BACHELOR OF ARTS

(BASOH)

ASSIGNMENT

July 2022 and January 2023 session

COURSE CODE: BSOC-101

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY MAIDAN GARHI, NEW DELHI-110068

BSOC 101: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY
Tutor Marked Assignment

Assignment A

Answer the following Descriptive Category questions in about 500 words each. Each question carries 20 marks.

2 x20=40

1. Discuss the similarities and differences between sociology and anthropology.

OR

Does sociology has relationship with history? Discuss.

2. How did sociological theory emerge? What was the factor of industrial revolution in its emergence?

OR

Explain the AGIL model of Talcott Parsons.

Assignment B

Answer the following Middle Category questions in about 250 words each. Each question carries 10 marks.

3 X 10 = 30

3. Examine mass media as an agent of socialization.

OR

Discuss the diversity of culture in India.

4. Discuss the concept of political culture as used in political sociology.

OR

What do you understand by social control? Explain.

5. Discuss the socio-cultural factors of social change.

OR

Examine Merton's ciritique of Parsons' functional theory.

Assignment C

Answer the following Short Category questions in about 100 words each. Each question carries 6 marks.

5 X 6 = 30

6. What is gemeinschaft?
7. What is ethnocentrism?
8. Differentiate between acculturation and assimilation.
9. What is master status?
10. What is social institution?

Assignment A

Answer the following Descriptive Category questions in about 500 words each. Each question carries 20 marks.

1. **Discuss the similarities and differences between sociology and anthropology.**
   ## OR
   Does sociology has relationship with history? Discuss.

   Ans:

   Discuss the similarities and differences between sociology and anthropology.

   Sociology and anthropology are two distinct but closely related social science disciplines that study human societies, cultures, and behavior. While they share some similarities in their methodologies and subject matter, they also have significant differences in their focus and approach. Let's explore the similarities and differences between sociology and anthropology:

   Similarities:

   1. **Study of Human Behavior:** Both sociology and anthropology are concerned with the study of human behavior, interactions, and societies. They seek to understand the patterns and dynamics of human social life.

   2. **Qualitative and Quantitative Methods:** Both disciplines use a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods to gather data. They conduct interviews, surveys, observations, and analyze statistical data to gain insights into human behavior.

   3. **Culture and Society:** Sociology and anthropology both examine the concept of culture and its role in shaping human behavior. They explore how cultural norms, values, and beliefs influence social interactions and institutions.

   4. **Comparative Perspective:** Both disciplines often adopt a comparative approach, studying different societies or cultures to identify similarities and differences. They aim to understand the universals and variations in human behavior and social structures.

   5. **Social Institutions:** Both sociology and anthropology analyze social institutions such as family, education, religion, politics, and economy. They study how these institutions function and impact individuals and communities.

   Differences:

   1. **Scope of Study:**

- Sociology primarily focuses on contemporary societies and modern social issues, such as urbanization, globalization, social inequality, and social change.

- Anthropology has a broader scope, encompassing both contemporary and historical societies, as well as prehistoric cultures. It includes the study of human evolution and the exploration of cultures that may have vanished or changed significantly over time.

2. **Approach to Culture:**

- Sociology often views culture as a shared set of ideas and practices within a specific society, emphasizing its role in shaping individuals' behaviors.

- Anthropology takes a more holistic approach to culture, considering it as a complex system that includes not only beliefs and practices but also social organization, kinship structures, and environmental adaptations.

3. **Level of Analysis:**

- Sociology focuses on the macro-level analysis of social structures, institutions, and large-scale social phenomena that affect society as a whole.

- Anthropology emphasizes a micro-level analysis of cultural practices, rituals, and behaviors, often studying individual communities or groups.

4. **Timeframe:**

- Sociology tends to examine more recent historical periods, as it deals with contemporary social issues and transformations.

- Anthropology has a longer timeframe, encompassing both historical and prehistoric periods to understand the development and changes in human societies and cultures over time.

5. **Subfields:**

- Sociology includes subfields like criminology, sociology of education, sociology of religion, and more, each focusing on specific aspects of society and social behavior.

- Anthropology includes four main subfields: cultural anthropology, archaeology, linguistic anthropology, and physical or biological anthropology, each with its unique research areas and methodologies.

In conclusion, while sociology and anthropology share common interests in studying human behavior and societies, they differ in their scope, approach, and focus. Sociology primarily examines contemporary societies and social issues at a macro-level, while anthropology takes a more holistic approach, studying diverse cultures and societies from both historical and contemporary perspectives. Together, these disciplines provide valuable insights into the complexities of human existence and social dynamics.

2. **How did sociological theory emerge? What was the factor of industrial revolution in its emergence?**

                                    OR

Explain the AGIL model of Talcott Parsons.

Ans:

Sociological theory emerged as a response to the significant societal changes brought about by the industrial revolution and other transformative events. It originated in the 19th century and has since developed and evolved to understand and explain the complexities of human societies. The industrial revolution played a crucial role in the emergence of sociological theory in several ways:

1. **Urbanization and Social Dislocation:** The industrial revolution led to mass migration from rural areas to urban centers, resulting in the rapid growth of cities. This urbanization brought about social dislocation and challenges related to housing, labor, and social order. Sociologists sought to understand the social consequences of this migration and the impact of urbanization on human behavior.

2. **Economic Transformations:** The shift from agrarian economies to industrial economies created new social classes, such as the working class and capitalist class. This socio-economic stratification and the unequal distribution of resources raised questions about social inequality and the nature of social classes, prompting sociologists to explore these issues.

3. **Social Change and Modernity:** The industrial revolution marked the beginning of a new era characterized by technological advancements, increased specialization, and modernization. Sociological theorists sought to understand the processes of social change and the challenges posed by modernity on traditional social structures and values.

4. **Social Problems and Injustices:** The industrial revolution brought to light numerous social problems and injustices, such as poor working conditions, child labor, and exploitation of workers. Sociological theorists like Karl Marx, Émile Durkheim, and Max Weber sought to analyze and critique these issues, laying the foundations for various sociological perspectives.

5. **Scientific Inquiry and Enlightenment:** The scientific revolution and the enlightenment period influenced the development of sociological theory. Scholars began to apply scientific methods and rational thinking to understand human societies systematically.

Key Figures in the Emergence of Sociological Theory:

- **Karl Marx**: Marx's theories focused on the conflict between social classes and the role of economic factors in shaping societies. He analyzed the capitalist mode of production and emphasized the significance of class struggle in driving social change.

- **Émile Durkheim**: Durkheim is considered one of the founders of sociology. He emphasized the study of social facts, the role of social integration, and the development of collective consciousness. His work laid the foundation for the functionalist perspective.

- **Max Weber**: Weber explored the rationalization of society, the influence of culture and religion on social behavior, and the development of bureaucracy. His theories contributed to understanding the role of ideas and values in shaping societies.

In conclusion, sociological theory emerged as a response to the profound societal changes brought about by the industrial revolution. The industrial revolution's impact on urbanization, social stratification, and social problems prompted scholars to develop systematic ways of understanding human societies, leading to the birth of sociology as a discipline and the emergence of various sociological theories.

Assignment B

Answer the following Middle Category questions in about 250 words each. Each question carries 10 marks.

3. **Examine mass media as an agent of socialization.**

Ans:

Mass media plays a significant role as an agent of socialization by influencing individuals' beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors in society. It is a powerful means of communication that reaches a large audience through various channels, such as television, radio, newspapers, magazines, the internet, and social media platforms. Mass media contributes to shaping individuals' social identity and understanding of the world around them in the following ways:

1. **Cultural Transmission**: Mass media serves as a primary source of information about culture, traditions, and societal norms. It transmits cultural knowledge, language, and values from one generation to another, helping individuals learn about their cultural heritage and societal expectations.

2. **Social Norms and Behavior**: Mass media portrays social norms, standards of behavior, and societal expectations through movies, TV shows, and advertisements. It influences how individuals perceive acceptable behavior, gender roles, family dynamics, and interpersonal relationships.

3. **Formation of Public Opinion**: Mass media has the power to influence public opinion on various issues, including politics, social issues, and current events. News coverage and editorials can shape how people think about specific topics and influence their attitudes and decisions.

4. **Role Models and Idols**: Media personalities, celebrities, and fictional characters often become role models for individuals, especially for the youth. They can influence aspirations, fashion choices, and lifestyle preferences, impacting how individuals present themselves in society.

5. **Socialization into Consumerism**: Mass media plays a crucial role in promoting consumer culture. Advertisements and marketing campaigns influence individuals' desires and purchasing decisions, leading to socialization into a consumerist society.

6. **Social Constructs and Stereotypes**: Mass media can reinforce or challenge social constructs and stereotypes. It can perpetuate biases based on race, ethnicity, gender, and other social categories, affecting individuals' perceptions of themselves and others.

7. **Globalization and Cultural Exchange**: Mass media facilitates global cultural exchange, allowing individuals to access information and perspectives from different cultures worldwide. It promotes cultural diversity and fosters a sense of interconnectedness.

However, it's essential to acknowledge that the influence of mass media on socialization is not unidirectional. Audiences are active recipients of media content, and their interpretation and response to media messages can vary based on individual characteristics, experiences, and critical thinking.

In conclusion, mass media acts as a potent agent of socialization, impacting how individuals perceive the world, understand societal norms, and develop their social identity. It influences cultural transmission, public opinion, role models, and consumer behavior, making it a significant force in shaping societal values and attitudes. As a society, we need to be aware of both the positive and negative effects of mass media and engage in critical media literacy to navigate its influence effectively.

4. Discuss the concept of political culture as used in political sociology.
Ans:

Political culture, in the field of political sociology, refers to the set of shared beliefs, values, attitudes, and norms that shape individuals' and groups' understanding of politics and government within a particular society. It encompasses the political ideas and behaviors that are deeply ingrained in a society and guide how people perceive, interact with, and participate in the political system. Political culture plays a crucial role in shaping the overall political climate and influencing political outcomes.

Key Elements of Political Culture:

1. **Beliefs and Values**: Political culture reflects the fundamental beliefs and values that individuals hold about the nature of political authority, democracy, justice, freedom, and equality. These beliefs serve as the foundation for political ideologies and impact political decision-making.

2. **Attitudes towards Government**: Political culture influences attitudes towards government institutions and political leaders. It can range from trust and legitimacy to skepticism and cynicism, affecting citizen engagement and participation.

3. **Political Socialization**: Political culture is often transmitted through the process of political socialization, where individuals learn political norms and values from family, schools, media, and other social institutions.

4. **Collective Identity**: Political culture fosters a sense of collective identity and national pride, defining who belongs to the political community and shaping the sense of belonging and loyalty to the nation-state.

5. **Political Participation**: Political culture influences patterns of political participation, including voting, protests, social movements, and engagement with civic organizations.

6. **Tolerance and Pluralism**: Political culture can also shape attitudes towards diversity, pluralism, and minority rights, influencing whether a society is inclusive and accepting of different perspectives and identities.

Significance of Political Culture:

1. **Stability and Continuity**: Political culture provides stability and continuity to a political system by shaping individuals' long-term political attitudes and behaviors.

2. **Political Change**: At the same time, political culture can be a force for political change. Shifts in political culture can lead to transformations in political ideologies and policies.

3. **Comparative Politics**: Studying political culture allows for comparative analysis across different societies, revealing variations in political attitudes and behavior among nations.

4. **Public Policy**: Political culture influences public policy formation and implementation, as policymakers are often responsive to the prevailing values and beliefs in society.

5. **Democratic Governance**: In democratic societies, a shared political culture that values democratic principles is essential for the functioning of democratic governance.

Overall, political culture provides insights into the collective mindset of a society, illuminating the political values and norms that shape political processes and outcomes. Understanding political

culture is vital for comprehending the dynamics of politics, governance, and citizen engagement within a specific society or nation.

4. Discuss the socio-cultural factors of social change.

Ans:

Sociocultural factors are significant drivers of social change, influencing how societies evolve and adapt over time. These factors encompass various aspects of social life, including cultural values, beliefs, norms, social institutions, technology, demographic shifts, and interactions between different social groups. Here are five key sociocultural factors that contribute to social change:

1. **Cultural Values and Beliefs**: Changes in cultural values and beliefs can have a profound impact on society. As cultural norms evolve, attitudes towards issues like gender roles, family structures, religion, and individual freedoms can shift, leading to changes in social practices and institutions.

2. **Technological Advancements**: Technological innovations can trigger significant social change. Advancements in communication, transportation, and information technology, for example, have transformed how people interact, access information, and conduct business, leading to globalization and interconnectedness.

3. **Demographic Shifts**: Changes in population demographics, such as aging populations, urbanization, and migration, can drive social change. These shifts influence societal structures, workforce dynamics, and the distribution of resources, shaping the economic and social landscape.

4. **Social Movements and Activism**: Social movements advocating for civil rights, environmental protection, gender equality, and other causes can bring about significant social change. They challenge existing power structures, demand policy reforms, and raise awareness about pressing issues, leading to shifts in societal attitudes and policies.

5. **Interactions between Cultures**: Interactions between different cultures through trade, migration, and communication can lead to cultural exchange and the diffusion of ideas, customs, and practices. These interactions can foster cultural pluralism and shape social identities, contributing to the cultural richness and diversity of societies.

Social change is a complex and dynamic process influenced by a combination of sociocultural factors, political, economic, and environmental forces. The interplay of these factors can lead to gradual, incremental changes or rapid, transformative shifts in society. Societies are continuously evolving, and understanding the role of sociocultural factors in social change is crucial for policymakers, social scientists, and individuals alike in navigating the challenges and opportunities presented by a changing world.

Assignment C
Answer the following Short Category questions in about 100 words each. Each question carries 6 marks.

6. What is gemeinschaft?
Ans:

Gemeinschaft is a German term used in sociology to describe a traditional and close-knit community characterized by strong social bonds, shared values, and a sense of collective identity. In gemeinschaft societies, social relationships are based on personal connections and mutual support rather than formal institutions. Members often have a sense of belonging and interdependence, and social norms are deeply rooted in tradition and customs. This type of community contrasts with gesellschaft, which refers to more modern and impersonal societies characterized by individualism, rationality, and formal organizations.

7. What is ethnocentrism?
Ans:

Ethnocentrism is a concept in sociology and anthropology that refers to the tendency of individuals or groups to evaluate other cultures, beliefs, and practices based on the standards and values of their own culture. It involves seeing one's own culture as superior or the "right" way of doing things, while viewing other cultures as inferior, strange, or even threatening. Ethnocentrism can lead to prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination against people from different cultures, as well as hinder cross-cultural understanding and cooperation. Overcoming ethnocentrism requires cultural relativism, which involves understanding and respecting the diversity of cultures without judgment or bias.

8. Differentiate between acculturation and assimilation.
Ans:

Acculturation and assimilation are both processes that occur when individuals or groups from different cultures come into contact. However, they have distinct outcomes:

1. Acculturation: Acculturation involves the exchange and adoption of cultural elements between different cultures, often resulting in a blend of customs, language, and practices. In acculturation, both the dominant culture and the minority culture influence each other, maintaining some aspects of their original identity while also integrating elements from the other culture.

2. Assimilation: Assimilation occurs when individuals or groups from a minority culture adopt the values, norms, and behaviors of the dominant culture to the extent that they lose their distinct cultural identity. Assimilation usually leads to a more homogenous society, where the minority culture becomes indistinguishable from the dominant culture.

9. What is master status?
Ans:

Master status, in sociology, refers to a primary social identity or role that holds exceptional significance and dominates how an individual is perceived by others and how they perceive themselves. It becomes the most salient characteristic, overshadowing other social identities the individual may possess. Master status can be based on various factors such as race, gender, occupation, or disability. This concept highlights how society often assigns a singular and defining label to an individual, influencing how they are treated and how they navigate social interactions. Master status can have a profound impact on an individual's self-concept and social interactions within their community.

10. What is social institution?
Ans:

A social institution is a complex and organized system of norms, rules, and practices that fulfill specific social needs and functions within a society. These institutions provide stability, order, and structure to social life, regulating various aspects of human behavior and interactions. Examples of social institutions include the family, education system, government, economy, religion, and healthcare. Each institution serves distinct roles in society, shaping individuals' behaviors, beliefs, and values, and contributing to the overall functioning and maintenance of a cohesive and organized social order. Social institutions are fundamental building blocks of societies and play a vital role in shaping individuals' socialization and collective behavior.