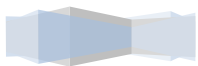


# SOCIOLOGY

(DJ207)

## LECTURE NOTES

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## THE CONCEPT OF SOCIOLOGY

### DEFINITION OF SOCIOLOGY

Sociology is like every other social science such as Psychology, Economics, Geography, Political Science, etc., but its approach, assumptions and methods are to some extent different from others.

Sociology is the systematic study of the groups and societies in which people live, how social structures and cultures are created and maintained or changed, and how they affect our behaviour.

As we noted earlier on, Sociology is part of the family of social sciences that includes psychology, anthropology, geography, political science and parts of history. All Social Sciences are concerned with human behaviour. Although they share the same basic subject matter, each

Social Science focuses on a different aspect of behaviour, for example, psychologist are most interested in the internal sources of behaviour; sociologist in the external sources of behaviour. Psychologists study the workings of the nervous system and the effects of neurotransmitters, hormones, or stress on individual. Sociologists look at the workings of society and the effects that social class, gender roles, age, new technologies, changing attitude towards reckless behaviour, or political revolutions have on people. Psychologists focus on personality -on the behaviour and attitudes that are characteristics of person regardless of the situations. Sociologist focus on roles -on the behaviour and attitudes that are characteristic of people in a given social position or situation regardless of their individual personalities. Anthropology shares Sociology's interest in the impact of social structure and culture on behaviour; but anthropologists usually study non-western societies, preliterate societies, local communities, or small groups. Sociologist, too, study communities and small groups, but they also examine modern industrial societies and large-scale.

Economists and political scientists single out particular kinds of social activity; sociologists look at the nature of social action itself and at the manner in which different kinds of activities fit together to create the larger pattern of society.

Sociologists are primarily interested in areas where social structure and culture intersect. One of these is social institutions. Social institutions are established patterns of action and thought that organize important social activities -the family, education, religion, and the political and economic systems. These institutions provide ready-made answers to the recurring problems of life; how to make community decisions (the political system), how to produce and distribute goods and services (the economic system), how to arrange house-holds and provide child-care (the family), and so on.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Define sociology and relate it to other social sciences.

A more formal definition of sociology may be that it is a social science which studies the processes and patterns of human individual and group interaction, the forms of organization of social groups, the relationship among them, and group influences on individual behavior, and *vice versa*, and the interaction between one social group and the other (Team of Experts, 2000).

Sociology is the scientific study of society, which is interested in the study of social relationship between people in group context. Sociology is interested in how we as

human beings interact with each other (the pattern of social interaction); the laws and principles that govern social relationship and interactions; the /influence of the social world on the individuals, and *vice versa* (*Ibid.*). It deals with a factually observable subject matter, depends upon empirical research, and involves attempts to formulate theories and generalizations that will make sense of facts (Giddens, 1982).

## ORIGIN OF SOCIOLOGY

Considering the origins of sociology, one would then have to look at the contributions made by some founding fathers. The contributions of Max Weber and August Compe shall be considered.

### Max Weber (1864-1920)

Max Weber was one of the founding fathers of Sociology whose work has been a great influence on the study of Sociology. In his own contribution, sociology is a science of social action. He made a clear distinction between action and social action. To him, action has to do with all human behaviour in so far as the actor attaches a subjective meaning to it; but for that of social action, the actor does not only and usually attach a subjective meaning, the action itself must also be seen to take account of the behaviour of others (1968: 1,4).

### Emily Durkheim (1858 - 1917)

This is one of the early Sociologists. Emily Durkheim dealt with two types of social solidarity. By 'Solidarity', Durkheim meant the moral beliefs and ideas which formed the 'common-sense' underlying social life. Mechanical solidarity (characteristic of pre-industrial societies) was said to be based on agreement and identity between people; organic solidarity derived from agreement to tolerate a range of differences, conflict being moderated through a variety of institutional arrangements, such as courts, political parties, etc.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Describe the contributions of Max Weber and Emily Durkheim to Sociology.

The founders or the pioneering sociologists are the following (Henslin and Nelson, 1995; Giddens, 1996; Macionis, 1997):

- **Auguste Comte, French Social Philosopher (1798- 1857)**

Comte was the first social philosopher to coin and use the term sociology (Nobbs, Hine and Flemming, 1978).

He was also the first to regard himself as a sociologist. He defined sociology as the scientific study of social dynamics and social static. He argued that sociology can and should study society and social phenomena following the pattern and procedures of the natural science. Comte believed that a theoretical science of society and the systematic investigation of human behavior were needed to improve society. He argued that the new science of society could and should make a critical contribution towards a new and improved human society. Comte defined sociology as the study of **social dynamic** and **social static**, the former signifying the changing, progressing and

developmental dimensions of society, while the latter refers to the social order and those elements of society and social phenomena which tend to persist and relatively permanent, defying change.

- **Karl Marx (German, 1818-1883)**

Marx was a world-renowned social philosopher, sociologist and economic historian. He made remarkable contributions to the development of various social sciences including sociology. He contributed greatly to sociological ideas. He introduced key concepts in sociology like **social class**, **social class conflict**, social oppression, **alienation**, etc. Marx, like Comte, argued that people should make active efforts to bring about societal reforms. According to Marx, economic forces are the keys to underestimating society and social change. He believed that the history of human society has been that of **class conflict**. He dreamed of, and worked hard towards realizing, a classless society, one in which there will be no exploitation and oppression of one class by another, and wherein all individuals will work according to their abilities and receive according to their needs. Marx introduced one of the major perspectives in sociology, called **social conflict theory** (Macionis, 1997)

- **Harriet Martineau, British Sociologist (1802-1876)**

At a time when women were greatly stereotyped and denied access to influential socio-political and academic arena, it is interesting to have a female academic to be numbered among the pioneering sociologists. Harriet was interested in social issues and studied both in the United States and England. She came across with the writings of Comte and read them. She was an active advocate of the abolition of slavery and she wrote on many crosscutting issues such as racial and gender relations, and she traveled widely. She helped popularize the ideas and writings of Comte by translating them into English (Henslin and Nelson, 1995).

- **Herbert Spencer, British Social Philosopher, (1820-1903)**

Spencer was a prominent social philosopher of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He was famous for the organic analogy of human society. He viewed society as an organic system, having its own structure and functioning in ways analogous to the biological system. Spencer's ideas of the evolution of human society from the lowest ("barbarism") to highest form ("civilized") according to fixed laws were famous. It was called "**Social Darwinism**", which is analogous to the biological evolutionary model. Social Darwinism is the attempt to apply by analogy the evolutionary theories of plant and animal development to the explanation of human society and social phenomena (Team of Experts, 2000).

- **Emile Durkheim, French Sociologist, (1858-1917)**

Durkheim was the most influential scholar in the academic and theoretical development of sociology. He laid down some of the fundamental principles, methods, concepts and theories of sociology; he defined sociology as the study of **social facts**. According to him, there are social facts, which are distinct from biological and psychological facts. By social facts, he meant the patterns of behavior that characterize a social group in a given society. They should be studied objectively.

The job of a sociologist, therefore, is to uncover social facts and then to explain them using other social facts. Some regard Durkheim as the first sociologist to apply statistical methods to the study of social phenomena (Macionis, 1997; Clahoun, *et al*, 1994).

#### • Max Weber, German Sociologist (1864-1920)

Weber was another prominent social scientist.

According to him, sociology is the scientific study of human **social action**. Social action refers to any “action oriented to influence or influenced by another person or persons. It is not necessary for more than one person to be physically present for action to be regarded as social action...” (Team of Experts, 2000). It is concerned with the interpretive understanding of human social action and the meaning people attach to their own actions and behaviors and those of others. Weber was a renowned scholar who like Marx, wrote in several academic fields.

He agreed with much Marxian theses but did not accept his idea that economic forces are central to social change. Weber argues that we cannot understand human behavior by just looking at statistics. Every activity and behavior of people needs to be interpreted.

He argued that a sociologist must aim at what are called **subjective meanings**, the ways in which people interpret their own behavior or the meanings people attach their own behavior (Henslin and Nelson, 1995; Rosneberg, 1987).

### SCOPE OF SOCIOLOGY

The scope of study of sociology is extremely wide beginning from studying and understanding interactions among individuals up to the scientific analysis of global social processes such as globalisation and information technology; globalisation and sustainable economic development.

### METHODS OF SOCIOLOGY

In understanding human behaviour, Sociologists use methods which are mainly scientific in discovering facts about human beings. The major scientific tools usually being used in sociological research are:

Survey

Archival research

Participant observation

Surveys

The survey is a method of systematically collecting data from people about their behaviour, attitudes and beliefs. Subjects for surveys are carefully selected to represent the group of people about whom the investigator intends to draw conclusions. The subjects in a survey can be interviewed in persons, as they were or on the telephone; or they might complete a self-administered paper -and -pencil or computerized questionnaire. Whatever the mode of data collection, the questions in a survey are carefully constructed to yield the precise information that the investigator is seeking. Usually, surveys require respondents to choose between response alternatives that are supplied by the researchers.

## Archival Research

The questions and results of some comprehensive national surveys are published so that other researchers, not involved in the study can conduct their own analyses of the data. Results published in this manner are said to be archived, and research using these results are called archival research. Archival research in actual fact uses existing records, gathered originally for some other purpose, as data. An archival study might examine census figures; birth records; scores on tests administered in schools, clinics or businesses; criminal records; or personal documents such as diaries or letters.

## Participant Observation

The term "participant observer" was coined by Eduard Linteman (1924), a university of Chicago Sociologist, to refer to individuals who belong to a group and report on that group to investigators. Today, the term still is used, but now it refers to a researcher who interacts with group members for the purpose of studying them. The extent of participants observers' involvement with their subjects varies from study to study, as do the means they use to gain entry into their subjects worlds.

Researchers may spend extended periods of time with the people they study, sharing many life experiences with them, or the data may be gathered over a relatively short time by means of one or a few intensive interviews. Some investigators have gained access to groups deceptively, by passing themselves off as regular group members.

Others identify themselves as researchers from the outset, hoping that those they plan to study will grant them access to information usually reserved for insiders.

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

Explain the methods of sociology.

## SOCIAL ISSUES IN SOCIOLOGY

There are many social issues that are of great interest to Sociology.

Some of these social issues do result into problems, and they are stated below:

Rape	Armed Robbery	Assassination
AIDS/HIV	Terrorism	Prostitution
War	Poverty	Unemployment
Conflicts etc.		

### *TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT*

1. What do you understand by the term of "Sociology" and what is the relationship to other social sciences?
2. (a) Describe the scope of Sociology.  
(b) Explain the methods of Sociology.  
(c) Describe the practical significance of Sociology.

## PRACTICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF SOCIOLOGY

The practical significance of Sociology is stated below:

It provides more adequate and clearer understanding of social situations.

It gives practical implications in terms of assessing the results of policy initiatives.



It makes possible the promotion of cultural awareness on the different groups in society.  
It promotes deep self-understanding, etc.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LEARNING SOCIOLOGY

Generally, learning sociology provides us with what sociologists call the *sociological imagination*.

Sociological imagination is a particular way of looking at the world around us through sociological lenses. It is a way of looking at our experiences in light of what is going on in the social world around us.

This helps us to appreciate the social and non-biological forces that affect, influence and shape our lives as individuals, groups, and communities (Giddens, 1982).

Sociological imagination helps us look beyond individual psychology to the many and varied facets of social and cultural forces, and "the recurring patterns in peoples' attitudes and actions, and how these patterns vary across time, cultures and social groups." (Henslin and Nelson, 1995)

Learning sociology helps us understand how social forces influence our goals, attitudes, behavior, and personality. We become more sensitive towards the social issues.

Furthermore, learning sociology helps to cast aside our own biased assumptions, stereotypes and ethno-centric thinking and practices to become more critical, broad-minded and respectful in our interpersonal and inter- group relationships.

By learning sociology, we can be more humane and people –centered; we give high value to human dignity.

### **In general, sociology increases our self-knowledge.**

Learning sociology can provide us with self enlightenment.

When we learn sociology, we gain more knowledge about the conditions of our own lives, and about the way our society and social system function.

As such knowledge increases, we can be more empowered to influence the direction of forces and circumstances that affect our lives. We can also be more responsive to the various policies set by governments; and can suggest our own policy initiatives and alternatives (Giddens, *op cit*).

In addition to the aforementioned theoretical benefits, sociology has certain practical benefits. There is what we call **applied sociology**, the application of sociological knowledge, principles, methods, concepts and theories to provide the solutions to the contemporary social pathologies.

Sociology plays practical roles to tackle social pathologies.

Sociological knowledge is highly applicable in dealing with today's most crucial social problems, and in facilitating developmental activities in socioeconomic sectors.

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

State the practical significance of Sociology.

## **SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH METHODS**

### **The Scientific Method Inductive vs. Deductive Approaches**

Sociology is a science. As such, it is concerned with systematically observing and classifying facts, and establishing verifiable laws. It, like any other science employs **scientific method**, which is the source for scientific knowledge.

The scientific method is a logical system used to evaluate data derived from systematic observation. The scientific method as a precise way of designing and conducting research consists of the following basic steps: “(1) establishing a hypothesis, a general statement based on observed facts; 2) determining ways to test the hypothesis, incorporating them in research design; 3) testing the hypothesis through research and further observation...” (Howard and Dunaif-Hattis, 1992:7)

Sociology as a science employs the two very important approaches in research design and in the overall research framework: **inductive methods** and **deductive method**. Inductive method is a method by which the scientist first makes observation and collects data, on the basis of which he or she formulates **hypothesis** and **theories** (Scupin and DeCorse, 1995).

The researcher tries to build theories from particular observations and instances. Induction moves from the particular to the general; whereas deduction moves from the general to the particular. In deductive approach, the researcher attempts to derive specific assertions and claims from a general theoretical principle. In short, deductive approach in research goes from general theory to particular claims (Dooley, 1995:65-66).

As a science, the primary aim of sociology is doing research; to produce, accumulate, and disseminate scientific knowledge on society and social phenomena.

However, there are some people who question the scientific status of sociology and other social sciences. They argue that sociology is not strictly science because its subject matter is very much complex. It is not possible to subject human behavior into laboratory manipulations. People have their own motives and hidden aspirations and other complex aspects.

However, it is generally accepted that sociology is a science in the sense that its primary aim is doing scientific research to promote scientific knowledge.

Sociology can and should employ the scientific methods. The scientific method is defined as a method of observing the world critically, empirically and rationally to collect and analyze data systematically to arrive at a scientific knowledge.

### **Steps in Sociological Research**

Generally, there are about seven steps in doing a sociological research. These steps are not, however, typical to sociology alone. It should also be noted that these steps are not fixed ones. Some steps may not necessarily be followed in some research projects. They steps may not necessarily be put in sequential order.



## 1. Identification of Research Problems

The first step in doing sociological research (for that matter, any other research) is to come up with a research problem. Identification of research problem basically involves choosing a research topic. The ways and manners in which researchers identify a research problem and choose a topic vary according to various factors. The research interests of sociologists are, often, triggered by their own life experiences and observations (Howard and Dunaif-Hattis, 1992). The initial ideas for research thus may occur at any time and place for a researcher. Walking down a street, reading through newspapers, watching television, etc may suggest a topic of research for an observing and curious person (Mann, 1976).

Once a research topic comes to our mind, we should ask the following questions:

- Is it researchable?
- Is it sociologically/ socially significant?
- What is new about it?
- What gap will it fill?
- Is it manageable in terms of time, money, expertise and other resources? In other words, do you have the needed resources to do the research?

If you answer these and other related questions adequately, then you are on the right track to conduct the research.

## 2. Literature Review

This step involves familiarizing or orienting yourself with the concepts, theories and the works already done pertaining to the topic identified. Relevant available literature on the topic chosen should be reviewed; we should also check out what works have already been done by others, what gaps are remaining, what questions remain unanswered, etc.

Research work normally proceeds by reviewing earlier works on a specific research problem one has identified. The researcher will need to review past works on the question he or she is raising (Dooley, 1995). The traditionally dominant source for literature review has been libraries and documentation centers where books and various references are found in card catalogued manner. Nowadays, most libraries maintain a computerized filing system, whereby references are made available via electronic online methods. Searching literature has become very easy, thus, with the computerization of library sources; one can easily access them if Internet connection is available (Rosnow and Rosenthal, 1996)

Literature review is necessitated by the fact that a researcher is probably not the first person to develop an interest in a particular problem; and hence, he or she need to spend some time in the library reviewing what theories and methods others have used to the topic in the past and what findings are there (Macionis, 1997).

According to Marshal and Rossman (1989: 35), review of literature has the following four purposes:

First, it demonstrates the underlying assumptions behind the general research question.... Second, it demonstrates that the researcher is thoroughly knowledgeable about related research and the intellectual traditions that surround and support the study.

Third, it shows that the researcher has identified some gaps in previous research and that the proposed study will fill a demonstrated need.

And finally, the review refines and redefines the research questions and related tentative hypotheses by embedding those questions in larger empirical traditions.

### 3. Hypothesis Formulation

Hypothesis is a statement that can be proved to be correct or incorrect. Hypothesis formulation involves identifying basic research objectives and determining research questions. This should be tested empirically.

We put some guiding assumptions to the research in this step. We ask some basic research questions.

However, we may note that this may not be always the case. The type of research may determine whether hypothesizing is needed or not. For example, in exploratory studies hypothesizing may not be needed.

### 4. Selections and Designing of Methods of Data Collection

Here the researcher determines data collection methods and prepares data collection instruments. He/she chooses from among the different data collection methods. There are generally two categories of methods:

#### Quantitative methods and qualitative methods.

Quantitative methods focus on measuring quantity of information: terms such as prevalence, scope, percentage, frequency, magnitude, etc are very important. On the other hand, qualitative methods focus on depth and quality of information. The complex, detailed and sensitive aspects; belief, attitudinal and knowledge dimensions etc are usually studied by qualitative methods.

### 5. Conducting Data Gathering Activity

This is the step in which the researcher engages in collecting the needed data by using the various methods and instruments. The researcher goes to the field and collects the data. He/ she trains data collectors, supervises the overall data collection process, and so on.

Data collected thus may be of two types: **primary** and **secondary data**. Primary data are firsthand and original information; the researcher firsthand collects them. They are collected by the sociology themselves during their own research using research tools such as experiment, survey, questionnaire, interviews and observation (Chapman, 2000). On the other hand, secondary data are those which are already collected by someone else found in various sources as documents or archives.

They include: official statistical documents, mass media sources (such as electronic media – radio, television, films, etc; and print media such as newspapers, magazines, journals, posters, brochures, leaflets, sign boards, etc.)

Some of the methods of data collection in sociology include:

#### Surveys

One of the dominant quantitative techniques is the **survey method**, which involves sampling, impersonal data collections, and sophisticated statistical analysis.

Of all the social sciences research techniques, survey research probably seems to be the most visible and pervasive form research in the social and behavioral sciences (Jones, 1995). In survey research, people who provide information are termed as **respondents**, (unlike in anthropology, where we call them informants); these respondents are often selected on **random sample** basis, wherein all members of a population have equal chances of being included in the study population

There are three types of survey research: **cross sectional survey**, which aims to find out what opinions research participants across sections of society have about a certain phenomena at a given point of time his survey represents fixed reflections of one

moment in time. **Longitudinal survey** is conducted on the same type of people over long period of time, as long as sometimes 20 to 30 years. This type provides us with a moving picture of the changes over time in a given area.

The third type is called **panel surveys**, which are alternative versions of longitudinal surveys. It usually lasts shorter period of time and asks questions of panel members on a frequent basis. A panel member may be asked question every month for a couple of years, while in longitudinal survey, people are asked often once a year (Moore, 2001).

Traditionally, the survey techniques has been considered the domain of disciplines such as sociology, psychology, political science, and economics, which often work mainly in large, complex and populous societies, unlike anthropologists, which have traditionally worked among small-scale societies.

**Experimentation:** This quantitative method is sometimes used in sociology. Sociologists conduct experimental studies, following the procedures and principles of experimentation. This is done usually to explore cause and effect relationship between one and the other social phenomena. What causes what? What is the effect of one social phenomenon on the other?

**Key Informant Interview:** This is a qualitative method in which a knowledgeable person in study site or community is contacted and interviewed by the researcher or data collector. Questions for the interview session may be prepared in advance, or sometimes only guiding themes are prepared for the session. This method is similar with **in-depth interview**, in that in most cases one individual person is contacted and interviewed at a time. However, in the latter, the researcher/ interviewer digs deep into issues (Macionis, 1997).

**Focus Group Discussion:** This is a form of qualitative data collection method in which intends to make use of the explicit interaction dynamic among group members which may yield important information on certain topic.

This qualitative method of data collection has become so popular particularly in the recent decades; it is highly being used by researchers from crosscutting fields such as public health, anthropology, and other behavioral sciences disciplines.

**Case Study:** This method involves investigating a certain issue as a case taking longer time and investigating the phenomenon in depth. A case study may be about an individual person, a social group, a family, or an organization. The case chosen is regarded as a representative of the wider group or context from which it is derived. This method may involve elements of both quantitative and qualitative aspects.

**Observation:** This qualitative method involves collecting data on social phenomena by carefully observing the social processes, events, activities, behaviors, actions, etc., they take place. All relevant events, actions, places, objects, etc must be observed and recorded (Marshall and Rossman, 1989). One of the key procedures in these techniques is called **participant observation**, the active involvement in community life while studying it. The researcher participates in a research setting while observing what is happening in that setting (Henslin and Nelson, 1995). A variant of this method is **non-participant observation** – collecting data without participating in what the informants or the subjects do.

**Unobtrusive Measures:** Most of the research techniques are **obtrusive**, meaning the data are gathered while the study subjects' behaviors actions are directly observed, and they know that they are being researched. To avoid the risks of the research act intruding on the subject of study thereby affecting the research findings, sociologists have developed what is called unobtrusive measures. When a researcher takes unobtrusive measures, people's behavior is observed while they are not aware of it. Here, this method involves techniques that do not interfere with the objects or events studied. Sociologist study many social phenomena using this methods such how people behave in the public arena, the way people wear and decorate themselves, the way they sit or stand relative to others, etc (Rosenberg, *et al*, 1987).

## **6. Data Organization, Analysis, Interpretation, and Report Writing**

The most challenging task is how to manage, handle, store and arrange the raw data as cautiously as possible. Data may get lost, if not handled well. The researcher here carefully stores the data, manages them, organizes and systematically arranges. Various ways of analyzing data are used both in **qualitative** and **quantitative** methods (Henslin and Nelson, 1995). For quantitative data researchers use sophisticated statistical techniques using computer models. Plans for data analysis are often made as early before the data are collected (Mann, 1976).

Analysis of qualitative data also actually begins while the researcher is in the field recording his/ her field notes, tape recording and transcribing the interviews. Tape-recording the interview process and transcribing are the essential components of analysis (Jones 1995).

In analyzing the data, the researcher must distinguish between his own views and the views of the people being studied (Scupin and DeCorse, 1995). There are many possible analytic schemes and some computer models for analyzing qualitative data are also available.

After the data are entered into a computer for easy processing, tabulation, and analysis, the researcher interprets the data and writes up the findings. The hypotheses are tested, comparisons are made with similar kinds of studies conducted elsewhere or done before, conclusions are drawn, and recommendations are made, depending on the type of research, such as basic or applied.

## **7. Dissemination of Research Findings**

This is the final step in which the researcher shares the findings with all concerned bodies. Dissemination of the research findings is possible via scientific journals, seminars, symposiums, conferences and other forums.

## **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIOLOGY AND DISCIPLINES**

Sociology occupies an important position among the disciplines, usually called the social sciences. These include sociology, anthropology, psychology, economics, political science, history and human geography. These disciplines are sometimes also referred to as behavioral sciences, as they study the principles governing human social behavior.

How is sociology related to other sciences? What are the similarities and differences? These are important questions. Sociology is similar with all other sciences in that it employs the scientific methods and its major aim is production of scientific

knowledge. Sociology is related to other social and behavioral sciences in that all of them have more or less similar subject matter; they all in one way or another study society, human culture, social phenomena; and aim at discovering the laws that govern the social universe.

However, sociology differs from other social sciences in terms of its focus of study, approach of study, and the method of study. The closest discipline to sociology is social anthropology. The two share concepts, theories and methods, and have similar historical background.

However, they are different in that sociology is primarily interested in the problems of modern society, whereas anthropology is primarily interested in the problem of traditional, non-western society. (It should be noted here that this conventional distinction between the two is now disappearing.) Further, sociology focuses mainly on quantitative techniques whereas anthropology on qualitative research techniques. Perhaps, the methods of research are more important in differentiating the two.

Anthropology's heavy focus on qualitative method and sociology's on quantification are still persistent natures of the two disciplines. Further, one point of difference worth mentioning is that sociology is narrower in scope than anthropology, which has four sub fields; and anthropologists tend to stay in the field for long period (several months to few years) while sociologists prefer brief stay (weeks to few months).

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

1. What is *sociology*? Explain it using your own words.
2. How can we differentiate sociology from other social sciences, which also study society and human culture?
3. Discuss the main sociopolitical and economic factors behind the emergence of sociology.
4. Mention at least five issues of sociological relevance in the contemporary society of Uganda.
5. Discuss the personal and professional benefits of learning sociology.
6. Consider the issue of students' sexual behavior in your University. Discuss those aspects that would be interesting to study for a sociologist. What aspects might *not* be interesting sociologically? Why?
7. Discuss the main differences between qualitative and quantitative methods of doing research.
8. Identify the factors to be considered when one is considering choosing a certain issue or issues as research topic.

## **SOCIETY**

### **Definition**

The term *society* is derived from a Latin word *socius*. The term directly means *association, togetherness, gregariousness*, or simply *group life*. The concept of society refers to a relatively large grouping or collectivity of people who share more or less common and distinct culture, occupying a certain geographical locality, with the feeling of identity or belongingness, having all the necessary social arrangements or insinuations to sustain itself.



We may add a more revealing definition of society as defined by Calhoun *et al* (1994): "A society is an autonomous grouping of people who inhabit a common territory, have a common culture (shared set of values, beliefs, customs and so forth) and are linked to one another through routinized social interactions and interdependent statuses and roles." Society also may mean a certain population group, a community

The common tendency in sociology has been to conceptualize society as a system, focusing on the bounded and integrated nature of society. Great founders of sociology had also focused on the dynamic aspect of society. Such early sociologists as Comte, Marx and Spencer grasped the concept of society as a dynamic system evolving historically and inevitably towards complex industrial structures (Swingwood, 1991:313).

The common tendency in sociology has been to conceptualize society as a system, focusing on the bounded and integrated nature of society. But in recent years such an approach has been criticized. Contemporary sociologists now frequently use the **network conception of society**. This approach views society as overlapping, dynamic and fluid network of economic, political, cultural and other relations at various levels. Such a conception is analytically more powerful and reflects the reality especially in the context of modern, globalizing world. (Personal communication: Dr TeketelAbebe, Addis Ababa University, Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology)

## BASIC FEATURES OF A SOCIETY

First, a society is usually a relatively large grouping of people in terms of size. In a very important sense, thus, society may be regarded as the largest and the most complex social group that sociologists study.

Second, as the above definition shows, the most important thing about a society is that its members share common and distinct culture. This sets it apart from the other population groups.

Third, a society also has a definite, limited space or territory. The populations that make up a given society are thus locatable in a definite geographical area. The people consider that area as their own.

Fourth, the people who make up a society have the feeling of identity and belongingness. There is also the feeling of oneness. Such identity feeling emanates from the routinized pattern of social interaction that exists among the people and the various groups that make up the society. (Henslin and Nelson, 1995; Giddens, 1996; Calhoun *et al.*, 1994)

Fifth, members of a society are considered to have a common origin and common historical experience. They feel that they have also common destiny.

Sixth, members of a society may also speak a common mother tongue or a major language that may serve as a national heritage.

Seventh, a society is autonomous and independent in the sense that it has all the



necessary social institutions and organizational arrangements to sustain the system. However, a society is not an *island*, in the sense that societies are interdependent. There has always been inter-societal relations. People interact socially, economically and politically.

It is important to note that the above features of a society are by no means exhaustive and they may not apply to all societies. The level of a society's economic and technological development, the type of economic or livelihood system a society is engaged in, etc may create some variations among societies in terms of these basic features.

## CONCEPTUALIZING SOCIETY AT VARIOUS LEVELS

As indicated above, in a general sense and at an abstract level, all people of the earth may be considered as a society. The earth is a common territory for the whole world's people. All people of the earth share common origin; inhabit common planet; have common bio psychological unity; and exhibit similar basic interests, desires and fears; and are heading towards common destiny (Calhoun, *et al.*, 1994).

At another level, every continent may be considered as a society. Thus, we may speak of the European society, the African society, the Asian society, the Latin American society, etc. This may be because, each of these continents share its own territory, historical experiences, shared culture, and so on.

At a more practical level, each nation-state or country is regarded as a society. For example, the people of Uganda or Kenya, Japan are considered as a society. Going far farther still, another level of society is that within each nation-state, there may be ethno-linguistically distinct groups of people having a territory that they consider as their own. They are thus societies in their own right. Some Such society may extend beyond the boundaries of nation-states. Example, the Borana Oromo inhabit in both Ethiopia and Kenya. The Samya, inhabit in both Kenya and Uganda.

## TYPES OR CATEGORIES OF SOCIETIES

Sociologists classify societies into various categories depending on certain criteria. One such criterion is level of economic and technological development attained by countries. Thus, the countries of the world are classified as First World, Second World, and Third World;

First World Countries are those which are highly industrially advanced and economically rich, such as the USA, Japan, Britain, France, Italy, Germany, and Canada and so on.

The Second World Countries are also industrially advanced but not as much as the first category.

The Third World societies are thus which are least developed, or in the process of developing. Some writers add a fourth category, namely,

Fourth World countries. These countries may be regarded as the "poorest of the poor" (Giddens, 1996).

Another important criterion for classifying societies may be that which takes into account temporal succession and the major source of economic organization (Lensiki and Lensiki, 1995). When societies modernize they transform from one form to another.

## **TYPES OF SOCIETIES**

Although humans have established many types of societies throughout history, sociologists and anthropologists (experts who study early and tribal cultures) usually refer to six basic types of societies, each defined by its level of technology.

### **Hunting and gathering societies**

The members of hunting and gathering societies primarily survive by hunting animals, fishing, and gathering plants. The vast majority of these societies existed in the past, with only a few (perhaps a million people total) living today on the verge of extinction.

To survive, early human societies completely depended upon their immediate environment. When the animals left the area, the plants died, or the rivers dried up, the society had to relocate to an area where resources were plentiful. Consequently, hunting and gathering societies, which were typically small, were quite mobile. In some cases, where resources in a locale were extraordinarily plentiful, small villages might form. But most hunting and gathering societies were nomadic, moving constantly in search of food and water.

Labor in hunting and gathering societies was divided equally among members. Because of the mobile nature of the society, these societies stored little in the form of surplus goods. Therefore, anyone who could hunt, fish, or gather fruits and vegetables did so.

These societies probably also had at least some division of labor based on gender. Males probably traveled long distances to hunt and capture larger animals. Females hunted smaller animals, gathered plants, made clothing, protected and raised children, and helped the males to protect the community from rival groups.

Hunting and gathering societies were also tribal. Members shared an ancestral heritage and a common set of traditions and rituals. They also sacrificed their individuality for the sake of the larger tribal culture.

### **Pastoral societies**

Members of pastoral societies, which first emerged 12,000 years ago, pasture animals for food and transportation. Pastoral societies still exist today, primarily in the desert lands of North Africa where horticulture and manufacturing are not possible.

Domesticating animals allows for a more manageable food supply than do hunting and gathering. Hence, pastoral societies are able to produce a surplus of goods, which makes storing food for future use a possibility. With storage comes the desire to develop settlements that permit the society to remain in a single place for longer periods of time. And with stability comes the trade of surplus goods between neighboring pastoral communities.

Pastoral societies allow certain of its members (those who are not domesticating animals) to engage in non survival activities. Traders, healers, spiritual leaders, craftspeople, and people with other specialty professions appear.

### **Horticultural societies**

Unlike pastoral societies that rely on domesticating animals, horticultural societies rely on cultivating fruits, vegetables, and plants. These societies first appeared in different parts of the planet about the same time as pastoral societies. Like hunting and gathering societies, horticultural societies had to be mobile. Depletion of the land's resources or dwindling water supplies, for example, forced the people to leave. Horticultural societies occasionally produced a surplus, which permitted storage as well as the emergence of other professions not related to the survival of the society.

### **Agricultural societies**

Agricultural societies use technological advances to cultivate crops (especially grains like wheat, rice, corn, and barley) over a large area. Sociologists use the phrase Agricultural Revolution to refer to the technological changes that occurred as long as 8,500 years ago that led to cultivating crops and raising farm animals. Increases in food supplies then led to larger populations than in earlier communities. This meant a greater surplus, which resulted in towns that became centers of trade supporting various rulers, educators, craftspeople, merchants, and religious leaders who did not have to worry about locating nourishment.

Greater degrees of social stratification appeared in agricultural societies. For example, women previously had higher social status because they shared labor more equally with men. In hunting and gathering societies, women even gathered more food than men. But as food stores improved and women took on lesser roles in providing food for the family, they became more subordinate to men.

As villages and towns expanded into neighboring areas, conflicts with other communities inevitably occurred. Farmers provided warriors with food in exchange for protection against invasion by enemies. A system of rulers with high social status also appeared. This nobility organized warriors to protect the society from invasion. In this way, the nobility managed to extract goods from the "lesser" persons of society.

### **Feudal societies**

From the 9th to 15th centuries, feudalism was a form of society based on ownership of land. Unlike today's farmers, vassals under feudalism were bound to cultivating their lord's land. In exchange for military protection, the lords exploited the peasants into providing food, crops, crafts, homage, and other services to the owner of the land. The caste system of feudalism was often multigenerational; the families of peasants may have cultivated their lord's land for generations.

Between the 14th and 16th centuries, a new economic system emerged that began to replace feudalism. Capitalism is marked by open competition in a free market, in which the means of production are privately owned. Europe's exploration of the Americas served as one impetus for the development of capitalism. The introduction of foreign metals, silks, and spices stimulated great commercial activity in Europe.

### **Industrial societies**

Industrial societies are based on using machines (particularly fuel-driven ones) to produce goods. Sociologists refer to the period during the 18th century when the production of goods in mechanized factories began as the Industrial Revolution. The Industrial Revolution appeared first in Britain, and then quickly spread to the rest of the world.

As productivity increased, means of transportation improved to better facilitate the transfer of products from place to place. Great wealth was attained by the few who owned factories, and the “masses” found jobs working in the factories.

Industrialization brought about changes in almost every aspect of society. As factories became the center of work, “home cottages” as the usual workplace became less prevalent, as did the family's role in providing vocational training and education. Public education via schools and eventually the mass media became the norm. People's life expectancy increased as their health improved. Political institutions changed into modern models of governance. Cultural diversity increased, as did social mobility. Large cities emerged as places to find jobs in factories. Social power moved into the hands of business elites and governmental officials, leading to struggles between industrialists and workers. Labor unions and welfare organizations formed in response to these disputes and concerns over workers' welfare, including children who toiled in factories. Rapid changes in industrial technology also continued, especially the production of larger machines and faster means of transportation. The Industrial Revolution also saw the development of bureaucratic forms of organization, complete with written rules, job descriptions, impersonal positions, and hierarchical methods of management.

### **Postindustrial societies**

Sociologists note that with the advent of the computer microchip, the world is witnessing a technological revolution. This revolution is creating a postindustrial society based on information, knowledge, and the selling of services. That is, rather than being driven by the factory production of goods, society is being shaped by the human mind, aided by computer technology. Although factories will always exist, the key to wealth and power seems to lie in the ability to generate, store, manipulate, and sell information.

Sociologists speculate about the characteristics of postindustrial society in the near future. They predict increased levels of education and training, consumerism, availability of goods, and social mobility. While they hope for a decline in inequality as technical skills and “knowhow” begin to determine class rather than the ownership of property, sociologists are also concerned about potential social divisions based on those who have appropriate education and those who do not. Sociologists believe society will become more concerned with the welfare of all members of society. They hope postindustrial society will be less characterized by social conflict, as everyone works together to solve society's problems through science.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

1. Define the term "society".
2. What do you understand by Social life?
3. "In a broader perspective, the people of the planet earth maybe regarded as a society." Explain.
4. Mention the criteria for classifying societies into different categories. Where would you put Uganda as a society according to both criteria? Why?

## TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain Social life and its implications to media practice.
2. Describe the different types of society citing media operations.

## MAJOR THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES IN SOCIOLOGY

Sociology as science employs perspectives or theories to understand, explain, analyze and interpret social phenomena. To interpret social facts, they must be subjected to a theoretical framework. A theory may be defined as a general statement about how some parts of the world fit together and how they work (Macionis, 1997). Scupin and DeCorse (1995) define a theory as a set of interconnected hypotheses that offer general explanations for natural or social phenomena.

It should also be noted that the terms “perspectives” and “schools of thought” are often used interchangeably with the term “theory”.

There are three major theoretical perspectives in sociology that have provided an overall framework for sociological studies.

These are **structural functionalism**, social **conflict theory** and **symbolic interactionism**. There are also theories that have emerged challenging these major ones (see below).

### The Structural-Functionalist Theory

This is one of the dominant theories both in anthropology and sociology. It is sometimes called functionalism. The theory tries to explain how the relationships among the parts of society are created and how these parts are functional (meaning having beneficial consequences to the individual and the society) and dysfunctional (meaning having negative consequences). It focuses on consensus, social order, structure and function in society.

The structural-functionalist theory sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability; it states that our social lives are guided by **social structure**, which are relatively stable patterns of social behavior (Macionis, 1997). Social structure is understood in terms of **social function**, which are consequences for the operations of society.

All social structure contributes to the operation of society. The major terms and concepts developed by anthropologists and sociologists in this theory include (or the theory focuses on): order, structure, function (manifest or direct functions and latent or hidden, indirect functions), and equilibrium.

Those hold this view ask such questions as: what hold society together? What keeps it steady? The Structural functionalist theory pays considerable attention to the persistence of shared ideas in society. The functional aspect in the structural-functionalist theory stresses the role played by each component part in the social system, whereas the structural perspective suggests an image of society wherein individuals are constrained by the social forces, social backgrounds and by group memberships.

Many of the great early founding sociologists such as August Comte, Emile Durkheim and Herbert Spencer and later American sociologists like Talkot Parsons and Robert K Merton. Structural -functionalist theorists in modern sociology are more



likely to follow in the tradition of the writings of particularly Emile Durkheim, who is regarded as the pioneering proponent of this perspective (Henslin and Nelson, 1995). After dominating sociology and anthropology for a long time, this theory was challenged by its main critics, notably those who proposed the social –conflict theory (*see below*). The theory was attacked for its emphasis on stability and order while neglecting conflict and changes which so vital in any society.

### **The Social Conflict Theory**

This theory is also called Marxism; to indicate that the main impetus to the theory derives from the writings of Karl Marx. This theory sees society in a framework of class conflicts and focuses on the struggle for scarce resources by different groups in a given society. It asks such questions as what pulls society apart. How does society change? The theory holds that the most important aspect of social order is the domination of some group by others, that actual or potential conflicts are always present in society. The writings of Karl Marx are generally in the spirit of conflict theory, and Marxism influences most of conflict theorists in modern sociology.

The theory is useful in explaining how the dominant groups use their power to exploit the less powerful groups in society. Key concepts developed in this perspective include: conflict, complementation, struggle, power, inequality, and exploitation.

Although this theory gained fame in recent decades, it came under sharp criticism, for its overemphasis on inequality and division, for neglecting the fact of how shared values and interdependence generate unity among members of society; it is also criticized for its explicit political goals. Another critique, which equally applies also to structural functionalism, is that it sees society in very broad terms, neglecting micro-level social realities (Macdonis 1997).

### **Symbolic Interactionism**

This theory was advanced by such American sociologists as Charles Horton Cooley (1864-1929) William I Thomas (1863-1947) and George Herbert Mead (1863-1931) in early 20th century. This perspective views symbols as the basis of social life.

Symbols are things to which we attach meanings. The theory stresses the analysis of how our behaviors depend on how we define others and ourselves. It concentrates on process, rather than structure, and keeps the individual actor at the center. According to symbolic interactionism, the essence of social life and social reality is the active human being trying to make sense of social situations. In short, this theory calls attention to the detailed, person-oriented processes that take place within the larger units of social life (Calhoun *et al*, 1994; Henslin and Nelson, 1996; Soroka, 1995).

As indicated above, there are contemporary sociological theories that have emerged in recent decades that have heavily influenced sociological and anthropological thinking. These include the following:

### **Feminism**

This theory takes as its central theme the place and facts of women's underprivileged status and their exploitation in a patriarchally dominated society.

Feminist sociology focuses on the particular disadvantages, including oppression and exploitation faced by women in society. This theory ranges from **liberal feminism**, which recognizes inequalities but believes that reform can take place without a



fundamental restructuring of the social system, to **radical feminism**, which advocates the fundamental need for societal change (Marcus and Ducklin, 1998:32)

### **Social Exchange Theory**

This theory focuses on “the costs and benefits which people obtain in social interaction, including money, goods, and status. It is based on the principle that people always act to maximize benefit. However, to receive benefits, there must always be an exchange process with others” (Marcus and Ducklin, 1996: 26)

**Public Choice Theory:** This theory states that collective organizations such as political parties act rationally to maximize their own benefits. It argues that individual differences are best resolved by collective involvement within organizations. The role of the state is important in arbitrating between large-scale interests (*Ibid, same page*).

**Rational Choice Theory:** This theory assumes that individuals will operate in rational way and will seek to benefit themselves in the life choices they make (*ibid*).

### **Structuralism**

This theory denies any basis for humans being active, since human consciousness is no longer seen as the basis of meaning in language. Structuralism differs from the mainstream traditional theories in that it rejects objective social facts and a concept of society as an objective, external entity. It defines social reality in terms of the relations between events, not in terms of things and social facts. Its basic principle is that the observable is meaningful only in so far as it can be related to an underlying structure or order (Swingwood, 1984).

The equivalent of structuralism in anthropology, advanced by its famous French structuralist anthropologist, Claude Levi-Strauss, states that “the origin of universal principles that order the ways in which we behave and think about the world is to be found in the structure of human thought.”(Howard and Dunaif-Hattis, 1992:373).

The problem with this theory is that they view societies as static and do not help very much in explaining variation among societies. The theory treats culture as a given order and fails to explain the adaptive dimensions of culture.

### **Post-Structuralism and Post-modernism:**

**Post –structuralism:** focuses on the power of language in constructing knowledge and identity. The writers in this field have emphasized the role of language in human life, how language dictates the thoughts we have, and how it constructs meanings for us. Poststructuralists argue that humans cannot arrive anything they can confidently call the (universal) truth. There is no link between the words (language) ideas, and the real world. It denies the sociological idea that our concepts have some relationship to the real world. It is not possible to arrive at a sociological truth, and such attempts are dangerous (Bliton, *et al.* 1996; Kirby, *et al.* 2000).

**Post-modernism:** The basis of post-modernism was post-structuralism. Post-modernism is defined as a cultural and aesthetic phenomenon which mainly rejects order and progress, objective and universal truth; and supports the need for recognizing and tolerating different forms of reality. It tends to celebrate chaos and

disorder, diversity and fragmentation in the modern global society rather than wanting to achieve order. This theory maintains that there is no ultimate reason in human life and existence (Bliton, *et al.* 1996; Kirby, *et al.* 2000). Postmodernists argue, "Power has become decentralized and fragmented in contemporary societies" (Torres and Mitchel, 1998). The theorists of post- structuralism share a lot with post-modernists.

## SOCIAL INTERACTION AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP

To understand social organizations in a society, sociologists study social structures and the function of social events and processes. This involves studying social interaction and relationships at broader (macro) and micro levels. Social interaction and relationship may be studied as they occur between the whole societies linked in the world system down to those between two individuals. Here our focus is on social interaction and relationship in the everyday life of individuals.

Individuals are the main components of society; they make up the building blocks; as, in a very important sense, society is the product of the actions of individuals. We may further state that society is a representation of the collective behavior of individual actors. It is the product of decisions people make concerning when, how, and with whom they are going to interact. However, individuals are social actors who act in a social environment; their social interactions are influenced by the social environment and existing social pattern. In other words, the actions of individuals are not haphazard ones; they take place in patterned relationships.

**Social relationship** refers to any routinized, enduring patterns of social interactions between individuals in society under the limits and influences of the social structure. The term "social relationship" elicits two important questions: between whom does social relationship take place? About what are social relationships? Answers to these questions lead us to the concepts of social status and role (Henslin and Nelson, 1995).

## Social Status and Social Roles

### *The Concept and Types of Social Status*

In the social structure of a society or a group, there are various defined positions to be occupied by a group of individuals. This position is termed as **social status**. It is the position or rank a person or a group of persons occupy in the social system. Some of these positions are naturally given and they are called **ascribed social status**. They are acquired by birth. For example, being a male or female, boy or girl, black or white person, son or daughter, father or mother, etc. Some positions in society are to be attained by competitions, making efforts, commitments, choices, decisions, and other mechanisms. Such kinds of status are called **achieved statuses**. Examples include being a husband or wife, a student or teacher, a physician, a nurse, an athlete, etc.

However, there are some of the statuses which may be both ascribed and achieved. For example, one can be an Ethiopian by birth or through other mechanisms.

Achieved social status may be regarded as the characteristics of modern, industrial societies. In a traditional society, most social statuses are naturally acquired. E.g. a potter family may produce potter son or daughter. But in modern society, this is not usually the case.

Every person has at least two social statuses. A person, for example, may be at the same time a student, a daughter, a mother, an employee, etc. Of these various statuses, one or two may be more dominant than others.

The most dominant of all is called a **salient status**. It is that which defines a person's position in most cases at most occasions Calhoun *et al.*, 1994; Rosenberg, 1987; Stockard, 1997).

## THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL ROLES

**Social roles** are the expectations, duties, responsibilities, obligations, etc, which are associated with a given social status. Every person/ group of persons is/ are expected to behave, act and demonstrate skills, knowledge and attitude that are fitting to the given status or statuses. Every person is expected to play two or more roles.

Multiple statuses are associated with multiple roles. The different roles associated with a single status are called **role set**. Sometimes, there are role conflicts, meaning the clashing of one role with the other. These role conflicts may be **inter-role**, i.e. conflict between two or more roles. There are also **intra-role** conflicts, i.e. conflicts that occur when a person feels strains and inadequacies in accomplishing a certain role, or when there is a gap between what a person does and what a group expects of him or her. Intra-role conflict may also be called role strain. In other words, there is a clash between **ideal role**, that which a person is expected to perform theoretically, and **actual role**, that a person accomplishes according to his or her level of understanding, capacity and personality.

## Social Interaction in Everyday Life

Micro-sociology focuses on understanding and analyzing the processes and dynamics of social interaction in everyday life. Social interaction may simply mean what people do when they are in the presence of one another. Four symbolic interactionist micro-sociological perspectives are developed to understand social interaction in everyday life (Henslin and Nelson, 1995). These are:

**1. Symbolic Interaction:** Symbolic interactionism as indicated earlier focuses on social interaction as the most significant part of life in society. What interest scholars in this perspective are symbols people use to define their worlds. Here, three important concepts are used to explain the symbolic basis and nature of social interaction; these are: **stereotypes in everyday life, personal space, and touching.**

- **Stereotypes in Everyday Life:** Stereotypes are the assumptions we have about people; they determine and shape our reactions and behaviors towards people. Our first impressions about people are shaped by the assumptions we make about such characteristics as the person's sex, age, skin color, physical appearance, social status, etc. The assumptions not only influence our ideas about the person, but the way we interact with that person.

- **Personal space:** Individuals have, and maintain, an important sense of personal space in social interaction; every person has thus personal space. Our personal spaces are open to only those whom we are intimate with such as children, parents, close friends and spouses.

Otherwise, we keep others out of this personal space making sure that we do not touch, and are touched by, others. Anthropological research findings show that the use of personal space varies from culture to culture; four different distance zones are identified, for example, as used in North America (*Ibid*). These are:

- I. **Intimate Distance** (50 centimeter from our bodies; reserved for lovemaking, wrestling, comforting, protecting, etc.);
- II. **Personal Distance** (extends from 50 centimeter to 120 centimeter surrounding our bodies; these spaces are reserved for friends, acquaintances and conversations);
- III. **Social Distance** (extends from 120 centimeter to 3.6 meters for impersonal or formal relationships; e.g., for job interviews); and
- IV. **Public Distance** (this zone extends from 3.6 meters; it marks a more formal relationship. This is used to separate dignitaries and public speakers from the general public.)

- **Touching:** Each society has rules about touching in social interaction. Frequency of touching and the meaning people attach to it vary between and within cultures. However, in impersonal social interactions, higher status individuals are more likely to touch those of lower status; e.g. teacher his/ her students; a boss his secretary, etc.

**2. Dramaturgy:** Symbolic interactionists use the term “dramaturgy” to refer to the way individuals present themselves in everyday life. The term was coined by sociologist Erving Goffman (1922 – 1982) to refer to dramaturgical analysis of how people act and behave in social situations. Thus, social life is likened to a drama or stage. Individuals are born into the stage of everyday life. Our everyday social life consists of playing our assigned roles. Every person learns how to perform in the stage. Our everyday life is filled with stages where we perform; each person is expected to play his/ her drama taking many roles; e.g. a student, a wife, a mother, a daughter, a worker, etc. The actions and roles played on the stage are called **role performances** (*Ibid.*).

**3. Ethno-methodology:** literally means *the study of people's methods*. Ethno-methodologists study how people make sense of life. Ethno-methodology involves uncovering people's basic assumptions as they interpret their everyday world. Sociologists like Harold Garfinkel (who coined the term) have made extensive studies of how people use commonsense understandings to make sense out of their lives. What form the bases of social interaction in our everyday life are the assumptions individual actors have about the way life is and the way things ought to work (*Ibid.*)

**4. The Social Construction of Reality:** Symbolic interactionists argue that individuals define their own reality and try to live according that definition. Reality is not something that exists “out there”, independently. It is created socially. By “social construction of reality“, we mean the process by which we take the various elements available in our society and put them together to form a particular view of reality. Every individual's definition of realities derives from his/ her society's own definition. The definitions we learn from our cultures form the basis of not only what we do, but also what we perceive, feel or think.

## **SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

### **Definition and Main Features**

**Social institutions** may be defined as practices based on similar principles that display some degree of regularity. More specifically, a social institution is an interrelated system of social roles and social norms, organized around the satisfaction of an important social need or social function (Team of Experts, 2000).

In general, a social institution is an established pattern of behavior that is organized to perpetuate the welfare of society and to preserve its form. From the above definition, we can observe that social institutions have got some important functions. Three of such main functions are: (a) perpetuation of the welfare of society, (b) preservation and maintenance of the form of society, and (c) meeting the major needs of the members of society. A society is functionally integrated and held together by social institutions.

Social institutions are universal. They vary from time to time and across cultures, in terms of complexity, specialization, scope, formality and organization. But their basic nature and purpose are similar everywhere.

These features are particularly true regarding the five major social institutions discussed below. Social institutions are resistant to change; they tend to persist.

However, once a change occurs in particular social institution, it tends to affect the other institutions as well.

### Major Types and Functions of Social Institutions

There are many principles around which institutions are organized. The five social institutions of major significance are:

1. Economic institutions: those that deal with economic and property relations;
2. Polity and law: Those that are concerned with social control with politics and law government, the police, court, etc;
3. Religious institutions: Those concerned with the supernatural magic and religion;
4. Family: those based on principles of kinship, meaning, social relations created by descent and marriage; and
5. Educational institutions: those that deal with the need for training individuals in the roles, values, skills, knowledge, attitudes etc which are associated with being a citizen and a worker.

Each institution performs two types of social function.

These are: (a) **primary functions**, which are also called manifest, explicit, or direct functions; and (b) **secondary functions**, which are also called indirect, hidden, or latent functions. Through these functions, social institutions fulfill important needs in the society. The primary functions of the five major social institutions are as follows.

#### 1. The Family

The family is the most important social unit in any society. It is the building block of any society. The family fulfills two basic functions. These are reproduction and socialization. Society reproduces or recreates itself through the family. Children are born in the family to join the society. Parents play the roles of nurturing, caring for, teaching and training children; children are expected to play the roles of good and teachable trainees. The way parents nurture, train and care for their children vary according to forms of family organization. **Nuclear family** is a dominant form of family organization in modern, industrialized and urban societies. It usually consists of husband wife and dependent children. In traditional, agrarian and rural societies, **Extruded family** form dominates. It consists of husband, wife/ wives, their children, and other relatives (Henslin and Nelson, 1995; Calhoun *et al.* 1994)



## **2. Economic Institution**

Every society needs to make effective use of the scarce resources. Goods and services have to be produced to meet the basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, etc. Economic institutions are responsible for organizing the production, exchange, distribution and consumption of goods and services.

## **3. Religious Institution**

This asocial institution is responsible for meeting (providing) spiritual needs of the members of the society. There are puzzling questions about the meaning of the human life, human destiny, the universe, and other questions.

Religion and related institutions like magic provide explanations for these puzzling paradoxes of life and provides meaning and purpose for life. It helps people to cope with purposelessness, meaninglessness and sense of alienation and frustration. These institutions also help members of society conform to social values and norms, and play their expected social roles appropriately. They also provide a sense of social solidarity among members of society.

## **4. Political Institution (Government and Law)**

These social institutions are responsible for protecting the society from internal disorder, crime and chaos; as well as from external threats and invasion. They are responsible for maintaining peace and order at micro and macro levels; enforcing social control; and maintaining the welfare and well-being of society.

## **5. Educational Institution**

This social institution is responsible for providing training for the members of society. It serves as center of knowledge production, exchange, and distribution.

Generally, educational institutions are responsible for the vertical and horizontal transmission of material and non-material cultures. Vertical transmission means over time from one generation to another generation; whereas horizontal transmission means over geographical space or from one society to another. Educational institutions also play the role of preparing members of society for the statuses and roles that re associate with being good citizens and workers, holding various occupations.

Before ending this section it is important to note that although the foregoing way of presenting the nature and function of social institutions is often common in some of standard text books in introductory sociology, we also need to view them in a critical and conflict theory approach. From such perspectives, social institutions may be functional for some and dysfunctional (meaning positively harmful and damaging) for other individuals and groups in a society. This is partly because they often exist and operate in the context of class division and social stratification, unequal access to power and resources. From this point of view, social institutions may not be functional to all members of society equally.

They may exist to promote the interests and privileges of some sections of society (*Personal communication: Dr Teketel Abebe, Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, Addis Ababa University*).

## **MORE ABOUT SOCIETY**

*It may be tempting to think that a society is simply a collection of individual person. Much of the time, we like to think of ourselves as individuals who are different to*



*everyone else, and that we are not affected by what other people say or do. However, this does not seem to reflect what people and societies are really like. How much of the time are you totally alone, doing exactly what you want without any influence from others?*

*Most of the time what we do is influenced directly or indirectly by the various kinds of groupings with whom we interact. For example, much of what we do reflect the fact that we are involved in social relationship! with other members of our family. As children we were influenced by what we learned from our parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters and so on. Then, throughout life our feelings and behaviour are often shape (by what other members of our family are doing. For many of us, much of our behaviour is also shaped by the fact that we go out to work. The organisation we work for sets the context for our behaviour. It requires you to do certain things: It provides us with sets of colleagues and acquaintances with whom we may spend part of our non-working hours.*

*Also our behaviour is affected by other kinds of groupings. We may be members of sports clubs, or work for a charity. We are also affected by being part of this institute. As you read this you may be an individual: but you bring to your studies what you learned at school; you may be tired as a result of what your employers asked you to do; you are connected to other students and tutors in this institution; and you may be planning to get through this work quickly so that you can spend some time with your children.*

*The point of all this is to emphasise that what we do as individuals is best seen in the context of our membership of what sociologists call social institutions or social units. A social unit mayor may not have a clear organisation. It can be an organised institution with clear rules and buildings, e.g., a business firm; or it could be something without any formal organisation, e.g., the expatriate community in Uganda. These units can have different purposes, e.g. making money or providing all the kinds of physical and emotional support that good families provide.*

*Sometimes, a social unit can itself be part of other units, or may have sub-division within it. For instance, refugee camp, there are subdivisions: the Liberian refugees, the Sierra-Leone refugee and other refugees from war-tom countries in Africa. There are further sub18 divisions within this refugee camp: the male and female groups; the Christian, Muslim, traditionalist; the young and the old, etc.*

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

*Write down some of the various kinds of social units that you are involved in?*

## **CULTURE**

### **Definition of Culture**

Before going any further, it may be important to note that common people often misuse the concept of culture. Some misconceptions about the term culture include:

1. Many people in the western world use the term culture in the sense that some people are more "cultured" than others. This basically emanates from the idea associated with the root word of the term culture, "kulture" in German, which refers to "civilization". Thus, when one is said to be "cultured", he or she is said to be civilized. For sociologists and anthropologists, "culture includes much more than refinement, taste, sophistication, education and appreciation of the fine arts. Not only

college graduates but also all people are 'cultured'" Kottak (2002: 272).

2. A second commonly used misconception is that which equates "culture" with things which are colorful, customs, cloths, foods, dancing, music, etc. As Kottak (op. cit p.525) argues, "... many [people] have come to think of culture in terms of colorful customs, music, dancing and adornments clothing, jewelry and hairstyles.... Taken to an extreme, such images portray culture as recreational and ultimately unserious rather than something that ordinary people live everyday of their lives not just when they have festivals" (Ibid. P. 525).

3. A third misconception about what culture is and what it constitutes is that which may be entertained by many common people here in Uganda. This misconception is similar to the second one, but it differs from it in that most people here think culture is that which pertains to unique traditional material objects or non – material things of the past. According to this view, the cultural may not include things (material or non – material), which are modern, more ordinary, day-to – day, life aspects. Here, the simple, ordinary social, economic and other activities, ideas and affairs are regarded as not cultural or somewhat "less cultural" although not clearly stated.

**Culture refers** to shared, consensual and learned pattern of behaviour. Suppose that A and B are sitting together and B is telling a story about the origin of the people that A and B consider themselves to be. This story is one that is known by all of B's generation. What is told to A by B is culture. Suppose also that B has thought about this story and has some different ideas about the elements of the story but B has never told this to anyone else. So long as B keeps this to herself, it is not a part of the culture of the people of A and B. Therefore, culture is said to be shared and learned. The consensual element means simply that many share it and agree to its meaning and importance.

Culture is the embodiment of the people, it is also of the things they share and do together. Language, family structure, how and when they plant, how they live out their lives, how they die, what they hold to be sacred. In fact, virtually everything the people hold in common is a part of their culture. Tools, paths, techniques, for using tools, these are also part of the culture.

All in all, *the concept of culture is one of the most widely used notions in sociology. It refers to the whole ways of life of the members of a society. It includes what they dress, their marriage customs and family life, art, and patterns of work, religious ceremonies, leisure pursuits, and so forth. It also includes the material goods they produce: bows and arrows, plows, factories and machines, computers, books, buildings, airplanes, etc (Calhoun, et al, 1994; Hensiln and Nelson, 1995).*

*The concept of culture has been defined hundreds of times by sociologists and anthropologists, emphasizing different dimensions. However, most often scholars have focused on the symbolic dimension of culture; that culture is essentially symbolic.*

All in all, Culture refers to the ways of life of the members of a society, or of groups within a society. It is said to include how they dress, their marriage customs and family life, their patterns of work, religious ceremonies and leisure pursuits. It also covers the goods they create and which become meaningful for them -bows and

arrows, computers, books, dwellings.

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT*

1. What do you understand by the term "Culture"?
2. Describe the culture of your place.

### **COMPONENTS/ELEMENTS OF CULTURE**

Culture includes within itself elements that make up the essence of a society or a social group. The major ones include: Symbols, values, norms, language, beliefs, and technology, etc. (See *Henslin and Nelson, 1995; Calhoun et al. 1994*).

#### **Beliefs**

These are often associated with religion. They refer to those things that we hold to be true. Beliefs and values blend together. Our national ideologies are also beliefs. Many contemporary Americans believe that people were not created, but evolved from other forms of life over a very, very long period of time. If you are a fundamental Christian perhaps you believe the world was created in 7 days and that it was created by God. Both of these are belief systems (involving certain assumptions about what is and how things have come to be), that shape the lives of the true believers. They shape their lives by supporting their notions of what is important, what is real and how we are to believe at all times. True, most of us do not think of this all of the time, but there are times when we are reminded of our beliefs and their importance and then act accordingly. It is also the case that for most that these beliefs remain in the background, but do shape our day to day behaviour.

#### **Technology**

These are the material good of the culture. In what we are doing, the computers are the technology. Technology is often more than the tools, since it involves the techniques as well as the tools themselves. The programming languages that make all of the things we do on the computers work are techniques, the wires that link us together are tools, but how we link those wires for what purposes are techniques. Consider that 'gun-powder' was known to the Chinese for centuries (a tool), but that it was only used to make noises at festivals. It took the Europeans to change these tools with a different set of techniques into a weapon of destruction.

#### **Symbols**

Symbols are the central components of culture. Symbols refer to anything to which people attach meaning and which they use to communicate with others. More specifically, symbols are words, objects, gestures, sounds or images that represent something else rather than themselves. Symbolic thought is unique and crucial to humans and to culture. It is the human ability to give a thing or event an arbitrary meaning and grasp and appreciate that meaning. There is no obvious natural or necessary connection between a symbol and what it symbolizes.

## *Language*

Language, specifically defined as a system of verbal and in many cases written symbols with rules about how those symbols can be strung together to convey more complex meanings, is the distinctive capacity and possession of humans; it is a key element of culture. Culture encompasses language, and through language, culture is communicated and transmitted. Without language it would be impossible to develop, elaborate and transmit culture to the future generation.

## *Values*

Values are essential elements of non-material culture. They may be defined as general, abstract guidelines for our lives, decisions, goals, choices, and actions. They are shared ideas of a groups or a society as to what is right or wrong, correct or incorrect, desirable or undesirable, acceptable or unacceptable, ethical or unethical, etc., regarding something. They are general road maps for our lives. Values are shared and are learned in group. They can be positive or negative. For example, honesty, truth – telling, respect for others, hospitality, helping those in need, etc are positive values. Examples of negative values include theft, indecency, disrespect, dishonesty, falsehood, frugality, etc. The Hippocratic Oath in medical profession dictates that practitioners should among other things, keep the secrets of patients, provide them whatever help they can, do no harm to patients willingly, etc. This is an example of positive value.

Values are dynamic, meaning they change over time. They are also static, meaning they tend to persist without any significant modification. Values are also diversified, meaning they vary from place to place and culture to culture. Some values are universal because there is bio- psychological unity among people everywhere and all times. In other words, they emanate from the basic similarity of mankind's origins, nature and desires. For example, dislike for killing people, concepts and practices of disease management, cleanliness, personal hygiene, cosmetics, incest taboo, etc.

## *Norms*

Norms are also essential elements of culture. They are implicit principles for social life, relationship and interaction. Norms are detailed and specific rules for specific situations. They tell us how to do something, what to do, what not to do, when to do it, why to do it, etc. Norms are derived from values. That means, for every specific norm, there is a general value that determines its content.

Individuals may not act according to the defined values and norms of the group. Therefore, violation of values and norms and deviating from the standard values and norms are often common. Social norms may be divided into two. These are **mores** and **folkways**

**Mores:** Are important and stronger social norms for existence, safety, well-being and continuity of the society or the group or society. Violation of, and deviation from these kinds of norms, may result in serious reactions from the groups. The strongest norms are regarded as the formal **laws** of a society or a group. Formal laws are written and codified social norms. The other kinds of mores are called conventions. Conventions are established rules governing behavior; they are generally accepted

ideals by the society. Conventions may also be regarded as written and signed agreements between nations to govern the behaviors of individuals, groups and nations.

**Folkways:** Are the ways of life developed by a group of people. They are detailed and minor instructions, traditions or rules for day-to-day life that help us function effectively and smoothly as members of a group. Here, violating such kinds of norms may not result in a serious punishment unlike violating mores. They are less morally binding. In other words, folkways are appropriate ways of behaving and doing things. Examples may include table etiquette, dressing rules, walking, talking, etc.

Conformity to folkways usually occurs automatically without any national analysis and is based upon custom passed from generation to generation. They are not enforced by law, but by informal social control. They are not held to be important or obligatory as mores, or moral standards, and their violation is not as such severely sanctioned. Although folkways are less binding, people have to behave according to accepted standards. Some exceptional behaviors are regarded eccentric behaviors.

Folkways are distinguished from laws and mores in that they are designed, maintained and enforced by public sentiment, or custom, whereas laws are institutionalized, designed, maintained and enforced by the political authority of the society. Folkways in turn may be divided into two sub types: **fashion** and **custom**.

**Fashion:** Is a form of behavior, type of folkways that is socially approved at a given time but subject to periodic change. Adherents combine both deviation and conformity to norm of a certain group.

**Custom:** Is a folkway or form of social behavior that, having persisted a long period of time, has become traditional and well established in a society and has received some degree of formal recognition. Custom is a pattern of action shared by most or all members of a society. Habit is a personality trait, where as the custom is a group trait. Fashion and customs can be differentiated in that while custom changes at slower rate, fashion changes at a faster rate.

**All in all, Norms are** rules that govern behaviour, expectations we hold for how to behave in a given situation. These rules that govern our behaviour can be quite informal (rules about how we dress, stand when talking to others, how we address one another) to formalised laws.

## **ROLES/IMPORTANCES OF CULTURE**

The following are the importance of culture:

- Sets behaviour standards for a given setting
- Defines the structure of relationships
- Defines importance of setting, relationship, things (VALUES)
- Defines who we are and what we hold to be true (BELIEFS)



## ***SELF-ASSESSMENT***

1. a. Explain the Components/elements of culture
- b. Describe the importance of culture.

## **BASIC CHARACTERISTICS/FEATURES OF CULTURE**

### ***1. Culture is organic and supra-organic:***

It is organic when we consider the fact that there is no culture without human society. It is supra organic, because it is far beyond any individual lifetime. Individuals come and go, but culture remains and persists Calhoun (op cit).

### ***2. Culture is overt and covert:***

It is generally divided into material and non-material cultures. Material culture consists of any tangible human made objects such as tools, automobiles, buildings, etc. Non-material culture consists of any non-physical aspects like language, belief, ideas, knowledge, attitude, values, etc.

### ***3. Culture is explicit and implicit:***

It is explicit when we consider those actions, which can be explained and described easily by those who perform them. It is implicit when we consider those things we do, but are unable to explain them, yet we believe them to be so.

### ***4. Culture is ideal and manifest (actual):***

Ideal culture involves the way people ought to behave or what they ought to do. Manifest culture involves what people actually do.

### ***5. Culture is stable and yet changing:***

Culture is stable when we consider what people hold valuable and are handing over to the next generation in order to maintain their norms and values. However, when culture comes into contact with other cultures, it can change. However, culture changes not only because of direct or indirect contact between cultures, but also through innovation and adaptation to new circumstances.

### ***6. Culture is shared and learned:***

Culture is the public property of a social group of people (shared). Individuals get cultural knowledge of the group through socialization. However, we should note that all things shared among people might not be cultural, as there are many biological attributes which people share among themselves (Kottak, 2002).

### ***7. Culture is symbolic:***

It is based on the purposeful creation and usage of symbols; it is exclusive to humans. Symbolic thought is unique and crucial to humans and to culture. Symbolic thought is the human ability to give a thing or event an arbitrary meaning and grasp and



appreciate that meaning Symbols are the central components of culture. Symbols refer to anything to which people attach meaning and which they use to communicate with others. More specifically, symbols are words, objects, gestures, sounds or images that represent something else rather than themselves. Symbolic thought is unique and crucial to humans and to culture. It is the human ability to give a thing or event an arbitrary meaning and grasp and appreciate that meaning. There is no obvious natural or necessary connection between a symbol and what it symbolizes (Henslin and Nelson, 1995; Macionis, 1997).

Culture thus works in the symbolic domain emphasizing meaning, rather than the technical/practical rational side of human behavior. All actions have symbolic content as well as being action in and of themselves. Things, actions, behaviors, etc, always stand for something else than merely, the thing itself.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT**

1. Discuss the main characteristics of culture.

### **CULTURE VARIABILITY AND EXPLANATIONS**

**Cultural variability** refers to the diversity of cultures across societies and places. As there are different societies, there are different cultures. The diversity of human culture is remarkable. Values and norms of behavior vary widely from culture to culture often contrasting in radical ways (Broom and Slezni, 1973). For example, Jews do not eat pork, while Hindus eat pork but avoid beef. Cultural diversity or variability can be both between societies and within societies. If we take the two societies, Ethiopia and India, there are great, sharp cultural diversities between the two societies. On the other hand, within both societies, there is remarkable cultural variability. Cultural variability between societies may result in divergent health and disease conditions. For example, variations in nutritional habits are closely linked to the types of diseases. The prevalence of tapeworm among raw-meat eating people may be a case in point.

We use the concept of **subculture** to denote the variability of culture within a certain society. Sub culture is a distinctive culture that is shared by a group within a society (Stockard, 1997). We call it sub culture, because groups (with their sub cultures) exist within and as a smaller part of the main, dominant culture. Examples of subculture could be the distinctive culture of university students, street children and prostitutes in Addis Ababa, the culture of medical professionals, etc.

Why cultures vary from society to society? Sociologists, anthropologists, cultural geographers and other social scientists have studied the causes for cultural variations among (between) societies. Various arguments have been provided the variation, including geographical factors, racial determination, demographic factors, span of interest and mere historic chances. Those who argued for racial determination believe that cultural variation is genetically determined. Geographic factors include: climate, altitude, and so forth. Included in demographic factors are changes in population structure, population increase, etc., whereas by span of interest is meant cultures vary as people's interest in life also varies. Cultural variation is due to mere historical chances; a particular group of people may develop a culture as it is exposed to certain historical circumstances and opportunities.

However, no one explanation is sufficient by itself; anthropologists now reject particular deterministic explanation such as those based on race; rather cultural variations are accounted for by more holistic explanations.

## **ETHNOCENTRISM, CULTURAL RELATIVISM AND CULTURE SHOCK**

### ***Ethnocentrism***

We often tend to judge other cultures by comparison with our own. It is not logically possible and proper to underestimate or overestimate or judge other cultures on the basis of one's cultural standard. Ethnocentrism, in general, is an attitude of taking one's own culture and ways of life as the best and the center of all and on the other hand, regarding other ethnic groups and cultures as inferior, bad, full of errors, etc. It is the tendency to apply one's own cultural values in judging the behavior and beliefs of people raised in other cultures. It is a cultural universal. People everywhere think that familiar explanations, opinion, and customs as true, right, proper and moral. They regard different behavior as strange or savage (Maconis, 1997; Henslin and Nelson, 1995).

### ***Cultural Relativism***

Every society has its own culture, which is more or less unique. Every culture contains its own unique pattern of behavior which may seem alien to people from other cultural backgrounds. We cannot understand the practices and beliefs separately from the wider culture of which they are part. A culture has to be studied in terms of its own meanings and values. Cultural relativism describes a situation where there is an attitude of respect for cultural differences rather than condemning other people's culture as uncivilized or backward (Stockard, 1997).

## **RESPECT FOR CULTURAL DIFFERENCES INVOLVES:**

1. Appreciating cultural diversity;
2. Accepting and respecting other cultures;
3. Trying to understand every culture and its elements in terms of its own context and logic;
4. Accepting that each body of custom has inherent dignity and meaning as the way of life of one group which has worked out to its environment, to the biological needs of its members, and to the group relationships;
5. Knowing that a person's own culture is only one among many; and
6. Recognizing that what is immoral, ethical, acceptable, etc, in one culture may not be so in another culture.

Cultural relativism may be regarded as the opposite of ethnocentrism. However, there is some problem with the argument that behavior in a particular culture should not be judged by the standards of another. This is because in its extremeness, it argues that

there is no superior, international or universal morality.

To sum up the issues of ethnocentrism and cultural relativism, the concepts involve difficult choices, dilemmas and contradictions regarding cultural exchanges and relationships between and within societies. The dilemmas and contradictions become clear when we see that the traditional anthropological position maintains that every cultural beliefs and practice, including for example the ones which are termed as “harmful traditional practices” in Ethiopia, are part and parcel of the general cultural system of a society and therefore they should not be judged and undermined by any outsider. On the other hand, the dilemma is taken to the extreme cultural relativism appears to entail a fallacy, in that it implies that there are no universal cultural or moral standard by which actions and beliefs have to be judged. Yet still, even cultural anthropologists accept the idea that there are some cultural standards which are universally found everywhere, expressed for example in the world’s major religions.

In any case there may be no readymade solutions to this dilemma; however, what we can at present maintain is that cultural diversity has to be respected and yet international standards of justice and human rights have to be taken into account.

### ***Culture Shock***

Culture shock is the psychological and social maladjustment at micro or macro level that is experienced for the first time when people encounter new cultural elements such as new things, new ideas, new concepts, seemingly strange beliefs and practices. No person is protected from culture shock. However, individuals vary in their capacity to adapt and overcome the influence of culture shock. Highly ethnocentric people are exposed widely to culture shock. On the other hand, cultural relativists may find it easy to adapt to new situations and overcome culture shock (Henslin and Nelson, 1995).

## **CULTURAL UNIVERSALS, ALTERNATIVES AND SPECIALTIES**

### ***Cultural Universals***

Although there are as many different and unique cultures as societies, there are some cultural practices that are universal. Amid the diversity of human cultural behavior, there are some common features that are found in virtually all societies.

**Cultural universality** refers to those practices, beliefs, values, norms, material objects, etc., which are observed across all societies in the world, or across different social groups within a society.

For example, every culture has a grammatically complex language. All societies have some recognized form of family system in which there are values and norms associated with the care of children. The institution of marriage, religious rituals, and property rights are all cultural universals. All societies have some form of incest prohibition. Anthropologists have identified variety of more cultural universals including the existence of art, dancing, bodily adornments, games, gift giving, joking and rules of hygiene. Cultural universals condition behavioral similarity among individuals in a given society or across societies. They do not allow differences in actions and behaviors, lifestyle, attitude, behaviors, etc (Broom and Selzenki, 1973).

## *Cultural Alternatives and Specialties*

There are many different options for doing the same thing. For example, care for a patient is a universal aspect of cultures; but the way people care for patients varies. There are many diverse ways of doing the same thing. This is called cultural alternative. In other words, cultural alternatives refer to two or more forms of behavior in a particular society which are acceptable in a given situation. These alternatives represent different reactions to the same situations or different techniques to achieve the same end. Cultural alternatives are (also) the types of choices that allow for differences in ideas, customs and lifestyles. Modern industrialized societies offer far more cultural alternatives than had many societies of the past.

On the other hand, cultural specialties refer to the specific skills, training, knowledge, etc. which is limited to a group or specific members of society. They are those elements of culture which are shared by the members of certain social groups but which are not shared by the total population. Cultural specialties cause behavioral differences among people as opposed to cultural universals.

## **THE CONCEPTS OF CULTURE LAG AND CULTURE LEAD**

Culture is dynamic. When culture change occurs, the change is usually not evenly distributed across **material** and **non-material** dimensions of culture. The rate of change is not balanced. Material culture may change at a faster rate than non-material culture. The growth in science and technology in western, industrialized societies for example, does not seem to be matched by the necessary changes and appropriate adjustment of adaptive culture. That is non-material culture changes slowly. This condition is termed as **culture lag**. Associated with the rapid growth in material culture are usually crisis in the realm of amorality, social and cultural dilemmas, which in turn result in various social pathologies such as extreme form of individualism, alienation, the state of normlessness, suicide, etc (Team of Experts, 2000).

On the other hand, in some less developed societies, the change of non-material culture may outpace the material culture. When this occurs, it is called **culture lead**. Due to the effect of globalization and rapid assimilation processes, people in the Third World are accustomed to the ideology and cultures of the Western World, though their material culture is not changing keeping pace with non-material culture.

## **GLOBAL CULTURE AND CULTURAL IMPERIALISM**

Before closing this chapter, it may be important to note few things on the issues of cultural exchange in today's globalizing world. One of the main aspects of globalization is that a relatively uniform world culture is taking shape today in the world. The global culture may entail all speaking the same language, share the same values and norms, and sustain common und of knowledge as of residents of the same community (Kottak 2002). Global culture may also be associated with **cultural imperialism**, the unequal cultural exchange in the global system whereby western material and non-material cultures have come to occupy dominating and imposing roles over the indigenous cultures of the Third World peoples.

### **The global culture is often promoted by:**

- The global spread of capitalism
- Consumerism and the consumer culture
- The growth of transnational media, particularly electronic mass media such as BBC, CNN, etc.

The transnational media have often promoted the aggressive promotion that its value system is superior and preferable to those of other non-western cultures

### ***SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE***

1. Why do cultures vary between societies?

2. (a) What are subcultures?

(b) How are sub-cultures created?

© Think of a certain health service rendering set up. Mention some of the examples of sub-cultures in such set up

3. (a) What are cultural universals?

(b) Why and how do cultural universals condition behavioral similarities among persons of a similar society or social group?

4. Why and how does culture shock occur?

5. Discuss the examples of culture lead and culture lag in our contemporary Ugandan culture.

### ***TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT***

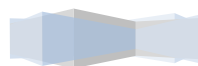
1. Discuss the role of journalism in promoting culture.

2. Discuss the challenges of traditional culture.

3. Explain the meaning of culture and its components.

4. Analyse the different cultural settings and the role of journalism in promoting culture.

5. Analyse the different cultures in Uganda and assess how media has promoted them.





## SOCIALIZATION

### The Concept of Socialization:

#### Definition and Necessity

In any society there are socially recognized ways in which the norms and values of the society are inculcated in the human infant who comes into this world as a biological organism with animalistic needs or impulses. Individuals learn group-defined ways of acting and behaving, and what they socially learn becomes part of their personality.

**Socialization** is a process of making somebody social and fully human. Or more appropriately, it is a process whereby individual persons learn and are trained in the basic norms, values, beliefs, skills, attitudes, way of doing and acting as appropriate to a specific social group or society.

It is an on-going, never ending process- from cradle to the grave. That means an individual person passes through various stages of socialization, from birth to death. Thus, we need socialization as infants, preschool children, schoolboys/girls, pubescents, adolescents, adults and older persons.

From the point of view of individual persons, especially a newly born baby, socialization is a process whereby a biological being or organism is changed into a social being. In terms of the group, society or any professional organizations, socialization is a process whereby the organizations', social groups' and society's structure and well-being are kept and sustained. It is the process whereby the culture, skills, norms, traditions, customs, etc., are transmitted from generation to generation – or from one society to another.

Socialization may be formal or informal. It becomes formal when it is conducted by formally organized social groups and institutions, like schools, religious centers, mass media universities, work places, military training centers, internships, etc. It is informal when it is carried out through the informal social interactions and relationships at micro-levels, at interpersonal and small social group levels. The most important socialization for us is that we get through informal agents like family, parents, neighborhood and peer group influences. It has a very powerful influence, whether negative or positive, in our lives.

The process of socialization, whether it is formal or informal, is vitally important to both individuals and society. Without some kind of socialization, society would cease to exist. Socialization, thus, can be labeled as the way by which culture is transmitted and individuals are fitted into the society's organized way of life.

#### The Goals of Socialization

In terms of individual persons, the goal of socialization is to equip him or her with the basic values, norms, skills, etc, so that they will behave and act properly in the social group to which they belong. Socialization has also the following specific goals (Broom and Slezni, 1973):

- ☐ To inculcate basic disciplines by restraining a child or even an adult from immediate gratification; a child who is toilet-trained will delay relieving himself/herself until the proper environment is created.
- ☐ To instill aspirations;

- ❑ To teach social roles;
- ❑ To teach skills;
- ❑ To teach conformity to norms; and
- ❑ To create acceptable and constructive personal identities.

Despite the inculcation of values and norms is significant in the process of social integration, we need to also note that social values are not equally absorbed by members of a society or group. The integrative function of socialization is also not equally beneficial to all people. There is always the question of whose values have to be inculcated? This question particularly becomes crucial in an increasingly globalizing society.

Hence, the ideological role of socialization with the issues of differential power, control, domination and conflict become important.

### Modes of Social Learning

What are the mechanisms by which socialization is accomplished? Fuller answer is not yet found to this question. Sociologists have, however, identified four modes of social learning. These are: conditioning, identity taking, modeling-after and problem solving (*Ibid.*).

**Conditioning:** This involves learning based on the principle of association. Conditioning refers to the response pattern which is built into an organism as a result of stimuli in the environment. There is what is called **classical conditioning** in which the response remains constant while the stimuli vary, as in Pavlovian experiment. In contrast, in **operant** or **instrumental conditioning**, response is controlled. The term "operant" signifies a behavior which is guided by an anticipated result. Thus, operant conditioning entails the "creation of built-in responses a result of systematic reinforcement. Conditioning is important in socialization in that through classical conditioning children learn to respond to various social and man-made stimuli; and through operant conditioning, they learn to inhibit certain response and adopt others as habitual.

**Identity Taking:** Studies show that children begin to identify themselves and others by sex and learn to behave in the normative gendered ways according to the society of which they parts. This happens by age five. Researchers of socialization believe that sex-type behavior emerges through operant conditioning.

However, it is not the case that conditioning alone accounts for sex-differences in behavior, although the individuals take their identity of maleness and femaleness through approval and disapproval as well as reward and punishment. As their linguistic and cognitive skills gradually develop, children begin to learn that they are being called boys or girls, accept what others label, learn by observation, and report what boys and girls do and behave accordingly.

**Modeling After:** Children learn to model their behavior after someone who is an admired, loved or feared figure. This is considered as a typical stage in personality formation and in the development of personal autonomy and social involvement. Through modeling after someone, our behavior acquires meaning and coherence.

**Problem Solving:** The above three mechanisms of social learning are ways in which individuals internalize the values and norms of society. They may be termed as modes of internalization. However, social learning transcends beyond simply internalizing values and norms. It also includes learning to involve in cooperative and conflict-ridden activities, to cope with new situations and to achieve one's goals. Problem

solving mode of social learning is essential particularly in societies where complexity and fluidity dominate the social world.

Problem solving is not to be understood as a kind of mathematical puzzle solving, but it is one which is applied to a problematic social situation in which individuals find themselves uncomfortable and need a context-based response.

While each mode of social learning is important, it is to be noted that each has its own limitation. No single mode of social learning thus fully accounts for socialization.

### Patterns of Socialization

There are two broadly classified patterns of socialization. These are: **Repressive** and **participatory** socialization. Repressive socialization is oriented towards gaining obedience, while participatory socialization is oriented towards gaining the participation of the child. Punishment of wrong behavior and rewarding and reinforcing good behavior are involved in the two kinds of socialization, respectively. The following is a tabular representation of the two modes of socialization.

### Major Types of Socialization

There are different types of socialization; the major ones include: **primary** or **childhood** socialization, **secondary** or **adulthood** socialization, **de-socialization** and **re-socialization**.

Other minor types of socialization include: **anticipatory** socialization and **reverse** socialization (Calhoun *et al*, 1994; Henslin and Nelson, 1995; Soroka, 1996; Macionis, 1997)

### Primary or Childhood Socialization

This is also called **basic** or **early** socialization. The terms "primary", "basic" or "early" all signify the overriding importance of the childhood period for socialization. Much of the personality make-up of individuals is forged at this period in life. Socialization at this stage of life is a landmark; without it, we would cease to become social beings. The human infant who is a biological being or organism is changed into a social being mainly at this early stage. Hence, children should be appropriately socialized from birth up to particularly five years of age, because this period is basic and crucial one. A child who does not get appropriate socialization at this stage will most likely be deficient in his/her social, moral, intellectual and personality development. Some grew up developing anti-social attitudes, aspirations and practices.

### Secondary or Adult Socialization

While socialization is an overbidding issue for children and adolescents, it is a never-ending process that continues throughout life. Secondary or adult socialization is necessitated when individual take up new roles, reorienting themselves according to their changes social statuses and roles, as in starting marital life. The socialization process at this stage may sometimes be intense. For example, fresh college graduates entering the world of work to start their first jobs, there are quite many new roles to be mastered.

Intense adult socialization may also occur among immigrants. When they go to other countries, they may need to learn the language, values, norms, and a host of other custom and folkways, coupled with experiencing economic hardships may prove to be truly stressful and most challenging. Although it may be fairly stated that childhood socialization experiences what kind of people we become, the challenges of socialization thus continues in late adolescent and adult stages. This happens to be so particularly in the context of fast changing world in complex societies.

### **Re-socialization and De-socialization**

In the lives of individuals, as they pass through different stages and life experiences, there is the need for re-socialization and de-socialization. Re-socialization means the adoption by adults of radically different norms and life ways that are more or less completely dissimilar to the previous norms and values. Re-socialization signifies the rapid and more basic changes in the adult life. The change may demand abandonment of one life way with a new one, which is completely different from, and also incompatible with, the former.

This quite so often happens as adult life in modern societies demands sharp transitions and changes.

De-socialization typically precedes re-socialization. De-socialization refers to stripping individuals of their former life styles, beliefs, values and attitudes so that they may take up other partially or totally new life styles, attitudes and values. The individuals have to abandon their former values and take up new ones in order to become part of the new social group.

De-socialization and re-socialization often take place in what is called **total institutions**, which are an all encompassing and often isolated from the community.

They demand a thorough de-socialization of the new entrants before they assume full-fledged membership.

Total institutions include: mental hospitals, prisons, religious denominations and some other political groups, and military units. In each case, persons joining the new setting have first to be de-socialized, before they are re-socialized.

Re-socialization may also mean socializing individuals again into their former values and norms, after they rejoin their former ways of life, spending a relatively longer period of time in total institutions. This is because they might have forgotten most of the basic values and skills of the former group or society. This kind of re-socialization may also be regarded as reintegration, helping the ex-community members renew their memories of their former life ways, skills, knowledge, etc.

### **Anticipatory Socialization**

Anticipatory socialization refers to the process of adjustment and adaptation in which individuals try to learn and internalize the roles, values, attitudes and skills of a social status or occupation for which they are likely recruits in the future. They do this in anticipating the actual forthcoming socialization. It involves a kind of rehearsal and preparations in advance to have a feel of what the new role would look like. However, anticipatory socialization may not be adequate when the nature and scope of life transition is complex. It may be difficult to fully anticipate what will happen.

## **Reverse Socialization**

Reverse socialization refers to the process of socialization whereby the dominant socializing persons, such as parents, happen to be in need of being socialized themselves by those whom they socialize, such as children. This idea seems to be associated with the fact that socialization is a two-way process. It involves the influences and pressures from the socializers that directly or indirectly induce change the attitudes and behaviors of the socializers themselves.

In reverse socialization, children, for example, may happen to socialize their parents in some roles, skills, and attitudes which the latter lack.

## **Agents and Components of Socialization**

The following are agents of socialisation:

Family

Peer and own preferences

Television and Mass Media

Schools

### **Family**

This is one of the agents of socialization. Parents are the most important socializing agents for the child at the very early stages of his development. Parents and the child's siblings form the only significant group on whom the child depends physically and psychologically. In reality, parents and siblings of the child under socialization are usually referred to as significant others, on whom the child can observe, imitate and identify with. In actual fact, the value, attitudes, the norms, folks ways and beliefs of a society are learned by the child from his interaction with his parents and siblings.

### **Peer and Own Preferences**

This is another important agent of socialization for a child. As the child matures, he begins to interact with his friends (i.e. friends in the neighbourhood, church/mosque and other important places). The child begins to learn new things which he might not have learnt from his parents and siblings. A lot of things (good or bad) are learned from these interactions. Can you remember what your peer group taught you while you were maturing from childhood to adulthood? Just have a flashback; you will definitely remember what you were taught by your peer group members.

### **Television and Mass Media**

It is a fact that television and other mass media such as radio, print advertisement, films, etc. do go a long way to socialize children. As a matter of fact, the increasing industrialization and urbanisation have greatly influenced the impact of television and mass media on child's socialization; for example, in Uganda today, newspaper, magazines and other printed materials have increased tremendously just as radio and television have. These have become important media through which certain types of socialization take place.



## Schools

As the child grows older and mature, then the family role alone becomes inadequate for the socialisation of the individual. Therefore, it becomes more and more necessary for professionally trained personnel (such as teachers) to be involved in the socialisation process of the individuals.

The role of schools in the socialisation process is now becoming more and more prominent and recognised. As you can observe these days in Uganda, children are sent to school much earlier, particularly with the introduction of day care centres where children, even six weeks old are sent while their mothers are at work. Not only this, nowadays in Uganda, there are improved educational opportunities opened to individuals for adequate training.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain the agents of socialisation.

### TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What do you understand by the term "Socialisation"?
2. What are the agents of Socialisation?

*Agents of socialization are the different groups of people and institutional arrangements which are responsible for training new members of society. Some of them could be formal, while others are informal. They help individual members get into the overall activities of their society.*

*There are three components to socialization process.*

*There is the socializee who could be either a newborn child, a recruit to the army or the police force or a freshman in a college or an intern in medical service.*

*Then again there are the socializers who may be parents, peer groups, community members, teachers or church members. Both the socializee and the socializer interact with one another not in a vacuum but in a social environment which plays an important role in the socialization process. These different socializing environments are called socialization settings. The most socializing agencies are the family, peer relationships, schools, neighborhoods (the community), the mass media, etc.*

*The institution of family is generally regarded as the most important agent of socialization. In the process of socialization, the most important contacts are between a child and his/her parents and siblings. The contacts could also be between the child and surrogate parents when actual parents are not available. Besides the child's parents, there are other agents of socialization (in modern societies) such as day-care-centers, nurseries and kindergarten, as well as primary and secondary schools and universities. It seems that these various agents of socialization have partially taken over the function of the parents, particularly in modern societies, where women are increasingly leaving their traditional home-based responsibilities by engaging in employment outside home. The school represents a formal and conscious effort by a society to socialize its young.*

*Other than parents and schools, peer groups play very significant roles in the socialization process. Sometimes, the influence of the peer groups be it negative or positive, can be as powerful as that of parents. The peer group may transmit prevailing societal values or develop new and distinct cultures of its own with peculiar values.*

*The mass media such as television, radio, movies, videos, tapes, books, magazines and newspapers are also important agents of socialization. The most crucial effect on children comes from television, as studies show. The effects are both negative and positive.*

*Negative impact seem to be greater that parents and other concerned bodies worry about the way television is socializing children. For example, studies show that watching violence on television can encourage aggressive behavior in children*

### **Multiple and Contradictory Influences of Socialization**

So far, the picture of socialization presented may seem to be biased towards the structural functionalist view of society and socialization. Hence, it would be useful to add few ideas that may help balance the picture. In a critical conceptualization of socialization, the contradictory and ambiguous sources and influences of socialization need to be highlighted.

If we take a good example interesting for health science students, it would be important in this regard. A case in point could be alcohol and tobacco consumption. Evidences show that the consumption of tobacco and alcohol is rapidly increasing in the Third world. There are underlying and contradictory processes of socialization behind this phenomenon. The conflicting influences arise when on the one hand, families, schools, and medical institutions warn youngsters not to consume these products; and on the other hand, the global companies producing these products are powerfully waging the war of getting the products to the youth, through the lure of television advertisement.

This example shows us that often conflicting, competing messages pass from the various sources of socialization. The various agents of socialization are also not accorded balanced share of power, control and domination. The international companies, who forcefully promote the culture of consumerism thorough the aid of the powerful global media, tend to play dominating roles in influencing the attitudes and lifestyles of youngsters (*Personal communications. Dr Teketel Abebe, Addis Ababa University, Department of Sociology and Anthropology*)

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

1. Define the term "socialization".
2. Why are humans biologically capable of socialization?
3. Mention and discuss the goals of socialization.
4. Discuss the mechanism by which social learning in humans takes place.
5. Compare and contrast the two modes of socialization.
6. Mention and discuss the major and minor types of socialization.
7. "A greater proportion of an individual's personality is a reflection of the type of socialization process he or she has gone through during primary socialization." Explain.
8. "Without socialization a person is a mere biological being." Discuss.
9. Identify the aspects of your personality which you regard as the results of parent socialization, peer influxes and the mass media.
10. Discuss the negative and positive effects of television as agent of socialization in your life.

## **SOCIAL PATTERNS**

### **FAMILY**

Many Sociologists have regarded the family as the cornerstone of society. It forms the basic unit of social organisation and it is difficult to imagine how human society could function without it. Although the composition of the family varies -for example, in many societies two or more wives are regarded as the ideal arrangement -such differences can be seen as variations on a basic theme. In general, therefore, the family has been seen as a universal social institution, an inevitable part of human society. On balance, it has been regarded as a good thing, both for the individual and society as a whole.

For some time, it has been thought natural and normal for households to be based around families.

#### **Definition of Family**

In a study entitled social structure, George Peter Murdock examined the institution of the family in a wide range of societies. Murdock (1949) took a sample of 250 societies ranging from small hunting and gathering bands to large -scale industrial societies. He claimed that some form of family existed in every society and concluded, on the evidence of this sample, that the family is universal.

Murdock (1949) defines the family as follows:

The family is a social group characterised by common residence, economic co-operation and reproduction. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship, and one or more children, own or adopted, of the sexually cohabiting adults.

Thus the family lives together, pools its resources and works together, and produces offspring. At least, two of the adult members conduct a sexual relationship according to the norms of their particular society. Such norms vary from society to society. For example, among the Banaro of New Guinea, the husband does not have sexual relations with his wife until she has born a child by a friend of his father. The parent-child relationship, therefore, is not necessarily a biological one. Its importance is primarily social, children being recognised as members of a particular family whether or not the adult spouses have biologically produced them.

### **TYPES OF FAMILY**

#### **Nuclear Family**

The concept of family refers to different levels of social organisation in different cultures. For example, in Euro-American societies, a family consists of a man, his wife, and children. This type of family is called the nuclear family. It is also known as the *Elementary family*. There is also the *conjugal family* or the family of procreation where one is a father or mother, or husband or wife. In these societies (i.e. Euro-American societies) the father's or mother's natal family (sometimes referred to as family of orientation) that is, the family where a man or woman was born, is regarded

as a different family. The nuclear family appears to be as a result of industrialization and modern development. In Nigeria, today, this type of family is now a common practice.

### **Extended Family**

This is a type of family that has been in existence for a number of years for now. An extended family consists of two or more nuclear families. For example, a man's family (conjugal family) is joined to his father's family through him to form one extended family. Hence, a man and his wife and children together with his father and mother and their other children (if any) form one extended family.

### **Polygamous Family**

This is a type of family practice where a man is married to more than one wife. In this type of family, a man may be married to two, three, four or even more than that. This is a type of practice that has been in existence for a very long time and it is still seen among us today, particularly among the rich people, kings, etc.

### **Monogamous Family**

This type of family is referred to as one man one wife, that is, a man is said to have only one wife as a legal wife and no other one. These days in Nigeria, monogamous family practice is a common sight everywhere. Majority of men prefer to be involved in this than polygamous family.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT**

1. Differentiate between nuclear and extended family.
2. What do you understand by conjugal family?
3. Explain the terms 'Monogamous family' and 'Polygamous family'.

### **ACTIVITIES IN FAMILY**

Every member of a family has some functions to perform in maintaining the unit. The father is seen as the leader who directs the affairs of the unit, but usually takes vital decisions after consultation with the wife and children. It is the role of the father to ensure that the family is protected from danger; the father ensures that the physical well-being of his family is assured and maintained. The physical well-being has to do with food, clothes and shelter. He is not only the provider of all these, he also ensures that he provides and maintains moral and philosophical training of the children.

Apart from the father, the mother also is involved in some vital activities. It is the woman who performs the role of a house-wife and sexual consort and bears and suckles children. She sees to the daily feeding of the family members.

In this line, the children are made to observe the division of labour within the family and of the mutual role dependence and they also contribute whatever they can in order to see to the daily maintenance of the family.

As seen from above, the activities in the family has been to regard men as superior to his wife. This can easily be observed in many African societies where a man expects respects and obedience from his wife and children.

### ***SELF-ASSESSMENT***

1. Explain the activities in a family.

### **FUNCTIONS OF THE FAMILY**

George Peter Murdock gives the universal functions of the family as stated below:

#### **1. Functions for Society**

From his analysis of 250 societies, Murdock argues that the family performs four basic functions in all societies, which he terms the sexual, reproductive, economic and educational.

They are essential for social life since without the sexual and reproductive functions there would be no members of society, without the economic function (for example, the provision and preparation of food), life would cease, and without education (a term Murdock uses for socialisation) there would be no culture. Human society without culture could not function.

Clearly, the family does not perform these functions exclusively. However, it makes important contributions to them all and no other institution has yet been devised to match its efficiency in this respect.

#### **2. Functions for Individuals and Society**

The family's functions for society are inseparable from its functions for its individual members. It serves both at one and the same time and in much the same way. The sexual function provides a good example of this. Husband and wife have the right of sexual access to each other and in most societies there are rules forbidden or limiting sexual activities outside marriage. This provides sexual gratification for the spouses. It also strengthens the family since the powerful and often binding emotions which accompany sexual activities limit husband and wife.

The sexual function also helps to stabilize society. The rules which largely contain sexual activity within the family preventing the probable disruptive effects on the social order that would result if the sex drive were allowed "free play". The family thus provides both control and expression of sexual drives and in doing so perform important functions not only for its individual members, but also for the family as an institution and for society as a whole.

### ***SELF-ASSESSMENT***

1. What do you understand by the term "family"? Explain activities in family.
2. Explain the functions of family.



## ***TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT***

1. Analyse the role of journalism in promoting family welfare.
2. Discuss the challenges of family institutions.
3. Explain the meaning of family and its role to the society.

## **MARRIAGE**

### **Meaning of Marriage**

Marriage is traditionally conceived to be legally recognised relationship, between an adult male and female, that carries certain rights and obligations. However, in contemporary societies, marriage is sometimes interpreted more liberally, and the phrase 'living as married' indicates that for many purposes it makes no sense to exclude cohabitation. It should be noted, however, that even this more liberal definition usually excludes homosexual couples. Although cohabitation is increasingly accepted, and is now the normal prelude to marriage.

### ***SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE***

Describe your understanding of marriage.

### **Types of Marriage**

There are two basic types of marriage, so far as numbers are concerned: Monogamy and Polygamy. Monogamous norms restrict the individual to one spouse at a time. Polygamous norms permit plural marriage and take the form either of polygamy (one husband and two or more wives) or of polyandry (one wife and two or more husbands). There is a fourth type of marriage, usually called "group marriage" in which there are both plural wives and husbands in the marital unit. The last form is rare, and in all known cases the marital rights of one pair in the group takes precedence over others. Monogamy is permitted in all societies, although polygamy is the preferred form in most societies.

These different kinds of marital arrangements frequently may be interpreted in terms of conditions outside the marriage structure itself.

Polygamy is often associated with a shortage of men, although this is not necessarily the case; multiple wives are sometimes a form of conspicuous consumption -a sign of affluence. Because of warfare and the more hazardous occupational pursuits of males, primitive societies often have a predominance of females. This, however, does not place the male in the enviable position that some of you (males) students might assume.

### ***SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE***

Describe the major types of marriage.

## ***TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT***

1. What do you understand by the term "Marriage"?
2. State and explain two major types of marriage.

# SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

## Introduction

Stratification is a very general term referring to a hierarchy of inequality. Traditionally, the term has been applied mostly to societal rather than to other types of social systems. There has been disagreement among analysis in the stratification sense; there is general agreement that it involves "economic", prestige, and power differences or some combination of them.

## Definition

Social stratification is one of the outcomes of the continuous occurring of social processes. Every society is segmented in to different hierarchies. In virtually all societies, some people are regarded as more important than others (more worthy of respect than others), either within the society as a whole or in a certain situations.

Social stratification is the segmentation of society into different hierarchical arrangement or strata. It refers to the differences and inequalities in the socioeconomic life of people in a given society. It represents the ranking of individuals or social positions and statuses in the social structure. The term is borrowed from geology where it is used to explain the hierarchical arrangement of rocks and mineral in the earth's surface. When applied to the world of people, it refers to hierarchical arrangement of people into different classes or *strata* which is the division of a population into two or more layers, each of which is relatively homogenous, between which there are differences in privileges, restrictions, rewards and obligations (Macionis, 1997; Henslin and Nelson, 1995; Calhoun *et al* 1994).

All in all, Social stratification is defined as the unequal distribution of attributes, qualities, or possessions among members of a society that at usually regarded within that society as desirable and valuable.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

The study of social stratification is particularly important for sociologists. Some of the reasons for this may include (Giddens, 1995):

1. To investigate the class membership of individuals in society with the aim of understanding the type of life people live. That is, knowing what type of life individuals in a given social group or stratum live is very important for sociological analysis.
2. To explore the bases for the assignment of individuals into various hierarchies of the social structure. What are the bases for stratifying individuals into a specific stratum?
3. To understand the relationship between individuals assigned into different hierarchies. What kind of interaction and relationship exist between individuals located into different strata?

4. To investigate the relationship between individuals or groups belonging to the same hierarchy. What kinds of relationship exist between people in the same stratum?
5. To understand what type of social system gives rise to what or which types of hierarchies. That is, the type of social stratification varies across cultures, times and types of social systems.

## **THEORIES OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION**

There are various theories of social stratification concerning its importance, origin and value, of which two important theories are the following.

### **1. The functionalist theory of social stratification**

According to the proponents of the functionalist theory, segments or hierarchies and social inequalities exist in all societies. Moreover, their main argument is that social stratification is functional and purposeful and also essential in any society. They contend that no society is classless or unstratified, and social stratification is universally necessary. Social stratification in short is universal, functional, inevitable, and beneficial and something, which can't be avoided.

### **2. The conflict theory of social stratification**

The proponents of the conflict theory of social stratification also accept the fact that social inequality exists in every society. But they do not believe that social stratification is functional. According to conflict theorists, it is the way of oppressing one group of people by another (Calhoun *et al.*, 1994).

### **3. Symbolic Interactionism**

Symbolic interactionism is a theory that uses everyday interactions of individuals to explain society as a whole. Symbolic interactionism examines stratification from a micro-level perspective. This analysis strives to explain how people's social standing affects their everyday interactions.

In most communities, people interact primarily with others who share the same social standing. It is precisely because of social stratification that people tend to live, work, and associate with others like themselves, people who share their same income level, educational background, or racial background, and even tastes in food, music, and clothing. The built-in system of social stratification groups people together.

Symbolic interactionists also note that people's appearance reflects their perceived social standing. Housing, clothing, and transportation indicate social status, as do hairstyles, taste in accessories, and personal style.

## **STRATIFICATION DIMENSION**

Now, that you have been exposed to what is meant by stratification, and then there is need to discuss the pattern of stratification within a society. In reality, social scientists make use of three dimensions, namely: (i) Class (ii) Status (iii) Power

**Class:** This refers to the relative amount of money, wealth and other economic goods that a person or social group possesses. .

**Status:** This refers to the relative degree of prestige and privilege that a person or social group can successfully claim from other members of the society.

**Power:** This refers to the ability of ensuring compliance among members of a group.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT**

1. Explain the three dimensions of stratification that social scientists use.

### **FORMS OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION or BASIS ON WHICH PEOPLE ARE STRATIFIED**

Practically, some factors have been considered important for stratification to work effectively. These factors include:

#### **1. Social Class**

Social classes are groups of people who are stratified into different categories. In a more general sense, social class can be defined as a category or level of people found in similar positions in the social hierarchy. The criteria or the bases for dividing people in a given society into different social classes may include wealth, occupation, education, sex, family background, religion, income, among others. The societies in modern world have been divided usually into three; low class, middle class and upper class. Each of these three classes is usually divided into sub-classes.

Social class is often characterized as an open and flexible system. Thus, we have societies, which can be characterized as open system, as opposed to societies having closed system. This form of social class is common in industrialized, modern, heterogeneous and literate societies. Such system generally works in most contemporary societies of the world (Stockard, 1997).

#### **2. Caste**

Another well-known form of social stratification is the caste system. The system is based on religious and other strongly rooted traditional belief that cannot be changed or are very difficult to change. This is the form of social stratification whereby classification of people into different strata is made on the basis of usually religious and other very strong conventions/ traditions that are difficult to change. Some of the features of caste system include:

- It is a very rigid and closed system.
- People belonging to the same stratum practice endogamy.
- Intermarriage between strata is not permitted.
- There are occupational differences between strata; i.e., each stratum is usually assigned a particular type of occupation.

- Food sharing, social drinking, friendships, etc., are permitted only within a stratum, not between strata. This form of social stratification characterizes most traditional, agricultural societies. However, the best example of caste is the Hindu caste system of India. This has existed for some 3000 years and was only officially nullified in 1947. Hindu caste system divides the society into five major strata. These are Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Sudras and Haryans (Indrani, 1998)
3. **Power** (e.g. political, military or economic power)
  4. **Income** (amount, type of and sources)
  5. **Authority.**
  6. **Ethnic status, religion, and race**
  7. **Education, learning and wisdom.**
  8. **Ownership of property,**
  9. **Occupation or skill, and achievement in it, etc.**

### ***SELF-ASSESSMENT***

1. Describe the basis on which people are stratified.

### ***TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT***

1. What do you understand by social stratification?
2. a. Describe what you understand by stratification dimension.  
b. Describe what you understand by bases on which people are stratified.

## **SOCIAL MOBILITY**

### **Definitions of Social Mobility**

The movement -usually of individuals but sometimes of whole groups-between different positions within the system of social stratification in any society, is referred to as social mobility. It is conventional to distinguish upward and downward mobility (that is, movement up or down a hierarchy of privilege), and inter-generational from intra generational or career mobility (the former referring to mobility between a family of origin and one's own class or status position, the latter to the mobility experienced during an individual career, such as respondent's first job compared to his or her present job).

In a nutshell, social mobility is further referred to as the movement up or down within the stratification system.



## **Types of Social Mobility**

In sociology, the following types of social mobility have been identified: individual mobility, group mobility, career mobility, generational mobility, vertical mobility, horizontal mobility

### **Individual Mobility**

This refers to the movement of individuals from one social class to another. In this case, an individual may move easily as a result of his/her educational attainment or economic strength from one social position to another. This is a common type of mobility which takes its measurement by comparing an individual's present position to the social class into which he was born and grew up. Most people from poor family backgrounds but who later became known in the society just as a result of their economic wealth or educational opportunities could be said to be an example of individual mobility.

### **Group Mobility**

This has to do with the movement of a group of individuals from one social status to another, usually from a lower one to a higher one. The group upward movement may reflect hard work on the part of the group members or luck.

### **Career Mobility**

This entails the changes in the social status of an individual. These changes could be largely due to education, mother dominance, number of siblings, etc. The changes being mentioned here are what an individual experiences in his life time i.e. his or her achievements.

### **Generational Mobility**

This relates to any change in status that occurs between a child and a parent. There is every possibility for a child to rise above the status into which he or she was born; so when this happens, then it is referred to as generational mobility.

### **Vertical Mobility**

This refers to movement either upward or downwards across various strata. For example, in, one's place of work, one could be promoted (i.e. upward mobility). On the other hand, another individual in another place of work could be demoted (i.e. downward mobility) due to certain offence he or she has committed in the organisation.

### **Horizontal Mobility**

This refers to movement on the same status. For example, a bank manager in Ibadan can be taken to Lagos branch of the bank to be the new bank Manager. This is obviously horizontal mobility because the affected individual still maintains the status.

## **Inter-generational Social Mobility**

This type of social mobility involves the movement up or down, between the social class of one or two generations of a family, or a social group. In this mobility, our focus of attention is a social group, like the family. Here we look at change in the status position of the family over two or more generations, i.e., the social position of the grandfather, the father and the son.

If a child, for example, whose father was an upper class person as a result of his wealth, becomes only a laborer in his own time, then he has experienced a downward intergenerational social mobility.

## **Intra-generational mobility**

This concerns individual changes in positions during one's lifetime. It may also refer to the change that occurs in social groups or a country's socioeconomic position over a specified period of time. In other words, through achievement or other means one can move up from being a poor primary school teacher to a high court judge. Unlike the Inter-generational social mobility, intra-generational social mobility is within one generation.

But like inter-generational social mobility, it may be an upward or downward social mobility. Unlike the intergenerational social mobility, our focus here is on a specific individual or group. Here, we observe change in the social position of an individual or a group over the life cycle of the individual himself or the group either upward or in some cases downward. For example, a person in his/her lifetime may rise up from a lower position such as shoe shining, and climb up the social ladder until he or she becomes a member of privileged social and economic position. Or, others may happen to lose their once prestigious socio-economic position and as a result move down until they end up in destitution.

## **Avenues of Social Mobility**

The avenues of social mobility are the doors through which a person moves upward in the social hierarchy.

The major avenue to social mobility in most modern societies is access to appropriate modern education.

Change of profession/ occupation and geographical mobility are also avenues. There are also some sudden or short cut avenues to social mobility. These include windfall gains in terms of inheritance, gambling, theft or financial corruption, winning a lottery game, etc. Such mobility is rare, bearing in mind that most inheritance is within the same social group.

The opportunities for upward social mobility are great in modern societies which have open systems. In such societies, there is freedom of vertical social mobility, and any member of a society may move up or down the social hierarchy. There are no legal and/or traditional restrictions that are put on social mobility on either direction. What count a lot are personal merits, competitions and efforts for achievement. On the other hand, in societies with closed system vertical, especially upward, is very difficult. In such societies, individuals born to a certain social position remain within that category for their lifetime. The most important determinants here are not individual's achievements, merits or personal effort, but what counts most are one's ancestry,

racial background, family background, religion, sex, ethnicity, etc. (Henslin and Nelson, 1995)

### **Barriers to Upward Social Mobility**

These are factors that make it difficult to individual families or groups to move from one status position to another. Such barriers may include various social, psychological, cultural, economic, political and other related factors. Lack of opportunity, motivation, commitment, interest, or positive attitude, etc., is very crucial psychosocial factors. Other most important barriers may include one's own physical condition, lack of access to an appropriate modern education; inequality in the distribution of inherited wealth; one's color or ethnic origin, religion, etc. These are the most obvious barriers to social mobility.

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

- i. What do you understand by social mobility?
- ii. State the various types of social mobility.

#### *TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT*

1. What do you understand by social mobility?
2. State and explain five (5) types of social mobility.

### **CONSEQUENCES OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION ON THE LIVES OF INDIVIDUALS**

Social stratification has crucial implications for the health and well-being of people. Social stratification is directly related to the issue of inequality, power imbalance etc, and these directly or indirectly influences the life chances of individuals in the social strata. Health status of individuals is among one of these life chances which can be significantly affected by one's location in the stratification system.

The different stratification systems on the basis of age, sex, gender, ethnicity, religion, occupation, etc, directly or indirectly promote unequal chances of living standards.

The key concepts in the relation between health and social stratification are the concepts of vulnerability, risk and hazard.

**Vulnerability** is a sociological concept which refers to the “characteristics of individuals and social groups [along the lines of gender, age, ethnicity, occupation etc;] that determine [their capacity] to protect themselves, withstand and recover from disasters, including health hazards based on their access to material and non-material resources” (Personal communication: Dr Teketel Abebe, Department of Sociology and Social Administration, Addis Ababa University).

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

1. What is social stratification?
2. (a) How is social stratification created?

- (b) What is the necessity of social stratification in society?
3. Discuss the different forms of social stratification.
  4. What is the effect of caste as a social stratification on the living standards of individuals and social groups? Do you think that there are diseases individuals suffer from that are the results of social stratification? If yes mention and discuss some of them.

### ***TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT***

1. Describe the determinants and benefits of social stratification.
2. Analyse the role of journalism in harmonizing social stratification.

## **CONFORMITY**

### **What is Conformity?**

Conformity is defined as behaviour which follows the established norms of a group or society. People do not always conform to social norms because they accept the values that underlie them. They may behave in the approved ways simply because it is expedient to do so, or because of sanctions. No society can be divided up in a simple way between those who deviate from norms and those who conform to them. Most of us on some occasions transgress generally accepted rules of behaviour.

### **Why do People Conform?**

Research suggests three influential factors. First, people are motivated to be correct and norms provide information about what is right and wrong.

Second, people are motivated to be liked by other members of the group.

Finally, norms guide the dispensations of social reinforcement and punishment. With this, you should note that from childhood on, people in many cultures learn that going along with group norms is good and earns rewards. People also learn that breaking a norm may bring punishments ranging from scoldings for small violations to imprisonment for non-conformity with norms that have been translated into laws.

### ***SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE***

What factors influence people's level of conformity?

### **When do People Conform?**

The following are factors that influence conformity: Ambiguity of the Situation: This is one of the factors that encourage conformity. As the physical reality of a situation becomes less clear, people rely more and more on others' opinions, and conformity to a group norm becomes more likely.

Unanimity and Size of the Majority: In actual fact, people experience great pressure to conform as long as the majority is unanimous. Conformity also depends on the size of the group.

The larger the group, the more conformity members experience.

**Personal Characteristics:** This is another factor that influences when people conform. In nearly any situation, some people will conform more than others. One major determinant of conformity is familiarity with the task; social status is another. Research suggests that people who are unfamiliar with a situation or have relatively low status in a group are the ones most likely to conform. Attraction to a group also influences conformity. People are more likely to conform when they like the members of a group than where there is no title or no attraction. It should be noted here that attraction may increase conformity because people tend to trust the judgment of those they like or because they want the approval of people to whom they are attracted.

Another personal characteristic that may shape conformity is the degree to which people are concerned with being liked or with being correct.

People who are preoccupied with being liked are likely to conform particularly when they are also attracted to the others in the group. In contrast, people who are preoccupied with being right are likely to conform, no matter how much or how little they are attracted to others in the group.

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

Explain when people conform, citing examples peculiar to yourself?

### *TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT*

1. What do you understand by "Conformity"?
- 2 (a). Why do you think people conform?  
(b). When do you think people conform?

## **DEVIANCE**

### Definition of Deviance

Deviance is defined thus:

- (a) Behaviour that violates important norms of the group (or society);
- (b) the behaviour must occur frequently, e.g., if I show up at work once a year or only once drunk, chances are no one will call that deviant, but if I show up in that condition everyday, then it is deviant;
- (c) the rule violated must be important e.g., If I wear jeans to class all of the time, that will not be enough to label me serious deviant, eccentric perhaps, but not deviant. However, if I persist in propositioning students in the class in an examination period for favours of various kinds, that rule is considered important and I am likely to be labeled as deviant for this activity. It is also likely to cost me my position at this institution.
- (d) the seriousness of the deviance: The deviance is considered serious if the rule being violated is important. Important rules are those that often govern acts and activities that are seen as threatening to the group. You have to keep in mind that this kind of thing is relative (what is considered as serious and threatening to the group depends entirely on the group in question). Think of examples where acts arouse a great response, but you do not see them as being that serious. Then consider the response from the group and how that response relates to the integrity of the group. Often you will find something very important to the group being threatened. Abortion, for example, threatens the sanctity of life for some group, for others it threatens the integrity of the family by permitting women to engage in sexual activity



outside the bounds of matrimony. Since life and the family are seen as very, very important by these groups, abortion is seen as a threat to the group, and therefore, must be abolished so the sanctity of the group may be maintained.

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

From your own understanding, what is deviance?

### **Perspectives on Deviance**

In this section, the perspectives on deviance will be examined. Four (4) major perspectives on deviance will be explained for your understanding:

Biological, Individual, Psychological

(a) Lombroso discusses two things that are of importance here.

First, this is an early attempt to explain "criminal behaviour's through physical characteristics. I would think that Lombroso was motivated by a sincere desire to be able to identify criminal behaviour and once identified to eliminate it.

Second, the manner in which this was shown to be in-correct. This is very important since we draw conclusions of the kind made by Lombroso even today (that is we assume that because two things occur together in one kind of group, they must therefore be linked).

(b) Genetic Based Violence, e.g., XYZ chromosomal difference.

(i) Personal Space and Violent Behaviour: Personal space is the area around us that we consider to be an extension of our body or selves. The size of this bubble is culturally defined. Americans and Northern Europeans like a distance of 18" to 2", Mediterranean and Arabic people tolerate a much small space, often on the order of 15" or less. They like to be able to feel the breadth and to smell the other person.

(ii) There is some suggestion that the size of the personal bubble each of us carries with us is related to violent behaviour, researchers have noted that violent prisoners often have a need for a larger personal bubble than most of us, they react violently when that bubble is unexpectedly violated. The violent behaviour in this case is attributed to the size of personal space, an individual social psychological characteristic.

(iii) Alcoholism: This is seen to be partially, perhaps entirely genetically based.

(iv) Personality Based Theories of Deviance: This relates to weak self-esteem, inability to control temper, rage. Another relates to too much self-control, holds in, then explosion.

### **Social Perspective**

(a) Differential Association

Differential association defines the cause of deviant or delinquent behaviour in the pattern of associations that we have. We are deviant or delinquent because we associate with people who are deviant or delinquent. Your parents (or you as a parent) are aware of this potential whenever you make a point of the kinds of children your children play with or go out with.

Note that much of our prison system is based in part on this set of ideas that one learns from association with criminals.

The key point is that the young person becomes deviant through association with others, learning from them. Some researchers suggest that children become involved in deviant acts because others reject them, not that they associate with delinquents.

#### (b) Sub-cultural

The deviant groups exist within the community, youths are attracted to them. As a matter of fact, this is not a full deviance theory since it does not address how such subcultures come into existence in the first place. It is useful in general discussion of delinquency and deviance when people are drawn into such groups or 'subcultures'.

#### (c) Deviant Attachments

This comes close to helping to explain how deviance comes about, but suffers from the same flaw of the above; it does not address the issue of how the groups to which they become attached came into existence in the first place. Gangs come to have a prominent place in the discussion as they are often seen as meeting needs that some young people have and are not being met in the home. The gang forms to provide this kind of support, identity and attachment. Once formed, the bonds can be quite strong.

### **Labeling Perspective**

Labeling occurs in response to the commission of deviant acts and is influential in how those acts and the actors are seen by others. Labeling occurs in a series of steps, outlined below:

- (a) The first time we commit a deviant act that is primary deviance.
- (b) If we are identified with the deviant act, then others may come to expect us to commit further acts of this kind (even if we did not do so in the first place).
- (c) When we do respond to this expectation with a deviant act. The act we commit is called secondary deviance. That is, the act is a response to be called a deviant, even if we were not to that point.
- (d) *For example, suppose that a boy or a girl samples a drug. The parents, school authorities find out and are constantly watching the kid. The kid does not want to use drugs again, but everyone seems to believe that they are junkies; no one believes they are clean. Finally, the kid says to hell with it, if they think I am then I may as well go ahead and do it. THIS IS SECONDARY DEVIANCE.*
- (e) Labeling is the process of labeling someone as deviant, criminal, or whatever the acts that follow from the secondary deviance. Note that this is a social process involving both the deviant and the group or persons doing the labeling.

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

Consider why you conform to the rules of the society?

### **Social Control Perspective**

Rather than ask why people are deviant, we turn the question around and ask why do people conform? As we look about us, we find that most people conform to the rules most of the time. Few of us are 'deviant' or criminal. If we did not conform there would have to be a policeman to watch each and everyone of us, everyone would be a policeman watching everyone else. In such circumstances, there is a low level of trust

and the sense of community disappears. There are better ways of maintaining order and conformity. Efficient control is maintained when each of us is *our* own policeman. There are a number of social factors that contribute to this conformity and social control. Most notable among these are the internal controls of conscience and *our* attachments to groups. Direct and indirect external controls also exist.

(1) Conscience -your own internal policeman: Each of us has been carefully taught by *our* parents and by others to understand and to obey the rules. We have been instilled with a conscience that makes us feel guilty whenever we violate the rules. *For* example, I grew up in a rural area and was taught that it was wasteful to drop picked fruits and vegetables. I still wince whenever a piece of fruit gets away from me and drops to the ground or into the mud. This is a *form* of conscience. It is this internal 'policeman' that keeps us from driving through a red light very early in the morning when there is no traffic warden anywhere to be seen.

Notice that kind of control is very, very efficient, it is always with us and means that we always conform to the norms, rules and expectations of *our* community.

(2) Attachments -the 'baggage' we pick up, e.g. jobs, wives, kids, friends and so: These attachments provide us with a lot to lose.

These are a variation on the attachments discussed above (those often related to the links that provide us with emotional support and worth). The 'attachments' in this sense are more the accumulated wealth and position we have in the community. One way to assess the kind of attachment is to look at a small businessman, who provides a service to the community in contrast to a similar individual who earns his living from a large corporation. The businessman has many, many links and connections to the community that are necessary *for* his survival and continued well-being. The corporate employee has no link to the local community (other than friends and perhaps family). The result is that the employee may not worry about cheating people in the community or actually stealing from them. He could move easily within the corporation and be gone. In this same thread note that as we grow older, we collect things that link us to the community and that make it more difficult to cheat, lie and steal in the community because we have so much more to lose. The young person who is just starting out has little in the way of things or reputation to risk, so can try many different kinds of things, including those that are illegal or deviant.

(3) Note that most deviance occurs among those in their late teens and twenties, people with few attachments. In the effort to keep young people in school, the emphasis is on extracurricular activities, where you develop attachments to people in the activities and to the school. The more of these activities, and the more the attachments, the less likely the students is to drop out.

(a) Direct, External Controls

These are the forces that can be brought to bear upon us. The state monopolises the legitimate use of force to control the population. Such force works so long as it is seen as being legitimate and not excessive. However, as soon as groups begin to see the application of force as illegal or excessive, then the effectiveness of these controls is greatly lessened and armed conflict will break out. Several examples of the use of excessive or perceived illegal force come to mind.

### (b) Indirect, External Controls

It is a fact to note that rewards and punishments are associated with work. People are often held under control by the threat of the loss of a job or loss of pay in that job. These become very powerful deterrents to those who might otherwise consider challenging authority. Consider your own position in the university as a student. If you want a degree, you must play by the rules, whether you like them or not. Those indirect, external controls become increasingly effective as we mature and gain more position within the society. Such controls often rest upon our fear of loss of income, position, or other material objects that we have accumulated.

### *TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT*

1. Explain the concept "Deviance"
2. State and explain the perspective on deviance.

## **POWER**

### **Definition of Power**

Power has been seen as the ability to ensure compliance despite resistance from the individual involved. It is the ability to compel or influence others to do what they would otherwise not do. A person who has power can impose his will on others. He can do this by the use of threat of punishment if they disobey him. Power is exercised in all human relationship. For example, teachers have power over their students. Also, parents have power over their children.

Power is a key aspect of any managerial post, and springs from a variety of sources. Legge (1973) describes power as "(the) capability of exercising influence over the attitudes and/or behaviour of other individuals or group". This is a useful definition since it emphasises the capability of exercising influence. In other words, power does not necessarily rely either on formal authority, i.e. power granted by the organisation to a particular 'position-holder'. Power is more of matter of what a person does, or is potentially capable of doing, to influence others. Thus, a trade union representative who successfully persuades a group of work mates to stop work has exercised power, regardless of whether he had any authority to do so under his union's rule.

### **Roles of Power**

An understanding of role is vital to the effective performance of any job, because it enables the job-holder to assess his or her power position. A role may be defined as: 'the set of expectations held by the individuals concerned and those about them concerning how a job or task is to be performed.'

A role needs to be distinguished from a position, or job, which is primarily a statement of duties an individual, has been allocated. The job description is merely the script, but the role is the way the script is acted out.

The various forms of power that are available to managers have been described by Handy (1985) as follows:

**Physical Power** – this is the capability of using physical force to achieve influence. An unlikely source of power for a manager, but a lockout is one such manifestation.

**Resource Power** - 'the possession of valued resources', as Handy puts it.

Examples include control over salary and promotion prospects. This form of power is less available to managers in large bureaucracies, where such issues are dealt with in accordance with centrally-directed procedures.

**Position Power** – this is the power of office or position, as described by Weber. It refers to the rights written into the particular position (to allocate work, assess performance, etc.). Position power relies closely on resource power. However, it does give access to what Handy calls 'invisible assets', i.e. information, rights of access to key groups, and the right to organise work.

**Expert Power** – this arises from the possession of acknowledged expertise. This is power which, in effect, is a position by those over whom it is to be used. Expert's power only exists if other people recognise it and value it.

**Personal Power** – this is the power of personality (charisma). Like expert power, it is only effective when it is recognised by those concerned.

**Negative Power** – this is the power to stop things happening, for example. Even lowly members of an organisation may have this form of power. It finds expression in the filtering or distorting of information. It tends to surface at times of low morale.

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

Describe the forms of power known to you.

#### *TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT*

1. What do you understand by the term "Power?"
2. Describe the forms of power known to you.

### **AUTHORITY**

#### **Definition of Authority**

Authority has been identified as meaning legitimate use of power. It is depended on agreement that certain uses of power are valid and justified. This means further that not only by those who make decisions and issue commands can determine the validity and justifiability of authority, but also by those who are subject to those orders.

One of the central functions of political institutions is to legitimize the ways in which power is exercised in a society. Ugandans, from example, usually assume that democracy -rule by the people -is the only legitimate form of government. But in different times and places, other political systems have enjoyed widespread popular support and voluntary allegiance.

#### **Types of Authority**

Max Weber (1946) identified three main sources of political legitimacy: traditional, charismatic, and rational-legal authority.

Traditional authority is based on customs handed down through the generations. It is the sacred right of a king or queen, an emperor or tribal chief, to command his or her subject. In many cases, traditional authority is inherited. Although custom may

impose some limits, traditional leaders are free to make unilateral decisions. A modern example of traditional leadership, although outside politics, is the Pope, whom many Roman Catholics recognise as the supreme authority on issues of morality.

Charismatic authority is based on special personal qualities.

Charismatic leaders have no traditional or legal claim to power; indeed, they often oppose prevailing custom and existing laws. Their authority derives from their followers' belief that they have exceptional insight and ability or, perhaps, supernatural powers. Mahatma Gandhi, who used non-violent resistance to oppose British rule and lead India to independence, is an example of a charismatic leader. Another example is the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. Who viewed Gandhi as a model.

Although King never held public office, he was considered the spokesperson for African Americans and he inspired collective action, against violent opposition, in the civil rights movement.

The third type of authority is Rational- Legal authority. In actual fact, rational-legal authority is derived from a formal system of rules or laws that specify who has the right to make which decisions and under what conditions. Authority is vested in the position or office, not in the person, who temporarily occupies that position, and the office-holder's authority is clearly defined and limited. For example, the President of Uganda does not have the authority to tell Ugandan couples to limit their families to two children; our constitution protects individual liberty and our culture holds family matters as private.

#### *TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT*

- 1 (a). What do you understand by "Authority"?
- (b). What is the difference between power and authority?
2. State and describe the three types of authority.

### **LEADERSHIP**

#### Definition of Leadership

Leadership is a concept that many people have written about but few have defined. However, a working definition is suggested as follows by Cole (1997):

"Leadership is a dynamic process at work in a group whereby one individual over a particular period of time, and in a particular organisational context, influences the other group members to commit themselves freely to the achievement of group tasks or goals"

This working definition encompasses several important features of leadership:

- 1) Leadership is a dynamic process, influenced by the changing requirements of the tasks, the group itself and the individual members. The implication of this is that there is no "one best way" of leaders and leaders need to be able to exercise a range of behaviour to maintain their role effectively.
- 2) Leadership is not necessarily confined to one person, but may be shared between members. Usually, an appointed leader (e.g. manager) is nominally in charge of a group, but he or she may not always be the leader in practice.



- 3) The leader's principal role is to influence the group towards the achievement of group goals.
- 4) Leadership is exercised in, and influenced by, the particular set of circumstances which form the organizational context.

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

What is leadership?

### **Leadership Theories**

Leadership itself, has been accompanied throughout time, by numerous theories, all claiming to answer the question: Are Leaders born or made?

Those who accept the verdict, that leaders are born and not made, maintain:

"... that there are certain in-born qualities such as initiatives, courage, intelligence and humour, which altogether predestine a man to be a leader... the essential, pattern is given at birth" (Adler, 1991, p.4).

Two leadership theories which concentrate on this point are the great man/great woman and the trait theories. The "great man/woman" theory involves its followers believing that major events, both nationally and internationally, are influenced by those persons in power.

The trait theory expands further on this conjecture, by concentrating on the personal characteristics of the leader. The theory, which until the mid-1940s formed the basis for most leaders, the list of which grew in length over the years, to include all manner of physical, personality and cognitive factors, including height, intelligence and communication skills. However, few traits emerged to conclusively differentiate leaders from non-leaders. The traits an individual has may increase the probability that a person will become a leader though whether such leadership is guaranteed, is uncertain. Nevertheless, it can be seen to be true that some people are more likely than others to assume leadership positions.

However, this theory still did not answer, why one member of a group emerged as the leader, rather than another, or why one particular leader proved to be better in some situations than another. The emergence of a related theory, the interactionist approach, attempted to explain the existing anomalies.

The interactionist theory, proposed that both the characteristics of the individual, and the situation in which the group found itself, accounted for whom would become the leader. Resulting from this theory, was the view that leaders are both born and made, due to the leader requiring certain abilities and skill, but as the situation and the needs of the group changed, so too the person acceptable as leader changed.

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

Describe the two theories explaining the concept of leadership.

### **LEADERS VERSUS MANAGERS**

Most people view leadership as being associated with the role of a manager. However, there are some, who suggest that leaders and managers are not equal positions. It has been said, that leading and managing involve separate and distinct behaviours and activities.

Leaders and managers, these sources continue, vary in their orientation towards goals, conceptions about work, inter-personal style and self perceptions.

Leadership has been described as being one aspect of what a manager does; but certainly not all of it. Managers, they assert, fulfill four functions, namely: planning, organising, controlling and leading. Thus leading aspect of management, involves influencing subordinates towards the achievement of organisational goals.

It is necessary here to point out that a manager may not necessarily be a group's leader. While a manager of a group performs activities of a planning, organising and controlling nature, the real leader may be one of his/her sub-ordinate.

In essence, managers, we can summarise, can in certain situations, be leaders, however, leadership is only one aspect of their function. Some people have the capacity to become excellent managers, but not strong leaders; others have great leadership potentials but for a number of reasons, have great difficulty becoming strong managers. Both leading and managing are desired aspects in a group situation, i.e. in a group situation, both shall be present, in order for the group to become an efficient and effective body.

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

What is the relationship between managing and leading?

#### *TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT*

1. What do you understand by the term "Leadership"?
2. State ten (10) good characteristics of a leader.
3. Differentiate between trait theories and interactionist theory of leadership.

### **SOCIAL ORGANISATIONS**

#### Meaning of Social

Social organization has been considered by social scientists as indicating an organization in which individuals and relationships are ordered with reference to the goals of the society concerned. Social organization is said to have two aspects which include, first, the form of structure which relates to the fact that all the individuals and institutions that compose a society are given sizes and positions which functions in an interrelated pattern.

Secondly, social organization has been seen as a process. This has to do with the order of the social organization i.e. how the components of the society are ordered. As a matter of fact, social organization is said to be dynamic. Usually, there is growth, and adaptation in the structure as well as in the functions of any social organization.

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

Describe what is meant by social organization.

### **LEVELS OF SOCIAL**

There are three levels of social, namely: inter-personal level, group level and the total level of the society. The inter-personal level usually occurs between persons, it is the most elementary form of social organization.

Examples of interpersonal level of relationship include a teacher and his/her students, a father and his children, a pastor and his followers; a leader and his followers, etc.

You should note that to study adequately social organization in any society, there is need for adequate knowledge of inter-personal relations.

The group level of social organization relates to a large number of people whose interests vary. When group relations are adequately studied, then people's attention to major areas of social conflict can be easily directed. Apart from this, it should be noted that social scientists particularly Sociologists, Social psychologists, etc. are usually interested on group behaviour.

The third and highest level of social organization, total level of the society, is made up of both interpersonal and inter-group relations. The inter-play between various groups is part of the organization at the societal level. You should bear in mind that it is at this level that various personal, institutional and group roles are related to one another.

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

Describe the levels of social.

#### **The Roles of Individuals in Social**

Different individuals or institutions are not equally talented or equipped to function or perform adequately effectively. Social organization, however, recognizes and utilizes these inequalities amongst the components of any given society. This means that social organization signified some notions of division of labour, of social differentiation and of differences in the capabilities of individuals. Obviously, the individual differences can be the result of physiological or hereditary elements or environmental factors.

On this note, social organization recognizes the importance of division of labour. People and institutions are arranged into different positions and roles which they hold in the service of the whole unit. Through this, the best in everybody is being utilized. As a matter of fact, every individual is given the opportunity to contribute his or her skill or ability in the activity in which he or she has been considered capable and fit for. Therefore, it is now interesting to note that social organization is an organization of roles. Every individual is a role player in any given society. Bodies such as school, church, mosque, military, police, etc are role players in any given society. For example, within government, there are role players in the executive arm of government, legislative arm of government and judiciary arm of government.

In addition, in our secondary school system, the role players include the principal, a number of vice- principals, Heads of Department, School Counselors, some student representatives, etc.

A major point you should be aware of is that the various roles are not played just haphazardly. On this note, it is, therefore, the concern of social organization in ensuring that roles are ordered and also that positions are duly regulated.

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

Explain what you understand by the role of individuals in social organization.

#### *TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT*

- 1 (a). What do you understand by the term Social organization?  
(b). Describe the roles of individuals in Social organization.
2. Describe the levels of social organization.

## SOCIAL PATHOLOGIES/ SOCIAL PROBLEMS

### The Concept of Social Pathology/Social Problems

Social scientists usually talk about *social pathologies* or social problems. Social pathologies have existed as long as humans began living in groups. In other words, they are as antique as humans themselves. The kinds of social pathologies that baffle social scientists and moral philosophers today were also topics of philosophical inquiry for ancient and medieval philosophers and religious thinkers. However, it may be appropriate to argue that the profundity and scope of today's social problems are unmatched with those of the past (Ranchman, 1991; Zastrow, 1996).

The term *pathology* is a Greek word, which is composed of *pathos* and *logos*. It literally means *the study of diseases and disease processes*. The term social pathology generally refers to the *pathos of society*, i.e., the "social diseases" that affect society. However, a more explanatory term is *social problems*. Social problems are those diseased conditions of society that affect its normal functioning. A problem that is limited only to the level of an individual person or to only few groups may not be regarded as a social problem. A social pathology affects society, or its institutions and organizations at large. However, the very term *social problem* may mean any problem that has social origins, affecting at least two persons, that goes beyond mere psychological and physiological levels (Kornblum and Julian, 1995)<sup>1</sup>.

Sociologists argue that social problems are best understood in the social institutional context. Although the causes for social problems are multiple, sociologists contend that they are usually the manifestations of the failure in the social institutions themselves. When an institution fails to address the basic needs of people, social problems occur. It is usually easy for an ordinary person to blame the cause of a certain social problem on the failure of individuals themselves. For example, if we take the problem of begging or drug addiction, the individual victims are blamed for the actions. However, we need to look into the broader sociological and cultural contexts (Indrani, 1998).

### The Universality and Locality of Some Social Pathologies

It may be right to state that some social problems are universal in their nature; this means that they occur everywhere across all societies. They may derive from the fundamental similarity of the nature, origin and destiny of all human societies. As anthropologists argue, all human beings share common bio-psychological problems and as such they have more or less similar basic interests, questions, fears, etc. Although they may vary in terms of scale, all societies face such kinds of social problems as for example, juvenile delinquencies, marriage breakdown and divorce, parent-children conflicts, tensions over limited resources between groups, wars and inter-group skirmishes, alcoholism, environmental pollution, prostitution, homelessness, begging, etc.

However, some of the social problems seem to emanate from the local conditions; they are the manifestations of the specific cultural and ecological settings of a society, as well as the reflections of the socio-historical and political dimensions of the society. They also reflect the level of technological advancement a society has arrived at. For example, the major social problems that abound in the industrially complex society of the West include environmental pollution, marital breakdown and familial

conflicts, juvenile delinquencies, suicide, drug addiction, and the collapse of morality, among others. These seem to be more rampant in the Western societies. On the other hand, the Third World societies suffer from such kinds of social problems as urban slums, housing shortage, urban and rural poverty, sanitation problems, famine, ethnic conflicts, lack of good governance and corruption, streetism and homelessness, among others.

**Discuss the kinds of social problems and their solutions** (Student should research)

### **A Survey of Some Social Problems in Uganda**

A cursory look at the streets of major urban centers in Uganda shows that this is a time when our contemporary Ugandan society is hosting a multiplicity of social problems. The nature, type, intensity and complexity of the social problems in contemporary Uganda are reflections of:

1. The country's long history of underdevelopment;
2. Socio-cultural backwardness;
3. Poor level of scientific and technological development;
4. Lack of good governance;
5. Uncontrollable natural conditions, such as droughts, famine, etc;
6. The mismatch between rapidly growing population and economic development; and
7. Urbanization and economic growth, among others (Fasil, 1993).

The following are some of the major social problems in Uganda.

### **Vulnerability to Famine and the Problem of Food Insecurity**

Our country has been experiencing vulnerability to famine. It has successively been hit by severe droughts and resulting famine which claims lives. The problem is now one of the top agenda items for the Government of Uganda.

The rural population is more vulnerable to famine. The quality of life of the rural people has as a result deteriorated very much. The most important sections of society that are more affected by the famine and drought are often children, women and the aged. Of the death toll due to famine, these categories constitute of the largest proportion (Fasil, *op cit*).

Vulnerability to famine as a social problem, thus, results in a number of adverse consequences on health. "Famine and food insecurity aggravate the spread of diseases; it is now well known that the mass death and famine induced mortality are caused not only by starvation but also by the spread of diseases among the already vulnerable population" (Personal communication, Dr TeketelAbebe, AAU, Department of Sociology and Social Administration). Thus, many of the cases of



morbidity and mortality are associated with famine and lack of adequate nutrition particularly in rural Uganda. Diseases like kwashiorkor, marasmus, and poor physical conditions like stunted growth, emaciation, etc., are cases in point. Such conditions are at the other extreme to some health problems like obesity in affluent societies.

## **Prostitution**

Prostitution as a social problem seems to be associated with the growth of urbanization and urbanism as a way of life. Although it has existed throughout history, it has become rampant in this age of modernization. Some cities in south East Asian countries like Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand are notorious for the sex industry. The term prostitution now appears to be outdated and a more humane term is now *commercial sex work*. This term is introduced to indicate that like any other work, prostitution is also an industry, where individuals are, mainly due to factors beyond their individuals' capacity, forced to sell their bodies to earn money for a living.

As some studies indicate, the history of prostitution in Uganda goes back to the rise of urbanization. Commercial sex work has now become a major social pathology in the country. Urban centers like Naluwelele, Mbiiko, Busia, Bugembe, among others are major centers of commercial sex work. Multiple sexual partnership and commercial sex work are thus the most visible pathways for the spread of STIs and HIV/AIDS. Addressing this social problem at its root causes might, therefore, would help very much in the fight against the spread of HIV/AIDS.

The root causes of commercial sex work are usually poverty, harmful traditional practices such as early marriage, forced marriage and marriage by abduction, among others. Dysfunctional marriages, entrenched poverty and economic dependency often drive females to prostitution; and this may in turn contribute to the spread of STIs including HIV/AIDS among women and the general population. Young girls from rural areas often flee to urban centers from harsh social and cultural conditions in the rural areas. They end up engaging in commercial sex work to earn a living.

## **Unemployment**

Governments in developed and undeveloped countries alike these days face the mounting social problem of unemployment. In Uganda, too, unemployment has become one of the major social problems. The unemployed are those who currently in search of a gainful job and are dependent on somebody else for their living. There are other categories like the underemployed; these are those who are engaged in a job that does not match their level of expertise or training (Team of Experts, 2000).

The youth seem to suffer the most from this social problem. Of those who complete the Certificate, Diploma and degree levels in Uganda, many stay long in search of job. The problem of unemployment has many adverse ramifications on the unemployed and the society at large. Desperation and disappointments may lead many to self-destructive and anti-social behaviors and actions, such as drug addictions, alcoholism, organized crimes (like robbery), suicide, and violence against women, theft and begging.



## **The Youth and Drug Addiction**

The problem of drug addiction is now a social problem, particularly in developed societies. The problem is becoming rampant in Uganda as well. It is now common to hear from the electronic media and to read from the print media that the tradition of drug usage is a growing one in many large urban centers in the country.

The drug tradition is often associated with the growth of overnight clubs, bars and the chance for multiple sexual partnerships also becomes very high.

## **Rural to Urban Migration, the Refugee Problem and Health**

Uganda as a Sub-Saharan African country has experienced the sweeping influence of the wave of migration that is better understood in the political, economic, ecological and socio-cultural contexts of the contemporary world.

Migration at both the micro- and macro levels between regions and within regions, from rural to urban and vice versa, from urban to urban and rural to rural, all these have continued until today. The following have significant places in the drama of internal migration in the country,

- The government actions of resettling people from one region to another such as the rather massive landslides in Bugishu region.
- The rapidly growing population and the resultant resource depletion and ecological deterioration;
- The increasing urbanization and the seeming presence of better opportunities therein that act as pull factors; and
- The weakening of the traditional social-cultural and political structure of the various ethnic groups; among others.

The issue of rural to-urban migration in Uganda should be high on the governments' agenda.

The quality of life in the migrant sending rural communities as well in the receiving urban areas of Uganda has deteriorated tremendously. The large, steady flow of the mainly productive male sections of the rural communities to urban areas has many bad consequences. The sending areas would face serious productive labor shortage. The receiving areas, where there are little or no adequate social services and employment opportunities, will face the problem of crimes, housing shortages, growth of urban slums, and other undesirable, anti-societal phenomena.

**When we come to health**, migration is an important factor in determining the health status of individuals and groups. People migrate with expectations of better living and health conditions. But very often, many individual send up in poor living and health conditions.

Many are subjected to harsh treatments, poor pay, physical and mental abuses. Many refugees are subjected to unhygienic living conditions, poor nutrition, to the extent of

starvation, and outbreaks of infectious diseases. There are also sometimes cases of sexual harassment and rapes.

Uncontrolled rural to urban migration (boosted by population growth) and rapid urbanization also may lead to the mushrooming of squatter settlements and slums which in turn increase peoples' vulnerability to epidemic diseases.

While migration may thus have adverse consequences the lives of individuals, we should not also forget the positive, developmental effects of migration, be it internal or international migration. In fact, it is all too well known that people migrating from the Third World to the West are making significant contributions to the economic development of their home countries (Dutoit, 1990).

### **Population Explosion and Ecological Degradation**

The Ugandan population has grown from a mere 20 million in the early 1990s to about 45 million currently. At the present rate of annual growth, demographers predict that the numbers will double itself in a short period of time.

Uganda's population growth is not matched with a correspondent growth in economy. The country is one of the poorest in terms of many development parameters such as per capita income, life expectancy, literacy, access to basic health and social services, etc. The uncontrolled population explosions have now become a major threat to the natural resources and ecology of the country. It is accompanied by deteriorating ecological conditions, due to deforestation, over-utilization of resources, environmental pollutions, etc. The recurrent drought is one of the effects of the deteriorating ecological conditions (Fasil, *op cit*).

The issues of population explosion and ecological deterioration are now major social issues and the Ugandan Government has taken them as priority areas.

### **Growth of Urbanization, Urban Poverty, Housing Problem, Homelessness and Begging**

Majority of the population of Uganda lives in urban areas. With growth of urbanization, many social problems have emerged. The problem of urban slums, increasing poor quality of life and poverty, shortage of basic social services such as clean water, electricity, communications facilities, housing, etc, and the growing rate of crimes and deviance. Urban slums are centers for undesirable social behaviors such as commercial sex work, theft, robbery, drug trafficking and use, sanitation problems, among others.

With the growing number of urban population, access to good housing is becoming increasingly problematic. Studies indicate that many urban people live in substandard houses and many more even lack accesses to housing. Thus, homelessness has now become a growing social problem in many urban centers.

Some people are thus forced to spend their entire lives in the streets. Available data show that number of people taking to the streets is increasing rapidly, particularly in major urban centers.

Here, we can talk about a category of people known as the **street children**. These are

those who are born to homeless people or those who come from various parts of the country to urban centers and live in the streets. The number of older persons living in the streets is also growing.

The health and living conditions of these categories of people is very appalling. The street children and adolescents are often among the risk groups to contracting STIs including HIV/AIDS. They lack access to basic social and health services. The main means of making a living for these categories of people is usually begging and sometimes engage in commercial sex. Begging itself has become a major social pathology in some large urban centers. The problem of begging is especially visible during the religious ceremonial days or on Fridays in some big urban centers like Kampala, Jinja etc.

### **Social Deviance and Crime**

Deviance is behavior that members of a group or society see as violating their norms. Definition of deviance varies according to groups. Whether an action or behavior is considered deviant depends on time, place and social situations (Henslin and Nelson, 1995).

There are psychological and sociological explanations of deviance. Psychological theories focus on the personality of individuals. Certain genetic and biochemical abnormalities lead individuals to commit deviance and criminal acts. Sociological theories focus on the forces beyond the individual.

**Differential association theory** maintains that people learn deviant acts through socialization; **structural strain theory** maintains that deviance occurs when conformity to widely accepted norms of behavior fails to satisfy legitimate, culturally approved desires.

According to the **control theory**, every person is naturally prone to make deviance, but most of us conform to norms because of effective system of inner and outer control. It is those who have less effective control who deviate. Another sociological theory called **labeling theory** states that behaviors are deviant when and only because people label them as such (Caffrey and Mundy, 1995).

In general biologists and psychologists look into the individual, while sociologists look outside of the individual for explanations of why people commit deviance and crime.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT**

1. What do you understand by the terms *social pathologies* and *social problems*?
2. Why do social pathologies occur in a given society?
3. What are some of the main social pathologies that appear to be universally occurring in all societies?
4. Which of the social pathologies are more common in developed societies? Why?
5. Mention and discuss some of the social pathologies that are seriously facing our contemporary Ugandan society.

6. Why do some of the social problems appear to be more rampant and challenging in today's society than in the past?
7. Discuss the HIV/AIDS pandemic as social pathology in Uganda and the Sub-Saharan Africa today.

### **TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. Discuss the role of journalism in overcoming social problems.
2. Analyse the different social issues and how the media is covering them.
3. (a) Explain a social problem.  
(b) Describe the different social problems and provide their solutions.

### **THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL CONTROL**

#### **DEFINITION AND NECESSITY**

In any human society, there are deviations from the accepted norms of a society or group. This movement away from the accepted social standards is called **social deviance**. Each society or group expects and attempts to ensure conformity of its members to its norms. Those members of a society or a group who abide by the rules and norms of the society (or the group) are called **conformists**, while those who don't are called **non-conformists**.

A society or a group applies some formal and informal mechanisms to achieve conformity. Individuals may not act according to the defined values and norms of the group. Therefore violation of values and norms and deviating from the standard values and norms are often common.

**Social control** is thus simply defined as all the mechanisms and processes employed by a society to ensure conformity. In other words, social control is any cultural or social means by which restraints are imposed upon individual behavior and by which people are initiated to follow the traditions and patterns of behavior accepted by society. It is, simply, a means by which conformists are rewarded and non-conformists are punished.

#### **Types of Social Control**

There are two major types of social control mechanisms.

These are: negative and positive social control mechanisms.

**Negative Social Control:** This involves punishment or regulating behavior of deviants. A deviant is a person whose views and actions are different in moral or social standards from what is considered normal or acceptable in the context of a certain social group. This social control may be at micro/ informal level and macro/formal levels. Micro/ informal level social control occurs at the level of small groups such as peer groups, family, and interpersonal relationships. Examples of negative social control at micro levels include: simple gossip or backbiting, a simple

frowning, reprimanding, pinching, beating, ridiculing, scolding, ostracizing, etc. The punishments can be in the psychological, social or physical/ material forms. Punishments at macro or formal level include: fining, firing, demotion, imprisonment, banishment or excommunication, capital punishment and so on.

**Positive Social Control:** These mechanisms involve rewarding and encouraging those who abide by the norms. It involves rewarding the model behavior. The informal psychosocial reward mechanisms include simple smiles, saying encouraging word, shaking hands, thanking, showing appreciation, etc. Formal positive social control mechanism may include giving awards, promoting to a higher level of status, etc.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1. Explain the term *social organization* using your own words
2. What is *social relationship*?
3. Explain the following statement: "No one enjoys aloneness."
4. Discuss the difference between social groups and quasi-social groups.
5. Identify the elements of social group influence that you think have become part of your personality, life style, life choices and goals. Which of your life philosophies, likes and dislikes are *not the products of social influence, i.e., that are just your own idiosyncrasies*?
6. Mention and discuss the four key concepts developed by symbolic interactionists to analyze the nature of social interaction in everyday life.
7. Differentiate between intra-social and inter-social role conflicts. Explain cases of, if any, inter-social role and intra-social role conflicts you have encountered. Have these conflicts had any negative impact on your health? How?
8. Why do you think social control is necessary?

## GROUP DYNAMICS

### GROUPS

#### Definition of Group

A group of people working in the same room, or even on a common project, does not necessarily involve the group process. If the group is managed in a totally autocratic manner, there may be little opportunity for interaction relating to the work; if there is functioning within the group, the process may never evolve. On the other hand, the group process may be utilised by normally distant individuals working on different projects.

Schein (1965) defines a group as any number of people who (1) interact with one another, (2) are psychologically aware of one another, and (3) perceive themselves to be a group.

In his view, these three conditions need to be fulfilled if a group is to be distinguished from a random collection of individuals. Schein also assumed that groups share some common aim or purpose. Workgroups, for example, have a clear purpose, spelt out in the picture of the tasks assigned and the standards to be achieved.

## Why a Group?

Groups are particularly good at combining talents and providing innovative solutions to possible unfamiliar problems. In cases where there is no well-established approach/procedure, the wider still and knowledge set of the group has a distinct advantage over that of the individual. In general, however, there is an over-riding advantage in a group-based work force which makes it attractive to Management: that it engenders a fuller utilisation of the work force.

A group can be seen as self-managing unit. The range of skills provided by its members and the self-monitoring which each group performs makes it a reasonably safe recipient for delegated responsibility. Even if a problem could be decided by a single person, there are two main benefits involving the people who will carry out the decision. Firstly, the motivational aspect of participating in the decision will clearly enhance its implementation. Secondly, there may well be factors which the implementer understands better than the single person who could supposedly have decided alone.

More indirectly, if the lowest echelons of the workforce each become trained, through participation in group decision making, in an understanding of the companies' objectives and work practices, then each will be better able to solve work-related problems in general.

Further they will also individually become a safe recipient for delegated authority which is exemplified in the celebrated right of Japanese car workers to halt the production line.

From the individual's point of view, there is the added incentive that through belonging to a group, each can participate in achievements well beyond his/her individual potential. Less idealistically, the group makes provision for an environment where the individual's self-perceived level of responsibility and authority is enhanced, in an environment where accountability is shared: thus providing a perfect motivator through enhanced self-esteem coupled with two stresses.

## Group Development

How does a group develop? This is the next question to be answered. As a matter of fact, it is common to view the development of a group as having four stages:

Forming  
Storming  
Norming  
Performing

Forming is the stage when the group first comes together. Everybody is very polite and very dull. Conflict is seldom voiced directly, mainly personal and definitely destructive. Since the grouping is new, the individuals will be guarded in their own opinions and generally reserved. This is particularly so in terms of the more nervous and/or subordinate members who may never recover. The group tends to defer to a large extent who emerge as leaders. Now can you flashback on what happened to you when you joined a particular group (i.e. may be social or religious group)? How did you relate with other members of this group? How did they relate to you also? These are meant for you to think over.



Storming is the next stage, when all Hell breaks loose and the leaders are lynched. Factions form, personalities clash, no one concedes a single point without first fighting tooth and nail. Most importantly, very little communication occurs since no one is listening and some are still unwillingly to talk openly. True, this battle ground may seem a little extreme for the groups to which you belong.

The next stage is Norming. At this stage the sub-groups begin to recognise the merits of working together and the in-fighting subsides. At this stage, since a new spirit of co-operation is evident, every member begins to feel secure in expressing their own view points and these are discussed openly with the whole group. The most significant improvement is that people start to listen to each other. Work methods become established and recognized by the group as a whole.

And finally; performing this is the culmination, when the group has settled on a system which allows free and frank exchange of views and a high degree of support by the group for each other and its own decisions.

In terms of performance, the group starts at a level slightly below the sum of the individual's levels and then drops abruptly to its nadir until it climbs during norming to a new level of performing which is (hopefully) well above the start.

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

- i. Distinguish a group from a random collection of individuals.
- ii. Explain the stages of group development.
- iii. Why is group formed? Explain why you formed the group you belong to.

#### **Informal and Formal Groups**

'Formal' or official groups are groups forming a part of the organizational structure, established by management to see to the smooth running of the organization. For example, in banking industry, looking at a particular bank, there may be marketing team, personnel team, finance team, etc. In each of these teams, there is the expectation of achievement of a specific goal in order to allow the entire bank to keep on moving effectively. Informal groups or unofficial groups are those groups which are established by the employees themselves, for their own purposes rather than to fulfill organizational ends. Informal or unofficial groups have their purposes, which are generally to meet the social and security needs of the employees, for your information, it is good to note that the purposes of these unofficial groups may fit in fairly well with organizational objectives, but more than likely will be opposed to them.

Burns and Stalker (1961) make the interesting point that in 'mechanistic' (hierarchical), loyalty is to the concerned, and obedience is to superior. In this kind of organization, there is every possibility of open conflict between the behaviour of people in an unofficial group as compared with their behaviour as members of official groupings.



## Primary and Secondary Group

### Primary Group

This is relatively small, simple group of people. People in a primary group are in face-to-face relationship, for example, a family group or a village group. The group usually has some form of performance and its small number of people interact relatively intimately, intensely and frequently. This kind of interaction could be likened to one in which an individual often has his earlier form of education and training according to the local culture and values. In this kind of group, the relationship is voluntary and personalised, and everyone is interested in everyone else as persons, having his or her own value. The interaction that exists in primary groups could occur within a relatively defined territory like a village or a ward within a town.

Unlike the primary group, in secondary schools, there is less frequency and intensity of contact between members of the group. It is necessary to note here that all the members of the group do not often know themselves, not all the members live in close proximity, for example, a city or corporation. Although, secondary groups may also have face-to face relationship but contact between individuals in the group are very ephemeral and impersonal.

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES*

- i. Differentiate between informal group and formal group.
- ii. Differentiate between primary group and secondary group.
- iii. Explain why informal group is inevitable in any work organization.

### "In-Group" and "Out-Group"

The changes that occur within a group are important in the changing relationship between groups. These changes may form good base for a psychological analysis of group dynamics. Group dynamics has to do with the interactions between groups and the changes in such interactions.

Group dynamics involves in-group/out-group relationship. An in-group is characterised by a 'we-feeling'. A person has loyalty to this group and makes sacrifices to retain his membership and to maintain the continuity and strength of the group. Members cherish one-another's comradeship.

An in-group carries some element of sympathy amongst members and a sense of attachment to one another. There is often a feeling that what the group has is the best. Members of other groups are out-group members.

An out-group thus refers to intergroup relations. It is a relationship of "we and they". Such inter-group relations could be friendly or conflictual. In any case, the separateness of the membership and of their identity is maintained.

An analysis of in-group/out-group relations is essential in understanding a society and the processes of control. Such an analysis must take account of the luring nature of some groups and of the relative cohesion and intensity of interaction in one group but absent from other.

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

In your own words, describe what is meant by in-group/out-group relationships.

## Group Cohesiveness

The cohesiveness of any group is the extent to which the group members develop strong ties to each other and to the group as a whole ('team spirit'). It is also a measure of the ability of the group to attract new members. A very cohesive group is one that demonstrates strong bonds of loyalty within its membership and strict adherence to the established norms of the group.

A number of factors have been identified to encourage group cohesiveness' and these include: similarity of work, physical proximity, system of work, task structure, group size (especially small size), external threats prospect of rewards leadership style of manager common social features (age, sex, etc.)

It should be noted here that where a high level of cohesiveness has been achieved in a group, external forces will play a significantly reduced role in bringing about change in the group. Change in such a situation can only be realised if key members of the group agree to adopt the new ways. In a less cohesive group, there is possibility for a change from without.

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES*

- i. What do you understand by group cohesiveness?
- ii. In the group you belong, are you highly cohesiveness or lowly cohesive? Describe what makes you that.

## Group Effectiveness

In looking at the effectiveness of a group, there are two major criteria for measuring success:

How effectively were group tasks accomplished?

What was the level of individual satisfaction with membership of the group?

The first question tends to look on effectiveness from the point of view of organizational goals, the second considers personal goals. Seek success in terms of tasks accomplished, targets achieved, solutions rendered and other benefits. Individuals seek personal satisfaction from membership of the group, opportunities to perform a role and to gain status within the group.

However, it is important to note that both organizational and individual goals can be achieved, but where conflict exists, then it is the role of a leader in charge to minimize the negative consequences of this conflict.

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

- i. What do you understand by Group effectiveness?
- ii. How to do you measure effectiveness in your own group?

## Team Process

According to Adair (1986), a team is more than just a group with a common aim. It is a "group in which the contributions of individuals are seen as complementary. Collaboration (i.e. working together) is the keynote of a team activity. Adair suggests that the test of a good (i.e. effective) team is:

'Whether... its members can work as a team while they are apart, contributing to a sequence of activities rather than to a common task, which requires their presence in one place and at one time'.

The most important factor in team is its effectiveness. Woodcock (1965) identified this and as a result he describes the characteristics of effective team work. These characteristics include: support and trust, clear objectives and agreed goals, openness and confrontation, sound procedures, cooperation and conflict, appropriate leadership, etc.

Above all, Adair (1986) emphasises the importance of careful selection of team members. He noted that the professional competence of team member should not be more emphasised, but the ability to work as a team member, and the possession of 'desirable personal attributes' such as willingness to listen, flexibility of outlook, and the capacity to give and accept trust.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What do you mean by Team?

### **TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. (a). What do you understand by the term, "Group"?  
(b). Differentiate between Informal and Formal Group.
- 2 (a). What do you understand by group cohesiveness?  
(b). State the factors that encourage group cohesiveness.

## **SOCIAL DIFFERENTIATION**

### **Definition of Social Differentiation**

Social differentiation can be expressed as meaning the divisions of every human society into distinctive social roles and functions, based upon both inherited and acquired differences.

Social differentiation is easily noticed in every human society .It is very important for every society because its operations and existence enhance the continued survival of the society. In human societies, the coordination of individual efforts to maintain the society is usually achieved through what is termed as cultural specialisation.

### **Distribution of Members of a Society to Available Positions**

Human societies distribute their members in the available social positions and induce them to perform the duties of these positions.

Therefore, one of the ways of doing this is by *ranking*. Ranking is one of the ways in which human societies distribute their members in the available social positions. This means that positions available are valued differently such that positions are ranked in order of importance.

Therefore, the individuals that fill the position of great importance to the society and who perform functions requiring exceptional skills and abilities usually receive greater reward and privileges which may include prestige, money, etc., while those individuals that perform the less important tasks are made to receive lesser rewards and privileges.

This kind of activities is necessary in order to allow the society to function effectively.

Another way is stratification which happens to be a special type of social differentiation. Societies elaborate the ranking process further by arranging certain social positions in a graded hierarchy of socially superior or inferior ranks. As a

matter of fact, when a society displays a graded series of ranks, we say that it is stratified.

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

Explain the two (2) major ways societies distribute its members to positions.

### *TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT*

1. What do you understand by Social differentiation?
2. Explain how human societies distribute their members to available positions.

## **RELIGION**

### **Definition of Religion**

Religion is defined as a set of beliefs, symbols, and practices (for example, rituals), which is based on the idea of the sacred, and which unites believers into a socio-religious community. The sacred is contrasted with the profane because it involves feelings of awe.

Sociologists have defined religion by reference to the sacred rather than to a belief in a god or gods, because it makes social comparison possible.

### **Elements of Religion**

The religious frame work is composed of four basic elements: beliefs, rituals, subjective experiences, and community.

#### **Beliefs**

Religious beliefs affirm the existence of a divine or supernatural order, define its character and purposes, and explain the role humans play in that order. It is essential for you to know that a belief is a conviction that cannot be proved or disproved by ordinary means. Religious beliefs therefore organise an individual's perception of the world and serve as a guide for behaviour. For example, animist religions hold that the world is inhabited by spirits with motives and emotions like our own.

Although believers do not worship these spirits as gods, they do attempt to influence their behaviour through magic. This animist belief in spirits explains the occurrence of illness or accidents and prescribes a course of action. Similarly, the Christian belief in original sin, Christ and his miracles, and eternal salvation or damnation shapes perceptions and establishes a code of conduct.

#### **Rituals**

Religious rituals are formal, stylised enactment of religious beliefs-processions, chants, prayers, sacraments, and the like. Religious rituals differ from other activities in that believers attach a symbolic meaning to them. Religious symbols are concrete embodiments of values, idea, judgments, longings and beliefs.

#### **Subjective Experience**

The subjective experiences of religion grow out of beliefs and rituals.

Beliefs direct people to interpret certain inner states and group experiences as "religious". Rituals may be used to invoke or recall communication with the supernatural. Religious experiences range from the quiet sense of peace that comes from the belief the one's life in the hands of a divine power to the intense mystical experiences that inspire terror and awe.

## Community

Belongings to a community of believers is a central part of religious experience. Shared beliefs, rituals, and subjective experiences heighten group identification.

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

State and explain the elements of religion.

## Religion and Society: Three Views

Three nineteenth and twentieth-century thinkers have provided contrasting views of the relationship between society and religion. In the work of Durkheim, he emphasised the function of religion as a celebration of the society order. In the work of Karl Marx on the other hand, he saw religion as an instrument of oppression used by a ruling class to cover up economic exploitation of the masses. The third think, Max Weber, saw religion as an agent of social change.

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

Describe the relationship between religion and society going by the three views of Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx and Max Weber.

## The Nature of Religious

Religions are not only to be regarded as sets of beliefs and practices, but also social. Sociologists recognize four distinct types of religious organization which include the established church, the sect, the denomination, and the cult. It should be noted that "church" in this context does not refer specifically to a Christian organisation but refer any established religion.

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

What is your understanding of the nature of religious?

## TYPES OF RELIGIOUS ORGANISATIONS

This can be considered in four distinct types, namely established church, sect, denomination and cult.

### **Established Church**

Established church refers to a religious organisation that claims unique legitimacy and has a positive relationship to society. An established church is the official religion of its society. It endorses existing political and economic institutions and is, in turn, endorsed by the state.

The Catholic Church in medieval Europe and the Anglican Church in Elizabethan England are familiar examples. In Japan, the Shinto religion dates from before the fifth century. Its emphasis on the worship of natural phenomena and its belief in *Kami*, kindly supernatural beings who looked out for people, led to its being made the national religion, reaching its peak in the years just before world war II.

### **Sect**

A Sect is a religious organisation that asserts its unique legitimacy but stands apart from society. A sect usually claims to have a monopoly over the route to salvation. Where an established church is seen as entering into society in order to influence it, a



sect views society as "too sinful" to influence except from without. Usually, a sect dissociates itself from existing political and economic institutions, and its members may withdraw from "worldly" affairs thereby creating a separate community for its members.

### **Denomination**

Generally speaking, denominations are less exclusive than sects, more tolerant of diversity of religious belief more "worldly", less demanding of their members, more formal in liturgy, and more demanding in professional requirements for religious functionaries. You have to note here that a denomination is usually a religious organisation that has a positive relationship to society. A denomination is also known to accept the legitimacy of other religions.

Most of the major religious groups in Uganda today include Methodists, Moslems, Anglican, Catholics, Pentecostal, Baptists, etc. All these are seen as denominations.

### **Cult**

A cult is a religious organisation that accepts the legitimacy of other religious but has a negative relationship to society. Like a sect, a cult holds that there is "something wrong" with the way most people in society live. Where sects are often "at war" with society, cults tend to focus on the individuals. They are often more concerned with getting the individual in tune with the supernatural, and with individual peace of mind than with social change. Cults are known to be more tolerant of other religions.

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

Explain the four types of denomination.

### *TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT*

What do you understand by the concept "religion" State and explain the elements of religion. 2. State and explain the four (4) types of religion.

## **SOCIAL INTERACTIONS**

### **Meaning of Social Interactions**

Social interaction is defined as the "interactions and relationships' that exists between/or among people in everyday life. For example, when you are seated in a bus or train, you glance at the person next to you; take note of that person's sex, age, and even clothing, and based on this you adjust your behaviour accordingly. If she is a young lady and you are a young man (unmarried), you might initiate a conversation with a comment on the weather, a remark about something the other person is reading or carrying. The young lady in the next seat may respond to an overture with a nod and then open her book, signaling that she is not interested in talking. If on the other hand, she continues the conversation, then the two of you would probably talk about your jobs or why you are both travelling to Kampala. With this, you would not discuss your sex lives, and you would probably avoid getting into deep political or religious debate. On this, your interactions are further limited by the physical layout of the luxurious bus and by the other people on the bus. All these are what we pass through in our daily lives and therefore, we cannot avoid them.

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

What do you understand by social interactions?

## **The Role of Cultural Scripts and Ethno methodology on Social Interactions**

The most important studies of every day social behaviour come from symbolic interactions. Symbolic interactionists stress the role of language and other symbols (such as fashion) in the social construction of identity and in the structure of relationships. It is a thing of interest to note that social expectations set the stage for interaction but do not dictate behaviour. Individuals do not perform their roles automatically the drama-surgical approach (i.e. analogy between the real life and the stage), on the stage, each person interprets a role in his or her own way.

Some learn their parts well, while others continually bungle their lines.

In some situations, there are strict rules governing interactions, and participants are expected to follow the script closely. Other situations are more improvisational, with participants making up the "story" as they go along.

In many cases, we are so accustomed to our culture's script that we take expected role behaviour for granted. This now takes us to the issue of ethno methodology which is coined to mean countless unspoken, often unconscious rules people use to maintain order and predictability in everyday social interaction.

### **Social Identities in Social Interactions**

A social identity is "our sense of who and what we are. As our personal identity is based on our individual biography and idiosyncrasies; our social identity derives from the positions we occupy in society, as student, daughter, friend, poet, vegetarian, and the like. It includes roles to which we aspire as well as the positions we currently occupy. Our social identity depends in large degree on our perception of how others see us. Our private identity may include thoughts and experiences we never divulge to anyone; our social identity requires public validation.

This is particularly true when we are taking on a new role or leaving an old one: entering college, starting a new job, becoming a parent, or becoming single again after divorce. In addition, each of us has various situational identities that become dominant in certain settings. A woman may be a professor in class, at faculty meeting, and at professional conferences; when she gets home, however, her identity as "Mummy" comes first.

Social identities are not simply day-dreams (or nightmares). They are a major source of plans for action (helping us to decide whether to do this or that); they provide the criteria for evaluating our actual performances making us feel good or bad in our daily lives (helping us interpret the situations, events and people we encounter).

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What do you understand by social identities?

### **Making Social Interactions Positive (A Case Study of Children)**

Social interactions are the everyday give and take situations that occur.

A social interaction may include saying "Hello" or asking an appropriate question such as "May I play with you?" Social interactions also include the activities that help children make friends. Social skills are the tools that are necessary in order to have positive social interactions. When one child hits another child, they are having a social interaction, but it is not a positive interaction. You may need to help structure these interactions so they are positive rather than negative. One way that a child care

provider might structure interactions is to build games and activities into daily routines that will encourage children to work and play together. If a child yells out loud or grabs a toy from his peer, the caregiver might model a more appropriate way to say, "I want my way" or "I want that toy." What may start out as a negative interaction can be turned into positive one.

While games and songs are often used to teach positive social skills, modeling appropriate social skills is still important. Turn-taking is a very vital social skill because it helps children interact with each other in a positive manner. It is also a functional skill that a child will use throughout his/her life time. When a child is first learning to take turns, he/she needs to learn about reciprocity. The provider can model this: rather than frequently telling the children to take turns, she can show them how to do things during games and activities designed to demonstrate reciprocity.

It is also important to help children feel good about themselves.

Children who have positive self-esteem are usually less aggressive and more tolerant of others. One way to help children develop good self-esteem is to consistently give them messages that they are valued as part of the class. These messages can be verbal, such as "you work so hard" or "you chose such lovely colours for your picture", but body language also conveys messages. Even when it is necessary to correct a child, do so at his/her eye level. A touch on the shoulder or a nod of the head also lets a child know you like what he/she is doing.

#### *TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT*

1. (a). What do you understand by social interactions?  
(b). Describe the role of cultural scripts and ethno methodology on social interactions.
2. (a). What do you understand by social identities in social interactions?  
(b). How can social interactions be made positive using the interactions among children as a case study?

## **PUBLIC OPINION AND PROPAGANDA**

### **Definition of Public Opinion and Propaganda**

Public opinion can be defined as the aggregate views of the people on a particular public issue or government policy at a given period. You should note here that whenever a public is identified, there tends to be opinion formation.

### **Formation on Public Opinion**

Public opinion can be formed in various ways. These include:

**Through the Mass Media:** This is to say that people can express their views through the radio, newspaper and the television.

**Symposia and Lecturers:** This indicates that public opinion can be formed at meeting in which ideas on matters of public importance are expressed and discussed.

**Pressure Groups and Political Parties:** This indicates that pressure groups and political parties help in the formation of public opinion. Through this means, people's views and opinions are easily shaped.

**Bureau of Information:** A bureau of information is a government's agency which is meant to inform the public on the activities of government. This now shows that

government can assist in the formation of public opinion through the establishment of a bureau of information. This would make the government to easily know people's opinions on government policies.

**Elections:** Elections are another strategy of forming public opinion. This is made possible through the education of members of the public by political parties on important public issues. This usually occurs during campaigns or through advertisements.

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES*

How do public opinion form?

### **IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC OPINION**

Below are the importances of public opinion:

**Measuring the popularity of the government:** This shows that through public opinion, the government will be able to measure the popularities of its policies.

**Formulation of government policies is made easy:** Through public opinion, government is able to formulate policies. This means that the government is able to know that the views of the people are on any public issue and it is able to take that into consideration while formulating its policies.

**A means of decision-making:** This shows that people are made to participate in the decision making process through their opinion on certain issues.

**A means of checking the excesses of government:** Public opinion can be helpful in ensuring for accountability. For example, through public opinion, the government can be made accountable for its actions.

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

Describe why you think public opinion is important and necessary. .

### **Measurement of Public Opinion**

Public opinion can be measured with the following:

**Through referendum:** A referendum is a direct vote through which all the people in a society declare their position on any particular issue. It is a technique of measuring the acceptability or non-acceptability of any government proposal.

**Through elections:** It is a fact to note that government can easily know a lot through the conduct of an election. As a matter of fact, the result of an election could help us to know how popular or unpopular a government and its policies are.

**Through opinion polls:** Opinion polls are another way of measuring public opinion. Opinion polls are methods by which a cross-section of the public are interviewed on a given issue, with a view of identifying and measuring their position on it.

**Through meeting the people:** People can be met directly in order to know their opinion on any particular issue. People can be located in their various communities or neighbourhoods.

The above-listed techniques of measuring public opinion have been used by the government (Federal, State and Local governments), private bodies and other bodies as ways of knowing what is on people's mind.

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

Describe the techniques of measuring public opinion.

### **TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

- 1 (a). Define public opinion.  
(b). How do public opinion form?
- 2 (a). Explain the importance of public opinion  
(b). Describe how public opinion can be measured.

## **SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND SOCIAL INTERACTION**

### **The Concept of Social Organization**

A student should be introduced to the idea of how we as social beings organize ourselves and how individual persons, communities and societies are related to one another. Human beings are social animals by nature and whatever we do or say are related to social environment. Our lives as human beings have their meanings in organized relationships.

Whether we eat, drink, work, play, worship, recreate or learn, we do it in social group context. No one enjoys alone outside organized network of social interaction and relationships. Although we have the capacity for privacy, no one can enjoy him / herself for a sustained period of time, without inflicting upon oneself adverse effects

By **social organization**, we refer to the pattern of individual and group relations. The term "organization" signifies technical arrangement of parts in a whole, and the term "social", indicates the fact that individual and group relations are the outcomes of social processes (Broom and Slezinky, 1973). Thus, one of sociology's main concerns is to study and analyze the behavior of human society as it appears in its structured and organized ways and relationships. Specifically, sociologists are here interested in discovering and analyzing:

- The personal and group relations that influence individual behavior and social institutions;
- How persons and groups relate to each other;
- How people organize themselves in various social situations, whether consciously or unconsciously;
- What kind of social relationships occur in their organized behaviors; and
- How these social relationships are maintained; how they decline or disintegrate.

### **Social Groups**

In our day-to-day life and social activities, we interact with each other, belonging to a group of some kind. The study of group is central to any sociological investigation.

### **Definition of a Social Group**

The term group has a special meaning in sociology because it represents a concept that is central to any sociological analysis. Quite several definitions have been given to the term group by different sociologists.

Generally, a social group is defined as the collectivity or set of people who involve in more or less permanent or enduring social interactions and relationships. Members of a social group have common basis for interaction and shared characteristics, a feeling of identity or belongingness, shared psychology or consciousness and a definite set of norms to govern the behaviors of the individual participant in the group



## Basic Features of a Social Group

In their sociological analysis of the group behavior of human society, sociologists have identified some essential elements of a social group. For a set or collectivity of people to be a social group, it has to have the following essential traits or features (Calhoun *et al*, 1994)

1. Members of the group continue to interact with one another;
2. Membership requires living by norms that are special to the group;
3. Members view each other as part of the group; members feel some sense of identification with the group and with one another; and there is a social boundary between members and non-members;
4. Members are functionally integrated through role and status relationship in the group structure; and
5. Others see members as group.

Social interaction among the members is relatively permanent; it is not causal. Common interests should characterize as a basis for interaction. There are shared values, beliefs and lifestyles. The emotional, shared consciousness is also important. The feeling of belongingness is very important. Social norms and values govern behavior of group members.

All of the following are examples of social groups, from the smallest possible level to the largest possible. A dyad (made up of two persons like fiancés, husband and wife), a family, a group of students in a dormitory, peer group, a friendship, an ethnic group, a community, a nation, a continent, a university, an organization, etc.

## Classification of Groups

Sociologists have classified groups into two basic classifications, namely, **primary** and **secondary** groups.

The classification of groups into primary and secondary is mainly based on: (a) the quality of relationship between or among the members of the group, and (b) the degree of group identity. People, for example, generally feel more loyal to their family and close friends than to the companies for which they work (Henslin and Nelson, 1995).

## Primary Groups and Their Main Features

Charles H. Cooley was the first sociologist to use the term primary groups to describe such groups as family, neighborhood and children's play groups. Such groups were the "nursery of human nature" where the essential sentiment of human group loyalty and concern for others could be learned. Primary groups are distinguished by some of the following characteristics:

- There is face-to-face interaction among members.
- There is high sentiment or loyalty.
- Identification (group identity) and close cooperation among members
- There is a high level of emotional, spiritual satisfaction to be derived from involvement in primary social groups.
- Concern for friendly relations as an end in themselves, not as a means to an end.
- Primary groups are often small in size.
- Primary group gives its members (individuals) their "first acquaintance with humanity".



- Primary groups, for a child, are a school for learning the ways of human interaction and the give and take of working and playing together.

## Secondary Groups and Their Main Features

Secondary groups are the more formal types of groups to which peoples belong. To start with clearly definitive examples, the Federal Army, Lion's Club, Ethiopian Commercial Bank, etc, are secondary groups. As organizations, secondary groups do not give people the feeling of close identity that primary groups give.

Considerable effort must be devoted to making people proud of the corporation for which they work, and this type of pride, if it is achieved at all, is not primary group sentiment. One can still be lost in the great organization; there is not the same sense of psychological security.

Main features (traits) of secondary social groups include:

- There is little or no emotional involvement.
- Members are more competitive than cooperative.
- Members are less intimate.
- Group identity is less relevant.
- Economic efficiency is given higher emphasis than psychological identity.
- The group is mainly a means to an end rather than an end in itself.
- Membership is unlimited.

Some critical observations must be made concerning the classification of groups.

- i) Primary and secondary groups are ideal types, i.e. types represented as opposite poles for the sake of analysis. In concrete life situations, most relations are not purely primary or secondary, but come somewhere between, examples: school, church, etc.
- ii) A second reservation about primary secondary group classification is that primary groups may be formed with in secondary groups.

In other words, the classification of social groups into primary and secondary should not be taken as a sort of dichotomy. It should rather be considered as a continuum, i.e. at the two extreme ends, there may be crystallized primary and secondary groups, and in between the two extremes, there are mixtures of the two types.

## Quasi-Social Groups

Quasi-groups are those kinds of social groupings which lack the essential features of social groups. In this kind of grouping, there may be no functional integration among members. There are little or no structured and patterned social relationships. This kind of social interactions is common in modern, industrial and complex societies. It is more common in urban heterogeneous settings. They characterize individualistic societies. Such groups lack meaningful social structures and social interaction. There are two types of quasi groups: aggregates and categories.

### Aggregates

A social aggregate is quasi-social grouping in which two or more people are physically together at a certain time and at a certain place. There is physical proximity without enduring social interaction. There is no shared psychological-identity. However, out of this kind of grouping a real social group can emerge. Examples of an aggregate include: two or more people in a- taxi, bus, air plane, an elevator, a busy city street, in a cafeteria, a stadium, in a market, in a hospital ward, etc.

Anonymity in the midst of crowd behavior usually characterizes aggregates. Such condition may lead to the problem of sense of alienation, dehumanization, sense of being lost, depression, social stress and other psychosocial problems. Suicide is very common in urban than rural areas and mental illness is more increased in societies characterized by anonymity, individualism, and heterogeneity.

### **Categories**

This is a quasi-group which consists of a plurality or collectively of people who are physically dispersed, but who share common traits and interests. It refers to a social class; or a group of people who are more or less of similar lifestyles, and physical and psychosocial characteristics. There may be little or no social interaction, social structure, social norms, etc; but there is the feeling of belongingness, even though the people may never know each other. However, gradually, a meaningful social grouping can grow out of a category.

Examples of a social category include: all female students in higher learning institutions in Uganda; all female engineers in Uganda; all students from rural background, HIV positive persons, etc.

## **SOCIAL PROCESSES**

### **The Concept of Social Processes**

As members of a society or different societies interact with each other, different social processes take place.

As there are processes in the natural world, social processes are bound to take place in the organized life of society. In the social system, these social processes are necessary for the very life, existence and smooth functioning of the system. Sociologists are interested in studying and analyzing these repetitive forms or patterns of behaviors, actions, and reactions.

**Social processes** are certain repetitive, continuous forms of patterns in the social systems that occur as individuals, groups, societies, or countries interact with each other. They are interaction patterns or modes, among members (individual) within a society or a group involving particular repetitive features, occurring both at micro and macro levels. They help us interpret and understand our social behavior.

### **Modes of Social Processes**

Social processes may be manifested in a number of ways. There are generally five modes of social processes. These are competition, conflict, cooperation, accommodation and assimilation. These are universal modes; they take place at micro and macro levels. One mode of social process may balance another; e.g., competition by cooperation. One may also yield another they take place in an unending cycle. For example, competition may yield conflict.

### **Competition**

Competition as a social process seems to be more pronounced than others. It is real in our day-to-day interpersonal encounters, as well as in the global situations. Competition is the process whereby individuals, groups, societies, and countries make active efforts to win towards getting their share of the limited resources. It is an impersonal attempt to gain scarce and valued resources of wealth, land, health care

services, etc. As a result of competition, stratification, physical separation and so on may happen in a given society. Competition involves struggle, efforts, decisions, actions, etc., to survive. Competition is balanced by cooperation.

### **Cooperation**

Cooperation is a social process whereby people join hands towards achieving common goals. Competition is more likely to occur in advanced, modern, industrialized societies than in traditional, homogenous societies where cooperation appears to be more important.

### **Conflict**

In the process of competition for power (which could be economic, social, and political) and resources, conflict is bound to take place. Conflict involves disagreement and disharmony, which results due to differences in ideology, living standard, and other social factors. It is a universal phenomenon, an ever-present reality, taking place both at micro and macro levels. Conflict involves clash of interest between individuals in a social group like in a family or between groups or societies. It results due to power imbalance, due to unfair distribution of resources. Here, it produces social class and stratification. Conflict may be between males and females, youngster and older generation; between different religious, ethnic and, political groups.

### **Accommodation**

People may decide to consciously avoid the source of conflict thereby arriving at an agreement to live accepting one another, co-exist at relative peace, avoiding overt conflict. Accommodation is a social process whereby people try to accept one another, avoiding the sources of conflict to live in peaceful coexistence. It is a conscious adjustment and compromise among conflicting groups so that they can live with one another without overt conflict.

### **Assimilation**

Assimilation is a social process whereby a group of individuals learns and accepts the values, norms, etc., of another group and becomes sometimes virtually identical with the dominant groups. Assimilation involves the acceptance or the internalizing of the larger or dominant group's culture, values and life styles by the smaller or minority group. Assimilation could imposed or voluntary. In this age of globalization there are westernization processes, whereby peoples of the Third World are taking up the values, notions and practices of the Industrialized West.

## **SOCIAL CHANGE**

### **Definition of Social Change**

Wilmot (1985: 174) sees social change as "the alteration in the sources or organization of society or its component parts overtime." This alteration, he says, may be in terms of four variables, viz: size, complexity, direction and functions. In terms of size, a society can, through deliberate policies, bring about a change in itself. A practical example is the creation of local government areas from already existing ones by government. Once size changes, functions, direction and complexity will invariably change.

MacGee *etal* (1977: 589) refer to social change as the transformation in patterns of social organisation or activity. The emphasis in this definition is on the changes which the transformation process introduced into the older order of society. Therefore, social change can be seen as an overhaul of the socio-political, economic and other structures of society. It is either gradual and imperceptible or sudden.

### **Sources of Social Change**

Social change can be as a result of the following:

#### **Discovering**

Parsons (1951) defined discovery as an addition to knowledge.

"Discovery refers to such matters as the discovery of new astral bodies, new elements and new treatment for disease (Parsons, 1951: 94).

#### **Education**

Education, as it is, involves the process of transmitting ideas, knowledge and values to individuals in order to bring about a change in their behaviour. The knowledge and skills gained from education are usually being applied which therefore brings about changes of all sorts.

This is another source of social change. Invention has to do with combining existing elements of culture so that something new could be produced. Invention as a source of social change is of two types: material inventions and social inventions. Material inventions have to do with the idea and materials available to the inventor. Social inventions relate to things such as alphabet, constitutional governments, etc.

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

Explain the sources of social change.

### **Resistance to Change**

Several factors have been identified mostly by sociologists as making people to resist change. Some have argued in favour of economic costs of the change; some have also argued in favour of the early imperfections in new inventions.

Change can be resisted due to some other factors which include the threats constituted by the change; strong opposition particularly from concerned groups, the difficulty in adapting to new things developed, etc. All these could make people to resist change of any sort. .

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

What do you understand by resistance to change?

#### *TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT*

1. What do you understand by the term "Social change"?
2. Explain carefully the sources of social change with examples.
3. Describe the factors involved in resistance to change



## COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOUR

### What is Collective Behaviour?

Collective behaviour is seen as a potentially wide-ranging field of study which deals with the ways on which collective behaviours emerge as responses to problematic circumstances and situations. At one extreme, this can mean the study of coordinated and organised social movements; at the other, it refers to the seemingly spontaneous eruption of common behavioural patterns, as for example, in episodes of mass hysteria.

Between these are responses to natural disaster, riots, lynchings, crazes, fads, fashions, rumours, looms panics and even rebellions or revolutions.

In crowds, according to LeBon, people cease to act as individuals.

People of different ages, sexes, educational levels, and occupations chant the same slogans, to the same things. If one person runs, everybody runs. The crowd develops a mind of its own. Participants become highly suggestible: they will believe almost anything.

Specifically, collective behaviour has to do with the non institutionalised group behaviour that takes place without clear-cut direction from the normative system of culture. Usually, collective behaviour is unplanned and its effects unforeseen.

### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

What is your understanding of collective behaviour?

### Forms of Collective Behaviour

The six main forms of collective behaviour include:

panics  
crowds  
fashions  
rumours  
social movements ,public opinion

#### **Panic**

This is one of the forms of collective behaviour which ensues when people, being faced with danger such as fire outbreak, tend to lose their capacity to cooperate and hence their chances of escape are reduced. It is usually seen as the most transitory and rarest form of mass action.

#### **Crowds**

This is the next form of collective behaviour which tends to be more structured than panics and usually being guided by social norms. The presence of the influence of social norms on crowds makes possible members of a crowd to be easily persuaded to work toward a common goal.

#### **Public opinion**

This refers to the aggregate views of the people on a particular public issue or government policy at a given period. It is a form of collective behaviour in which a relatively large number of people put their views on a particular public issue together.

## Social Movement

This refers to the (more or less) organised effort of a large number of people to produce some social change. Examples of this are the women's movement (e.g. women empowerment campaign team in Nigeria), environmental movement (e.g. movement to ban nuclear weapons), etc.

On the surface, social movements resemble collective behaviour.

Although they are non-violent, protest demonstrations may seem as spontaneous, unstructured, and emotional as a riot.

## Fashions

Fashion is seen as a great though brief enthusiasm among a relatively large number of people for a particular innovation. Fashions tend to be ephemeral (i.e. short-lived) since their novelty wears off quickly.

Ideally, every aspect of human life (e.g. clothes, architecture, philosophy, hair-styles) is usually influenced by fashions.

## Rumours

This refers to an unverified story that is spread from one person to another. It is the distortions made on a story that is supposed to be relayed on to another person. Going deeper, rumours promote panics, mobs or even riots. Practically, rumours are found in every society and are even part of interpersonal communication.

## Collective Behaviour as a Breakdown in Social order

Often, the media reports episodes of "collective madness". For no apparent reason, large numbers of people usually stop exercising critical judgement and self-control. As a matter of fact, upon closest inspection, such breakdowns may in fact, have some rather long-standing reasons, whether one accepts them as justifying outburst of violent group behaviour or not. Based on this, when the contagious elements in collective madness are fear or anxiety, rather than anger and frustration, the result is called *mass hysteria*. On the other hand, when the contagion involves wild enthusiasm about some person, object, or activity, the result is called a *craze*. Based on the views of functionalists, they see mass hysterias and crazes as collective responses to a breakdown in social order. They occur when large numbers of people are troubled but are not sure why or what to do to alleviate the problem. As a result, they become irrational in the sense that they are not aware of the real reason for their distress and their behaviour is not aimed at the actual source of the problem.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Express your views on collective behaviour as a breakdown in social order.

### TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is your understanding of collective behaviour? State and explain at least four (4) forms of collective behaviour.
2. Describe your understanding of collective behaviour as a breakdown in social order.



## SOCIAL CHANGE

One of the central problems of sociology is change, most especially social change. In the middle of the nineteenth century, the first attempts at sociological analysis were prompted by the need to explain two great waves of change that were sweeping across Europe; namely, industrialisation, and the expansion of democracy and human rights in the wake of the American and French Revolutions.

Auguste Comte, in his theory of social dynamics, proposed that societies progressed through a series of predictable stages based on the development of human knowledge. The general tendency of nineteenth-century theories of social change was towards historicism and utopianism.

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

Some of the most dramatic social changes in modern times have been initiated by such interventions as the motorcar, antibiotics, television, and computers. Change can also come through the impact of environmental factors such as drought, famine, and interventional shifts in economic or political change.

### DEFINITION OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Wilmot (1985: 174) sees social change as "the alteration in the sources or organization of society or its component parts overtime." This alteration, he says, may be in terms of four variables, viz: size, complexity, direction and functions. In terms of size, a society can, through deliberate policies, bring about a change in itself. A practical example is the creation of local government areas from already existing ones by government. Once size changes, functions, direction and complexity will invariably change.

Mac Gee *et al* (1977: 589) refer to social change as the transformation in patterns of social organisation or activity. The emphasis in this definition is on the changes which the transformation process introduced into the older order of society. Therefore, social change can be seen as an overhaul of the socio-political, economic and other structures of society. It is either gradual and imperceptible or sudden.

Some minor changes that take place in the lives of individuals and small, limited groups may not be regarded as social changes although these kinds of changes may be the manifestations or effects of changes that are taking place at larger scale. Changes in the material and non- material contents of a culture also may not be regarded as social changes. However, it is very difficult to separate social changes from cultural change. Because the two are usually interdependent, social change may usually introduce cultural changes, and vice versa.

## **SOME OF THE BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL CHANGE ARE THE FOLLOWING (INDRANI, 1998; TEAM OF EXPERTS, 2000):**

1. Social change occurs all the time. Its process may be imperceptible and can be cumulative, i.e., one may not easily perceive the processes of social change, although it is always taking place.
2. There is no society that is static and unchanging. All societies are susceptible to social change. In other words, social change is a universal phenomenon (it is everywhere and anywhere). It is spread both over time and space.
3. Change occurs both at micro-level and macro- level. The point here is that while social change often refers to noticeable changes in social phenomena, we must not lose sight of the fact that small changes in minor relationships can also be significant.
4. The influence of change in one area can have an impact on other related areas. That is, social change is contagious, like infectious diseases.
5. Social change has a rate; it can be rapid or slow.

## **DETERMINANTS/SOURCES OF SOCIAL CHANGE**

Social change can be as a result of the following:

### **Discovering**

Parsons (1951) defined discovery as an addition to knowledge. "Discovery refers to such matters as the discovery of new astral bodies, new elements and new treatment for disease (Parsons, 1951: 94).

### **Education**

Education, as it is, involves the process of transmitting ideas, knowledge and values to individuals in order to bring about a change in their behaviour. The knowledge and skills gained from education are usually being applied which therefore brings about changes of all sorts.

This is another source of social change. Invention has to do with combining existing elements of culture so that something new could be produced. Invention as a source of social change is of two types:

### **Material inventions and social inventions.**

Material inventions have to do with the idea and materials available to the inventor. Social inventions relate to things such as alphabet, constitutional governments, etc.

**The various factors that promote or hinder social change may be generally categorized as socio-cultural, psychosocial, economic, natural, demographic, political, and so on.**

Natural factors may include climate changes, the discovering of natural resources such as, minerals, petroleum, etc., are those which are considered as having positive effects on society.

Other natural factors are natural disasters such as earthquake, flood, famine, drought, and pestilence and so on. The emergence of HIV /AIDS as pestilence is for example having great effects on the social arrangement and organization of societies.

Demographic factors-migration, urbanization, population growth, etc., are also important ones in bringing about socio-cultural change.

Political factors such as planned change by government, change of state ideology, etc., are also important.

Other factors such as war, scientific invention and discoveries, diffusion of non-material and material elements of culture through education and trade relations, etc., also promote social change.

#### **SELF-ASSESSMENT**

1. Explain the sources of social change.

#### **RESISTANCE TO CHANGE**

Several factors have been identified mostly by sociologists as making people to resist change. Some have argued in favour of economic costs of the change; some have also argued in favour of the early imperfections in new inventions.

Change can be resisted due to some other factors which include the threats constituted by the change; strong opposition particularly from concerned groups, the difficulty in adapting to new things developed, etc. All these could make people to resist change of any sort. .

Last but not the least psychosocial factors like beliefs, vested interests, sacred values, attitudes, resistance to change or to accept and entertain new things and intending to maintain the *status quo* are also very important forces.

#### **SELF-ASSESSMENT**

1. What do you understand by resistance to change?

#### **THEORIES OF SOCIAL CHANGE**

Theories of social change have generally been concerned with the direction of change and the manner in which change occur. Sociologists want to explain the nature, direction, cause and effects of social change. Some of the theories of social change are the following (Calhoun *et al*, 1994; Rosenberg, 1987; Macionis, 1997).

##### ***Structural Functionalist Theory***

This theory states that social change takes place as the diversification and division of labor increases in the social system of a given society. Structural functionalists focus

on the cohesion, order and stability of social system. Change disrupts the orderly functioning of the system. Structural- functionalist theory focuses on the effect of social change on the structure of society, the function and dysfunction of change, stability and equilibrium of the social system. When change takes place, it affects the order and equilibrium of the social system and thus the system has to bring itself back to the equilibrium, to smooth functioning of the system.

### ***Conflict Theory***

This theory states that social change takes place due to the ever-present class conflicts in the social system for the better or worse. According to this theory, thus, social change is the result of social conflicts and is essential and beneficial. Every social system contains within itself the seeds of change as far as it is a system wherein exploitation of one group by another exists. Social change continues to become inevitable until a classless society emerges, one in which conflicts cease to exist.

### ***Cyclic Theory***

This theory states that society undergoes change in circular manner. Social change takes a cyclic form, from worse to better, back again from better to worse. Social change is not always for the better. Societies may grow, advance, and reach peak stage of development, and then they may stagnate and finally collapse, with the potential for rising again.

### ***Linear Theory***

This theory states that change takes place in a linear manner. The direction of social change is from worse to better, simple to complex and backward to modern. In other words, according to linear theory, social change is evolutionary; it is always towards the better way until perfection is achieved.

### ***Modernization Theory***

This theory of social change may be regarded as an extension of linear, evolutionary theory. It states that the change that is being experienced by most Third World societies is by imitating or copying the values, experiences, and models of already modernized societies. It is by adopting; assimilating and internalizing those aspects of the industrialized societies which if copied would bring about an improved social, economic and political development to the society.

### **Factors That Facilitate and Hinder Positive Social Change**

The various factors that promote or hinder social change may be generally categorized as socio-cultural, psychosocial, economic, natural, demographic, political, and so on. Natural factors may include climate changes, the discovering of natural resources such as, minerals, petroleum, etc., are those which are considered as having positive effects on society. Other natural factors are natural disasters such as earthquake, flood, famine, drought, and pestilence and so on. The emergence of HIV /AIDS as pestilence is for example having great effects on the social arrangement and organization of societies.

Demographic factors-migration, urbanization, population growth, etc., are also important ones in bringing about socio-cultural change. Political factors such as planned change by government, change of state ideology, etc., are also important. Other factors such as war, scientific invention and discoveries, diffusion of non-material and material elements of culture through education and trade relations, etc., also promote social change.

Last but not the least psychosocial factors like beliefs, vested interests, sacred values, attitudes, resistance to change or to accept and entertain new things and intending to maintain the *status quo* are also very important forces.

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT*

1. (a) What do you understand by the term "Social change"?  
(b) What are the benefits of social change?  
© What are the shortcomings of social change?
2. Explain carefully the determinants/sources of social change with examples.
3. Describe the factors involved in resistance to change
4. What is social change? Why does social change take place? Discuss the social and cultural change that is taking place in the present Ugandan society.

#### *TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT*

1. Analyse the role of journalism towards social change?
2. Explain the social changes, their causes and solutions.
3. Explain the meaning and determinants of social change.

#### *SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE*

1. What are social processes? Compare social processes with biological processes.
2. Discuss the necessity of competition and conflict as social processes.
3. Discuss the micro- and macro aspects of assimilation as a social process.
4. What is social stratification? How does the concept of social stratification compare with stratification in the world of rocks and minerals?
5. How is social stratification created? What is the necessity of social stratification in society?
6. Discuss the different forms of social stratification.
7. What is the effect of caste as a social stratification on the living standards of individuals and social groups? Do you think that there are diseases individuals suffer from that are the results of social stratification? If yes mention and discuss some of them.
8. What is social mobility? Discuss why social mobility takes place, the effects of it on the well being of individuals in a given society.
9. Discuss the type of social immobility you or your family has experienced or is experiencing.
10. What is social change? Why does social change take place? Discuss the social and cultural change that is taking place in the present Ethiopian society.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1. What do you understand by the terms *social pathologies* and *social problems*?
2. Why do social pathologies occur in a given society?
3. What are some of the main social pathologies that appear to be universally occurring in all societies?
4. Which of the social pathologies are more common in developed societies? Why?
5. Mention and discuss some of the social pathologies that are seriously facing our contemporary Uganda society.
6. Why do some of the social problems appear to be more rampant and challenging in today's society than in the past?
7. Discuss the HIV/AIDS pandemic as social pathology in Uganda and the Sub-Saharan Africa today.

## GLOSSARY

**Accommodation:** is a social process whereby people try to accept one another, avoiding the sources of conflict to live in peaceful coexistence

**Achieved statuses:** are those positions in society that to be attained by competitions, making efforts, commitments, choices, decisions, and other mechanisms.

**Actual role:** social role which a person accomplishes according to his or her level of understanding, capacity and personality

**Adult socialization:** (see *secondary socialization*)

**Aggregates:** A quasi-social groups which are characterized by physical proximity and lack any meaningful social interaction, norms and sense of belongingness.

**Agricultural societies:** This society, which still is dominant in most parts of the world, is based on large-scale agriculture, which largely depends on ploughs using animal labor.

**Alienation:** The phenomenon of being dehumanized and detached from the psychosocial support system due to system of domination, exploitation powerlessness and exploitation in the capitalist society.

**Anticipatory socialization:** refers to the process of adjustment and adaptation in which individuals try to learn and internalize the roles, values, attitudes and skills of a social status or occupation for which they are likely recruits in the future

**Applied sociology:** the application of sociological knowledge, principles, methods, concepts and theories to provide the solutions to the contemporary social pathologies. Sociology plays practical roles to tackle social pathologies

**Ascribed social status:** are positions that are naturally given and they are acquired by birth

**Assimilation:** is a social process whereby a group of individuals learns and accepts the values, norms, etc., of another group and becomes sometimes virtually identical with the dominant groups.

**Avenues of Social Mobility:** are the doors through which a person moves upward in the social hierarchy.

**Case Study:** A method which involves investigating a certain issue as a case taking longer time and investigating the phenomenon in depth.

**Casework:** A method of social work in which individuals in problems are addressed

**Caste:** This is the form of social stratification whereby classification of people into different strata is made on the basis of usually religious and other very strong conventions/ traditions that are difficult to change.

**Category:** A quasi-social group which is characterized by dispersed collectivity, and members sharing common socioeconomic characteristics.

**Change agents:** Those who work to bring about desired, positive change in eh lies of target groups.

**Childhood socialization** (see *primary socialization*)



**Classical conditioning:** a type of conditioning in which the response remains constant while the stimuli vary.

**Client systems:** (also called **target groups**), are people who are in need of the guidance and professional assistance of **change agents**.

**Community organization:** A method of social work in which the whole community is addressed as a target.

**Competition:** is the process whereby individuals, groups, societies, and countries make active efforts to win towards getting their share of the limited resources.

**Conditioning:** refers to the response pattern that is built into an organism as a result of stimuli in the environment, as in Pavlovian experiment.

**Conformists:** Those members of a society or a group who abide by the rules and norms of the society (or the group).

**Control theory:** A sociological theory of crime and deviance which states that every person is naturally prone to make deviance, but most of us conform to norms because of effective system of inner and outer control

**Cooperation:** is a social process whereby people join hands towards achieving common goals.

**Cross sectional survey:** A survey technique which aims to find out what opinions research participants across sections of society have about a certain phenomena at a given point of time his survey represents fixed reflections of one moment in time.

**Cultural imperialism:** the unequal cultural exchange in the global system whereby western material and non-material cultures have come to occupy a dominating and imposing roles over the indigenous cultures of the Third World peoples.

**Cultural relativism:** The view that each society's culture should be understood in its own context; one's cultural lens should not be applied in judging other cultural values

**Cultural universals:** those culture traits, norms, values, rules etc which are shared by more or less all people in a given group or which are found universally among all societies

**Cultural variability:** refers to the diversity of cultures across societies and places

**Culture:** A complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society

**Culture lag:** A phenomenon whereby non-material culture changes slowly, while material culture change fast.

**Culture lead:** The phenomenon whereby in some less developed societies, the change of non-material culture may outpace the material culture.

**Culture shock:** is the psychological and social maladjustment at micro or macro level that is experienced for the first time when people encounter new cultural elements such as new things, new ideas, new concepts, seemingly strange beliefs and practices

**Custom:** Is a folkway or form of social behavior that, having persisted a long period of time, has become traditional and well established in a society and has received some degree of formal recognition.

**Deductive approach:** An approach in which the researcher attempts to derive specific assertions and claims from a general theoretical principle; an approach which goes from general theory to particular claims

**De-socialization:** refers to stripping individuals of their former life styles, beliefs, values and attitudes so that they may take up other partially or totally new life styles, attitudes and values.

**Differential association theory:** A sociological theory of deviance and crime maintains that people learn deviant acts through socialization;

**Dramaturgy:** A symbolic interactionist term referring to the way individuals present themselves in everyday life

**Enlightenment:** is the eighteenth century social philosophical movement that emphasized human progress and the power of reason, and based on Darwinian theory of evolution.

**Ethnocentrism:** the attitude that one's own culture and one's own way of life is the center of the world and the best of all. This arises from ignorance about other ethnic groups and their ways of lives.

**Ethno-methodology:** literally meaning *the study of people's methods* is the study of how people make sense of life; involving uncovering people's basic assumptions as they interpret their everyday world.

**Experimentation:** A type of quantitative research technique used to explore cause and effect relationship between one and the other social phenomena. What causes what? What is the effect of one social phenomenon on the other?

**Extended family:** A form of family mainly in traditional, agrarian and rural societies which consists of husband, wife/ wives, their children, and other relatives

**Family:** is a minimal social unit that cooperated economically and assumes responsibilities for rearing children.

**Fashion:** Is a form of behavior, type of folkways that is socially approved at a given time but subject to periodic change.

**Feminism:** The theory that takes as its central theme the place and facts of women's underprivileged status and their exploitation in a patriarchally dominated society. Feminist sociology focuses on the particular disadvantages, including oppression and exploitation faced by women in society

**Focus group discussion:** a form of qualitative data collection method in which intends to make use of the explicit interaction dynamic among group members which may yield important information on certain topic

**Folkways:** Are the ways of life developed by a group of people.

**Formal laws:** are written and codified social norms

**Group work:** A method of social work in which small sized social groups I facing certain social problems are addressed.

**Horticultural societies:** are those whose economy is based on cultivating plants by the use of simple tools, such as digging sticks, hoes, axes, etc.

**Horizontal social mobility:** is movement within a social class or a social position where the individual slightly improves and/or declines in his social position within his/ her class level.

**Hunting and gathering societies:** The simplest type of society that is in existence today and that may be regarded the oldest is that whose economic organization is based on hunting and gathering.

**Hypothesis:** A tentative statement waiting to be tested or proved by empirical data

**Ideal role:** that which a person is expected to perform theoretically.

**In-depth interview:** A method of qualitative data collection in which the researcher asks informants on certain issues taking long time and going deeply into the issue.

**Inductive method:** is a method by which the scientist first makes observation and collects data, on the basis of which he or she formulates **hypothesis** and **theories**

**Industrial Society:** An industrial society is one in which goods are produced by machines powered by fuels instead of by animal and human energy

**Inter-generational Social Mobility:** This type of social mobility involves the movement up or down, between the social class of one or two generations of a family, or a social group

**Inter-role conflict:** role conflicts occurring between two or more roles.

**Intra-generational mobility:** a type of social mobility referring to individual changes in positions during one's lifetime. It may also refer to the change that occurs in social groups or a country's socioeconomic position over a specified period of time.

**Intra-role conflicts:** role conflict occurring when a person feels strains and inadequacies in accomplishing a certain role, or when there is a gap between what a person does and what a group expects of him or her.

**Key informant interview:** An anthropological method in which very knowledgeable individuals in the community are identified and the researcher learns lots of issues about the community life.

**Labeling theory:** A sociological theory of crime and deviance which states that behaviors are deviant when and only because people label them as such

**Language:** a system of verbal and in many cases written symbols with rules about how those symbols can be strung together to convey more complex meanings.

**Liberal feminism:** A variant of feminist sociology which recognizes inequalities but believes that reform can take place without a fundamental restructuring of the social system **Operant** (see also **instrumental conditioning**): A type of conditioning in which response is controlled.

**Longitudinal survey:** is conducted on the same type of people over long period of time, as long as sometimes

**Macro- sociology:** A level of sociological analysis that studies the large-scale aspects of society.

**Material culture:** The tangible things created by people, such as tools, technological products, etc

**Meso-level analysis:** A level of sociological analysis that takes into account human social phenomena in between the micro- and macro-levels

**Micro-sociology:** A level of sociological analysis that is interested in small-scale level of the structure and functioning of human social groups

**Mores:** Are important and stronger social norms for existence, safety, well-being and continuity of the society or the group or society

**Negative social control:** A type of social control which *involves* punishment or regulating behavior of deviants

**Network conception of society:** An approach which views society as overlapping, dynamic and fluid network of economic, political, cultural and other relations at various levels.

**Non-conformists:** those who don't abide by the norms of a society.

**Non-material culture:** The non-tangible, ideational phenomena such as values, language, beliefs, norms, ways of acting and doing things, etc

**Non-participant observation:** collecting data without participating in what the informants or the subjects do

**Norms:** are implicit principles for social life, relationship and interaction. Norms are detailed and specific rules for specific situations

**Nuclear family** is a dominant form of family organization in modern, industrialized and urban societies, which consists of husband wife and dependent children

**Obtrusive measures:** meaning the data are gathered while the study subjects' behaviors actions are directly observed and they know that they are being researched.

**Panel surveys:** are alternative versions of longitudinal surveys. It usually lasts shorter period of time and asks questions of panel members on a frequent basis.

**Participant observation:** the active involvement in community life while studying it. The researcher participates in a research setting while observing what is happening in that setting

**Participatory socialization:** is a form of socialization which is oriented towards gaining the participation of the child

**Pastoral societies:** are those whose livelihood is based on pasturing of animals, such as cattle, camels, sheep and goats

**Planned social change:** a conscientious, deliberate and purposeful action to achieve a determined change in the part of a client system

**Positive Social Control:** the mechanisms which involve rewarding and encouraging those who abide by the norms

**Post-industrial society:** This is a society based on information, services and high technology, rather than on raw materials and manufacturing

**Post-modernism:** is a cultural and aesthetic phenomenon which mainly rejects order and progress, objective and universal truth; and supports the need for recognizing and tolerating different forms of reality.

**Post-structuralism:** the theory which focuses on the power of language in constructing knowledge and identity.

**Primary data:** Is that which is collected by the sociology themselves during their own research using research tools such as experiment, survey, questionnaire, interviews and observation

**Primary functions:** are the manifest, explicit, or direct functions of social institutions.

**Primary groups:** The forms of social groups which are relatively small in size and characterized by personal, informal and face-to-face social interaction.

**Primary socialization:** The most basic stage of socialization whereby basic personality characters are forged during childhood. It is also called basic or **early** socialization

**Public choice theory:** The theory which states that collective organizations such as political parties act rationally to maximize their own benefits

**Qualitative data:** those which are expressed in terms of descriptive statements, about the depth, details and sensitive dimensions of information which are difficult to express in terms of numbers.

**Quantitative data:** those which are mainly expressed in terms of numbers, percentages, rates to measure size, magnitude, etc.

**Quasi-groups:** Collectivity of people which lack some of the essential features of a social group.

**Questionnaires:** highly structured questions, used in collecting usually quantitative information.

**Radical feminism:** A variant of feminist sociology that advocates the fundamental need for societal change.

**Random sample:** A technique wherein all members of a population have equal chances of being included in the study population.

**Rational choice theory:** This theory assumes that individuals will operate in rational way and will seek to benefit themselves in the life choices they make

**Repressive socialization:** A type of mode of socialization which is oriented towards gaining obedience.

**Re-socialization:** means the adoption by adults of radically different norms and life ways that are more or less completely dissimilar to the previous norms and values.

**Respondents:** people who provide information in survey research.

**Reverse socialization:** refers to the process of socialization whereby the dominant socializing persons, such as parents, happen to be in need of being socialized themselves by those whom they socialize, such as children

**Role performance:** The actions and roles played on the stage of everyday life by individual actors

**Role set:** The different roles associated with a single status.

**Salient status:** a dominant social status, that which defines a person's position in most cases at most occasions.

**Scientific method:** is, as the source for scientific knowledge, a logical system used to evaluate data derived from systematic observation.

**Secondary data:** are those which are already collected by someone else found in various sources as documents or archives. They include: official statistical documents, mass media sources (such as electronic media – radio, television, films, etc; and print media such as newspapers, magazines, journals, posters, brochures, leaflets, sign boards, etc.)

**Secondary functions:** are the indirect, hidden, or latent functions of social institutions.

**Secondary groups:** More formal social groups which are characterized by impersonal, bureaucratic social relationships.

**Secondary socialization:** A stage of socialization which takes after childhood, during adult life, when individuals are taking new roles.

**Social action:** refers to any action oriented to influence by another person or persons. It is not necessary for more than one person to be physically present for action to be regarded as social action

**Social change:** the alteration or transformation at large scale level in the social structure, social institutions, social organization and patterns of social behavior in a given society or social system.

**Social class:** A group of individuals who share similar socio-economic backgrounds

**Social conflict:** Conflict involving clash of interest between individuals in a social group like in a family or between groups or societies. It results due to power imbalance, due to unfair distribution of resources.



**Social conflict theory:** This theory is also called Marxism; to indicate that the main impetus to the theory derives from the writings of Karl Marx. This theory sees society in a framework of class conflicts and focuses on the struggle for scarce resources by different groups in a given society.

**Social construction of reality:** the process by which we take the various elements available in our society and put them together to form a particular view of reality.

**Social control:** is thus simply defined as all the mechanisms and processes employed by a society to ensure conformity.

**Social Darwinism:** Spencer's ideas of the evolution of human society from the lowest ("barbarism") to highest form ("civilized") according to fixed laws, which is analogous to the biological evolutionary model.

**Social deviance:** movement away from the accepted social standards.

**Social dynamic:** A Comtean concept, which signifies the changing, progressing and developmental dimensions of society.

**Social exchange theory:** The theory that focuses on "the costs and benefits which people obtain in social interaction, including money, goods, and status. It is based on the principle that people always act to maximize benefit.

**Social facts:** A Durkheimian concept that refers to the patterns of behavior that characterize a social group in a given society; they are distinct from biological and psychological facts.

**Social function:** are consequences for the operations of society.

**Social groups:** is the collectivity or set of people who involve in more or less permanent or enduring social interactions and relationships.

**Social institution:** is an interrelated system of social roles and social norms, organized around the satisfaction of an important social need or social function.

**Social interaction:** Any action, event or phenomenon whereby two or more people are involved, saying or doing, or behaving in any manner.

**Social mobility:** is movement in the social space, the shifting or changing of statuses or class positions. Social mobility is a social process that takes place among individual members or groups in a society, as they interact with each other.

**Social organization:** the pattern of individual and group relations. The term "organization" signifies technical arrangement of parts in a whole, and the term "social", indicates the fact that individual and group relations are the outcomes of social processes.

**Social pathology:** generally refers to the *pathos of society*, i.e., the "social diseases" that affect society.

**Social problem:** may mean any problem that has social origins, affecting at least two persons, that goes beyond mere psychological and physiological levels.

**Social processes:** are certain repetitive, continuous forms of patterns in the social systems that occur as individuals, groups, societies, or countries interact with each other.

**Social relationship:** refers to any routinized, enduring patterns of social interactions between individuals in society under the limits and influences of the social structure.

**Social roles:** are the expectations, duties, responsibilities, obligations, etc., which are associated with a given social status.

**Social stratification:** is the segmentation of society into different hierarchical arrangements or strata. It refers to the differences and inequalities in the socioeconomic life of people in a given society.

**Social structure:** is a relatively stable pattern of social behavior.

**Social static:** A Comtean concept, which signifies the social order and those elements of society, and social phenomena that tend to persist and are relatively permanent, defying change.

**Social status:** is the position or rank a person or a group of persons occupy in the social system.

**Social work (social action):** is described as an individual's, group's, or community's effort within the framework of social philosophy and practices that aim at achieving social progress to modify social policies to improve social legislation, health and welfare services.

**Socialization:** is a process whereby individual persons learn and are trained in the basic norms, values, beliefs, skills, attitudes, way of doing and acting as appropriate to a specific social group or society.

**Society:** A group people occupying a particular territory and sharing common culture

**Sociological imagination:** is a particular way of looking at the world around us through sociological lenses. It is "a way of looking at our experiences in light of what is going on in the social world around us."

**Sociology:** The scientific study human society.

**Stereotypes:** are the assumptions we have about people; they determine and shape our reactions and behaviors towards people

**Street children:** are those who are born to homeless people or those who come from various parts of the country to urban centers and live in the streets.

**Structural functionalist theory:** The theory that tries to explain how the relationships among the parts of society are created and how these parts are functional (meaning having beneficial consequences to the individual and the society) and dysfunctional (meaning having negative consequences).

**Structural strain theory:** A sociological theory of crime and deviance which maintains that deviance occurs when conformity to widely accepted norms of behavior fails to satisfy legitimate, culturally approved desires.

**Structuralism:** the theory that defines social reality in terms of the relations between events, not in terms of things and social facts. Its basic principle is that the observable is meaningful only in so far as it can be related to an underlying structure or order.

**Subculture:** denotes the variability of culture within a certain society. Sub culture is a distinctive culture that is shared by a group within a society

**Subjective meanings:** the ways in which people interpret their own behavior or the meanings people attach their own behavior.

**Survey method:** a quantitative method of research which involves sampling, impersonal data collections, and sophisticated statistical analysis.

**Symbols:** are words, objects, gestures, sounds or images that represent something else rather than themselves

**Symbolic interactionist perspective:** The theory that stresses the analysis of how our behaviors depend on how we define others and ourselves.

It concentrates on process, rather than structure, and keeps the individual actor at the center

**Total institutions:** are an all-encompassing and often isolated from the community, which demand a thorough de-socialization of the new entrants before they assume full-fledged membership.

**Unobtrusive Measures:** Observing people's behavior while they are not aware of it. Here, this method involves techniques that do not interfere with the objects or events studied.

**Values:** are essential elements of non-material culture. They may be defined as general, abstract guidelines for our lives, decisions, goals, choices, and actions

**Vertical social mobility:** is a type of social mobility that individuals experience when they move from their social status to other higher or lower social status

**Vulnerability:** is a sociological concept which refers to the characteristics of individuals and social groups [along the lines of gender, age, ethnicity, occupation etc;] that determine [their capacity] to protect themselves, withstand and recover from disasters, including health hazards based on their access to material and non-material resources.

## TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss the role of sociology in journalism.
2. What is the role of journalism in promoting harmony?
3. Discuss the role of journalism in promoting social change?