. Simmel's approach to Sociology therefore could be best understood as his attempt to reject the organicist theories of Comte and Spencer generally. Same as Durkheim and Max Weber, Simmel too was a classical thinker or the very core founder of the discipline of Sociology. He basically belongs to the conflict school of thought. Unlike Marx, Weber and Durkheim, Simmel was not as influential, but his ideas were drawn more or less in agreement of Marx's concept of 'alienation', effects on Weber's rationalisation and the existing social problems at individual and societal levels as envisioned by Durkheim. Now, can you refresh your mind to recollect these major theoretical backgrounds?

Multidimensional approaches

Simmel's major work *Sociology: Investigations on the Forms of Sociation* was released in 1908, wherein he outlined his approach to Sociology, which stands apart from both Auguste Comte's and Herbert Spencer's "organicist" approach and the German school of philosophical work. The organicist school regarded society's growth in terms related to that of living, or organic organisms, with social processes taking place always in relation to biological functions and mechanisms. Can you now guess, what would be the main idea that the 'idealistic school' put forth? The idealistic school, on the other hand, considered the natural or physical world as fundamentally different from the world of ideas. According to this approach, only the physical world could be measured, and making any attempt to quantify human social phenomena is meaningless in Sociology.

Altered perspective

People and interactions

Simmel rejected both ideologies and proposed a third that sees society as "the sum total of all interactions among the individual parts that make up the whole." To put it another way, society is made up of distinct individual phenomena that interact to form larger and complex systems. Simmel holds that Society comprises an intricate web of multiple relations between individuals where they are in constant interaction with one another. "Society is therefore essentially the designation for a group of people who are linked by these interactions." Now you may probably get an idea about Simmel's basic concept of theorisation and how he is considerably different from other social theorists of that time.

Micro Sociology

With the exception of Weber's contribution to macroscopic conflict theory, he is well- known as a Micro–sociologist, who played a great role in the development of small-group research. Weber is thus interested in studying the primary forms and types of social interaction which gives him an advantage over the other pioneers. Later on, Simmel's contribution had a tremendous shift from Micro-sociology towards a more precise general sociological theory. Nevertheless, Simmel's dialectical thinking illustrates multi-causal, multi-directional concerns dealing with different realms of psychological, interactional, structural and institutional levels ultimately focusing on metaphysics of life.

Scholarly and intellectual development

Simmel adds to his credit a number of books and hundreds of scholarly and popular articles which have been influential in American sociological theory for long. It was Simmel's intellectual development and writing that shaped many other social theorists to move ahead in laying their theoretical foundations and in general to the development of Sociology as a discipline. Undoubtedly even if Simmel has not been deep-rooted with any school of thought or explicit disciplines, he greatly shaped the development of Sociology. His views, which were diffused across several fields in which he wrote, left an enduring mark on subsequent generations too.

Famous Works of Georg Simmel

♦ *The Problem of Sociology* (1895)
♦ *The Metropolis and The Mental Life* (1903)
♦ *On Social Differentiation* (1890)
♦ *The Philosophy of Money* (1900)
♦ *Introduction to the Science of Ethics* (1892-1893)
♦ *Sociology: Investigations on the Forms of Sociation* (1908)
♦ *Fundamental Questions of Sociology*
♦ *The Stranger* (1908)

Legacy

Regarding Simmel's death and legacy, it is to be pointed out that more than two-hundred scholarly and non-academic articles and about 15 highly observed books add to his proficiency. With regard to various sociological schools of thought, his works proved greatly inspirational to the Chicago School of Sociology and have pioneered in the field of urban Sociology in general. His contribution also shaped intellectual development and writings of many social theorists. After fighting liver cancer, he passed away in 1918.

4.1.1 Formal Dimension of Interaction

Methodological relationism

Society is a collection of free individuals and it cannot be studied in the same way as that of the physical world. Sociology is more than the study of natural laws that control how people interact with one another. Simmel's basic approach can be described as "methodological relationism,". Simmel's theories operate on the principle that everything interacts in some way with everything else. Simmel is most known in modern Sociology for his contributions to our understanding of patterns or forms of social interaction. Simmel attempts to develop a geometry of social relations. Individuality of group members is calculated in terms of difference between the dyad (two-person group) and triad (three-person group).

Social geometry

It was Simmel who invented a distinctive style in Sociology known as 'Formal Sociology'. To put it simply, it is nothing but Sociology that studies the underlying forms of interaction taking place in society. In Simmel's Formal Sociology, he clearly develops a "Social Geometry" for understanding social relations at its depth. Simmel argued that rather than analysing the economic and political relations, there existed innumerable number of relationships in everyday life including various types of interactions with one another.

The difference between Sociology and other specific disciplines, according to Simmel, is that it approaches the same themes from a different perspective—from the perspective of different kinds of social relationships. Competition, subordination, division of labour, and other social relationships are exemplified in various spheres of social life, including the economic, political, religious, moral, and artistic, but Sociology disassociates these forms of social relationships and studies them in abstraction. Sociology, according to Simmel, is a specific social science that describes, classifies, analyses, and delineates the different types of social relationships.

Levels of social relationships

4.1.2 Social Forms

Dimensions of interaction

You should now understand Simmel's basic conception of society and how he analyses things. It's equally important to understand his theories of 'Forms of Interactions', Sociations and Social Types. As you see these concepts are really valid and actually valuable throughout your life. Let's have a reflection on these ideologies of Georg Simmel.The first understanding of society for Simmel stems from the formal dimension of interaction – which is termed 'Social Geometry'. Basically, in this theory Simmel is trying to prove how there is a common pattern in most of the simple interactions primarily based on numbers and distance. In other words, one can say that there is a logic behind every social grouping or interactions in general. It starts first of all with numbers moving on to distance, speed and time.

i. Numbers:

Dyad and triad

Mostly the number constitutes how many people are involved in an interaction process. Definitely the number of people that are involved in any interaction marks a sociological dimension or effect. Simmel, therefore, states that the number of different amounts of people involved in interactions makes different effects. He, therefore, divides this concept under dyads and triads, which you will see in detail in the subsequent sections.

ii. Distance:

Relation

Distance also creates and has a tremendous effect on social interactions. It mainly demands the relations between people and other people or between people and things. It determines the perception of an insider and the outsider.

Similarly, Simmel's concept of 'Stranger' is a great understanding of the phenomenon of distance. Who is a stranger according to you? In simple terms we can say that he/she is one who comes today and leaves tomorrow. Those with whom we are not close or familiar. Do you agree? To your understanding you can perceive that if someone is too close, nobody considers them as a stranger. On the other hand, if someone is not so close to you but too far, then you consider him as a stranger. These groups of people don't know you and do not keep a close contact with the group any more. Therefore, distance is more important in Simmel's work.

Familiarity and unfamiliarity

iii. Speed and Time:

Same as that of numbers and distance, time also shapes the interaction type. Time mainly focuses on efficiency or competence. You are also quite familiar that the way people interact with each other can be affected with time as well. You can imagine if time is limited within an interaction, it pushes people under pressure to interact with each other. It moves at a fast pace, less valued. Likewise, speed and time are also other factors that create an undesirable attitude.

Limitation in interaction

4.1.3 Sociation

According to Simmel the term "sociation" refers to the specific patterns and ways in which humans interact and relate to one another. Sociation in essence forms the major field of study for students of society. Simmel believes that society is nothing more than the individuals that make it up. Hence, Sociation involves the particular patterns and forms in which human beings relate to each other and interact. He finds sociation as a better way to talk about interactions.

Pattern of interaction

The Problem of Sociology (1895)

♦ Sociation is the form in which individuals grow together into a unity and within which their interests are realised.
♦ It is the particular pattern in which human beings relate to each other and interact.
♦ In Simmel's view, the concept of society is grounded on its individual components.

♦ Sociological underpinning works on a dual-functioning system, one part focuses on the psychological processes of individuals that lead eventually to the process of sociation; and the other is the manifestation of society as an ideal form.

Types of sociation

It is evident that Simmel regarded sociation as abstract, generic principles. He used them to depict historical forms of social organisation and some broad characteristics of social development, but not to explain social phenomena as stages in a historical process. Simmel emphasises structural elements that led him to describe a permanent social form or relationship that we would identify as historically relative. This is true of his characterisation of sociability as a pure type of sociation. However, Simmel has also highlighted the fact that people in groups vary in their sizes – monads (a group of one person), dyads, i.e. two people, triads, i.e. three people, or groups of more than three people – interact in different ways. The size of the group including its examples and conceptual justifications will be discussed in the later section of the unit. With a rise in the number of people in a group, there is a qualitative change in terms of organisation.
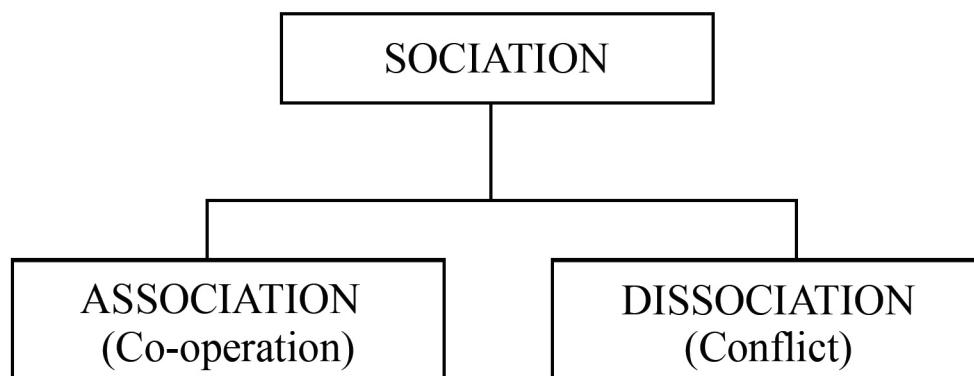
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                    ┌──────────────────┐
                    │    SOCIATION     │
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    │   ASSOCIATION    │          │   DISSOCIATION   │
    │  (Co-operation)  │          │    (Conflict)    │
    └──────────────────┘          └──────────────────┘
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Fig 4.1.1 Sociation

Human interaction

According to Georg Simmel's sociological viewpoint, there cannot be a totalistic social science that investigates all elements of social phenomena, just as there is no unique "total" science of all matter in scientific sciences. As a result, Simmel claims that science should focus on aspects or dimensions of phenomena rather than global whole or totalities. In this context, he believes that Sociology's goal is to define and analyse specific forms of human interaction, as well as their crystallisation in group characteristics such as

the state, clan, family, city, and so on. Simmel contends that all human behaviour is individual behaviour, but that we can comprehend a major part of this human behaviour, if we understand the social group to which the individuals belong and the limits they confront in specific forms of interaction.

Association

Now let's look at the definition for society by Simmel. According to Simmel, society is "an intricate web of multiple relations between individuals who are in constant interaction with one another: Society is merely the name for a number of individuals, connected by interactions.' In society we can find many associations and as humans we are continuously in interaction with some kind of these groups or associations. To be specific, Simmel elucidates various forms of associations such as subordination, super ordination, exchange, conflict and sociability. Let us now look at these relationships in any interactions in society.

Mutual Relationship

What is your understanding of subordination and super ordination? Simply the term subordination means that which is placed in a lower degree, rank or position whereas super ordination is put in a greater class, rank or position. Both of them have a reciprocal relationship. In any kind of exchange or relationship one could find that there is one person who is dominant and the other person who is less dominant. In every oppressive kind of relationship there are always possibilities for personal freedom. Without mutual relationships, neither this nor any other sort of interaction can exist.

Creative consciousness

Simmel put forth the concept of 'creative consciousness'. Do you remember the terminology of collective consciousness by Durkheim? Similarly, Simmel has explained creative consciousness as found in any diverse forms of interaction, that has been observed as the ability of actors to create social structures. According to Simmel, humans assume roles as social beings, and we endow these roles with meaning and subjectivity. On the other hand, Simmel points out that an individual's potential can't be exhausted by the few roles they play in life. Rather, individuality (thinking of ourselves as individuals) becomes one more type or role and we become just 'outlines,' bound by the limits of the culture in which we (must) exist.

As opposed to being a distinct reality of its own, "society merely is the term for a number of individuals, connected by interaction. Society certainly isn't a "substance," nothing concrete, but an event. Thus, according to Simmel, society

is nothing more than a lived experience, and social forces are neither external to nor necessarily restrictive for the individual; rather, people constantly reconstruct society via their relationships and activities.

(a) Primary Concern: Concept of Group

Simmel's interest in creativity is evident in his analyses of various forms of social interaction, actors' ability to establish social structures, and the devastating implications of those structures on individual creativity. Simmel's discussions of different types of interaction generally indicate that actors must be aware of one another. Simmel also understands individual conscience and how society's rules and ideals become integrated in individual consciousness. Simmel also has a view of people's ability to confront themselves mentally, to separate themselves from their own actions, a view very similar to George Herbert Mead's views.

In contemporary Sociology, Simmel is most renowned for his contributions to our knowledge of patterns or forms of social interaction. Simmel made it apparent that one of his main concerns was conscious actor connection, and that his goal was to examine a wide range of contacts that may appear insignificant at times but are critical at others. Simmel's main concern was the form of social interaction rather than the content. The Sociologist's task, according to Simmel, is to impose a restricted number of forms on social reality, extracting commonalities from a vast range of specific interactions.

Simmel aims to build a geometry of social relations along these lines. The key distinction between a dyad (two-person group) and a triad (three-person group) is that a triad poses a larger danger to group members' individuality. In a bigger society, however, an individual is more likely to be a member of several groups, each of which has just a modest influence over his or her personality. The type of social engagement is also determined by distance. The value of an object, for example, is proportional to its distance from an actor. Hence, Simmel considered a wider range of social forms comprising exchange, conflict, prostitution, and sociability.

Simmel's historical and philosophical Sociology concentrates on the cultural level of social reality, which he refers to as objective culture. According to Simmel, people build culture, but the cultural and social worlds take on lives of their own and increasingly control the actors who created

Objective Culture

them due to their ability to make more concrete social reality. Tools, transportation, technology, the arts, language, the intellectual realm, conventional wisdom, religious dogma, philosophical systems, legal systems, moral standards, and ideals are all components of objective culture, according to Simmel. Modernization increases the absolute size of objective culture. As the cultural domain expands, so does the number of distinct components. Simmel was especially concerned about the harm that objective culture posed to individual culture.

Social form

There are no "pure" forms in any social reality, according to Georg Simmel. A variety of formal features are present in all social phenomena. Cooperation and conflict, subordination and superordination are examples of formal aspects. As a result, there is no such thing as "pure" conflict or "pure" cooperation in society according to Simmel. The "pure" forms are only abstractions that do not exist in real society, but were established by Simmel in order to analyse real-world social life. As a result, Georg Simmel's "forms" have a lot of significance. Henceforth, Georg Simmel discussed social types as a counterpoint to the concept of social form.

Social types

Simmel's concept of social forms and his concept of social types were complementary to each other. A person's social type develops as a result of his or her interactions with others who place him or her in a specific position and have certain expectations of him or her. As a result, the social type's attributes are regarded as the qualities of social structures.

4.1.4 Sociability

Social to sociation

Society exists where a group of people engage in interaction (interaction is Simmel's key to everything), which originates on the basis of particular desires or for the sake of specific goals. In the empirical sense, unity (or sociation) refers to the interplay of elements (i.e. Individuals in the case of society). Individuals are the centres of all historical reality, but elements of life aren't social unless they encourage interaction. This is because only this sociation has the ability to shift from a collection of isolated individuals into distinct forms of being with and for one another.

Any social phenomenon is made up of two aspects that are in actuality inseparable, according to Simmel's famous form/content dichotomy (distinction is only analytical). We often

focus on the content of our social interactions with people in regular social life. However, for Simmel, the sociologist's task is to uncover the shared social forms through which a variety of seemingly distinct interactions take place, rather than focusing on the contents that distinguish types of social interaction from one another. For example, in any kind of relationships whether it be between the boss or the employee, between the wealthy and the poor, between the husband and wives and any other, for Simmel, it isn't the specific demands that are of primary sociological concern, but rather the interaction that takes the form of relationship what Simmel calls a 'social form'. As discussed in the above example, we can see these social forms taking shape in any kind of relationship.

Interactions within families, among peer groups, gangs, business parties and other groups for instance, frequently take on a variety of social forms such as cooperation or competition or conflict. The point that Simmel puts forth here is fascinated by the notion that many different types of contents could take on the same social form. Further as an example, the need for money (content) might be represented in a variety of social forms, such as cooperation, competition, or extreme violence. Simmel saw the sociologist as constructing a "geometry of social life" through investigating the various ways in which we engage in social interaction.

1. **Content**: The phenomena or interactions of interest, purpose, or motive.

2. **Social Form:** The mode of individual interaction through/in the shape of which specific content achieves social actuality. Furthermore, the existence of society necessitates reciprocal interaction among its individual units; mere aggregation of parts spatially or temporally is insufficient.

The task of Sociology, according to Simmel, is to separate these forms of connection or sociation from their contents analytically and to bring them together under a consistent scientific worldview. The two ideas that underpin the form/content analysis, includes:

1. The same form of sociation is observed in disparate contents and in relation to disparate purposes and

2. Content is represented through an alternative of distinct forms of sociation.

Analysis of societal interaction

Simmel views Sociology as the science of social forms (in a way favouring analytic primacy over content, despite the fact that the two are closely linked). He uses the analogy of geometry as the study of form (i.e. patterns) that really exist in an endless variety of physical materials. In the same manner, Simmel believes that Sociology should leave the investigation of the content of societal interaction to other sciences (such as psychology or economy).

In a sense, society must be considered as a reality. On the one hand, there are the individuals in their direct visible existence, the bearers of association processes, who are joined by these processes into the higher unity of society. Besides, there are individual interests that motivate them to such a union or relationship.

Desire for sociability

i) Individuals unite for the benefit of specific demands and interests (in economic associations, blood fraternities and the rest). Above and beyond their specific content, all interactions are accompanied by a sense of fulfilment in the fact that one is associated with others and that one's loneliness is resolved into togetherness - a union with others. There is a desire that presses towards this kind of existence in all effective motives to associate a sense of worth in, and valuing the form of association as such. The desire for sociability embodies the pure essence of association (form), and the realities of social life (content), both viewed as an associative process that gives value and satisfaction.

Impulse of sociability

ii) Therefore, it can be perceived that the play – form of interaction, then, is sociability. Because sociability in its purest form has no ultimate intention, no meaning, and it only entails the fulfilment or satisfaction of the impulse of sociability. The process is absolutely limited to its individual bearers. As a result, the range of personality traits possessed by the participants determines the type of purely sociable interaction.

Regulated interactions

iii) It is fundamental that the individuals do not display their individuality excessively in terms of an individual's self-regulation in her/his personal relationships with others where no external or directly self-centred interests impose restrictions.

iv) In sociability, whatever qualities the personality possesses that are objectively significant such as those that are oriented toward anything outside the circle, must not

obstruct sociable interactions. Hence, the most disrespectful and deeply personal characteristics need to be eliminated from sociability. As it is said that there's an upper and lower sociability barrier for each and every individual - she/he should remove the objective aspects of her/his personality but restrain from exhibiting their totally subjective and internal aspects of his/her personality.

Objective aspects

(a) Forms of Individuality

Simmel holds, "society exists where a lot of individuals enter into interaction". He implies that whenever a group of people gather or get together, something happens that wouldn't have happened if the individuals had stayed alone. People tune themselves to one another in the same manner as musicians tune their instruments to one another. Individuals' behaviour begins to be guided or coordinated by a pattern or kind of interaction. Simmel offers the example of a cocktail party at which a precise set of instructions emerges, defining what may and cannot be spoken in such an event. Simmel claimes that social interaction has taken on a certain particular shape or form. This he calls the play form of social interaction or the pure 'sociability'.

Pattern of social interaction

Simmel advocated that Sociology be defined as the study of recurring social forms that occur in various situations and with various social meanings. The same play form regulates interaction in two distinct contexts with two different contents of interaction: one is polite conversation's free-ranging content, and the other is sexual desire. Simmel states, Sociology should be concerned with interaction, particularly the social forms that these interactions create. The content of these forms must be considered, and also studied by other social disciplines, such as economics, history, and psychology. Simmel cites conflict, sociability, subordination and superordination as examples of forms of interaction. A concrete phenomenon is frequently composed of various forms of interactions. Simmel examined superiority and subordination, collaboration, rivalry, division of labour, and money transactions, among other things. These forms can be used to provide social form to a number of various contents or specific desires, such as sexual, spiritual, acquisitive, protective, playful, and so on.

Concrete phenomena

(b) Quantifiable Aspects of the Group

The Quantitative Determination of Groups, one of the most famous chapters in Simmel's work, claims that numbers can

influence the social organisation of groups. When a group grows from two members (a dyad) to three members (a triad), the dynamics shift dramatically. Now that a majority has been formed, one member can play the other two members against each other. Simmel believes that the size of a group influences certain aspects of social life. For example, larger groups are associated with higher levels of structural differentiation (specific organs enhance and sustain the group's interests) and less personal connection. Let's have a look into Simmel's concept of groups, group size or group structure through certain patterns.

Structural differentiation

(c) Social Group Sizes: Monad, Dyad and Triad

You have already learned about the idea of groups and their various forms in the previous sections. They are categorised in a variety of ways such as primary group, secondary group, in-groups, out- groups, voluntary and involuntary groups, reference groups etc. So far various sociologists using diverse perspectives have studied groups in peculiar ways as well. There are many kinds of groups that too occur in different forms and sizes. Now we can further explore the classification of the different types of social groups such as monad, dyad and triad. Simmel has classified social groups on the basis of the 'Size of the group'. The size of a group can have an impact on its dynamics and interactions. Simply, monad refers to a single unit or one number, dyad includes those formed by only two people and those formed by three people (triad), as well as other bigger social groups.

Dynamics of interaction

SIZE OF A GROUP

♦ Most significant aspects of sociation is the number of persons doing things together in groups.

♦ Simmel argued, "Size is highly significant for the group."

♦ The smallest unit that can be taken into account is the individual human person.

♦ Simmel started with the most elementary of all human groups and moves upward to more complex groups.

Social groupings come in a variety of sizes and shapes. You can visualise for example the family or your friend's circles that you belong to. Some of you might have a small family and much closer friends circle only while surely others have a large family and enormous circle of friends. As in this example, there are differences between various sorts of social groups. Similarly, each type of group influences group dynamics and relationships. However, to Simmel, the size of the group also has a considerable effect on these features of a group.

Georg Simmel wrote extensively on the distinction between a dyad (two-member group) and a triad (three-member group). A small group, such as a nuclear family, a dyad, or a triad, is defined as a collection of people small enough that all members of the group know each other and share simultaneous interaction. In the first, if one person leaves, the group ceases to exist. Let's look at the interesting features of 'Group Size' as Figure 4.1.2 shows.
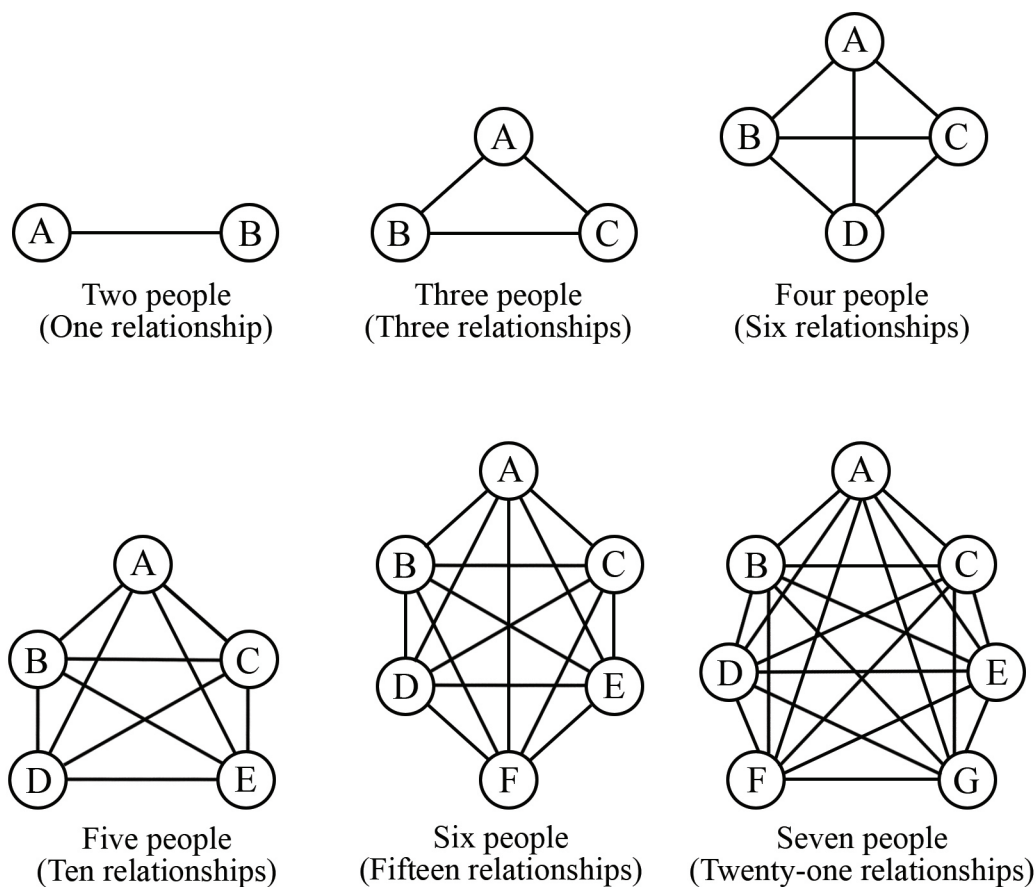
Two people
(One relationship)

Three people
(Three relationships)

Four people
(Six relationships)

Five people
(Ten relationships)

Six people
(Fifteen relationships)

Seven people
(Twenty-one relationships)

Fig 4.1.2 Group Size and Relationships

Size of the group

For an in-depth analysis of the above-mentioned example, you can consider the connection between the number of people in a social group and the number of relationships among them. It is apparent from Figure 4.1.2 that two people form a single relationship (a dyad), adding a third person generates three relationships (a triad), adding a fourth person makes six. In each group, increasing the number of people at a time, magnifies the number of relationships than the previous ones. This paves the way for every individual to interact with everyone already there. Thus, as the Figure shows, five people produce ten relationships whereas by the time six people join one conversation, it connects fifteen channels. As an adverse situation, this leaves too many people unable to speak, hence the group usually divides at this point.

(i) Social Group: Monad

Single Unit

The term monad means a single unit or the concept of one as its essence. One to one conversation or the ego or self is a monad. It is considered as a microcosm or unit that reflects interpersonal relationships. The self's unique identity is patterned by the society and society's unity is maintained by its members' self- identities.

(ii) Social Group: Dyad

Social group of two

Simmel used the term dyad to label a social group with two members. A dyad is the most basic and fundamental sort of social group, consisting of merely two people. Dyads are the forms of interaction between two persons. These are also known as the most intense forms of sociation. Throughout the world, romantic engagements or love affairs, familial ties through marriages, the closest friendships at schools or job places and other factors can all contribute to dyadic relationships. Consider another example, that of a divorce. What happens in such relationships? It effectively terminates the "group" of the married couple or two close persons, and they never communicate again.

What therefore makes the dyad a special relationship? As you notice from your personal experiences, what are the common peculiarities of the relationship between two people? First, Simmel explained, social interaction in a dyad is typically more intense than in larger groups. Therefore, dyads are considered the most meaningful social bonds that we ever experience. On the contrary, Simmel explained, dyads have another characteristic of instability. The connections can either be extremely intense or at the same time they can also

be unstable and just temporary. There is no independent group beyond the dyad themselves. Hence, one can see that when they disperse the interaction disperses. It is highly essential that both members of a dyad should equally and actively help to sustain the relationship. What would happen if either of them withdrew? The group may collapse. Hence throughout our discussions you can see that it also proves that for each dyad to make a dyad work, both members of the group must work together and cooperate. The group will break apart if just one person refuses to cooperate. Dyad retains high individuality with no sense of belongingness.

(iii) Social Group: Triad

So now you have come to know what a monad and a dyad are. Could you have an assumption on what a triad would constitute of? As against the example of the divorce, the dynamic of a triad, on the other hand, is entirely different. A social group with three members is a triad according to Simmel. Even if one individual leaves, the group continues to function. When there are three people in a group, two-against-one dynamics can emerge, and a majority opinion on any matter. A triad has a unique set of connections. In simple terms, if we add another person to a dyad, then it becomes a triad. Generally, triad is thus said to be a social group made up of three individuals. An addition of just a simple member to a group can remarkably bring significant change in group interactions and dynamics.

A triad is more stable than a dyad because even if the relationship between any two members becomes stressed, the third can act as mediator to re-establish the group's activity. Triads are said to be the foundations of all complexities such as they involve competition, coalition (alliances) or mediation or negotiations in any group that you see around you. For instance in politics, in different parties you may see one join the other parties or groups due to personal or political negotiations. Even if it is visible in your friend's groups, one of them becomes the focal point of attraction for the other two. Also, you can notice that one may take control over the others like the concept of 'Monopoly'. It is necessary that if social structures are to be created, one dominates the other. For example: you can see it in the widely witnessed form of the majority that tends to suppress the minority around most parts of the world.

Still, we can see that, as groups grow beyond three members, they become more and more stable for the reason

that the loss of even several members does not put the group's existence at risk. You may also notice at the same time, unlike small groups, increase in group size typically reduces intense personal interactions. Larger groups are thus based on less personal attachments and more on formal rules and regulations. Henceforth, larger groups, even keep on going over time.

(d) Small Groups

"A small group is a system made up of three to a lesser number of people who get together and interact with each other to achieve a shared goal." This definition defines the number of persons who make up this tiny group. One suitable example of small groups is the Primary Groups which you perhaps studied in your earlier classes. Primary groups are small in size to know one another intimately. At the same time, it is characterised by intimate face to face interactions. Regarding the relationships within the primary group, we can see that it is a long-lasting relationship which is intimate, personal, and spontaneous in nature. Can you name some examples for Primary groups which designate the above-mentioned characteristics from your immediate environment? Family, neighbourhoods and peer groups form examples of such groups. Is a restricted group, however, defined just by the number of individuals who make it up? Here are some characteristics of restricted groupings.

The members of the group are all acquainted with one another. They have a close relationship. A member can, for example, name each of the other members and explain their everyday lives; the group prioritises specific goals, and the members of the group work together to attain those goals. Members form cordial bonds with one another and grow dependent on one another even when they are not gathered together. In the group, several roles are formed. As a result, each member serves a distinct function. Some members may serve as leaders, while others may serve as recruiters, labourers, or observers.

In the group, unique norms or regulations arise. For instance, to retain membership status, an organisation could require each member to attend weekly meetings. The group develops its own identity. It can, in fact, develop its own system of beliefs, practices, and culture through time. The small number of participants, face-to-face contacts, interpersonal growth, sense of belonging, formation of organising processes, and systems of norms are the most

often the distinguishing features of small groups. To have a thorough understanding, let's look at a few examples of small groups:

i) Socialism: - You've certainly heard of socialism, but do you really know what it means? It only works in small, homogeneous groups, where each individual may directly experience the group's efforts and the benefits of socialism. Huge groups of people are tied together by specialisation and interconnectedness. It is any system in which a group of people share responsibility for the production and distribution of commodities and services. While you look into its defining characteristics, you may notice it as having no competition – that is it encourages cooperation rather than competition, creates a commitment towards social equality of people and meets basic needs of people.

ii) Aristocracies: - you have learned about political institutions. Can you recollect the peculiar characteristics of aristocracy? It is characterised by a very small size i.e. power in the hands of a few people. Beyond the absolute size limit, an aristocracy cannot exist. Each of the particular members must know each other personally. The practice of primogeniture (hereditary rule or succession), as well as blood and marital ties, prevents the group from expanding. In the small group, the aristocratic class consciousness is often realised as against in a larger group.

iii) Religious Sects: The sense of belonging stems from the recognition that they are a small group of a larger whole. They are a small group which is tied together by solidarity (unity). The larger group serves as a background against which these sects can recognise their own unique character. A sect is a religious group that opposes another clerical group. Before being approved as a member of the sect, potential members must actively engage or participate in it. In a sect the members mingle freely with the group. Those who join the groups validate the rules and norms. They are not enforced through power structures by a set of leaders.

Small groups are known for their internal cohesion and sense of belonging. Small groups, on the other hand, face a barrier to achieve larger goals. When they are up against larger groups, they may find it difficult to be heard or to be a force for change. In a sense, they're easy to overlook. A triad's relationships can be just as intense as that of a dyad, but the group is usually more permanent and stable. When

two persons in a triad disagree, the third person in the group can act as a mediator to help them to an understanding. That paves the way to compromise even. If it fails, one individual can quit a triad and the group will still exist, unlike the one person who remains after a dyad is broken. Another notable difference between dyads and triads is the division of responsibilities.

(e) Larger Social Groups

There are a number of trends that arise as the membership of a group grows beyond three members. It's hard to define when a small group expands into a large one. It could happen when there are too many people participating in a discussion at the same time. Alternatively, a group may join with other groups as part of a larger movement. Similarly, what would be the difference and significance that make larger groups different from the smaller groups? As the group grows larger, the intimacy and loyalty of the members decrease. Members of the group feel less commitment and responsibility because their ties are less intimate. In a large group, each member's contribution is less than it would be in a small group. Because of the difference of ideas and perspectives, a larger group is also less likely to form a compromise. On the good side, large groups have more stability because the group can continue to exist even if several members leave the group.

The bigger the group, the more attention it may get and the more pressure members can exist on each other to achieve whatever goal they want. Simultaneously, the larger the group, the greater the possibility of division and lack of unity. A fundamental question emerges: does a social group have an ideal size? What would be your answer? The answer depends purely on the group's purpose. The discussions so far have made clear that a dyad offers absolute intimacy, whereas a group of several dozen members is considered more stable with larger capability of attaining complex tasks and can better accept new members or ideas or behaviours etc.

Summarised Overview

In academia though Simmel was unable to find a full-time place, his publications and wide range of subjects and lectures have made a profound impact in Sociology. His contributions provide a scientific base to Sociology in all its essence. The formal Sociology, according to him, should include the study of societal formations as its unique form of focus. Societal forms were related to their geometry. The geometric forms deal with pure forms in spite of its content and functions. Simmel states that the basic elements of sociological analysis are thus, human social interaction otherwise termed 'Sociation'. Essentially society comprises all varied ways of social groups and other organisations in which humans come together to interact. Simmel illustrates the Group dynamics, group size and member interactions. Size is thus extremely important for the group. He determines the form of sociation in groups, in term of their possible numerical elements, small versus big groups. The individual is considered the smallest unit. The numerical setup that brings together the case of two persons is called a dyad (Two-person group). It is considered the most intimate of all social groups. The three-person group is named a triad, which occurs due to the addition of one more member to the group. Relations in smaller groups are more intense and stable than those in larger groups. All relationships are defined by certain levels of proximity and distance.

Assignments

1. Write a short note on Simmel's early history and education.
2. Evaluate the dialectical approach of Simmel. Also point out some examples for the approach from his own works.
3. Describe Georg Simmel's contribution to the study of groups and group size.
4. Simmel was a "methodological relationist." Expand the statement.
5. In Simmel's Formal Sociology, one sees his effort to develop a "social geometry" of social relations. What do these signify?
6. Elaborate the different types of social forms.
7. What was the primary task of Sociology according to Simmel?
8. Why is Simmel considered a champion of 'Formal Sociology'?

Suggested Readings

1. Appelrouth, S & Edles, L. D. (2020). *Classical and Contemporary Sociological Theory: Text and Readings*. India: Sage.
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1. Slattery, M. (2003). *Key Ideas in Sociology*. UK: Nelson Thornes.
2. Ray, L. J. (1999). *Theorizing Classical Sociology*. UK: Open University Press.
3. Frisby, D. (2013). *Georg Simmel*. UK: Taylor & Francis.
4. Simmel, G. (2015). *The Problem Of Sociology*. US: Creative Media Partners.

Space for Learner Engagement for Objective Questions

Learners are encouraged to develop objective questions based on the content in the paragraph as a sign of their comprehension of the content. The Learners may reflect on the recap bullets and relate their understanding with the narrative in order to frame objective questions from the given text. The University expects that 1 - 2 questions are developed for each paragraph. The space given below can be used for listing the questions.

SGOU - SLM - MA SOCIOLOGY Foundations of Sociological Theory

Philosophy of Money

Learning Objectives

- ◆ To expose the 'philosophy' in Simmel's study of money
- ◆ To explain the role played by money in modern societies
- ◆ To narrate the dimensions of money exchange in Simmel's study

Background

All the works developed by Simmel have created his own remarkable style which separates him from other social thinkers. The major concern of Simmel on money views it as a structuring agent that gives people insights about the totality of life. Simmel generated strong views regarding the development of the money economy. *Philosophy of Money* is the renowned book written by Georg Simmel in 1900 in Germany, principally related with economic Sociology. It is considered one of the well-thought-out masterpieces of the social philosopher that extends the breadth of his thinking. He has a reflective view on power and meaning of money in our society, more from the psychological, philosophical and sociological standpoints. Simmel therefore views money as a metaphor and reason for humans' social existence. Simmel analyses the broader issue of money and value. At another level of his interest, he viewed money from a wider perspective that had profound impact on modern society as well as linked it with various, other components of human life such as ownership, exchange, selfishness, scepticism (uncertainty or disbelief), individual freedom, life style, personality, culture etc. His final argument therefore centres on the idea of seeing money as a specific component of life that supports us to understand the totality of life.

Keywords

Philosophy, Rationality, Interaction, Reification, Replaceable

Discussion

Cultural role of money

Simmel attempted to discover the relationship of money to all realms of our lives – its effects on all fields of culture, the spiritual, moral, and religious assumptions that underpin it. He highlighted the intellectual nature of monetary economy in particular. Philosophical, cultural analyses, and economic Sociology are all combined in his work, *The Philosophy of Money*. Money, according to Simmel, is inextricably linked to the relativistic and restless cultural character of modern society. Money equalises all values and keeps things moving indefinitely. *The Philosophy of Money* contains sociological observations such as the observation that trust is important to the modern economy. Money is only as useful as the governmental authority that backs it up.

Money exchange as a type of social interaction

In society, there are banks that stand as economic institutions. We depend on these monetary systems for availing ourselves of educational loans, for the construction of houses, for purchasing cars and many other necessities in life. Economic transactions carried out through banks more or less form a structured pattern. They follow definite arrangements including rules and regulations. On the other hand, within your family also, your parents lend money to friends or neighbours out of personal relations. It is also a kind of economic exchange. When the economic exchange takes place between individuals, it fixes the personal ties among one another. This strengthens the social interaction between individuals. Hence, money as an economic exchange becomes a kind of social interaction.

Money as a substituent of social interaction

You are familiar with the earlier well-known type of exchange that existed within the 'Jajmani-system' of the past societies. As the earlier known types of monetary transactions of the barter system were replaced, it paved the way for new forms of exchange. To his concern "Money is subject to precise division and manipulation". It becomes impersonal in the sense that it promotes human's rational calculation. As money becomes the predominant link connecting people, it substitutes personal ties between people. Do you experience or feel how money replaces personal ties? Money has become the link that connects people. For instance, a person starts a business with the small capital available in his hand, the rest of the money he garners through other means such as banks, his personal links etc. Personal connections become much

wider among banks, government organisations, retail shops and people who have helped the person in his initiation of the business. Here you can notice that on one side there are economic relations and on the other personal ties develop conspicuously. Simmel thus argues that personal ties that get replaced by economic relations.

Money as a means of exchange

The modern world looks at money as a major means of exchange. In the modern world, values have lesser roles and money is viewed as a means of exchange. The exchange of money results in economic and social growth of the economy. It is much beyond a standard value that embodies calculability, rationality and impersonality. Beyond its economic functions money maximises individual differences.

Money affects human relationships

Though Simmel's work *The Philosophy of Money* is much bound to Karl Marx's idea of Capitalism, it has astounding differences. Simmel clearly accounts the problems created by the money economy as money has a profound impact on the nature of human relationships. Within all spheres, its extensive use creates an account of calculability and rationality. This in turn, paved the way for the decline of genuine human relations and altered social relationships to a greater extent. He profoundly equates this with the attitude people commonly have around small towns and in cities. Even when small towns are typified by strong bonds and emotionality, modern cities match with narrow intellectuality that has a reflective effect on calculability, division of labour and specialisation. At this juncture, Simmel's general argument relates to the ever-widening nature of objective culture as against the decline of individual culture. It is money that leads to the supremacy of objective culture with a corresponding devaluation individual culture. Thus, it is difficult to maintain individuality at this critical juncture.

4.2.1 Money and Value

Simmel's *The Philosophy of Money* commences with the discussion of money and the value it has created. Later the argument moves to the impact of money with regard to the 'inner world' of individuals and on culture in particular. Simmel propounded general principles on money and value. Simmel came out with an intriguing question, what makes things valuable? This stands strong grounds for his work in analysis of his concept of money. The imperative point he accords is that the value of anything is determined normally

by its distance from the actors. Rather than perceiving the importance of money, Simmel makes it clear that the impact of it on a wide range of phenomena receives much recognition. Especially on the objective culture and "inner world" of the actors.

Thus, Simmel's argument strongly emphasises that things are not valuable if their easier or too close to obtain or it is the same even if it is too difficult or distant to obtain. He therefore accords, objects are most valuable only when it takes greater effort to attain them. What therefore determines value to objects? Simmel found it was time, scarcity, sacrifice and difficulties that provided value in getting objects. That is, the greater the difficulty in obtaining an object the greater is its value. Simmel illustrates this with an example of the pre-modern and modern eras with the existence of the exchange of goods and services under barter system that took place in terms of the value attached to land, honour, food etc. Later on, the monetary cost was purely determined with the advent of currency. Hence, money forms a single quantifiable metric in society though it has no intrinsic value of its own.

Although Simmel's initial concerns on the principle of value of things stand high in terms of its difficulty in obtaining an object, however this difficulty of attainment has a "lower as well as an upper limit" in general. On the contrary, some endeavours are required to consider something as valuable. Though generally, things that are too close, easily attained and things that are too far, moreover too hard or nearly impossible to acquire, are also not considered valuable. According to Simmel, what we admire or confront most are valuable to us irrespective of our efforts to obtain them. Hence, he argues those things that are of greatest value are neither distant nor much closer. The common principle holds that value of things generally derives from the ability of people to distance themselves properly from objects. The factors such as the time that it takes one to obtain the things, its scarcity, the difficulties involved in attaining it as well as the want to give up other things so as to acquire it are involved in determining the distance of an object from the actors. Hence, people often place themselves at a proper distance from the objects.

It is in this context of value, Simmel, conferred the economic value of money. In the modern economy, the value of money is attached to the objects which creates both distance from

us and provides the means to overcome it. The universal fact therefore remains that we cannot obtain them without having money of our own. Moreover, the difficulty in obtaining money to obtain the objects therefore makes them valuable to us. In common parlance, once we attain abundant money, we can easily overcome the distance between ourselves and the objects. Finally, money plays an interesting purpose in creating distance between people and objects and provides the means to overcome that distance in particular.

The major arguments that influence Simmel's discussion on money is based upon the following thoughts:

1. In every aspect of human existence, money is a structural metaphor.

2. The word "Value" symbolises the dual nature of moral and monetary influences.

3. Power of money activates physicalisation, commodification and universalisation.

4. The effects of money examine the nature of valuation and immeasurability on human relations.

With these important subject matters, Simmel then moves on to examine how money accomplishes value and becomes a crucial category in an individual's life. Ultimately, he argues that value is not something that is assigned inherently but is a human creation. He makes the idea clear by stating the relationship between the universal and the particular. Nevertheless, money is well-known to us, in the way in which we see it, feel or count but yet a concrete existence that lacks profound "cognition". Here Simmel's idea comes close to the Kantian arguments about how values commonly affect our cognition about the world, from where Simmel generates his thoughts on' commensurability'. As money had a far-reaching impact and formed the necessary foundation of everything, it ultimately helps in synthesising values that are diverse and incommensurable.

For example, usually, humans assign value to many things in their lifetime like food, pet animals, sexual relationships, bond of friendships, but in various circumstances and distinct cultures, these values are roughly comparable since it is less quantifiable and exchanged. Therefore, the values are not assigned to us by nature; nevertheless it is human- generated in the most chaotic manner. Hence, it is not natural existence that inferred value to objects, thoughts or events and moreover

Value systems

the values diverge widely from the natural settings due to the commencement of money. Simmel accords that it is this intrinsically valueless currency (referred to as money) that makes immeasurable systems of value measurable. People thus simply relate their values in accordance with quantified monetary figures. And in terms, they built an exchange based on the two value systems.

Indispensable factor

Economic value forms the basic aspect of all known existence, interdependence and interaction of everything in society. Henceforth, the indispensable role and quality of money become more coherent, for which the value of things is taken for granted in terms of their economic interaction, all of which had embodied in the single and purest expression of money. Thus, money in its purest concept has accomplished the final stage. It is regarded as nothing other than its pure form of exchangeability. It exemplifies that the value of meaning of things by virtue of which ought to become economic, which finally comprehends the totality of money itself.

4.2.2 Money and Freedom

Self-identity

We have already discussed money's central role in creating value systems and seen its quantifiable nature within every element in the system. You can see that in the first part Simmel covers *The Philosophy of Money* with more of an analytical approach and therefore he now expands his ideas and moves into larger ideas of economy and modernity. From the very title "Individual freedom" Simmel points out that though money makes possible universal exchanges and specialisation in society through monetary benefits, individuals face greater freedom of individualisation or self-identification.

In the *Philosophy of Money*, Simmel enunciated the fundamental fact that money signifies personal freedom. Economic obligations limit freedom. The same example that we looked at earlier related to the barter system can also be well explained in terms of money and personal freedom. The peasant was tied to the land of their feudal lords and was obliged to give a part of their cultivated products in return to the lord. Thus, they exchanged cattle, wheat or maize in return for their service with greater loss or troubles. On the other hand, when it came to economic obligations, the

Independency

peasants were free to cultivate the crops that they intended and could involve in any other activities as they choose to pay the tax. Therefore, in an economic system, money sanctioned relationships become more impersonal and insignificant. Thus, money is advantageous to freedom. In effect, it encourages individuals to experience independence and self-sufficiency.

Replaceable aspects

Simmel accorded that there occurs strong inter-relationship between money economy, rationality and individualism. Here the term, "rationality" means the act of justifying one's own beliefs with one's own reasons and actions, that is regarded as the state of having sound judgement and consistent logic, whereas individualism has been associated with one's own interests and individual characteristics which rely on individual's freedom and self-realisation. The essence of his thought on money creates the notion that individual becomes a calculating machine as money permits rational calculations. It has significantly become "the most frightful leveller that replaces human personalities with impersonal relationships." Moreover, he saw the money economy transforming man to become a calculating machine that destroys all the human sentiments, emotions and symbolism.

4.2.3 Money, Reification, and Rationalisation

Reified social world

We saw in the earlier session the process of creating value by money. Now, let us look at two prominent concepts associated with money, such as 'Reification' and 'Rationalisation'. Do you have any notion about these particular terms? Let us see these in detail. In any economy, money creates value by allowing a wide range of calculations, long-term credits and large-scale enterprises. It paves the way for the modern economy, development of markets and capitalist society. We may notice that it stands quite different from that of the earlier systems of barter or trade. Money is thus the product of the reified world that has developed absolute freedom from everything personal. To Simmel, the process of reification began to exert control over the individuals. Besides, money not only creates a reified social world but it also contributes to increasing the rationalisation of the social world. Simmel saw money as an economic emphasis on quantitative aspects rather than qualitative factors. It would be easy to illustrate the categorisation of quantity over that of quality with examples.

There are a multitude of examples that would illustrate the example of quantity over the term quality. We can simply attribute quantity as the amount or number of something. To put it in another way, we can just say how many items or things you have. Rather quality is of value of the items or things that you possess or have. Here, in this case, Simmel saw that in the case of money, volume (quantity) matters more than value (quality). Mostly, humans in their lives tend to believe that having a vast number of products is preferable to having a few high- quality ones.

Quantity-quality matter

4.2.4 Social Effects of Money

Simmel's perspective, while pessimistic, is not entirely negative. Individual independence decreases as money and transactions increase, as he or she is drawn into a holistic network of exchange governed by quantifiable monetary value. Surprisingly, this results in greater individual potential freedom of choice, as money can be spent on any possible goal, even if most people's lack of money keeps that potential low most of the time. Money's unifying nature promotes greater liberty and equality.

Individual freedom of choice

Simmel's work *The Philosophy of Money* greatly deals with his apprehension of money and its social meaning. This major work is concerned with the effects of money on people and society. Simmel sketches money as a social phenomenon. Simmel evaluates the impact of the money economy on the inner world of actors and the objective culture as a whole in *The Philosophy of Money*. Money, according to Simmel, is linked to social phenomena such as trading, ownership, greed, luxury, cynicism, individual liberty, lifestyle, culture, and the value of one's self. He claimed that individuals create value by creating items, distancing themselves from those objects, and then attempting to overcome distance, hurdles, and challenges.

Ill effects of money

Money is used to establish distance between objects as well as to provide the means to overcome that distance. Money offers the means for the market, economy, and, eventually, society to take on a life of their own that is independent of and coercive of the actor. As money transactions became a more vital aspect of society, Simmel observed the importance of the individual diminishing. A society in which money becomes

an end in itself can cause individuals to become increasingly cynical (distrustful) and to have an indifferent attitude. Personal identification becomes a problem at the same time, the growth of the money form has both positive and negative implications. Individual freedom is greatly increased, yet alienation, fragmentation, and identity construction remain as major issues.

Summarised Overview

It was in 1900 *The Philosophy of Money* was written by Georg Simmel to contextualise the relation between man and money. Money was created as a way to measure the things exchanged. It continues to be the major way to determine the worth of something or someone. Further, it has divided people into classes as rich and poor. Georg Simmel argues what money is capable of. In essence, because of money, people have gained authority over others. The uses of money and transactions have increased with time. Man's independence has therefore diminished. The measurable monetary value controls human thought. Man uses money as a means to obtain anything he wants. One can maintain control over his desires and objectives if he has the money. Conversely, his freedom of choice expands. With the introduction of money, everything could be expressed in terms of its monetary value. Social interaction increasingly includes economic exchange. Money has been made the most significant priority by man. Money brings changes in the relationships among people. It has gained more importance in the present society than ever. It has evolved into the hub of trade and rationalisation. At the same time, money also creates certain injustices and inhuman actions as well. Money has two sides, the same as a coin, on the one hand, it has proper uses and on the other it harms people. In order to obtain it, people keep on doing any kind of activity. Money adds value to something or someone. If money comes to an end to its existence, then it will be impossible to replace it with another calculating thing in society.

Assignments

1. Prepare an assignment on Simmel's Philosophy on money.
2. Money can be dangerous in social interactions'. Validate the statement.
3. Describe the aspects of analysing money as a means of social interaction.
4. Explain the Objective nature of money.
5. Why is money considered a social phenomenon by Simmel?
6. How does Simmel explain Money in a sociological analysis?

Suggested Readings

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4. Spykman, N. J. (2017). *The Social Theory of Georg Simmel*. US: Taylor & Francis.

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UNIT 3
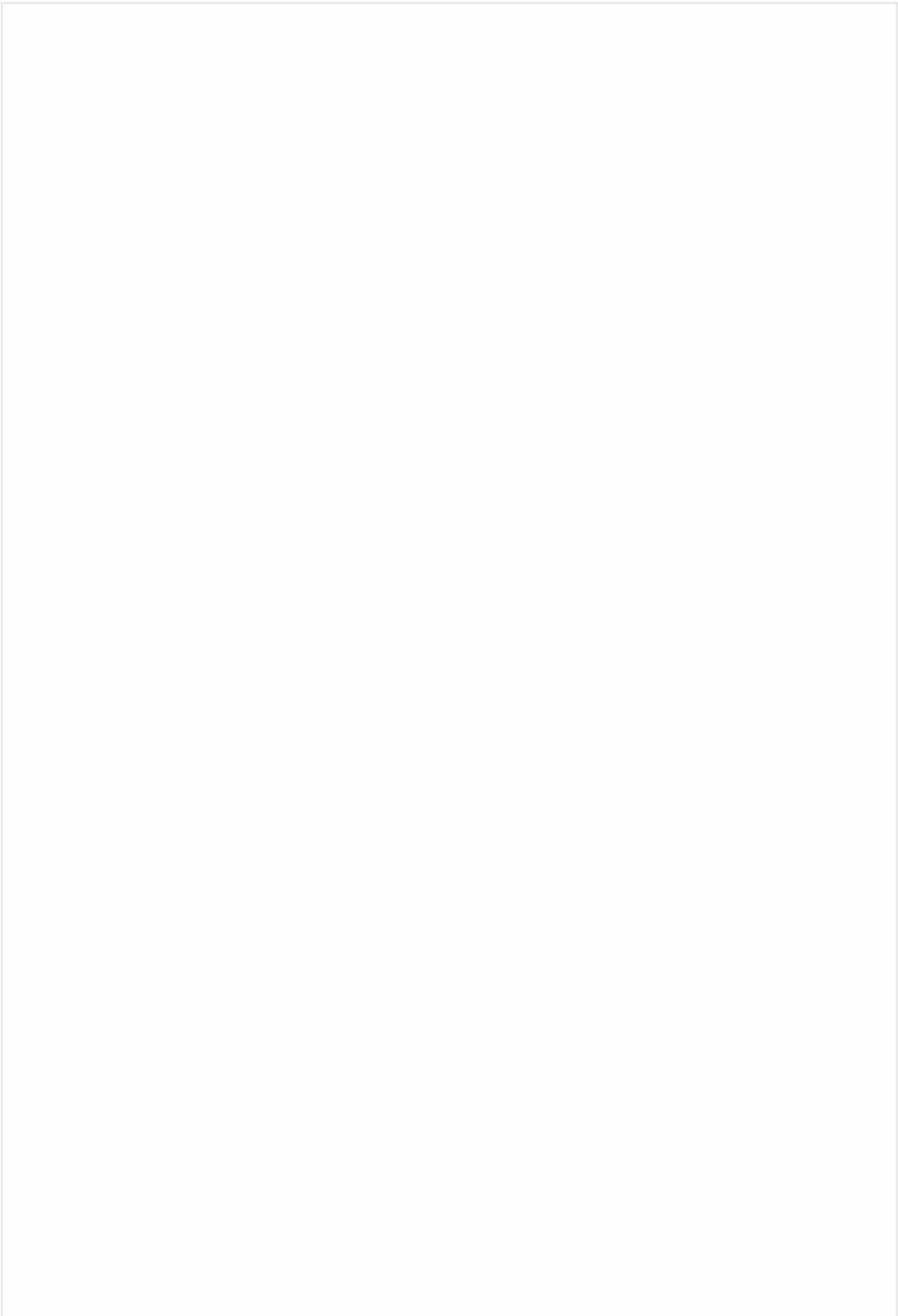
Metropolis and Mental Life

Learning Objectives

♦ To understand the concept of *Metropolis and Mental life*
♦ To make awareness of the difference between rural and urban people
♦ To make familiarity with the features of Metro cities

Background

The Metropolis and Mental Life is a short work of Simmel that focuses greatly on modern contemporary life. In this work he illustrates the subject of 'Urban living' and its inner meaning of life in an entirely different way. Simmel clearly places the adjustments and changes made by individuals in response to their outside circumstances and beautifully explains the extent to which the social structures demand particular relationships within the society. In spite of this, Simmel discusses the urban conditions especially the city life as against the existence of the rural settings. Simmel attributes several unique characteristics to the metropolitan society. He equally points towards the blasé view and several other behaviors exclusively as the features of urban setting. The particular kind of social attitude that people living in cities follow and certain kinds of possible human interactions exibited are showcased in his work. In the city, most of the human values including freedom, emotions, morals, ideals and other principles become irrelevant. Thus, urban life necessitates the creation of a particular type of "protective organ" to escape from all forms of traditional upholding. Metropolis hence fosters intellectualism in its heights and lessens emotional concerns. City life is stuck by new stimulations that enable ones to the highest level of reactivity.

Keywords

Metro city, Punctuality, Individuality, Money economy

Discussion

Conceptualisation

Unlike Simmel's concepts such as the 'Size of Group' and *The Philosophy of Money*, he focused on Urban life and the form of the Metropolis. Hence, towards this theorisation, Simmel is known to be the 'Father of Urban Sociology'. *Metropolis and Mental Life* also forms a prominent thought that needs to be overlooked from a different perspective to the study of concrete connections of social relations. It was a collection of essays published as a book by Simmel in 1903. In this book Simmel explains that man is actually making an effort to become independent in his own ways and trying to generate his own individuality. It is interesting to note that at this juncture man finds his individuality from that of the historical heritage, of the external culture and of the technique of life that he recognises around him.

Theoretical explanation

As compared to earlier times, could you notice any change or changes in the modern society that you are part and parcel of in one way or the other? More than a century ago, the majority of the population lived in villages or led a rural life. But as time has passed, more than half of the world's population now lives in cities. Sociologist like Durkheim and Tonnies discussed rural-urban contrast and characteristics if rural settings. Simmel doesn't talk about the differences between rural lives and their urban counterparts. But Simmel mentions about the clear- cut 'mentality' of individuals who are living in both cities and village dwellers.

4.3.1 The Rural-Urban Contrast

Diverse Perspectives

What would characterise a rural setting and a Metropolis or a City? You have already learned about 'Rural-Urban' contrast in various ways explained by Tonnies and Durkheim as in either the terms of "gemeinschaft and gesellschaft" or describes what it is called the "mechanical solidarity or organic solidarity" in your vocabulary. Simmel accorded individual freedom or individuality as the most prolonged feature. In the city one could find that the division of labour stood in its extreme nature. As different from the earlier thinkers, Simmel does not utter a clear-cut statement about the rural – urban contrast, instead he precisely talks about the mentality of the people who are living in the cities.

The first and foremost idea was that an individual in a city always tries to "Accommodate itself" among the various forces of the society. Thus, it is seen that individuals try to accommodate themselves to all the forces and to the situations of the society wherein they live. As an individual member of the society, we all accommodate in some way or the other to conditions and circumstances existing in the society.

Let's look at those characteristic features of the city people as earmarked by Simmel:

◆ In rural settings Simmel points out that "the rhythm of life and sensory imagery flows are characterised slowly, more habitually and evenly". That is, things here are slower, they occur usually, normally and habitually. In cities things are fast paced, they are not as slow, habitual or usual. Nevertheless, it bombards individuals with new sounds and smells. It envisions newer experiences, new things and practices that overwhelm the individuals.

◆ Individual in the city therefore finds to take in only relevant things and chooses to avoid what is irrelevant for him. As a result, the individual learns to discriminate or effectively distinguish what is predominantly important for him and neglect what is irrelevant.

◆ On the other hand, the metropolitan people become more sophisticated and intellectual thus leading them to become more rational and very calculative compared with the rural dwellers.

◆ Simmel adds, the metropolitan type of individual as time passes develops an organ that would protect them against all other discrepancies of his external environment. It would provide a shield for him from external forces.

Can you think of other differences between metropolitan types of men with their rural counterparts? Look at another explanation. People in the rural settings behave or react with their hearts perhaps instead of their head, while cities just behave in the opposite way. They first think with their head and react to it. Undoubtedly, Metropolitan life fosters awareness and supremacy over intelligences. What dominates a rural society and a metropolitan economy generally? It is money that guides the Metropolis whereas it

is intense emotions that dominate rural people. More or less every relation in a metropolis is based on the question of how much? They in return think of their own benefit only while carrying out the action. Largely people in cities this type of attitude. And so we can equate emotions with that of rural society and money to that of metropolitan economy.

Metropolitan and money

How would the rural lifestyle and its nature differ from the example of a city life and its nature? We all know life in rural settings is different from urban lifestyles and are different from each other. The nature and behaviour of people, the way of life taken forward, opportunities, the culture, people's attitude, nature of environment and knowledge perceptions are all diverse for both. They enjoy a varied kind of social life. Simmel argues that in city life everything works in a routine way, thus life here depends on punctuality. What would happen if this system breaks or fails to function properly? Yes, the system may stop or come to breakdown which causes chaos in the entire structure.

4.3.2 Lifestyle and Assertiveness

So far, we have been continuously talking about the characteristics of a metropolitan life. From the above discussed features, are you able to state the facets of the metropolitan individuals? If you are, let's sum up the above factors like punctuality, calculability, exactness, subjectivity and impersonality as the notable characteristics of individuals in metropolitan cities. Above all Simmel accorded that the urbanite follows a 'Blasé Attitude'. Let's look at what kind of attitude Simmel is pointing at here by the metropolitan individual's blasé attitude. We discussed earlier that man adopts certain peculiar ways to defend all external stimuli that he experiences in the society. To make it sharper and more precise, Simmel talks about how urbanites adapt to city life by developing a 'blasé attitude'. As people are faced with lots of problems and difficult circumstances, as human beings they reach a point that they avoid certain things knowingly or shrewdly. They develop a reserved attitude towards everything.

Adaptation

Over time there are remarkable differences between rural and urban life. As society expands, people become more sophisticated. The reason behind this is that while leading a city life people become over enthusiastic about their own state

Quantifiable

of affairs and never get involved too much with others' lives. People appear to be emotionless and unfriendly by nature. However, people in cities are found to be more intellectual, rational and calculating than their rural counterparts.

Differentiation

Moreover, if the denial and anonimity to the external world continue to their highest achievement, then gradually one could see that people refuse to react to the stimulus which ultimately leads to the devaluation of the objective world. That means, in modern life, individuals maintain their own independence and they find individuality as the existence against all other forces of society. Henceforth, Metropolis is always associated with this kind of differentiation and individuation. The Metropolis or City becomes the site of the greatest division of labour and the greatest expansion of individualism and individual freedom. Simmel observes that this produces "difficulty in stating one's own self or personality within the limitations of metropolitan life".

4.3.3 Culture and Spirit of Living

Subjectivity and Objectivity

The "objective spirit" triumphs over the "subjective spirit" due to the city's growth, expanding population, and "simplicity and scarcity of inter-human interactions afforded to the metropolitan people, as contrasted to the social intercourse of the small town." Language, production, art, science, and other aspects of modern culture are "at an ever-increasing distance." This is due to the growing division of labour and the result of specialisation in individual interests. The term "subjective culture" refers to the way people think "the actor's ability to create, absorb, and regulate the aspects of objective culture. Individual culture, in an ideal situation, shapes and is being shaped by objective (i.e., external) culture. The trouble is that objective culture therefore develops its own personality and life of existence."

As we look into "the individual has developed into a mere part in a massive machine of things and powers and all forces that pull out his/her growth, progress, spirituality, meaning and values from his/her hands in order to transform them from subjective form to objective life". This sounds remarkably like Marx's alienation, Durkheim's anomie, and Weber's rationalisation. But Simmel, identifies it with the city rather than society as a whole, as different from what the other classical thinkers suggest. Simmel

turns back to the individual, assessing how the individual responds to modern society's developments and examines how under certain conditions the individual personality develops. According to Simmel, individuals can assert their personalities by "being distinctive," adopting different manners, fashions, and styles, and "appearing more centered and strikingly distinctive or unique ways". Because of the short duration and fragility of life of contact in the city, permanent or long-lasting impressions based on daily and habitual engagement with others are impossible to form. In such situations, Simmel argues that self-esteem and having "the sense of occupying a position" can only be obtained by searching for "the awareness of others." This means that people may follow certain new trends and try to look "to the point" in their personal behaviours. It's also important to remember that personality is not an isolated thing; it's also a social entity that relies on human interaction.

Individuality

Being engaged in social interaction, observing others' reactions and pursuing recognition and awareness from others are all important aspects of a person's personality. Thus, and so Simmel connects the individual and the social and one requires the existence of the other. So far, we have seen different mentalities that people hold in leading a rural or urban life. Further, by keen observation, we can find larger differences. What would you now add more to rural life and the modern settings? Furthermore, in traditional and modern societies, the intellect and behaviour of the individual (personality) develop in various ways. In rural and small-town settings, opinions and judgments about others are formed over time and via repetitions, habits and practices. Many of these perceptions are based on more intensely felt emotional interactions and are therefore less conscious (intentional) in nature.

Rural people

On the other hand, in the city there is severe discontinuity, single looks or observations, and a diversity of temporary and quick impressions. Throughout the discussions Simmel has been pointing to the reactions of the type of metropolitan individual. It's quite clear for you, right now, isn't it? Therefore, there comes a thousand different variations for describing a metropolitan type of individual for Simmel. Are you able to sum up the things you have learned so far? If so, let us move ahead. In leading an urban life people develop an organ that protects him/her from the frightening currents and disparities in his/her external environment that would threaten to uproot him/her. As discussed earlier, how would

Utilitarianism

he/she react in certain circumstances? Instead of reacting with his/her heart, he/she reacts with his/her mind. As a result, intellectuality is considered to protect subjective life against the overpowering strength of metropolitan life. One could find that intellectuality has multiple branches and is intertwined with a variety of distinct manifestations.

Urban social space

In essence, Simmel sees objective culture as having an impact on the individual, concurrently he also considers how it affects the individual's development, how the individual understands and begins to develop in their settings, how the individual comes into contact (interacts) with other individuals, and how these interactions shape social life of the Metro city. Simmel ends his essay by discussing how the city affects people and provides possibilities, "opportunities and impulses for the development of individual personality and methods for assigning roles to men. These circumstances take on a different significance, re- loaded with incalculable implications for the development of subjective existence of humans." The process can be described as "allocating roles to individual" rather than "individual to role". Simmel is concerned about the potential harmful impacts of objective culture, yet he believes that personalities vary to develop in the circumstances of city life.

4.3.4 Criticisms and Responses

Follow the Philosophical approach

The German philosopher and sociologist Georg Simmel is still a debated figure. While some praise him as the father of contemporary Sociology, others see him as merely a talented stylist who contributed nothing new and failed to establish a comprehensive framework. Simmel was not a system builder, and he was frequently focused on establishing approaches – philosophical, historical, or sociological – which he demonstrated through his fundamental analyses. Although sociologists remember Simmel largely for his work in this field, Sociology was only one of many interests for him, and his productive phase in this field lasted slightly more than a decade. Simmel's works, both early and late, were more philosophical in nature.

Simmel is most commonly criticised for his work's fragmented nature. He didn't come up with a systematic Sociology as Marx, Durkheim, or Weber did. Simmel is blamed by Marxists for failing to identify a way out of the cultural tragedy, which is an analytic analogue of Marx's

concept of alienation. In some ways, Simmel's Sociology resembles those of the other great writers, but he had less to say about social structure and dynamics than Marx, Weber, or Durkheim. He did speak about objective culture, and his writings on money are similar to Weber's reasoning. He was an inconstant theorist as he is the creator of valuable ideas but lacked a coherent, systematic kind of theory. His perspective of society, focuses on social interaction, and studies on the city are important contributions to current Sociology even today.

Lack of clarity

Summarised Overview

Simmel's essay *The Metropolis and Mental Life* well explains the aspects of modern social urban life with reference to the inner meaning of life. Though it is a little book, it has had a thoughtful impact. It explains the individual's place in the Metropolitan big city lifestyle and the psychological adjustment that individual makes to it. Simmel argues that the urban way of life is dominated by objectivism. He charmingly elucidates the peculiar features of urban life as opposed to traditional communities. Human interactions in the metropolis become short and instrumental, lacking emotional and personal involvement. Simmel makes a clear distinction between objective (material) and subjective (individual) culture. Instead of reacting emotionally, metropolitan men react in a rational manner. Living in a Metropolis thus requires a protective, rational and indifferent behaviour.

Modern urban Metropolis is an example of all those elements of objective culture. Objective culture refers to all those social contexts, objects, and technology that exist outside the realm of the personal and the everyday life. People in modern society become calculating, punctual, subjective and impersonal in comparison to the earlier forms of society. Bureaucracies, law, timekeeping, regularity, norms of punctuality and growth of money economy are examples of objective culture. Practical life in the Metropolis therefore requires higher intellect where individuals "react with their head instead of their heart." People do not account for personal qualities in dealing with others. Hence the modern mind follows a 'blasé outlook' towards everything unconditionally reserved to the city alone. Thus, the blasé attitude is the result of continuous bombardment of the intellect which creates a society that is mostly indifferent.

Assignments

1. Write the major differences that you notice among people for their existence in a rural society and an urban society. What kinds of distinctions is Simmel referring to, and how does living in cities contribute to them?
2. Simmel accords, People have a "blasé attitude" towards metropolitan life. Can you think of any examples of how living in a Metropolis could lead to a sense of indifference?
3. What, according to Simmel, is the greatest obstacle that individuals face in modern society?
4. What according to Simmel best describes his concept of Metropolis?
5. According to Simmel, what are the characteristic features of people who live in the city?
6. On what basis is the metropolis economy shaped?
7. What kind of attitude do urban people have?
8. Which are the desired changes that satisfy the urban people?
9. Why is Simmel considered the 'Father of Urban Sociology'?

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വിദ്യയാൽ സ്വതന്ത്രരാകണം
വിശ്വപൗരരായി മാറണം
ഗ്രഹപ്രസാദമായ് വിളങ്ങണം
ഗുരുപ്രകാശമേ നയിക്കണേ

കൂരിരുട്ടിൽ നിന്നു ഞങ്ങളെ
സൂര്യവീഥിയിൽ തെളിക്കണം
സ്നേഹദീപ്തിയായ് വിളങ്ങണം
നീതിവൈജയന്തി പാറണം

ശാസ്ത്രവ്യാപ്തിയെന്നുമേകണം
ജാതിഭേദമാകെ മാറണം
ബോധരശ്മിയിൽ തിളങ്ങുവാൻ
ജ്ഞാനകേന്ദ്രമേ ജ്വലിക്കണേ

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Foundations of Sociological Theory

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