06 Work and Economic Life

# Unit 06 Work and Economic Life

Notion of Work -

* Natural Sciences - Expenditure of Energy
* Sociology - Work is a social activity performed in groups. It is about the power relations, social dynamics, conflicts, functions performed, etc.

Work is the basis of Economy!  
Study of Work in sociology is important because economy and production influence all other parts of the society

Industrialization & Modernisation together led to the formation of new discipline Sociology

[[<#Marx>]] Work/Production of goods and services is an avenue of expression of creativity and a way to happiness and satisfaction. When workers loose control they are alienated  
[[<#ED>]] Work is an integrating force in modern societies and forms the basis of organic solidarity

Work - Carrying of tasks requiring the expenditure of physical and mental efforts, with the objective of production of goods and services catering to human needs.  
Economic Sociology - Work is an activity which results in paid employment, reward or contract

## Need of Work in Society

### Importance of Work in modern societies -

1. Source of Income & Living - Money Market
2. Breaks monotony of domestic life
3. Gives identity to a person, as in Industrial societies, a person is known by the work carried out
4. Provides opportunity to build Social Capital
5. Directs human energy in constructive way to acquire skills

### Social Significance of Work

1. Money - Economic need
2. Activity level - Experiment & experience Skills
3. Variety - Breaks monotony
4. Temporal Structure - Proved sense of direction on a daily basis
5. Social Contracts - Friendship

Work > Employment

## Social Organisation of Work

Organisation of Work - Patterning of activities which involves a technical & social component  
Technically - Division of Labour  
Socially - reflects normative structure of Society in the form of stratified order

### General Schema - Dimensions of analysis of organisation of work

1. Production Activities - Hunting-gathering, mass production, agriculture
2. Nature of Work - Simple/Complex, Formal/Informal
3. Source of Power - Land, capital. Classical [[<#Elites>]] - Power in individual qualities, [[<#Marx>]] - Power is in control of modes of production
4. Stratification System - Result of pattern of inequalities. Master-slave, Lord-Serf
5. Social Mobility - High-low, Ascriptive-acquired
6. Degree of Alienation - [[<#Marx>]] Peaks in Capitalism, [[<#Weber>]] Result of increasing rationalisation of work
7. Specific features - Gender roles, Age roles, Individualisation, Communal organisation

### Primitive Slave Societies

Man was overwhelmed by forces of nature, like rains, floods, which determined the social organisation. Forces of production were at lowest level and material density was low. Family was self-sufficient unit of production & consumption  
2 Classes

* Masters - Owners of mode of production & Slaves
* Slaves - often Prisoners of War

#### Features

1. Major Economic Activity -Hunting & Food gathering
2. Ancient Mode of Production - Few mastered the skills of hunting and enslaved others
3. Low division of labour
4. No specialised economic organisation - Occupational differentiation limited to birth, sex, age
5. Little/No Surplus - Poor specialisation so Low productivity
6. Low/Simple Stratification - because Inequalities are low
7. No private ownership
8. Religion dominates and interferes in Economic life
9. Low level of Innovation - Simple needs
10. Family role in production - Community based production
11. Power Source - Animated - human labour, animal power
12. Low level of Alienation - Workers enjoy fruits of their production
13. Simple economic system - No distinction between domestic & community economy

### Feudal Agrarian Society

Agriculture became a dominant, Land got slowly privatised, though ownership was largely communal.

#### Relationships based on

* Domination
* Subjection
* Exploitation

#### Features

1. Major economic activity - Agriculture
2. Feudalistic mode of production - based on Control over Land
3. Enhanced Division of Labour - 3 estates
   1. Nobility
   2. Clergy
   3. Serfs
4. Little Surplus - Markets start emerging
5. Low Social Mobility - Closed society, ascriptive in nature
6. Low Alienation - More autonomy & lesser specialisation
7. Religion dominant in workplace, family & Life

### Modern Capitalist / Industrial Society

Production increased, Surplus-trade - increased, usage of mechanical instruments increased, new markets emerged. Industries/Factories were setup.  
Man now controlled Nature

* [[<#Marx>]] - Exploitation of Workers by Capitalist + Alienation
* [[<#ED>]] - Complex Division of Labour > Increased Organic Solidarity > High Social Cohesion

#### Features

1. Major economic activity - Mass production in factories
2. Complex division of labour - specialisation increases
3. Centrality of Capital - Factory production - More importance to Capital, less to labour
4. Production for exchange & profit - Earlier it was for self-consumption. [[<#Marx>]] - Earlier goods had use value, now they have exchange value
5. Production based on Competition & not cooperation - Demand increased
6. High Alienation - Workers lose control over the produce & monotony of work is very high
7. Multiplicity of economic institutions - New services are needed, so new institutions like factories, bank, markets emerge
8. High Surplus
9. Money Economy - Money replaces barter system, labour is commoditised
10. Use of Inanimate Power - Leads to higher production & less human involvement
11. High Occupational Mobility - Due to increased means of communication
12. Work Life Separation - Domestic & Commercial activities are separated as community production replaced by factories
13. High Levels of Innovation - Individual has more freedom to be creative
14. Secular Economic Settings - Work organised more rationally, not on customs. Laws are progressive and Religion plays lesser role

[[<#Remaining>]]

## Relation between Work & Economy

### Social Determinants of Economic Development

Uneven economic development of various societies prove that economic development depends on various Social factors. [[<#Weber>]] proves this relation in Protestant Ethics & Spirit of Capitalism [[<#PESC>]]  
[[<#Goldthorpe>]] - Middle Class is not only about Wealth, but also about values & lifestyle

#### Social Factors affecting Economic Development

1. Education System
2. Religious beliefs [[<#PESC>]]
3. Social Stratification - Caste, Class, Gender
4. Personal values - Ascetism, hard work, enterprising
5. Demographic composition & Dependency ratio
6. Scientific advancement
7. Spread & penetration of Money economy
8. Urbanisation level
9. Secularisation

In case of [[<#IndianSociety>]], lack of Economic development due to -

1. Caste system rendered society fragmented
2. Worldly Ascetism - Religious practices Islam Hinduism
3. Joint family system focussed on affective aspects & less on liberal enterprising values
4. Lack of Political Unity in post Mughal period

### Industrialisation & Social Change

Industrialisation - Shift from animate (humans/animals) to inanimate (coal, electricity) source of power, Rise of factories & use of machinery in production of goods  
This phase was termed as Industrial Revolution [[<#IR>]] by Arnold [[<#Toynbee>]]  
Overall transformation of some societies & so some regions emerged more prosperous than others, Skewed Prosperity!

#### Social Changes due to IR

1. Occupational Shifts - Agriculture to Industry
2. Achievement based Division of Labour - Communal-family DoL gave way to Scientific Division of Labour
3. High DoL & Opportunity for Mobility - Increased stratification/specialisation
4. Changing Power Relations - Decline of estates and rise of Capitalism. Land no longer remained central, industry & trade emerged as new sources of power
5. New forms of Conflicts - Trade unionism, Labour mobilisation - New modes of class struggle
6. Demand for Skilled Jobs & Educational Changes - Education as agent of Social change & facilitator of skill development
7. Changing Family Structure - Mobile & Nuclear family
8. Revolution & Marxian Thoughts - Industrialisation & Capitalism lead to real change - arrival of Socialism
9. Misc. - More Jobs, more prosperity, better standard of life.

## Formal & Informal Work in Society

[[<#Amitai>]] Etzioni - Our society is an organisational society  
Organisations are social units with specific objective & goals to achieve unlike family, friends  
Rise in DoL -> Rise in various types of organisations

### Formal Organisation of Work

Worker is governed by formal rules & regulations

#### Characteristics -

1. Legal status
2. High DoL
3. Permanent Work
4. Primacy of structure
5. Rules & Regulations

### Informal Organisation of Work ~ Unorganised sector

Workers are governed by directions (often whims & fancies) of employer

#### Characteristics -

1. Low skilled
2. Easy entry
3. Low paid employment
4. Lacks social security
5. Immigrant Labour

#### 4 Theoretical Strands explaining existence of Informal Sector

1. Dualist School - Informal sector comprises of only a few marginal activities. Informal workers are excluded from modern economic activities
   1. Imbalance between population & economic growth rate
   2. Mismatch between peoples skills & structure of modern economic opportunities
2. Structuralist School - Views informal sector as subordinated economic activity. It is an essential feature of a Globalised free market system
3. Legalist School - Informal sector is made up of small entrepreneurs who choose to operate informally to avoid costs and registration
4. Voluntarist School - Informal entrepreneurs deliberately seek to avoid regulations & taxation but do not blame Bureaucratic process, but do so based on cost-benefit analysis

/expo

### Labour & Society