
UNIT 1 NATURE AND SCOPE OF SOCIOLOGY

Structure

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

After you have studied this unit, you should be able to:

- give a definition of sociology;
- describe social groups and their different classifications;
- explain the major concerns of sociology;
- describe the relation between sociology and science;
- explain the relation between sociology and other social sciences; and
- give in brief the ideas about the founding fathers of sociology such as, Comte, Durkheim, Weber, Marx, and Spencer

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Sociology, as compared to other social sciences, like economics and political science, is a young discipline. One could say, it is about a hundred-and-fifty years old but there

has been a more rapid development of the subject in the last fifty to sixty years. This is partly due to desire, particularly, after the Second World War, to understand more about the behaviour of people in social situations. All social science subjects are concerned with the behaviour of people but each of them studies different aspects. Sociology, however, is concerned with social relations in general, and with social groups and institutions in particular.

1.2 WHAT IS SOCIOLOGY?

Sociology can be defined as a study of society or social life, of group interaction and of social behaviour.

1.2.1 Concept of Society and Culture

Society has been defined as a relatively self sufficient, usually large group of people who maintain direct or indirect contact with each other through a culture. Culture is generally understood as the shared language, beliefs, goals, artefacts and experiences that combine together to form a unique pattern. In other words, culture is a society's way of life (Stebbins, Robert A. 1987; p- 172)

1.2.2 Emergence of Sociology

During the 19th century sociology emerged as separate social science in Europe and its objective was the study of society. Auguste Comte, Spencer and Emile Durkheim besides several other social thinkers sought to establish the idea of society as a matter of study, unique in itself. They examined society as a whole - which is more than the sum of its parts. Society is more than the actions, thoughts, values, belief and wishes of its individual members. It is a complex and abstract reality; yet all human beings live in a society.

A sociologist is interested in the general study of social behaviour as it occurs in groups, large or small, and lays special stress on understanding social life in the contemporary world. The word 'general' has been used as other social science disciplines deal with more specific areas. For example, a political scientist studies governmental functions and activities and an economist studies production and distribution of goods. It is, however, difficult to draw an exact line of difference. Social psychology, social anthropology, political science and economics, all in a sense, have human social life as their general subject.

As sociology is a relatively young discipline compared with the discipline of philosophy, economics and political science, sometimes, people confuse it with social work. Sociology is used in the discipline of social work to analyse and understand social problems. Social work is concerned with the uplift of those socially deprived, physically handicapped, etc. Sociology is not concerned with the reformation of society as such nor is it directly involved in social planning or directed change. The sociological understanding and research can help in better planning and in finding ways and means of acceptance of improved practices, in the formulation of development policies and programmes. It is generally accepted that sociologists do not interfere with social process. They are supposed to be value-neutral, i.e., they are not supposed to have any bias or prejudice in the analysis of the social behaviour. There are, however, at present, some, who question this and feel that sociologists must take an active role in the development process.

We have defined sociology as the study of social life and group interaction and social behaviour. In order to understand social life, sociology is interested in the study of the organisation and the functioning of societies or social groups.

1.2.3 Social Groups

Just as every human being is born in a society, everywhere, social life is lived in groups, whether large or small. The term ‘group’ is used in different ways. There might be a group, which is watching a game in progress, there might be a group of people crossing a street. In sociology, the group is viewed in a different way. It has already been mentioned that the basic interest of sociology is human social behaviour. This leads to a study of how people relate to each other or interact with each other. The social group, therefore, would have to have the following:

- i) a group of persons (two or more);
- ii) a patterned interaction (i.e., there is a regularity in the social relations, based on shared beliefs, values and norms); and
- iii) the interaction is sustained over a period of time.

The groups are formed in order to satisfy some human needs. A basic need is survival and a family, which is an example of a group, enables us to meet this need. As individuals, it is not possible to fulfil all the needs. It is through the groups that the needs are met. We derive many satisfactions from living in groups and therefore, being a part of the group becomes important. The solidarity of a group is dependent upon the frequency of interaction and the emotional attachment.

Box 1.1: Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft

Ferdinand Tonnies (1855-1936), a noted German sociologist, while examining different kinds of societies found that there were two kinds of social groups, similar to the concepts of primary and secondary groups found in all societies. He found that in small homogeneous societies members interacted with one another on face to face, informal basis. In these groups tradition dictated social behaviour. Tonnies called this kind of society a *Gemeinschaft*, which when translated means broadly “a communal, or traditional society”.

In comparison, societies that are large and heterogeneous, such as the modern industrial societies, relationships among members are impersonal, formal, functional and specialised. According to Tonnies these societies have often contractual relationships which are on the basis of clear cut, legal contracts rather than being governed by traditions. Tonnies calls these societies *Gesellschaft*, or “associational societies”.

1.2.4 Kinds of Social Groups

The classification of social groups in two major types is based on the extent of attachment the individual would have to a group. The major classifications are (i) primary and (ii) secondary groups.

- i) A primary group has been defined as one in which the members have very close or intimate relations and there is an emotional involvement. It has also been defined as primary because it is this group, which is chiefly responsible for nurture of social ideas of the individual. From the description above, we can go on to a more precise definition.

Personality of an individual is involved in a primary group. The best example of the primary group is the family. As one tries to analyse one’s behaviour within the family and the functions, the family performs for each individual member, one can understand the importance of a primary group in shaping the ideas, beliefs and norms of the members.

The primary groups (family, play groups, a community, etc.) also acts as a link between the individual and the larger society.

- ii) In contrast to the primary group, there are secondary groups. In the secondary group, members interact with one another in a very specific range of activities. The relationships in the secondary group are more casual, impersonal and for specific purposes. A student body of a large college is a secondary group as they interact as students. People working in a factory are also an example of a secondary group as they relate to each other as workers. You can see yourself how the relationships between the family and in a work place differ. From that, you will be able to understand the difference between primary and the secondary groups. The understanding of the nature of the groups and their functions is very important for understanding social behaviour.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space provided below for your answers.
ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Give a definition of sociology. Write about five lines.

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- 2) What is social group? Use about five lines for your answer.

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- 3) Given below are some social situations, which amongst them can be called primary group. Tick the correct answer:

- a) Meeting of political leaders during a summit.
- b) Children playing "Kho Kho" in a field.
- c) A feminist leader addressing women labourers.
- d) School Principal addressing students in an assembly.

1.3 MAJOR CONCERNs OF SOCIOLOGY

Sociology seeks to study the society and to analyse it in terms of the social relations that have a pattern. Sociology addresses itself to three basic questions:

- i) how and why societies emerge?
- ii) how and why societies persist? and
- iii) how and why societies change?

Sociology has been concerned with the evolution of society. It has tried to analyse the factors and forces underlying the historical transformations of society. For example, societies have evolved from primitive tribal state to rural communities. How villages have become important centres of commercial activity or of art and culture and grown into towns and cities.

Sociology has also been concerned with the units of social life. The attempt has been to look at various types of groups, communities, associations and society. The effort has been to study the pattern of social relationships in these units. An important area which sociology deals with is social institutions. The institutions provide a structure for the society and perform functions, which enable the society to meet its needs. In any society, there are five basic social institutions; family, political institutions, economic institutions, religious institutions and educational institutions. However, in more complex

societies, there may be many other institutions such as bureaucracy, military organisations, welfare and recreational organisations, etc. Caste is also an institution, which is more or less peculiar to India.

Another area of study and analysis by sociologists is social processes. In one sense, the social institutions provide the stability and order whereas social processes are the dynamic aspects of social relations. Among the various processes that will be dealt with in the latter units are socialisation, social control, co-operation, conflict, social deviation and social change.

1.3.1 Concept of Culture

'Culture' is another very important concept. As mentioned earlier, we are immersed in culture from birth onwards, we take culture for granted. It is difficult to imagine what life would be like without culture. Culture provides summing up of the past experiences, which are the necessary foundation for living in the present. Culture is learned and shared among members of the group. Culture in a sense, can seem to be the chief means of survival and adaptation.

On each of the topics mentioned, which are concerns of sociology, there will be units which will deal in much greater detail. The society is dynamic and is changing, consequently, the areas of interest of sociologists are increasing. Today, there is sociology of knowledge, sociology of science and art, sociology of health, sociology of development, etc. This indicates the expanding nature of sociology.

1.3.2 Sociology and Science

At times, sociology has been defined as the science of society. This raises the question as to what science is. Some have thought of science as an approach whereas others have thought about it in terms of the subject matter. Simply stated, we might say that the scientific approach consists of certain assumption that the phenomena studied have a regularity and hence, a pattern. The method emphasises observation and verification of social phenomena. This involves a systematic approach to the study of phenomena.

The systematic approach consists of:

- i) defining a problem for study;
- ii) collecting data on the problem defined;
- iii) analysing and organising the data; which would help in formulation of hypothesis; and
- iv) further testing of the hypothesis and on the basis of this, develop new concepts and theories.

Sociology has been using a systematic approach in the study of social life. On the basis of the knowledge gathered through the systematic approach, it has tried to build a body of reliable knowledge. From this knowledge, it has tried to establish the patterns of relationships from which effort can be made at understanding social behaviour.

If we look at sociology from the point of view of its approach to the study of society, then sociology can be considered to be a science.

Check Your Progress 2

- Note:**
- i) Use the space provided below for your answers.
 - ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.
- I) Write a note, in eight lines, on the basic concerns of sociology.

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Auguste Comte (1798 – 1857)



Emile Durkheim (1858 – 1917)

- 2) Explain the relationship between sociology and science. Write about five lines.

1.4 SOME FOUNDING FATHERS

Later on, in various units of this course you will come across the names of many early sociologists. A brief introduction is given of early sociologists, whose contribution to sociology is lasting. All of them wrote on the nature of human behaviour. In a way, they tried to understand profound changes taking place in society.

1.4.1 Auguste Comte (1798-1857)

Comte is regarded as the founder of modern sociology. He is the first one to have used the word 'Sociology'. He tried to create a new science of society, which could not only explain the past of mankind but also, predict its future course. He felt that society moves through definite and fixed stages and that, it progresses towards ever-increasing perfection. The three stages, according to him, in which the society moves, were:

- i) the theological or the religious
 - to
 - ii) the metaphysical or the philosophical
 - to
 - iii) the positive or the scientific stage.

In the first stage, people thought, all phenomena were caused by supernatural forces. Abstract forces of either a religious or secular type were considered to be the source of knowledge in the second stage. In the last stage, scientific laws were supposed to determine both the natural and the social worlds.

He also talked about two broad areas — 'social statistics', which deals with the orderly and stable aspects of social life and patterns of behaviour (family, occupational, polity, etc.). The second area called 'social dynamics' emphasises the study of changes in a social system. According to him, sociology was to be the queen of all sciences.

Illustration

1.4.2 Emile Durkheim (1858-1917)

Durkheim was also interested in sociology being a scientific discipline. He wrote a book in 1895 entitled: **Rules of Sociological Method**. To him, social solidarity was one of the main principles of human life. He distinguished between two kinds of solidarity: '**mechanical solidarity**' based on common assumptions, beliefs, sentiments like those found in traditional societies and '**organic solidarity**' based on the division of labour and inter-related interests as found in industrial societies. When solidarity is broken, there would be social disorganisation and confusion in society.

He considered sociology as having wide interests, which includes sociology of religion, sociology of knowledge, sociology of law, sociology of crime, economic sociology, and sociology of education, art and aesthetics.

An important concept given by Durkheim was social facts, which, according to him, are external to the individual but they exert pressure on the individual in the behaviour pattern. Customs, traditions, folkways and mores are social facts. He felt that sociology should be involved in the reformation of society. For him society was a reality in itself, that is, it is more than its parts.

1.4.3 Max Weber (1864-1920)

Weber used the concept of social action rather than social relations. A comprehensive study of social action, to him, meant understanding the meanings human beings give to their behavioural pattern. The social behaviour was not merely a mechanical learning of norms but how people interpreted the social values. Sociology studies all kinds of social action without making any value judgements.

Weber was concerned with understanding of inter-relations between parts of society and also, with comparative studies of different societies. He studied religion in different societies. His work on **Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism** is one of the well known works in sociology. Through both these approaches, he tried to develop propositions having general validity. For example, he classified authority into three types — charismatic, traditional and rational. These concepts are still used in the study of leadership authority and power.

1.4.4 Karl Marx (1818-1883)

Marx has helped through his ideas in understanding the nature of society, particularly, how conflicts occur. Marx writes in 1848 that all history is a history of classes and class struggles. The society gets divided between the oppressors and the oppressed-masters and slaves, lords and serfs and in the modern times, capitalists and workers. To analyse the structure of society, it was necessary to understand the forces of production and relations of production. The contradiction between the forces and the relations of production leads to class struggle. According to him, each society dies in time because of internal conflicts and contradictions and is replaced by a higher one. In time, capitalism would be destroyed and there would emerge a classless society characterised by absence of conflict, exploitation and alienation from this world.

1.4.5 Herbert Spencer (1820-1903)

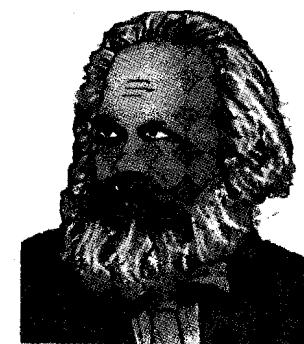
Spencer also emphasised a total view of society. According to him, the study of sociology covers the fields of family, politics, religion and social control, division of labour and social stratification. He emphasised the study of whole more than the study of parts. The individual institutions have significant relations. It is through a study of these inter-relations that one can hope to understand society. He indicated that the interdependence of the various parts was functional, i.e., each of the part performs different functions, which is necessary for the total well being of society. A large number of sociologists, who are “functionalists”, use Spencer’s idea of the functional interdependence as a basis for their approach to the study of society.

Above descriptions of the contributions of founding fathers of sociology are sketchy. The main purpose is to introduce their names and to give you some idea of their concerns in sociology. In the later units of Elective course 13 on Sociological Thought we will be studying their approaches, theories and contributions in greater details.

Max Weber
(1864 – 1920)



Karl Marx
(1818 – 1883)



Herbert Spencer
(1820 – 1903)



1.5 SOCIOLOGY AND OTHER SOCIAL SCIENCES

As mentioned earlier, sociology has a broad perspective. It is concerned with those aspects of social life, which are present in all forms. It embraces every social setting. Most related social sciences have restricted range of specialisations. It must be pointed

out that human behaviour cannot be divided neatly into different compartments and each assigned to a specific social science. Hence, the boundaries between the disciplines are often overlapping. Almost all the social sciences get outside their 'own' and into 'somebody else's' domain with great frequency.

1.5.1 Social Psychology and Sociology

Social psychology is the study of social and cultural influences on the individual. It focuses on the behaviour of a single person and hence, differs from sociology, which is more concerned with relations among groups.

However, there are areas of common interest such as socialisation, norms and values. Moreover, the influences of the group on the individual and of the individual on the group are also of interest to both social psychology and sociology.

1.5.2 Sociology and Anthropology

There are many fields in anthropology, namely; archaeology, linguistics, physical anthropology and social anthropology. Although, anthropology has been regarded as the study of early (primitive) cultures, and sociology of the more contemporary society. This distinction is no longer valid. Many of the early village studies in India have been done by social anthropologists. The tribal communities in India have, by and large, been studied by anthropologists, in both their physical and social aspects. There is, hence, some overlap between the areas of study of sociology and anthropology, particularly, social anthropology. Culture and social organisations are concepts studied in both these disciplines.

1.5.3 Sociology and Economics

Sociology and economics both study industry but do so differently. Economics would study economic factors of industry, productivity, labour, industrial policy, marketing, etc., whereas a sociologist would study the impact of industrialisation on society. Economists study economic institutions such as factories, banks, trade and transportation but are not concerned with religion, family or politics. Sociology is interested in interaction between the economic institutions and other institutions in society, namely, political and religious.

Social life, in modern times, is very complex and no discipline by itself can study all of it in depth. While each social discipline focuses on a particular aspect of the society, there is need to keep in mind the inter-relations of institutions of society. Only some social sciences have been discussed so as to give a feel of relationships among social sciences. Similar analysis of the relation of sociology can be made to philosophy, history, public administration, etc.

1.5.4 Basic and Applied Sociology

Sociologists are interested in conducting research studies in the area of social life and developing theories with regard to human social behaviour. The purpose is to build a body of reliable knowledge through which various aspects of social life can be understood and explained. While this is important, it is necessary to make use of this knowledge in various aspects of human affairs. There are many factors, which have an impact on social relations. Increased use of technology is one such area. Sociologists could anticipate as to how people will receive and react to new technology and changes it might bring about in social relations. There are many programmes of development that are launched. Sociologist can indicate what care needs to be taken in introducing changes without affecting their way of life so that suggested programmes can be accepted. The reactions towards the innovations — acceptance, resistance or non-

acceptance should be noted, when studies could also provide further insight into social values and social behaviour.

Sociology thus provides an understanding about the social order in which we live and about the forces that shape and mould it. It also suggests paths of action to ensure the emergence of new social patterns. Imaginatively pursued the study of sociology enables us to understand the condition and the predicament of human beings. It can, also help in finding solutions for the present problems and dilemmas of society.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: i) Use the space provided below for your answers.
ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- I) What is the difference between basic and applied sociology?

Write about ten lines for your answer.

1.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have given you a definition of sociology. We also explained the idea of social groups. We have explained basic areas of concern for sociology. These include the mention of the concept of culture. It also includes the relationship of sociology with science as whole.

This unit also provides thumbnail sketches of five founding fathers of sociology. The theories of these thinkers continue to influence present day sociology and other social sciences as well. Finally we looked at sociology in its relation to psychology, economics, and so on. We have therefore provided a good idea about the nature and scope of sociology.

1.7 FURTHER READINGS

- 1) Mc. Kee, James B., 1981. *Sociology : The Study of Society*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston: New York.
- 2) Ogburn and Nimkoff, 1972. *A Handbook of Sociology*. Eurasian Publishing House: New Delhi

1.8 KEY WORDS

- Classification** : A way of putting data or information into different categories and groups.
- Culture** : This embodies the customs, rites and beliefs of a group of people. It includes both material culture, such as, houses, pots, coins etc. as well as non-material culture, such as, values, beliefs, norms etc.
- Group** : Comprises two or more people who have a meaningful interaction with each other and common goals.
- Primary group** : A social group with close ties and shared interests, e.g. the family.
- Secondary group** : A large group with looser ties but common well defined goals, e.g. office employees, or members of a club or associations.

1.9 MODEL ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) In broad terms, sociology can be defined as the study of social life, group interaction and social behaviour, while other social sciences study specialised areas of social behaviour. Sociology is interested in taking an overall view of social life.
- 2) A social group refers to a group of persons (two or more), who have a regular social interaction, based on shared beliefs, values and norms. The interaction takes place on a basis over a period of time. The interacting persons view themselves as members of the group. Examples of a group are the nuclear family, a football team, etc.
- 3) b)

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Sociology is basically concerned with the study of patterns in social relations. Once relations between people are familiar and well-established, they become institutionalised ways of social behaviour, then, it is sociology's concern to make comparative studies of social institutions, such as, the family, economy and polity. Sociology is also concerned with the study of social processes, which reflect the dynamic aspects of social relations.
- 2) Being the scientific study of society, sociology views science as an approach to study social phenomena. In science, patterns in natural phenomena are discovered by observation and verification; in sociology, social phenomena are observed to formulate and test hypotheses.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Sociology is engaged in giving explanations of human social behaviour. For making use of this knowledge of human affairs, sociological findings can be and are used in planning development programmes. This kind of use of sociology is given the name of applied sociology. It is obvious that basic sociology is confined to researches into human social behaviour. Applied sociology differs from basic sociology in the sense that it only makes use of sociological findings in planning and implementing action-oriented programmes for development.

UNIT 2 BASIC CONCEPTS IN SOCIOLOGY

Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Key Sociological Concepts
 - 2.2.1 The Concept of Society
 - 2.2.2 Types of Society
- 2.3 Social Groups
 - 2.3.1 Primary Groups
 - 2.3.2 Secondary Groups
- 2.4 Status and Role
 - 2.4.1 Types of Status
 - 2.4.2 Multiple Statuses
 - 2.4.3 The Concept of Role
- 2.5 Social Institution
- 2.6 Culture
 - 2.6.1 Culture and Human Behaviour
 - 2.6.2 Folkways
 - 2.6.3 Mores
 - 2.6.4 Values
 - 2.6.5 Sub-Cultures
- 2.7 Social Change
 - 2.7.1 Agents of Change
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- 2.8 Social Control
- 2.9 Sociological Methods
- 2.10 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.11 Further Readings
- 2.12 Key Words
- 2.13 Model Answers to Check Your Progress

2.0 OBJECTIVES

After you have read this unit we expect that you will be able to:

- explain the concept of society;
- describe the nature of social groups;
- discuss the concepts of status and role;
- explain the relation between culture and human behaviour;
- describe social change and social control; and
- discuss sociological methods.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we introduce you to basic concepts in sociology. These concepts include that of society itself. The social group is discussed, as it is basic to society. We then discuss status and role, which are crucial concepts. This unit also introduces the concepts of social institution and sociological method. Further, we explain various aspects of culture including folkways and norms. The unit rounds off with explanations of social change and social control. This is an important unit for grasping some of the basic concepts of sociology.

2.2 KEY SOCIOLOGICAL CONCEPTS

Let us first see what is meant by concepts. A concept is a word or phrase, which is abstract from actual experience and which, more or less, means the same thing to all those familiar with it. A concept represents a class of phenomena. Thus, car is a concept, which signifies a vehicle of a particular kind. Once we are familiar with the concept of car, we do not always have to see it physically in order to know, what someone means by it. Similarly, a house or a table lamp are also concepts.

Concepts are necessary in every science since accuracy is achieved through them. Every scientific discipline is continuously developing a refined set of concepts, which, to those familiar with that discipline, will mean the same thing at all times. Sociology, too, has a large number of concepts, which are similarly understood by all sociologists. Here, we shall introduce you to some important sociological concepts. Many of these concepts, it will be noticed, are expressed in words or terms, which are of daily use. It is necessary to be careful with their sociological usage, because in sociology, these very terms are used in some special sense.

2.2.1 The Concept of Society

Society is viewed by sociologists as a chain of social relationships. A relationship is social, when it is determined by mutual awareness, that is, the behaviour of one individual influences the behaviour of another. For example, when a teacher enters the classroom, students stop making noise and stand up as a mark of respect for their teacher. This behaviour signifies the social relationship between the teacher and the taught. Thus, social relationships exist only when individuals behave towards one another in ways determined by their recognition of each other. This is why society is called a relational concept.

In other words, society is not a substantial concept. It does not denote a concrete reality, rather it refers to social relationships, which become institutionalised, when people relate to each other in well-established and familiar ways.

2.2.2 Types of Society

The predominant types of social relationships form the basis of classifying human society in various types. Most sociologists contrast the industrial society in which they live with all other types. Some sociologists, like Spencer and Durkheim, classified societies on the basis of their size or scale and other features, such as, the extent and degree of the division of labour, political organisation and social stratification, etc. Some scholars, like Karl Marx, distinguish them on the basis of their economic institutions. Thus, there are clearly many ways of classifying societies. Without going into complicated arguments at this stage of your introduction to sociology, it is necessary to realise that there is no ideal classification and no 'pure' example of various types of society.

In broad terms, taking the wider interests of sociology into consideration, we can divide societies into two types, namely; simple and complex. All primitive or tribal social

organisations are included among simple societies. The industrial societies with overlapping sets of social relationships are called complex societies.

Activity 1

Reflect about the type of society you live in and write a short note of one page about your understanding of your society.

Compare your answer with those of other students at your study centre and discuss with your Academic Counsellor.

2.3 SOCIAL GROUPS

The concept of group is central to sociology. While in normal discourse, we regard any collection of two or more individuals to be a group, sociologically, individuals constituting a group must be conscious of a common belongingness, of sharing some common understanding, common interests and goals as well as accepting certain rights and obligations. In this sense, a family or a class can be called a group. A society or community can also be called a group.

2.3.1 Primary Groups

First coined by the sociologist, Charles Horton Cooley (1864-1929), a primary group is relatively small (though not all small groups are primary). Its members generally have face-to-face contact, and thus, have intimate and co-operative relationships, as well as strong loyalty. The relationships between the members are ends in themselves. There is a basic human need for face to face, intimate co-operative interaction with others. That is, members derive pleasure and enjoyment merely by associating with one another. They have no other particular ends or goals in view. The primary group comes to an end, when one or more members leave it; they cannot be substituted by others. The best example of a primary group is the family or the friendship, or 'peer' group, as sociologists call it.

2.3.2 Secondary Groups

Secondary groups, in several respects, are the opposite of primary groups. These are generally large size groups, though not always so. Members of the secondary group maintain relatively limited, formal and impersonal relationship with one another.

Unlike primary groups, secondary groups are specific or specialised interest groups. Generally, a well defined, division of labour characterises these groups. Member can be substituted and replaced, hence, a secondary group may continue irrespective of whether its original members continue to be its members or not. A cricket team, a music club, an army or a factory, and so on, are examples of secondary groups.

It is possible that within secondary groups, some members may come close to one another and develop primary relations and form a group of peers. Several sociological studies have shown that the presence of primary groups in armies, factories, and other secondary groups, have contributed to high level of morale, and more effective functioning.

2.4 STATUS AND ROLE

The variety of social relations in any society is obviously countless. Parenthood, marriage, friendships, neighbourliness, and similar examples, illustrate the enormous range of social relations, which sociologists examine and on the basis of which they try to understand society. Each social relation is conceived, for purposes of analysis and understanding, in terms of two components, namely, status and role.

Status, also referred to as social position by some writers, is the ‘socially defined location or place’, which an individual occupies in a system of interaction or society. Thus, in any interaction, none of the participants is without status. Indeed, no individual can interact with another, if his/her status, as well as that of the person or persons, is not clear in a given situation.

Thus, interaction in the family poses no problems because each member knows well the status he/she and others are occupying. This knowledge allows for a smooth flow and predictable interaction. But, when we encounter a stranger, we first of all want to know his or her status. Until this is known, we are not clear, how we should behave towards him or her. Thus, it is status and knowledge of status that facilitates patterned interaction.

2.4.1 Types of Status

Sociologists make a distinction between ‘ascribed’ and ‘achieved’ statuses. Positions, which one is born into or one acquires without one’s own effort, are known as ascribed status. Mostly, kinship statuses come in this category. Achieved statuses are, in contrast, based on and defined by what people do or acquire through their own effort. Usually, people’s occupational positions come in this category. Only in some cases, it is possible to have both ascribed and achieved aspects in the same status, a hereditary priest in an Indian village, for example, may be rejected if he fails to learn the required scriptures.

2.4.2 Multiple Statuses

It should also be clear that every individual occupies multiple statuses. Even a young infant is a son, a grandson, a brother, a nephew, and so on. As we grow up, we may get into even more status positions. Public figures and other important men, women simultaneously occupy several statuses. There is, however, one key status in terms of which the individual is ultimately identified and evaluated. In modern societies, one’s occupation indicates one’s key status.

2.4.3 The Concept of Role

We turn now to the concept of role. Role is the behavioural aspect of status; there can be no statuses without a corresponding role attached to it. Role is, thus, the dynamic aspect of status and consists of rights and duties attached to it. Thus, an individual occupying the status of a father, simultaneously, has some rights over his children, as well as, some responsibilities towards them. Statuses and roles are, thus, two sides of the same coin.

Role refers both to the actual behaviour of an individual occupying a particular status, as well as to a set of **expectations** regarding behaviour, shared by those involved in particular social relations. Thus, in the teacher-student relations, the teacher has an expectation as to how the student interacting with him will or should behave. The students, too, in turn, have their own set of expectations. Should either of them fail to act according to other’s expectations, their relations are adversely affected. Since individuals, by and large, fulfil role expectation, society gains uniformity of behaviour.

This discussion indicates the significance of the concept of role. Indeed, it is one of the basic units of analysis of social order in human societies and later, in Block 7, more will be discussed about this concept.

2.5 SOCIAL INSTITUTION

Social institution can be defined as a ‘broad goal-oriented behaviour, which is firmly established’. It becomes possible to understand and predict the behaviour of people

because of this established pattern of behaviour found in a society. The study of social institutions, therefore, includes groups, roles, norms, beliefs and practices in a particular area of social life.

Social institution provides the framework within which people in different societies and cultures live. It provides the very structure of society. People are born in a family, which is an institution. They are nurtured and socialised in this institution, which is governed by the values, norms and mores of that society. How the family and its members earn their living depends upon the economic institutions of their society. How they maintain order and administration depends on the political institutions of that society. How information and skills are passed from one generation to another, depends upon the educational institution of that society. Finally, how people explain their existence in society, from where they have come before birth and where they will go after death, i.e. the ‘religious experience’ is established by the religious institutions. Thus, all social institutions in a given society are inter-related. Family as an institution forms the pivot around which all other social institutions move as it provides the individual members to the society. Therefore, as Perry and Perry (1973 : pp. 300) mention, “it’s important to remember that institutions are simply abstract concepts of organised habits and standardised ways of doing things. We cannot see institutions, what we can see are families, schools, banks and so on.” Culture is an essential aspect of all societies. You will learn more about it in the next section.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space provided below for your answers.
ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Define the concept of society, in eight lines.

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- 2) Show the difference between primary and secondary groups. Use about six lines.

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- 3) Distinguish between status and role. Write about five lines for your answer.

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2.6 CULTURE

Besides society, role, status and institution, culture is another important theme that engages the attention of sociologists. Ordinarily, even those, who are not at all familiar with sociology, are familiar with the word ‘culture’. In our daily life, we may describe some people as very ‘cultured’. We give such a label if persons concerned are refined and polished in their behaviour and manner. But sociologists do not use the term ‘culture’ in this sense. They have their own, special understanding of it.

In sociological terms, culture can be defined as the total sum of human activities, which are learnt. It is passed on from generation to generation through membership of a particular society. As various learning processes in human societies involve systems of tools, communications and symbols, we can also say that the concept of culture refers to a system of tools, communications and symbols. People in order to learn new activities require tools, language and symbols.

Cultures in human societies differ from one another and also, change over time. One of the gains of studying sociology is that besides giving an idea of various cultures, it also helps to develop an understanding of other cultures than one’s own.

2.6.1 Culture and Human Behaviour

A little reflection will show that in similar situations, people of different cultures reveal differences in the way they meet these situations. For example, while greeting friends and relatives, at home or on the street, men in our society may shake hands with other men but as a rule, not with women. Similarly, notwithstanding great hunger, a vegetarian refuses non-vegetarian food. This is because culture influences our behaviour in given situations. Stated in sociological terms, culture is **normative**, that is, it provides standards of proper conduct, and also therefore, tells us, what is right or wrong. Concretely, these standards are provided to us by what are called **cultural norms**. Thus, while many college students smoke these days, they do not normally do so in the presence of their elders or teachers. In our culture, such an act is considered to be wrong, that is, contrary to our cultural norms. The content of the non-material culture of every society consists of a large number of norms. These norms are learnt and enforced by folkways and mores.

2.6.2 Folkways

There are behaviour patterns that govern most of our daily life and contacts with other people. Thus, rising up from seats, when teachers enter into classrooms, allowing women to purchase tickets without queuing, distribution of sweets after getting a job or a promotion, and so on, are examples of folkways. A number of folkways are simply acts of politeness.

In order that folkways may not be taken lightly, mechanisms such as praise, approval and acceptance exist to make individuals conform to them. Conversely, a word of criticism, frown, or sarcastic remark or laughter are modes of expressing disapproval of incorrect behaviour. Since most people desire that they should not look funny or be considered rude and uncouth by their group, they fall in line with what the group expects and desires. Therefore, most people conform to the folkways without even being aware that they are conforming, or that there are alternative ways of behaving.

2.6.3 Mores

These are norms that are considered to be more important by group, and even vital for its welfare. Violation of the mores evokes an emotional response and instead of the mere raising of eyebrow or ridicule, a strong group action follows. Thus, prohibition of the consumption of beef and alcoholic drinks are part of the mores of Hindu and Muslim societies, respectively. Any violation of these will not be tolerated. Mores are linked to cultural values.

It should now be clear that mores are norms of a higher order than folkways. There is an element of compulsion in them and they are linked to the dominant values of the culture. Mores clearly and definitely reflect the concepts of what is moral and immoral. This is seen from the fact that mores are generally expressed in terms of 'must behaviour' (for example, all married men and women must remain faithful to their spouses and must observe sexual fidelity) or, negatively, in terms of 'must-not' behaviour, for example, women should not expose their bodies.

2.6.4 Values

Values, the ultimate essence and spirit of cultures, are the underlying principles and ideas on the basis of which societies and individuals choose their goals. Values are also the criteria on which social and individual ends and means are judged and evaluated. Apart from goals, all conduct and behaviour whether for achieving these goals, or otherwise, are judged and evaluated in the framework of accepted values. Any action that is contrary to the cherished values of the group or society is condemned and punished. For example, in Indian society there is a value regarding junior persons' behaviour towards senior persons. Any deviance from accepted behaviour is always a subject of criticism.

Unlike norms, which are quite specific, values tend to be generalised ideals and somewhat abstract; nevertheless, they attract the total commitment of the society.

2.6.5 Sub-cultures

Another important point to bear in mind is, that in the case of complex and heterogeneous societies, like India, which are characterised by many religious, linguistic and other diversities, it is usual to have a number of sub-cultures within the framework of the larger overall cultures. Thus, in India, religious communities like Muslims, Christians or Sikhs or linguistic groups like Tamilians, Maharshtians or Punjabis and so on, have their own sub-cultural characteristics that distinguish them from other communities or groups. But simultaneously, we also share certain core values like secularism, democracy and equality of all citizens, irrespective of our diversities, and these integrate us. But heterogeneous societies have constantly to keep emphasising and nurturing their more universal and cultural values so that they are not forsaken in favour of the sub-cultural values.

2.7 SOCIAL CHANGE

In tracing the origins of sociology, as well as in pointing out the concerns of early Sociologists, it had been indicated that the changes brought by the industrial revolution had a major role to play in the birth of modern sociology. Due to this, sociology and sociologists have never lost sight of the study of social change, and this interest has been major concern of the discipline throughout its entire history of about two hundred years.

Although, sociologists have been studying the process of social change for a long time, it is difficult to give a brief and precise definition. Social change refers to the process

by which alterations occur in society or social relations. Social change is a continuous process.

Social change can be caused by many factors. Increased population can bring about changes. Innovations—i.e., new ideas or an object can bring about new relationships. It is also possible that one society can borrow ideas or objects from other societies, which may cause variation in social relations.

Later on, you would be studying various theories of social change (evolution, cyclical, conflict, modernisation and development). The leading sociologists, who have been referred to in Unit 1, have their own ideas about how change occurs, which will be discussed later.

2.7.1 Agents of Change

An important question is the identity of agents of change. As mentioned earlier, any sub-units or institutions are instruments through which social change can be effected. Some of the institutions are more important than others—the economic, political and educational institutions are more central in effecting change. Religion can act as an agent of change as well as resistance to change.

Although, the society continuously undergoes change, it must be pointed out that there is usually resistance to change. New ideas and new behaviour patterns are not easily accepted. Even material innovations also take time to be accepted and diffused in any society (trains were considered in England as the work of the devil). Resistance is greater, when traditional values and beliefs are involved.

2.7.2 Rate of Change

Another question is with regard to the rate of change. In societies, which are industrialised and use sophisticated technology (which itself has brought about changes), the rate of change is more rapid than in pre-industrial societies. Another important fact to be kept in mind is that a great deal of change today is caused by planning. This is referred to as guided change, which is being undertaken in many developing countries. This would be discussed further in the unit on social development.

Activity 2

Within your family, ask your grand parents or their cousins about the kind of changes that they observe today in our society which were not present when they were children. Make a note of one page and discuss it with other students at your study centre.

2.8 SOCIAL CONTROL

Social control is a process to regulate behaviour within society. In a sense, social control is to discourage people from deviating from the established values and norms. Because of social control, people live up to what is expected of them. Social control is an aspect of all social institutions and thus, it is pervasive to social life on the whole.

Behaviour of people is controlled both by positive and negative sanctions. The aim of both these types of sanction is to encourage people to conform to the norms. Positive sanction can include praise, gifts and promotion whereas negative sanction can be punishment, demotion, ridicule or boycott. Social control is not necessarily always successful. There are different approaches to the study of social control, these will be discussed in later units.

2.9 SOCIOLOGICAL METHODS

Sociologists have used many methods in studying society. In Unit 1, we have already discussed the scientific method and its characteristics. Although, sociologists may use different methods, the scientific approach is basic to all of them. The historical method involves the study of origins, development and transformation of social institutions. In this method, a sociologist uses information pertaining to one or more societies over a long period of time. The main approach is to try to get some insights from the past experiences with regard to social behaviour.

In comparative method, data from different countries, different regions or different religions are gathered. An effort is made to see whether there are any common factors, which can explain patterns of behaviour.

The empirical method refers to collection of data from the field. The facts of social life are studied and described as they exist. The techniques used in this method are observation, survey, experimental, case studies.

These methods are not necessarily exclusive. There can be a combination of them. The purpose of all these methods, in a way, is to try to answer the questions: 'Why do people behave the way they do?' The sociological theories and concepts have emerged as a result of these studies.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Use the space provided below for your answers.
ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Write a note in ten lines on social division in tribal societies.

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- 2) What is social control? Explain in about five lines.

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2.10 LET US SUM UP

This unit has explained clearly some important concepts in sociology. They are in fact concepts which keep appearing in the following units. We hope you have grasped these concepts, such as, those of society, social group, status and role, social institutions, culture, and so on. These concepts are basic to a sociological study. Finally, we

explained the concepts of social change and social control. It would be advisable that this unit is understood well by the student for then it would help them better to understand the following units.

2.11 FURTHER READINGS

- 1) Ritzer, G. Kammeyer, K.C.W. and Yetman, N.R., 1979, *Sociology: Experiencing a Changing Society*. Allan and Bacon Ind.: Boston
- 2) Perry, J. & Perry E., 1973, *The Social Web An Introduction to Sociology*, Canfield Press, San Francisco.

2.12 KEY WORDS

- Culture** : The system of behaviour, customs, regulations that are learnt and socially acquired.
- Folkways** : Behaviour patterns that govern daily life and interactions, e.g. ways of addressing one another.
- Mores** : Ways of behaviour that are crucial for the welfare of a society, e.g. non-violence, fidelity, non-thieving and so on.
- Role** : In social life man and woman undertakes many responsibilities, e.g. husband, mother, son, etc. They are various roles.
- Status** : Consists of rights and duties of a person in any position. Each status has a role or set of actions attached to it, e.g. the teacher must teach.

2.13 MODEL ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Society is a relational concept. It does not refer to a concrete reality. It is viewed as a chain or a network of social relationships. A relationship becomes social only when individuals interact in ways determined by well-established and familiar recognition of each other. So, we can say that the concept of society refers to social relationships, which become institutionalised.
- 2) Primary groups are characterised by personalised relationships among their members. They are typically small and profoundly influence the members' behaviour. Secondary groups, on the other hand, are relatively larger and more impersonal. These groups are, generally, formed with a specific goal.
- 3) Within a set of social relationships among people, a place or a position is referred to by the term 'status'. Each status carries with it a generally expected behaviour. This behaviour is termed as 'role'. Role is, thus, the dynamic aspect of status.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Social change is a continuous process, which refers to changes occurring in society or social relations. Multiple factors, such as, increased population, innovations, natural disasters, political conflicts, etc., cause changes in society. Sub-units or institutions in society are instruments through which social change is effected. In pre-industrial societies, the rate of change is slower as compared to fast speed of change in industrial societies.
- 2) Social control refers to a regulatory process, which encourages people to conforming to established values and norms. Non-conformity is considered to be a deviant behaviour. Social control is exercised through the mechanism of positive and negative sanctions.

UNIT 3 SIMPLE SOCIETIES

Structure

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Economies in Simple Societies
 - 3.2.1 Hunting and Gathering
 - 3.2.2 Pastoral
 - 3.2.3 Shifting Cultivation
 - 3.2.4 Settled Cultivation
- 3.3 Systems of Exchange in Simple Societies
 - 3.3.1 Two Examples
 - 3.3.2 Markets
- 3.4 Social Organisation in Simple Societies
 - 3.4.1 Kinship
 - 3.4.1.1 Descent
 - 3.4.2 Marriage
 - 3.4.3 Religion
 - 3.4.3.1 Religion and Magic
 - 3.4.4 Polity
 - 3.4.4.1 Types of Political System—Cephalous
 - 3.4.4.2 Acephalous
- 3.5 Colonial Impact on Simple Societies
 - 3.5.1 Supply of Traditional Products
 - 3.5.2 Introduction of New Crops
 - 3.5.3 The Industrial Wage Labour
 - 3.5.4 Problems of Colonialism
- 3.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.7 Further Readings
- 3.8 Key Words
- 3.9 Model Answers to Check Your Progress

3.0 OBJECTIVES

After having read this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the main features of economy and social organisation in simple societies;
- explain the type of religion and political systems which exist in simple societies; and
- discuss the impact of colonialism on simple societies.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The term ‘simple societies’ refers to small-scale societies with a relatively simple technology. Such societies are not only small-in size but also their control over the environment is quite limited. With small-scale markets, their scope for specialisation in the division of labour is restricted.

All tribal societies can be called simple in terms of their limited technological control over the environment. Their economies are, generally, based on the mode of production of material goods for subsistence. Most such societies around the world have interesting systems of exchange, which intervene between production and consumption of material goods.

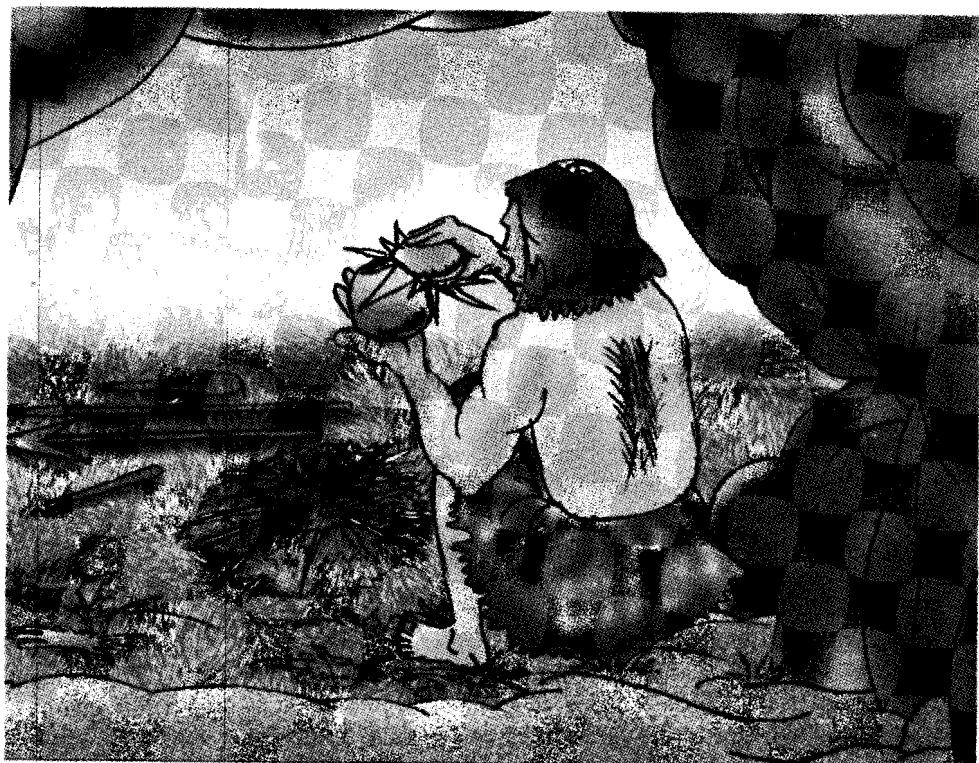
With their distinct types of socio-political organisations, tribal societies all over the world present a striking contrast to the societies in which we live. Many tribal groups are, now, caught in the process of acquiring advance technologies. They can be called ‘transitional’. Most transitional societies have experienced colonial rule by Europeans.

In this unit, you will, first, read about the main features of economies and systems of exchange in simple societies. Then, you will look at how these societies are socially and politically organised and how natural phenomena predominate in their religious belief-systems. Finally, you will learn about the impact of colonial rule on simple societies.

3.2 ECONOMIES IN SIMPLE SOCIETIES

Simple societies are spread over nearly the entire range of natural environments and are not confined only to one or two regions. They are found in the dense equatorial and tropical forests, in the hot and cold deserts and in the rich alluvial plains. They are found also in the foothills and high ranges of mountains, in the savannas, sea coasts and in the islands jutting out of the open seas. The diversity of natural environment has resulted in the diversity of economies practised by such societies. Given the simple technology, the impact of the natural environment is considerable. But the simple societies, even with their simple technology, have everywhere shown an indomitable spirit to face the harsh nature.

Based on the mode of production of material goods for subsistence, economies in simple societies can be grouped into the following types: a) Hunting and gathering; b) Pastoral; c) Shifting cultivation; and d) Settled cultivation.



3.2.1 Hunting and Gathering

Hunting and gathering societies live by hunting large and small game and by collecting a wide variety of roots, fruits, and tubers. Despite the similarity in the relationship with nature, the hunting and gathering societies differ a great deal among themselves, depending upon the habitat and the animals they hunt.

All these hunting and gathering societies live close to nature and (rather than adapting nature to themselves) they adapt themselves to nature. Following this principle, they keep on moving from place to place in search of animals, fruits, roots and tubers.

It was generally believed by early anthropologists that the hunting and gathering communities live on the edge of scarcity but recent researches have shown that this is not so and that they enjoy a measure of affluence/abundance.

3.2.2 Pastoral

The domestication of animals forms the main feature of the pastoral stage. Some of the pastoral communities mix pastoral economy with agriculture. For acquiring sufficient water and pasture ground for their animals, the pastoral communities have to move from place-to-place. Some pastoralists make only seasonal movements, while others remain constantly on the move. Because of the importance of movement among these people, the size of their population is always relatively small. Raiding of livestock is quite common among pastoralists. They are known to have little regard for authority and centralised administration. In India, the important pastoral communities include the Toda (The buffalo herders of Nilgiri Hills, Tamil Nadu), the Gujar (cattle and buffalo herders) and the Bakerwal (sheep and goat herders) of Jammu and Kashmir.

The pastoral communities have as their staple diet the animal products of meat, milk and blood. The Toda do not mix the blood of the animal with milk as some African pastoralists do.

The livestock reared among pastoralists have deep impact on their religious and other behaviour. Rearing the buffalo, for example, is a sacred activity for the Toda.

3.2.3 Shifting Cultivation

In shifting cultivation, after every few years, new ground is cleared by the farmer for planting crops and the old plot is left to its natural growth. Compared to the pastoralists' way of life, practitioners of shifting cultivation have relatively long residence in one area. In such societies, land is often owned by the community.

A number of tribes practise shifting cultivation such as the Bantu of equatorial Africa, Garo of Meghalaya, Baiga and Abujhmar Maria of Madhya Pradesh and Saora of Orissa. A number of tribes in Arunachal Pradesh also practise shifting cultivation.

3.2.4 Settled Cultivation

Relatively larger number of simple societies practise settled cultivation, where the same fields are cultivated year after year. Settled cultivation makes it necessary for the villages to become permanent settlements. A number of gods and deities rise up all around the villages, investing religious significance to the villages. The institution of private property also gets more crystallised.

Depending upon the technology, the settled cultivation admits of a two-fold division: hoe cultivation and plough cultivation. Many island communities, like the Trobriand Islanders in the Pacific, are hoe cultivators. The Munda, Santhal and Gond in India are plough cultivators. The hill slopes give rise to yet another type of settled cultivation, because to cultivate the hill slopes are cut up into terraces. The Nagas in India are good examples of terrace cultivators.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space provided below for your answers.

ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- i) Describe the main features of hunting and gathering societies in five lines.

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3.3 SYSTEMS OF EXCHANGE IN SIMPLE SOCIETIES

To give and take things from each other is a necessary part of our daily behaviour and therefore, forms an important aspect of interpersonal relations. In this sense, exchange is not simply a theme in economics. Undoubtedly, many exchanges of goods are of economic nature. In some other cases, occasions of gift-giving, being also ceremonial in nature, express well established and thus, institutionalised relationships among the people. Often, the purpose of exchanging goods is to maintain amicable relations between groups to minimise the possibilities of conflict. For instance, during wedding ceremonies in India, gifts are given and taken by both the sides of the bride and bridegroom. In terms of their use-value, such gifts have certain economic value but they also serve as a mark of status and put a kind of seal or stamp on the new relationship. Secondly, such exchanges are not transacted only once. They usually form a series of gift-giving, which builds mutual feelings of goodwill and express happy relations between the two sides. One of the purposes of exchanging goods is to maintain a state of mutual indebtedness.

Face-to-face relationships of mutual help in simple societies are continually reinforced by exchange of gifts. Many scholars, especially social anthropologists, have studied simple societies. They have highlighted some forms of exchanges, which are peculiar to some cases, with no parallels in Indian society. We bring you two classic examples of the other than economic importance of gift-exchanges in simple societies.

3.3.1 Two Examples

i) The Kula Exchange

Malinowski, in his study of economic activities known as the Kula ring of the Western Pacific region, showed that among the Trobriand Islanders, the members of the Kula ring exchange among themselves ritually and socially valued objects. The system of exchange is regulated in a kind of ring with two directional movements. In clockwise direction, the red shell necklaces circulate and in anti-clockwise circulation, the white arm-shells' circulate among the members of the Kula ring. These objects have no commercial value but carry differing prestige value for donors and recipients. The tribals undertake long dangerous sea voyages in search of these objects, which are economically useless. While the Islanders normally haggle and bargain in their day-to-day buying and selling of other goods, the objects given and taken in the Kula are never subjected to any bargaining.

ii) The Potlatch Ceremony

Our second example is from the American North-West where, the Kwakiutl (and also, some other tribes of the region) organised large-scale feasts. At such occasions, not only enormous quantities of food were consumed and gifts given to guests, but also many articles (considered valuable by them) were destroyed. The practice of feasts

(known as the institution of potlatch) among these people shows how giving away of goods to the extent of physically destroying them was linked with their claims to a higher social status. The more feasts one group organised, the more prestige it received. Further, the more a group was invited to such potlatches and the more gifts it received, the more prestige the group gained in the eyes of other groups. These feasts were always organised by agnatic groups, i.e., by those standing in the relationship of brothers to each other. One such group invited other such groups and vied with each other in giving more and more food to eat and more and more gifts to take home and more and more valuables to destroy.

Activity 1

Do you also have examples of gift exchange which are ritualised? Write an essay of one page on a ritual exchange of gifts in your community. You may discuss your essay with other students at your study centre, as well as, your Academic Counsellor.

3.3.2 Markets

Although, most economic exchange of goods in simple societies take place in markets, there are some societies in which multiple transactions in different items take place without a market. The Trobriand Islanders are a good example of this type.

In some simple societies, for instance in West Africa, markets are well-recognised places for exchanges of goods. They are essential to the functioning of the society's economic system. But besides their economic importance, markets also assume social meaning as a meeting-place. The tribes of Yoruba of Nigeria and Arusha of Tanzania are famous for their markets. Often, Market-places are also used as centres of administration and for dissemination of information. In this respect, traditional centres for development of folk forms of performing arts.

3.4 SOCIAL ORGANISATION IN SIMPLE SOCIETIES

In order to present an overview of simple societies, their social organisation can be briefly studied in four parts, namely, kinship, marriage, religion and polity. Kinship roles in these societies subsume religious and political activities and it is, therefore, reasonable to discuss them in one section.

Social anthropological studies have shown that simple societies have extremely elaborate systems of kinship, religion, economy and polity. But in contrast to modern complex societies, simple societies present relatively simpler ways of organising social life.

3.4.1 Kinship

Since most simple societies have been studied in relation to tribal social systems, we discuss the four aspects of social life in simple societies in similar terms. A tribal group is generally considered to be a good example of a simple society. A tribe is, often, spread over a small territory with its language, political and religious organisation. It is usually divided into two or more sections. When divided into only two sections, each section is called a moiety. But if a tribe is divided into more than two sections, each section is called a phratry. Moieties and phratries are, generally, exogamous groups, that is, members of these groups must find their spouses outside these groups; they cannot marry within. Only in some societies, the moieties are endogamous, that is members of such moieties must marry within the moiety. The Toda are an example of such a group.

The members of a moiety or phratry, clan and lineage are under social obligation to help each other. They generally act as corporate groups in performing a number of

social, economic, political and religious activities. But the wide dispersal of a number of tribal groups today in many parts of the world has weakened the corporate character of these groups.

3.4.1.1 Descent

Common descent or origin in simple societies is generally traced through lineages and clans. Lineages are those groups, which reckon common descent from a known ancestor. Clans are the groups of those people, who treat each other as related through common ancestry, even though, it may not be traceable with certainty. In other words, clans have mythical ancestors. Lineages are relatively smaller groups with known ancestors within clans, which are wider groups with presumed common ancestry.

Descent is usually traced through either mother or father. Descent through the mother is called matrilineal or uterine descent. In a matrilineal system of descent, a man does not belong to his father's lineage and clan. He belongs to the same clan and lineage as his mother and his mother's brother. The Nayars of South India are an example.

In patrilineal descent, relationship with males and females of one's group is traced only through males. Most of the students of the course are likely to belong to this form of descent system.

Some people, however, have systems of double descent, that is, both matrilineal and patrilineal groups are recognised, but for different purposes. For example, among the Yako (Forde, 1950), the inheritance of immovable property is regulated through patrilineal descent and that of movable property through matrilineal descent.

3.4.2 Marriage

In all societies, so also in simple societies, social recognition of mating among their members is arranged through the institution of marriage. Monogamy is the most popular type of marriage found in simple societies. Few tribal groups also practice polygyny where a man has more than one wife at a given point of time. More rare is the polyandry type of marriage, in which a woman is simultaneously the wife of more than one man. The Khasa in Uttar Pradesh and the Toda in Tamil Nadu practise polyandry. But there is a difference between the two. Among the Khasa, the eldest brother marries and all other brothers simultaneously become the husbands of their elder brother's wife. This type of polyandry is called adelphic or fraternal polyandry.

Among the Toda, the husbands of the woman need not be brothers. Multiplicity of husbands raises the problem of the paternity of the child. The Toda solve this problem by the performance of the 'bow and arrow' ceremony. When a woman becomes pregnant, the husband who performs the 'bow and arrow' ceremony becomes the father of the child to be born. He becomes the father of all the children born to her after the ceremony. He is regarded as the father of the children born even after his death if no other husband has performed, in the meantime the 'bow and arrow' ceremony. This institution is indicative of the fact that the Toda give emphasis to social rather than biological paternity.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Use the space provided below for your answers.

ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Write a note in ten lines on social division in tribal societies.

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3.4.3 Religion

With their simple technology, the people in simple societies have very little control over the natural environment. They are always overawed by the ferocities of nature. Forest fires, floods thunder, cloud-bursts, earthquakes and wild animals, all affects them severely and therefore they get frightened by the natural calamities far more than in more complex societies.

The belief in impersonal supernatural force finds expression in the wide spread belief in ‘mana’, a supernatural power generally associated with kings or successful men. Many Indian tribes, such as the Munda and the Ho of Singhbhum, Bihar also believe in this force, which they call ‘bonga’. Yet another expression of impersonal supernatural force is ‘taboo’. Taboo is a negative force and anyone who does not observe it exposes himself to the danger of supernatural punishment. Taboo is used to regulate social activities. Many tribal communities put a taboo mark on their property in the field and the forest to ensure against theft. ‘Mana’ and ‘taboo’ are polynesian terms, which have been incorporated into anthropological/sociological vocabulary.

Lack of understanding of the environment causes in them great anxiety. So it is no wonder that the simple societies develop their own theories regarding the nature and functioning of their environment. They have developed a theory of causation, which tells them that natural events are caused by supernatural forces. The supernatural forces have been visualised as belonging to two categories: personal forces and impersonal forces. Religion addresses itself to the personal forces and magic relates to the impersonal forces. Religion and magic, for the tribal, are thus not contradictory but complementary to each other.

3.4.3.1 Religion and Magic

Religion assumes that certain spirits and deities preside over nature. They have to be propitiated, placated and worshipped in order to get their blessings. These spirits may send both blessings and curses. So an element of freedom and an exercise of will are attributed to the spirits and deities. Magic on the other hand, is an impersonal force which can be made to operate provided the magic is performed properly. There is no exercise of will with regard to the impersonal force. Magic must succeed. It can fail only by an improper performance of magic or by the performance of more powerful counter-magic.

Frazer (1920) believed all magic to be sympathetic, based on the principle of sympathy between cause and effect. He identified two laws governing the operation of magic, the law of similarity and the law of contact. The magic based on the first law he called homoeopathic or imitative magic and the magic based on the second law he called contagious magic. In homoeopathic magic an image of the enemy is destroyed in order to destroy the enemy. In contagious magic, magic is played on the separated part of the body of the enemy, such as paired nails and hair.

But magic is not always destructive. It is in fact only a symbolic act. Magic is the playing out of an event. It expresses desires in symbolic ways.

In brief, religion provides the simple societies with a theory of causation. It builds confidence of nature. The fertility of fields, herds, women, of land and water are believed to be ensured by religion. Religion also has certain political aspects, which we shall examine, in the following section. You have already noticed the role of taboo in the maintenance of order in certain spheres of tribal life.

Activity 2

Do you think your religion and religious rituals have some elements of magic in it? If yes, write a note of about one page on the topic of “Role of Magic in My Religion” and compare it with those of other students at your study centre.

3.4.4 Polity

Maintenance of order over time is the central concern of political organisation in all societies. But different societies solve this problem of order in different ways. Modern state societies, characterised by structural differentiation, use the differentiated state apparatus for the maintenance of order.

The simple societies are characterised by undifferentiated ways of keeping law and order. The responsibility of maintenance of order is distributed among a number of institutions and structures. Manifestly non-political institutions like kinship and religion also perform political functions.

3.4.4.1 Types of Political System—Cephalous

Political systems among the simple societies are divided into two groups: (i) cephalous and (ii) acephalous. Cephalous political system is one in which there is a recognised head, a chief or a king. Acephalous political system is one in which no single head is recognised and order is maintained by means other than state apparatus. Both cephalous and acephalous political systems admit of a number of subtypes within them.

Among the cephalous political systems at least four subtypes can be recognised. Shilluk, Swazi, Ethiopean Kingdom and Muslim Emirates of northern Nigeria may be taken to represent these four types. Among the Shilluk, the headship is more ritual and symbolic than substantial. The order is maintained by the principle of lineage rather than by state apparatus. Swazi and Ethiopean Kingdoms represent two variants of a common system. In both systems, kingship is a powerful institution. Kingship enjoys divine sanction in both these systems. To disobey the king is not only a breach of political obligation, it is also at the same time a breach of the religious obligation. In both, authority is devolved from the king to his subordinates from the king to his subordinates. Among the Swazi, the devolution of authority is made from the king to his close kinsmen. Thus in this type, the king and his close kinsmen rule.

In the Ethiopean Kingdom also there is devolution of authority from the King to his subordinates. But the subordinates are not his kinsmen, they are his loyal non-kin dependants. In fact in this system the kinsmen are avoided and very often intense rivalry exists between the king and his kinsmen. Close kinsmen are often imprisoned so that they do not create any trouble for the ruling chief. Thus, kinship is not without significance even in this third type of cephalous political system. Though it must be noted that in this type the significance is negative and instead of basking in the sunshine of their kin, they are consigned to the darkness of the prisons.

The fourth subtype within the cephalous is qualitatively different from the above three subtypes. In all the three, the ruler and the ruled are tribals of one ethnic group or another. They share a number of social and political attitudes despite differentiation on class and power hierarchy. In this fourth subtype the ruler comes from a different culture and dominates over the tribal culture. It is clearly a case of political conquest. Our example representing this type is the Muslim Emirate of northern Nigeria.

3.4.4.2 Acephalous

Among the acephalous political systems, once again, four subtypes can be identified. The (i) Central African Bushmen, (ii) Yako of Nigeria, (iii) Masai of east Africa, and (iv) Nuer of Sudan may be taken to represent these four subtypes. Bushmen are

hunting and gathering people, constantly moving from one place to another in search of roots, fruits and tubers or in search of game animal. They are fragmented into small bands. Whatever disputes that arise within and between families are resolved by the elders of the band.

The second subtype consists of autonomous villages with their councils. Among the Yako the village councils contribute to the maintenance of order. Membership of the village council is based on a number of criteria such as genealogical position, economic success and qualities of leadership.

The third subtype of which Masai herders are an example is quite widespread in east Africa. The transition from childhood to manhood is not an unnoticed and uneventful phenomenon among the simple societies. Most of them give ritual recognition to this phenomenon. Among the Masai, the children undergoing this transition are initiated into the youngest age-set. In course of time the youngest age-set becomes the eldest age-set and then it has to take on the responsibility of maintaining law and order. So in this third subtype the maintenance of order is the responsibility of the age-sets.

The fourth subtype is also quite widespread and Nuer tribe of Sudan is an example of this subtype. Order is maintained in such societies by balanced opposition. The Nuer are divided into agnatic descent groups, the lineages. Members of a lineage are obliged to help other on occasions of dispute. Hence a dispute between two individuals belonging to two different lineages soon becomes a dispute between two lineages. Each lineage organises itself into a fighting group to support its member. But when the two persons in dispute belong to the same lineage, then the conflict is confined to this particular lineage and nobody outside this group is involved in this dispute.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: i) Use the space provided below for your answers.

ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) What is an acephalous political system? Write in about twelve lines.

3.5 COLONIAL IMPACT ON SIMPLE SOCIETIES

European colonialism came to be imposed on many simple societies from the 18th century. Nineteenth century and the following decades represent the worst period of

colonial exploitation. Though a large number of simple societies in Latin America, Africa, Asia and Oceania have been able to cast off colonial rule, there are quite a few still struggling to throw off the yoke. Even in those societies which have become politically independent, a number of structures and networks of exploitation established during colonial rule continue to sap, manifestly or latently, the economic, political and psychological vitality of these ex-colonial communities.

Colonialism imposed its imprint on all aspects of tribal life since the 18th century. Economic, political, social and cultural aspects of the simple societies came to be directly and indirectly, influenced by colonial rule. It has however to be noted that all tribal societies under colonial rule did not experience the same level of disorganisation in their social systems. In some the disrupting influence was much more severe than in others. We shall now examine the impact of colonialism in the economic, political, social and cultural aspects of simple societies

With the establishment of colonial rule the economics of the simple societies came to be integrated with the international capitalist economic system. Some got intimately integrated while others were only remotely integrated. In other words, some societies adapted themselves much faster to new ideas practices and technological changes than others. Economic integration with the capitalist system took three main forms: one, by supplying the traditional products to the international commercial network through a series of local and provincial agencies; two, through the introduction of new crops at the inducement and coercion of the colonial capitalists; and three, by joining willingly or under pressure, the industrial wage labour. The impact of economic integration was most in the third and least in the first.

3.5.1 Supply of Traditional Products

In the first category come the hunting and gathering, pastoral and agricultural communities that sold their traditional products to the agents of the capitalist market. This initiated anew system of exchange and influenced to a certain extent, their traditional systems of exchange and exchange obligations. But the impact was limited to only certain areas of their social life. Cash got introduced to their system and they could purchase with it certain new items of consumption but this did not bring about a restructuring of economic relations in these simple societies.

3.5.2 Introduction of New Crops

The changes introduced by the second type of integration were more far reaching than those associated with the first. In this a new agricultural cycle had to be followed bringing about considerable change in the domestic organisation of production. Most important consequence was the impact of fluctuations of the international price with regard to the cash crops grown by these communities. Tobacco and sugarcane, were some of the crops grown by the tribal communities specially for the world market. In many cases they had to replace food crops by cash crops and hence were forced to buy food from the market. Tribes in West Africa, for instance the Yorubas, were drawn into the international capitalist market through this second type of integration. But this type of integration did not result in geographical dislocation.

3.5.3 The Industrial Wage Labour

The most disastrous consequences followed from the third type of integration, by entering the industrial labour market. The colonialists developed industries for which they needed cheap labour. A number of inducements were first tried in Africa to lure people into industrial employment. But when they failed, a lot of repressive measures were taken to force the tribal people to work in the mines in the copper belt and in other factories started all over urban Africa. People were forced to pay taxes in cash which was available only in urban-industrial labour and when even these measures failed, physical capture of tribals was resorted to man the mines and the factories.

These repressive measures did not stop at the factory gates but the entire industrial discipline and the conditions of work were very repressive. Plantations in India, Africa and Latin America, employed tribal and non-tribal labour also called indentured labour and subjected them to dehumanising industrial discipline. This kind of integration involved geographical migration, very often leaving the wife, children and old-parents at home in the village. The worker faced problems at both ends of migration, at the village end as well as at the factory.

Imposition of colonial rule disrupted the political order of the tribal communities. The traditional political systems lost their sovereignty and legitimacy. The traditional political chiefs suddenly found that their rights, authority and power had vanished. They acted now as the representatives of the colonial power and had to behave with their own tribesmen in ways they would not have ever thought of doing in the past. Traditional jurisprudence, traditional measures of the resolution of conflict, all became irrelevant in the new colonial situation.

New political institutions, like police, magistrates and jails, came up all over the tribal world. New jurisprudence was imposed on them whose logic they failed to appreciate. New men came to occupy many of these new positions. Though following the principle of indirect rule, the British in 'Africa tried to retain old chiefs in many areas but this could not be done everywhere. Hence new chiefs were appointed in many communities.

3.5.4 Problems of Colonialism

The new political system had many problems. It was divorced from its relationship with kinship and religion. In the traditional political order as we have examined in an earlier section, kinship and religion played an important part. The chief was assumed to possess supernatural power because it was retained within one family. With chiefs coming from other families, the religious character of kingship got considerably eroded. Irrelevance of kinship support disintegrated not only the political system, but also, to a great extent, even the kinship system. This is because of the fact that this political role of the kinship system went a long way in giving a sense of unity and solidarity.

Economic and political changes had serious implications for the institutions and processes of social solidarity. In fact the tribals found it hard to accept the cognitive and affective elements of the new industrial culture. They got industrialised but could not internalise the values of industrialism. The lack of industrialism resulted in the high rate of absenteeism and low rate of turn over. The tribals became migrants not only from the village to the urban-industrial complex but also from factory to factory, from industry to industry. Thus an element of uncertainty and insecurity developed.

Colonial imposition resulted also in the disintegration of tribal cultures. Introduction of new market rationality and cash economy moved them over from generalised reciprocity to balanced reciprocity and in many cases to even negative reciprocity.

In the new urban-industrial environment they were not in a position to perform their multiple rites and rituals connected with birth, marriage and death. This created psychological deprivation and psychological strains within them. Living in an urban-industrial environment kept them away from the annual ritual cycle, from the festivals and also from a host of ritual obligations they were supposed to meet at their village home. They suffered from a cultural vacuum at the urban industrial centre. They could not practise their own culture and they could not participate in the cultural activities of the urban-industrial centres. They became alienated not only from their village but also from the industrial culture. In fact they got alienated from themselves.

The tribals did not meekly accept the imposition of colonial rule. Researches and studies bear testimony to the fighting spirit of the tribals. In Kenya the Giriamas rose against colonialism in 1913-14. The cult of Mumbo gripped the Gusii and the Luo in Kenya. The Mau Mau rebellion, again in Kenya, speaks of the tribals' determination to throw away the colonial masters. The cargo cults in Oceania are another expression

of the tribal antagonism to colonialism. In India too the tribals rose in violent uprisings against the British and their supporters throughout the nineteenth century. The tribes of Chotanagpur, the Munda, Ho and the Santhal, all rose against the British and the Zamindars in the nineteenth century. In fact the uprisings were so many in the nineteenth century Chotanagpur, that it may easily be called the century of tribal rebellions.

Two features stand out very clearly with regard to these tribal uprisings. One, most of them were violent, to the extent permitted by their primitive tools. Two, they looked for religious support for their success., They were all movements of hope of one kind or another and were all too sure about their success. Needless to say most of them were brutally crushed by the mighty colonial powers.

Check Your Progress 4

Note: i) Use the space provided below for your answers.

ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Write a note in about fifteen lines on exploitation of labour under colonialism.

3.6 LET US SUM UP

We have seen in this unit that simple societies have many different aspects to them. There are tribal economies, which have special features including hunting, gathering and agriculture.

This unit covered the factor of exchange in simple societies and their social organisation. Marriage religion and political organisation were also discussed. Types of political system in simple societies were examined. We have also pointed out how simple societies suffered under colonialism, including exploitation of labour. We have thus given a well-rounded overview of simple societies. A video programme, sent to your study centre and dealing with an example of a simple society, gives you a visual understanding of simple societies.

3.7 FURTHER READINGS

- 1) Bose, N.K., 1971. *Tribal Life in India*. National Book Trust: Delhi.
 - 2) Radcliffe Brown, A.R., 1964. *Structure and Function in Primitive Society*. Cohen and West: London.

- 3) Walker, A.R., 1986. *The Toda of South India: A New Look*. Hindustan Publishing Corporation: Delhi.

3.8 KEY WORDS

- Acephalous** : Society with no recognised head, or single political authority.
- Cephalous** : Society with a single political head, e.g. a king.
- Exogamous** : Where marriage must be outside a given group.
- Matrilineal** : Where descent is traced through female ancestors.
- Moiety** : When a tribe is divided into two sections.
- Patrilineal** : When descent is traced from male ancestors.
- Phratry** : When a tribe is divided into many sections, each section is called a phratry.
- Poligyny** : When a man has more than one wife.

3.9 MODEL ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) In hunting and gathering societies, people live by hunting large and small animals. They supplement this source of food by collecting a wide range of roots, fruits, and tubers. Living close to nature, the people adapt themselves to nature and move from place-to-place in search of food. In some cases, the hunters and gatherers managed to enjoy a measure of affluence by securing surplus food.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Generally, a tribe is divided into two or more sections. In a tribe with two sections, each section is called a moiety. Tribes with more than two sections refer each of these divisions by the term 'phratry'. Moieties and phratries are, generally, exogamous, that is, spouses are found from outside the social divisions. In some societies, e.g., the Toda, moieties are endogamous, that is, members of the moieties must marry within the division.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) In acephalous political systems, no single head is recognised and order is maintained by means other than the state apparatus. This system has four sub-types, exemplified by four groups—the Central African Bushmen, the Yako of Nigeria, the Masai of East Africa and the Nuer of Sudan. In the first sub-type, order is maintained by the eldest of each band of Bushmen, hunters and gatherers. In the second sub-type, the village councils and in the third sub-type, age-sets take the responsibility of keeping order in society. In the fourth sub-type, order is kept on the basis of relations among lineages.

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) Labour was required for industries, developed by colonial powers in various parts of the world. The colonialists, being a part of the capitalist economic system, wanted to acquire labour at minimum cost. As they held also political power over the colonies, they were able to coerce the colonised people in providing cheap labour to their industries. People from simple societies were lured into factories on false promises. When these protests lost their efficacy, even repressive measures were employed for keeping the tribals in labour force. Plantations in Asia, Africa and the Americas subjected their labourers to dehumanising conditions of work.

UNIT 4 COMPLEX SOCIETIES

Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Defining a Complex Society
 - 4.2.1 Rural-Urban Dichotomy
 - 4.2.2 Aspects of Community Life
 - 4.2.3 Types of Urbanisation
- 4.3 Modern Society
 - 4.3.1 Work in Complex Societies
 - 4.3.2 Work Structures
 - 4.3.3 Conflict in Industry
 - 4.3.4 Employment and Women
- 4.4 Post-Industrial Society
 - 4.4.1 Further Features
 - 4.4.2 Some Trends
- 4.5 Let us Sum Up
- 4.6 Further Readings
- 4.7 Key Words
- 4.8 Model Answers to Check Your Progress

4.0 OBJECTIVES

After you have gone through this unit carefully, you should be able to:

- define a complex society;
- discuss the rural-urban dichotomy;
- describe modern employment organisation;
- explain what generates conflict in industry;
- identify the characteristics of the employment of women in complex society; and
- describe the main features of post-industrial society.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Unit 3 we have indicated various aspects of simple societies. We find that complex societies are not tribal or simple in their organisation. In part, we find, technological advancement is what defines the complexity of modern society. There is however a rural-urban dichotomy, and community life too is not completely removed from that in simple societies. We examine industrial conflict in complex societies and also aspects of employment of women. Finally we turn our attention to post-industrial society, its main features, and some trends.

4.2 DEFINING A COMPLEX SOCIETY

Technological advances from the stage of hunting and gathering to landing on the moon have given birth to a technologically advanced complex society in modern times. Described as 'complex societies', modern industrial nation-states are contrasted with the simple societies in various important ways:

- i) larger territory and population membership;
- ii) greater occupational differentiation, and specialisation of work and social groups;
- iii) advanced technology for production of consumer items, building of houses, work places, etc;
- iv) greater co-ordination in the management of the complex society;
- v) quick rate of change in terms of consumer goods, forms of education, and so on;
- vi) faster modes of mass communication, such as, radio, TV, computers internet etc.

Initially it was technological advances that ushered in change. Huge markets sprang up, occupational opportunities and population increase created the nation-state. This is far more inclusive in organisation than anything in simple societies.



Advanced Technology in Complex Society

4.2.1 Rural-Urban Dichotomy

Sociologists had earlier thought that there is a clear difference between the urban and the rural community. However gradually this concept of rural-urban dichotomy underwent change. Some sociologists found that there was as much individualism, lack of understanding, fear and suspicion of strangers even among the villagers as it existed in the urban life. The ‘peaceful village’ image of rural life took a severe blow.

These studies indicated that the happy community-type of existence in villages was not a fact. Remarkably the concept of the urban community also underwent change in the 1950’s. It was found that family and friends made life close, informal, and secure. That is to say there does exist ‘urban villages’ in city life as well.

This aspect of complex societies is very puzzling. Moreover there exist people who live in villages and work in towns. Neither the village nor the town can thus be thought of as a stereotype. Close associations or lack of them did not depend on the environment. They were independent.

Activity 1

Closely examine the community in which you live and write a report of about one page on the nature of your community in terms of its level of urbanisation; whether you will call it rural, urban or semi-urban and why?

Discuss your report with those of other students at your study centre.

4.2.2 Aspects of Community Life

One thing is clear from the above is that the rural and urban life in complex society is not the opposite of one another. In fact it could no longer be assumed that environment determined any one type of association. However this is not to say that rural and urban populations do not have any differences.

Later studies stressed that:

- i) social class and
- ii) stage in family cycle were very important factors in the complex societies.

According to the studies, social class influences choice over where a person can stay (live). Stage in family cycle determines choice of area within a social class. Thus young parents in a social class do not have as much to invest as those who are older. There are thus several constraints on where a person can live. The housing market makes a cluster of similar social class and stage in family cycle.

Some sociologists point out that it is the group that is influenced—not the community as such. They argue in favour of studying local social systems. They feel these should be studied with reference to:

- i) maintenance and establishment;
- ii) modifying circumstances; and
- iii) inter-relationships with national systems.

It was suggested that community ties and behaviours are very much linked to national behaviour. Personal ties were believed to be decreasing to a very large extent. Thus vertical links to the central decision makers are replacing the 'horizontal' local ties. Thus the two are deeply inter linked, although community reflects the nation. Again the analysis of economic factors has become very important in urban studies. Further, it was felt that urban problems are not exclusively urban, e.g. slums and poverty. Thus, it may be pointed out that community studies do help in studying social change. However locality study gives more precise data for the same.

4.2.3 Types of Urbanisation

There are three types of urbanisation concept:

- i) Over-urbanisation.
- ii) Under-urbanisation.
- iii) De-urbanisation.

The developing world is experiencing over-urbanisation. Cities are enclaves which are surrounded by villages. They are also considered to be 'beach-heads' from which economic growth and its benefits go out towards rural areas. Our view on over-urbanisation is that metropolitan development is due to foreign capital. Thus, cities are being exploited by the main powers of the developed world.

Such urban centres become exploiters of the rural areas near them. They are, however, themselves dependent on industrial nations—both for economic and political dominance. In this situation, manufacturing industry does not grow strong. The service sector is over-emphasised. What results therefore is urbanisation without proper industrialisation. Thus over-urbanisation implies that cities in the developing world are not industrialised enough relative to population ratios. The picture indicates that the service sector has a deep agrarian root.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space provided below for your answers.
ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) What is a complex society? Describe in about five lines.

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- 2) List the three types of urbanisation. Use about five lines.

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4.3 MODERN SOCIETY

Modern society is basically industrial. In such societies we find that technical skills are valued very much. Unskilled labour is valued but much less so. All this is reflected in the wage structure. Administration and management services are very prestigious. Modern society has several features. These include:

- i) profit-motive production by big capitalists;
- ii) technological advances;
- iii) high rate of urban populations;
- iv) bureaucratic organisation; and
- v) spread of education.

Thus modern societies, large organisations are very important, but they make interaction impersonal. In contrast to **over-urbanisation** in the developing world, there is **under-urbanisation** in Eastern Europe. This is in a sense the opposite case relative to over-urbanisation. While the former is produced by industrialisation and low rural employment opportunities, under-urbanisation is the result of extra or over industrialisation, accompanied by a lack of support systems like housing. Thus, those employed in urban areas could not be given housing by the state. Further, the free market rate was too steep for the average person's budget. Workers thus have to travel a long way up and down to work. Only the higher strata people have chances of possessing a house. The process of under-urbanisation puts the burden of industrialisation on the less well-off sections of society.

The next aspect that we examine is that of **de-urbanisation**. In Britain since the late seventies there has been a movement away from large urban towns to small towns and

villages. There has thus been a ruralisation of urban/industrial relations. This is seen as a result of the economic and industrial policies, which encourage such a process. Such ruralisation is especially evident in advanced technology sectors.

In general therefore community remains an important factor. It helps to study change. Even today the idea of a good community is very strongly present. However, the connection between community and wider society must be kept in mind always.

Again in modern society kinship significance goes down in terms of expectations and obligations. However, there develops a complex division of labour. There is a great deal of specialisation inside a large organisation.

In modern society also there are many varieties of subcultures and counter-cultures, each representing a section of people. These form around music, philosophy, or political beliefs. Further we find that the arena of the sacred is relatively small in modern society. On the other hand folk societies are much smaller and closely knit together. There is little use of technology and the religious ethos is very strong. It presents to an extent a picture opposite to that of modern society.

There are some other aspects to modern society. There is the view that what is emerging is a mass society. That is a society in which small groups have no chance. Psychologically people become superficial, and without any deep commitment. Relationships are insecure and competitive.

In terms of politics that local groups are cut off from the mainstream. Job satisfaction is rare and people do not feel a sense of belonging to the work place. Thus this discontent is manipulated by politicians. Some sociologists however see only pluralism in these situations. They feel that modern society offers unlimited choices to the individual.

Activity 2

Prepare a map of the city/town/village where you live. Identify residential colonies and find out who are the people living in this colony, what is their social background in terms of religion, language, class and caste. Write a report of one page and discuss it with the other students at your Study Centre and also Your Academic Counsellor.

4.3.1 Work in Complex Societies

Work in complex organisations means work that is paid. However work may not earn monetary wage. It may be time consuming and call for skill without being wage productive, e.g. house repairs. In simple societies, the tendency is often to be partial towards leisure. Work is thus mental or physical action that has some end result. Thus work has a wide range of being. In fact, among the complex societies leisure activities have to some extent become a means of work and wage earning, e.g; cricket, football, wrestling and tennis. The players earn their living providing a spectacle to the crowd. Others are willing to pay for their playing. Thus employment or self-employment is the main arena of work. People's leisure activities are also related to it.

4.3.2 Work Structures

Very often in simple societies work is deeply linked with family and religion. Bronislaw Malinowski indicates that in the Trobriand Islands many day to day tasks were overseen by a magician. Again what was produced agriculturally was distributed keeping kinship obligations in mind. In such societies work is not separated from domestic activities. This is true also of pre-industrial France. Here household members helped in every way with the work on the farm. In contrast, complex societies have specific workers or employees. These people have a common work place away from home. Their work uses power and machinery and is supervised. Thus there is little job-freedom. Fixed hours have to be worked without a let-up in effort.

The main attraction for the employees, in a complex society, is the wages they are paid. They have to submit themselves to higher authorities (manager, supervisor, etc.) while at work. All this is quite different from simple societies. Work rhythms that take account of the worker's pace and stamina are almost non-existent. The question of not following the routine doesn't arise. A few provisions are made for emergencies (casual leave, medical leave, etc.) in government organisations. Lax rhythms or personally oriented rhythms are obsolete now. In complex societies commercial offices stress time keeping and ceaseless labour. Time keeping is part and parcel of capitalist and modern work modes.

Gradually, these factors were no longer considered to be imposed upon the workers; they themselves found it convenient. They were willing to work hard and to follow all the rules. This attempt to make workers time conscious and hard working continues till the present day. All these changes have met with some opposition. However, the complex societies do realise that the standard of living has risen greatly. However, some of the work has been both mentally and physically exhausting. Alienation is a modern day fact in social life of the complex societies. This is quite opposite of the tribal situation, e.g. Kalahari Bushmen. Here the material wants were few and easily met with. There was no tendency or opportunity to aggravate wants.

Thus some sociologists have pointed out that simple societies have had a better life. It is not so mechanical and relentlessly time oriented. There is time enough for leisure. However, in complex societies, the concept of 'leisure' time has taken another meaning. Some institutions; eg. Companies, offices etc. give paid vacations to their employees, special leave is given so that the productivity and capacity of the workers may improve.

Work has become a most vital aspect of life in complex societies and wage labour is an important factor in the area of work. To get the work done is also considered a kind of work. Some sociologists think that when work, as an employment-earning wages, a social status and standard of living pervades all areas of life, as it does in a complex society, people's attitudes become exceedingly commercialised. Some sociologists even believe that in contemporary societies class can be understood in terms of consumption. Thus, a person who consumes more or expensive items may be placed in a higher class. The tendency of commercialisation can lead to conflicts among the factors of economy. To illustrate this point we take the issue of conflict in industry.

4.3.3 Conflict in Industry

In industry, the employer has control over the employees' labour over a particular time. The employer would like to use his employee in different capacity. Therefore, he leaves the contract sufficiently vague. Nevertheless, (i) work conditions and effort; (ii) technical qualifications; and (iii) responsibility are areas of management worker discussions, and often disputes. Thus, work effort is always being discussed relative to pay. The worker wants higher pay and facilities. The management however, wants to maximise profits, and this includes keeping low wages and long hours of work for the workers. The same problem exists with technical skill and pay. Again responsible behaviour is sought after by management. The level of responsibility varies with the level in an organisation. Higher positions carry higher responsibility—and higher pay. This too afterwards becomes a bone of contention.

Further conflict areas exist when attempts are made to put machines to work and remove workers. This is also called retrenchment of labour. It also exists when attempts are made to control them very closely. Jobs can often be dehumanising and alienating.

The most visible form of industrial conflict are legal or illegal strikes. However, other methods require co-operation among workers to:

- i) go slow;
- ii) absenteeism; and
- iii) sabotage.

These methods may not show much on surface but cause great damage to management.

Industrial conflict has most meaning when it is recognised by management as a just step. This is rarely the case. Very often trade unions are not recognised by management. The pluralist view of industrial conflict is that various groups may have many complaints. Later, when changes are to be made, they have to participate in decision making. Control over workers is a controversial issue as well. Further this control is established through bureaucratic rules and regulations. Thus choices are extremely limited and the feelings of being hemmed in are very strong. Industrial conflict is a worldwide fact and injustices are in it. However, it is important to provide solution to this area.

4.3.4 Employment and Women

In complex societies appreciable headway has been made on employment of women. Women however remain separated from men in the work spheres. There is "horizontal" segregation in that women are mostly in clerical jobs, catering, receptionists, nursing, school teaching and so on. There is 'vertical' segregation also—for example relatively few women reach top managerial positions, or skilled manual jobs. As such their wages too are lower than those of men. As matters stand today anti-women job discrimination is on the way out. It is no longer felt that a woman must stay at home and only do domestic work.

Further the concept of two incomes has gained popularity, since it raises the standard of living. The responsibility of raising the young however remains vested with women. This is also true of domestic work. However, in most nuclear families in urban areas, men do contribute to the domestic work in one way or the other out of choice or out of compulsion. As such maternity leave is provided for in most jobs. Women also often spend time with their young. Even there is a provision for paternity leave which can be availed by the would be father. But still, women as workers are taken less seriously than men by employers. They are not often delegated to workshops, which increase their skill. It is often felt that they have domestic interests which reduce work—seriousness. This need not be true, however, that union meetings etc. are not conducive to women's participation although communication and technology advancement is bringing more and more women into the work force. In general work is still more male oriented.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Use the space provided below for your answers.

ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Write a brief note in five lines on conflict in industry in modern societies.

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- 2) Provide a picture of women and employment in complex society, in about three lines.

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4.4 POST-INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

Post-industrial society is a combination of various dimensions or features. These features separate it from the modern society. We will examine three of them here and two more in the next section. The first important feature is:

- i) **Service Economy:** In post-industrial society, agriculture and manufacturing do not absorb a majority of the work force. Services and trade are the major avenues of employment and the governments are major employers. Today only the U.S.A. shows indications of this stage. There are over 60 per cent work force engaged in services. This is expected to go even higher.
- ii) **Professional and Technicians:** In industrial societies blue collar and semi skilled labour predominate. However in post-industrial societies professional and technical operators grow to dominate. A new class structure begins to form the basis of post-industrial society.
- iii) **Theoretical Knowledge:** In post-industrial society, theoretical knowledge has a crucial value. Scientific knowledge along with mathematics based social science become very significant. In fact a shortage of scientifically trained professionals is felt. In providing this need universities gain a great deal of importance.

4.4.1 Further Features

Post industrial societies manifest two more features:

i) Technology Planning

In modern society, use of some technologies has proved to be harmful e.g. DDT is affecting crops, birds, wild life. Nuclear energy generating plants are creating nuclear wastes and accidents risks as in Chernobyl. USSR. Post-industrial societies have technology assessment to prevent any harmful effects of the technology. Thus, the government and people are much more aware of the possibility that the advance of technology can often lead to harmful side consequences.

ii) Intellectual Technology

A new intellectual technology will be crucial to post-industrial society. It is not the machine technology of the modern age. Intellectual technology comprises management and other techniques needed to organise. Vast use of computers and super computers and new mathematics is crucial. Decisions regarding the actual use of advanced technology rest with the politicians and not with the technicians. In this situation, the economy may feature an all-out exploitation of the less-developed population. This may lead to a revolution on the part of those exploited. Thus, the post-industrial society may not last long or else societies, both the developed as well as the developing, may take conscious steps to protect themselves from over exploitation of natural environment and pollution.

4.4.2 Some Trends

Post-industrial society depends for its emergence on the persistence of the present trends. What happens if this does not happen? Let us consider some of these aspects below:

- i) **State Tasks:** These include saving and distribution of wealth equitably. Both these are contradictory - for the latter means expenditure not saving of capital. Higher taxes do not solve the problem. Education, medicine, insurance, all needs great expenditure. Saving is not enough to meet them and a fiscal crisis arises.
- ii) **Cultural Change:** Change may come culturally - not only in the economy but all aspects of social life. The new young may find fulfilment outside their careers as well as inside them.

- iii) **Ideologies:** Post-industrialism regulates the big corporations strictly. It is a type of 'state capitalism'. In other countries state socialism exists. Socialism should lead to communal society, which eventually makes the state obsolete. However this is not borne out by trends in modern communism. It is also felt by some sociologists that bureaucracy needs to be replaced by communal structures.

Thus there is much speculation about future trends. Recently, however it is being questioned whether progress alone is the future. Cannot there be devastation in a global sense or regional nuclear holocaust? This factor has come in to create much sobriety and stops utopic visions of the future from being readily accepted.

In the 21st century, we have entered yet another era of social existence. This era is referred to as the "**information age**" where global communication through radio, T.V., Computer networks, satellites has changed the very notion of social group or community. People from different regions, societies, languages etc. can be part of an Internet group, constantly in touch with each other and so on. Sources of knowledge and its accessibility through improved communication technologies has taken such a significant shape that we can talk about a 'global' world today where development of any kind, be it social cultural, political or economic; it affects all societies throughout the world in different ways and different proportions. One example is the post September or 9/11 event in America when in 2002 the World Trade Center (WTC) building was destroyed by two aeroplanes carrying passengers. Thousands of people were killed. The tragedy was immense but its socio-political implications are still being felt everywhere in the world.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: i) Use the space provided below for your answers.

ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) List three features of post-industrial society. Use about four lines.

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4.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have examined the notion of complex societies. We began with a discussion on the features of complex societies. This involved taking into consideration rural and urban aspects of community life. It also included a look at various forms that urbanisation takes.

We studied modern society as a major form of complex society. We examined work and its aspects within such societies. Industrial conflict and women's employment were two important issues that we explained. Finally, we studied post-industrial societies and what they are comprised of. This included studying the features and various possible trends that complex societies might take in the future such as, the media revolutions which has really made the world a global world. We have thus provided a rounded view of complex societies.

4.6 FURTHER READINGS

- 1) Bell, Daniel, 1973. *The Coming of post-industrial Society*. Basic Books: New York.
- 2) Worsley, Peter (ed.), 1987. *The New Introducing Sociology*. Penguin Books Limited: Middlesex.

4.7 KEY WORDS

Absenteeism	: When workers are not in the work place without being on any leave.
Alienation	: A feeling of dissatisfaction and dislike for the job that the worker is doing.
Contention	: A dispute over something, e.g. wages for work, with the management.
Horizontal Segregation	: Keeping one particular group apart within the similar wage and status level.
Medicare	: Medical treatment available to workers and others.
Obsolete	: No longer in use; out moded.
Stereotype	: A generally held idea about something e.g. villages are beautiful and peaceful places.
Vertical Segregation	: Separating people at the top (or bottom) level from others, e.g. owners, managers, and supervisors.

4.8 MODEL ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) A complex society is one, which has high technological developments. Its organisations are formal and its' complicated bureaucratic set-up is an important feature of a complex society.
- 2) The three types of urbanisation are:
 - i) over-urbanisation;
 - ii) under-urbanisation; and
 - iii) de-urbanisation.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Conflict and disputes arise in industry in modern societies over
 - i) working conditions;
 - ii) required technical qualifications; and
 - iii) responsibility relative to pay.
- 2) A large number of women are employed in complex society. However, most of them are in low-level jobs—clerical, receptionists, etc. Very few reach high positions.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Three features of an industrial society are:
 - i) basically, a service economy, e.g. trade;
 - ii) dominance of professionals and technicians; and
 - iii) vast scientific knowledge.

REFERENCES

References cited in Block 1 (These are given here for those students who wish to follow up certain points in detail.)

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UNIT 5 FAMILY

Structure

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Definition of Family
 - 5.2.1 Family as an Institution
 - 5.2.2 Variations in Family Forms
 - 5.2.3 Universal Nature of Family
 - 5.2.4 Biological Basis of the Family
 - 5.2.5 Common Residence and Nomenclature
- 5.3 Social Functions of the Family
- 5.4 Role of Family in Industrial Society
 - 5.4.1 Importance of Family
- 5.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 5.6 Key words
- 5.7 Further Readings
- 5.8 Model Answers to Check Your Progress

5.0 OBJECTIVES

A study of this unit would enable you to:

- define the term family;
- explain the concept of family as one of the social institutions of society;
- describe the various forms of family;
- explain the nature and characteristics of family;
- distinguish the social functions of family; and
- describe the role of family in contemporary modern society.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous units, in Block 1, we have taught you some basic concepts. We also gave a good idea about simple and complex societies. In this unit we introduce you to the definition of the family, family as a social institution and variations in the family form. We also explain the biological basis of the family. Important features such as social functions of the family, roles and the importance of the family in industrial society are also brought out in this unit.

The basic unit of the social structure in every society is the family. This is as true among simple societies as within the complex, modern societies. However, it varies in internal organisation, in its degree of autonomy and in the sanctions and taboos by which it is protected and perpetuated. Its universality, its persistence through time and under widely variant cultures, and its necessity for biological and social reasons should be an effective reply to the ‘prophets of doom’ who fear that the family is of less significance today than in earlier times. The specific pattern of family life in any given social structure is the product of the mores and varies with time and place and peoples. Therefore, the family has been seen as a universal social institution, as an inevitable part of human society. It is built around the needs of human beings to regularise sexual behaviour and protect and nurture the young ones.

It is the unit in which resources are pooled and distributed for consumption, around which residence is organised and domestic tasks are performed. The social organisation is associated with such emotive issues as love, marriage, home and child bearing. It is the family that gives us our principal identity our social status and even our very name, which is the lable of this identity in the larger society of which we are a part. This unit will give you an idea about the family as a social institution, the discussion will be kept at a sociological level.

5.2 DEFINITION OF FAMILY

The early and classical definitions emphasised that the family was a group based on marriage, common residence, emotional bonds, and stipulation of domestic services. The family has also been defined as group based on marital relations, rights and duties of parenthood, common habitation and reciprocal relations between parents and children. Some sociologists feel that the family is a social group characterised by common residence, economic co-operation and reproduction.

In recent times the concept of family is viewed in terms of certain criteria applicable to all societies. For instance, it is felt that the family is a primary kinship unit, which carries out aspects of the sexual, reproductive, economic and educational functions. Keeping in view these definitions, we generally picture a family as a durable association of husband and wife with or without children, or a durable association of a man or woman along with children. Thus, members in the family live together, pool their resources and work together and produce offspring. A family is also viewed as an adult male and female living together with their offspring in a more or less permanent relationship such as marriage which is approved by their society. These definitions point out the basics or the minimum essentials of the family as a special kind of social grouping: (i) it involves a sexual relationship between adults of opposite sexes; (ii) it involves their cohabitation or living together, (iii) it involves at least the expectation of relative permanence of the relationship between them; and (iv) most important of all, the relationship is culturally defined and societally sanctioned-it is a marriage. Marriage and the family are not just something people become involved in on their own. Some of the ways in which they must relate to each other are decided for them by their society. It is a well known and recognised fact that marriage is the basis for the family. Since reproduction and control over it has been the concern of all societies, marriage as a legal institution becomes a crucial factor. Marriage is recognised as a special kind of relationship since it is the one in which families are created and perpetuated, and the family is the ultimate basis of human society.

5.2.1 Family as an Institution

In the previous block of this course, ESO-11 you learnt about social institution and how family is one of the pivotal and most significant institution of all societies.

There are various forms of family found all over the world; but most sociologists and anthropologists agree that universally the most common features of a family is that it is composed of individuals related to each other by blood, marriage, or adoption.

Family, like any other institution of society forms around complex, socially significant problems, solving the problems of social existence is critical to collective living in all societies. George Murdock (1949; 4-11) lists four important functions served by the nuclear family, these functions serve to resolve four major problems of society. According to him the nuclear family along with other social institutions, serves to:

- i) regulate sexual relations;
- ii) account for economic survival ;
- iii) controls reproduction; and
- iv) socialises children

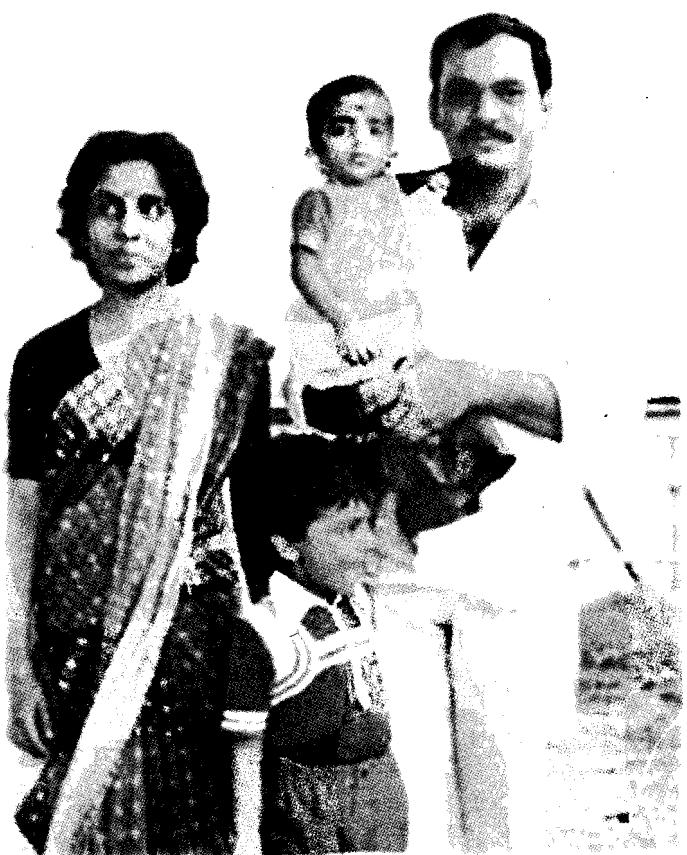
Out of all these functions, some thinkers believe that socialisation of children is one of the most central tasks of the family. Thus, one can see that family, as an institution, helps solve the problem of regulating sexual behaviour, surviving economically, reproducing new members of society and socialising them to become effective members of that society and culture.

5.2.2 Variations in Family Forms

The bewildering variety of family forms, noticed in societies throughout the world in the course of human history, is a cultural phenomenon of considerable interest. For instance, with regard to **residence** some societies are **matrilocal** in their marriage and family customs, while others are **patrilocal**. In the former case, the young married couple takes up residence at the home of the bride's parents, whereas, in the latter type the couple takes up residence at the home of the bridegroom's parents. Residence in most parts of India is patrilocal in that it gives to the husband and not the wife the right to choose the place of residence after marriage.

The issue of **descent** as to who will be related to whom and how, is not as simple as it might first appear. Those who are socially defined by a given society as "related", are called **kin**. Therefore from the point of view of lineage, there are three different systems for tracing descent. In a **matrilineal society** descent is traced through the female line, and in a **patrilineal society** through the male line. It is also common to trace descent bilaterally in some societies.

From the point of view of **authority**, the pattern of dominance and subordination and decision-making in the family, two different patterns are visible in different societies. These are **patriarchy**-male dominant; **matriarchy**-female dominant. Most of the societies have the patriarchal pattern. However, in modern societies of today, social and cultural change is tending to establish more equalitarian pattern of decision-making in which authority is shared between the conjugal pair.



i) Nuclear Family



ii) Extended Family

Yet another distinction is made between the **conjugal family** or family by marriage on the one hand and **consanguine family** or family by blood on the other, based on the membership type of the family. While the conjugal family consists of parents and their children, the consanguine family is made up of either parent and the units' blood relatives, such as, mother, her children, her parents or father, his children, his parents etc.

Finally, we can also classify families into nuclear and extended types based on the way they are organised. The nuclear family consists of a married couple and their children. The extended family is commonly defined as the nuclear family plus all kin belonging to either side, living together. It may be pointed out here that a consanguineous family implies 'ties of blood'. Ties of blood means the relationship between parents and their children, between siblings; even cousins on both paternal and maternal sides. It implies no particular form.

5.2.3 Universal Nature of Family

As stated earlier, the family is the most permanent and pervasive of all social institutions. There is no human society without any family system. All societies both large and small, primitive and civilised, ancient and modern, have institutionalised the process of procreation of the species and the rearing of the young. It is a permanent and universal institution and one of the constants of human life.

However we need to point out here that the same type of family is not found everywhere. There are several types of family. For example in the West the nuclear family is found. This comprises the husband and wife together with their children. In Indian villages and in small towns the extended or joint family is found. In India, too, largely nuclear families are found but often, amongst the better off families in villages, especially where agricultural land is there or amongst the Communities involved in business and trade, one often finds the large joint or extended family. This form of family has people living in it of two, three or sometimes four generations under the same roof.

5.2.4 Biological Basis of the Family

The institution of the family is to be explained in terms of biological factor—the existence of two sexes and the sexual character of reproduction in the human species. It appears as a natural answer to the human sexual drive, a phenomenon solidly based in the biology of the human organism. Family provides legitimacy to all these biological activities with the support of marriage.

The family is characterised by its limited size. Because of this characteristic feature, family is identified as a primary group. It may include parents and their unmarried children or parents and their married as well as unmarried children. The bonds that tie together these limited number of members with limited common interests are the outcome of emotional factors such as love, mutual affection and solicitude. This emotional basis of the family makes it an ideally suitable primary social group in every society.

Activity 1

Examine the type of family in which you live, in terms of residence, emotional attachment, household, size etc. and write a short essay on "My Family and its Social Structure". Compare your answer with those of other learners at your study centre.

5.2.5 Common Residence and Nomenclature

The family is one of the most durable of all social institutions. Each family has a residence, an address and a name. We recognise any family with the help of the family name, location and address. A family can mean two quite different things depending upon the vantage from which we view it. For instance, the family in which one is a

child is the **family of orientation** and the family in which one is a parent is the **family of procreation**. Each family thus has common habitation for its living. Without a dwelling place, the task of child bearing and rearing cannot be adequately met. However, family as a concept has a wider meaning than mere household since a family can be spread out geographically sometimes but yet emotionally, socially and legally be known as a family. For example, a married couple may be living in two different cities or their children may be working somewhere else, even living in a different country/city; but they think of themselves as one family.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use space below for your answers.
ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Give a definition of the family. Use around three lines.

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- 2) What is the biological basis of the family? Discuss in about three lines.

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5.3 SOCIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE FAMILY

The reasons for the endurance and universality of the family are largely grounded in the functions that it performs for individuals and for society. The major functions the family accomplishes are discussed below:

i) Member replacement and physical maintenance

In order to survive, every society must replace members who die and keep the survivors alive. The regulations of reproduction is centred in the family as are cooking and eating and care of the sick. Once children are born, they will be nurtured and protected within the family. It is the family that feeds, clothes and shelters them.

ii) Regulation of sexual behaviour

The family regulates sexual behaviour. Each and every member's sexual behaviour is influenced to some extent by what is learned in the family setting. The sexual attitudes and patterns of behaviour we learn in the family reflect societal norms and regulate our sexual behaviour. The sociological notion of sexual regulation should not be confused with repression. The norms, on the other hand, specify under what conditions and with what partners sexual needs may be satisfied.

iii) Socialisation of children

The family carries out the serious responsibility of socialising each child. Children are taught largely by their families to conform to socially approved patterns of behaviour. If the family serves society as an instrument for the transmission of culture, it serves the individual as an instrument of socialisation. A family prepares its children for participation in the larger world and acquaints them with the larger culture.

iv) Status transmission

Individual's social identity is initially fixed by family membership by being born to parents of a given status and characteristics. Children take on the socio-economic class standing of their parents and the culture of the class into which they are born, including its values, behaviour patterns and definitions of reality. In addition to internalising family attitudes and beliefs, children are treated and defined by others as extensions of the social identity of their parents. In short, family acts as a vehicle of culture transmission from generation to generation.

v) Economic activity

Until recent times, the family was an important unit of both production and consumption. The family produced most of the goods it consumed and consumed most of the goods it produced. But today, modern families mainly earn incomes. Thus, their principal function is that of the consumption of goods and services which they purchase. Because of the production of income the provision of economic support for family members is a major function of the modern family.

vi) Social emotional support

The family as a primary group is an important source of affection, love and social interaction. Caring for family members does not end with infancy and childhood. It is seemingly the nature of human beings to establish social interdependencies, not only to meet physical needs, but also to gratify emotional and psychological needs for response and affection as well as.

vii) Inter-institutional linkage

Each baby is a potential participant in the group life of the society. Family membership in a religious, political, economic, recreational and other kinds of organisations typically gives individuals an opportunity to participate in activities that might otherwise be closed to them.

The family, then, not only prepares the individual to fill social roles and occupy a status in the community, but also provides the opportunities for such activity. Some institutions depend also on the way the family functions in this regard to insure their own continuity and survival.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Use space below for your answers.

ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Briefly discuss, in three lines, one important function of the family.

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5.4 ROLE OF FAMILY IN INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

Many sociologists feel that the family has lost a number of its functions in modern industrial society. Institutions such as business, political parties, schools, welfare and recreational organisations, creche and play schools, now specialise in functions earlier performed only by the family. This reduces the dependency of the individual on his or her family and kin. The high rate of geographical mobility in industrial society decreases the frequency and intimacy of contact among members of the kin-family network. The

relatively high level of social mobility and the importance of 'achieved' status in modern society have weakened the importance of family and its extended form since it has less to offer to its members.

5.4.1 Importance of Family

However, this does not mean that the family is declining in importance. It has in fact become more specialised and its role is still vital. By structuring the personalities of the young and stabilising the personalities of adults, the family provides its members with the psychological training and support necessary to meet the requirements of the social system. In fact, the loss of certain functions of the family has made its remaining functions more important. The family's responsibility for socialising the young remains important as ever. Even though the family has largely lost its functions as a unit of production, it still maintains a vital economic function as a unit of consumption. Parents of today are expected to do their best to guide, encourage, and support their children in their educational and occupational choices and careers. Compared to the past, parents are more preoccupied with their children's health and emotional well being. State health and welfare provisions have provided additional support for the family and made its members more aware of the importance of health and hygiene in the home. In a nutshell, the family has adapted and is adapting to a developing industrial society. It remains as a vital and basic institution in society.

Across the span of history, the form and organisation of the family have varied, but in every social structure it has been a primary group and the basic unit of social organisation. Through the family the individual is a person with status, and children are reared and guided, and the cultural heritage is transmitted to succeeding generations. Families may be organised in an amazing variety of ways. Although the family is rooted in the biological nature of human beings, in human experience it is always a social institution which is governed by cultural norms.

With the growth of industry and the rise of cities, family life and family patterns have changed. The economic functions are largely transferred to outside agencies. Increasing emphasis is, however, placed on psychological values such as affection, companionship and emotional security.

The present is a period of transition. The family withstood the sweeping changes in the cultural pattern and found ways to adjust to each new situation. It will continue to survive, whatever further changes the future may bring.

Activity 2

Take 3 generations of your family, either you, your parents and their parents or you, your children and your parents (whichever is relevant to you). Identify two important changes in the emotional bond between different generations in your family and make a note of it. Compare your answer with other students at your study centre. Discuss this topic with your Academic Counsellor, as well.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: i) Use space below for your answers.

ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) What is the role of the family in industrial society? Use around five lines for your answer.

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- 2) Why is the family still important in industrial society? Use around five lines for your answer.

5.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have studied various aspects of the institution of family. We began with definitions of the family and then studied variations in family forms. This included describing the biological basis of the family. The universal nature of the family and common residence and nomenclature therein were also described.

We then turned to a description of the social functions of the family. Following this the role of family in industrial society is explained. This part also emphasised the importance of the family and aspects of the industrial family.

5.6 KEY WORDS

Conjugal family	: Family in which the members consist of spouses (married couple) and their children.
Consanguine family	: Family in which the members are related by descent rather than by marriage.
Extended family	: Family consisting of one or more married pairs, their children and other near relatives.
Family of orientation	: The family into which one is born.
Family of procreation	: The family of which the person concerned is a parent.
Kin	: Those who are related through descent or marriage.
Matriarchy	: Family dominated by the mother as head of the household.
Matrilocal	: The practice whereby a married couple settles in the home of the wife's family.
Mores	: Ideas of right and wrong which require certain action and forbid others.
Nuclear family	: Family consisting of parents and their children only.
Patriarchy	: Family dominated by the father as head of the household.
Patrilocal	: The practice whereby a married couple, settles in the home of the husband's family.

5.7 FURTHER READINGS

- 1) Kapadia, K.M. 1966. *Marriage and Family in India*, Oxford University Press, Bombay.
- 2) Sutherland, R.L., Woodward, J.L., and Maxwell, M.A., (editors), 1961. *Introductory Sociology*, Oxford and IBH Publishing Company, Delhi.
- 3) Murdock, G.P., 1949. *Social Structure*, Macmillan, New York.

5.8 MODEL ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) The family can be defined as group based on
 - a) Marital relations
 - b) Parenthood
 - c) Common residence
- 2) The biological basis of family is explained due to the existence of two sexes and reproduction. Further, it is the natural answer to human sexual urges.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) One important function of the family is to transmit the parents' status to the children. The children's social standing is related to the family.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) The role of the family in industrial society has weakened quite a bit. Institutions like schools, business houses, political parties, recreational organisations, etc., reduce the role of the family. So, also does the high level of mobility.
- 2) The importance of the family in industrial society cannot be under-estimated. It still provides socialising functions, psychological training and so on. The family still performs economic functions (support), which allows children to get on in life.

UNIT 6 MARRIAGE

Structure

6.0 Objectives

6.1 Introduction

6.2 The Institution of Marriage

6.3 Forms of Marriage

6.3.1 Monogamy

6.3.2 Polygamy

6.3.3 Rules of Endogamy and Exogamy

6.4 Mate Selection

6.4.1 Preferential Marriage

6.4.2 Love Marriage

6.4.3 Mate selection among Tribals

6.5 Changes in Marriage

6.5.1 Changes in the Forms of Marriage

6.5.2 Changes in Mate Selection

6.5.3 Changes in Age of Marriage

6.5.4 Changes in Marriage Rituals and Customs

6.5.5 Changes in Marriage: Goals and Stability

6.6 Let Us Sum Up

6.7 Key words

6.8 Further Readings

6.9 Model Answers to Check Your Progress

6.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit you should be able to:

- explain the institution of marriage;
- describe the various forms of marriage;
- explain what is implied by mate-selection;
- discuss changes that have taken place in the institution of marriage; and
- explain marriage goals and stability in marriage.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we will explain the institution of marriage. We will also explain various aspects connected with it. This will include discussion on forms of marriage. Such forms include monogamy, polygamy and rules such as those of endogamy and exogamy. We have also described mate-selection as an important aspect of marriage. Some of the related areas covered are love marriages, preferential marriages, and mate selection practices among tribals. The last part deals with changes in marriage, its forms, mate selection practices, age at marriage, and so on. We thus provide a full picture of the institution of marriage.

6.2 THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE

Marriage is an important and universal social institution of society. As a social institution, it provides a recognised form for entering into a relatively enduring heterosexual relationship for the bearing and rearing of children. It is thus primarily a way of regulating human reproduction. This reproduction, however, also has a sociological dimension. The right of sexual relationship, that universally accompanies marriage, provides legitimisation to the children born in wedlock; this legitimacy is of great importance in the matters of inheritance and succession. Besides, through marriage there comes into existence the family, a relatively stable social group, that is responsible for the care and training of children. In all these respects, then, marriage has historically provided the institutional mechanisms necessary for replacement of social members and thereby has been meeting the important prerequisites of human survival and society's continuance. However, these societal prerequisites do not encompass all the values and goals of marriage.

In some societies, particularly in the industrialised western societies, the chief aim of marriage is not only procreation but companionship, emotional, and psychological support are equally emphasised. The idea of companionship in marriage as a main feature, however, is a recent development. For the major part of human history, all societies have emphasised marriage to be a social obligation. It is invested with several familial, social and economic responsibilities.

Historically marriage has been found to exist in a wide variety of forms in different societies. Also it has been found to perform differing functions. Indeed, even the manner in which marriage partners are to be obtained reveals an astonishing variety of modes and customs. There is an almost endless variety in nearly everything concerning marriage. This has led to several definitions of what marriage is.

6.3 FORMS OF MARRIAGE

As has just been pointed out, above, and in Unit 5, marriage has a large variety of forms. These forms can be identified on the basis of the number of partners and rules governing who can marry whom.

In terms of the number of partners that can legitimately enter into matrimony, we have two forms of marriage, namely, monogamy and polygamy.

6.3.1 Monogamy

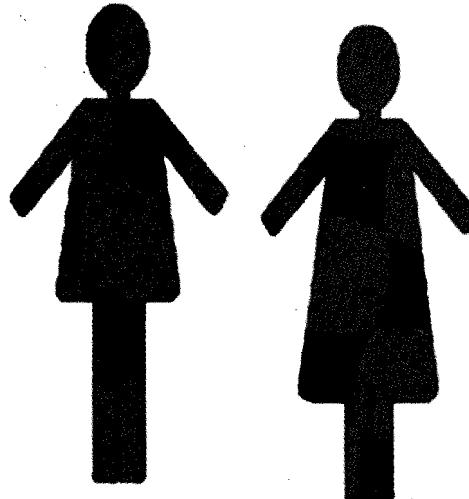
Monogamy restricts the individual to one spouse at a time. Under this system, at any given time a man can have only one wife and a woman can have only one husband. Monogamy is prevalent in all societies and is almost the universal form in all modern industrial societies. Even where polygamy (see Key Words) is permitted, in actual practice, monogamy is more widely prevalent. Due to constraints of financial resources and almost an even balance between the ratio of men and women in the population, a vast majority of individuals living in polygamous societies cannot have more than one spouse at a time.

In many societies, individuals are permitted to marry again often on the death of the first spouse or after divorce; but they cannot have more than one spouse at one and the same time. Such a monogamous marriage is termed as serial monogamy. Most western societies practise serial monogamy.

A society may also practise straight monogamy, in which remarriage is not allowed. Most upper caste Hindu females were obliged to follow the norm of straight monogamy prior to the enactment of Widow Remarriage Act of 1856, as until then widows were not allowed to marry again. These restrictions had not, however, pertained to men.

They were allowed to remarry after their spouse's death. However, in some lower castes, widow remarriage was permitted. In such a remarriage usually the deceased husband's brother was considered a preferred mate. This practice helped keep property within the family. It is also called levirate marriage.

Monogamy



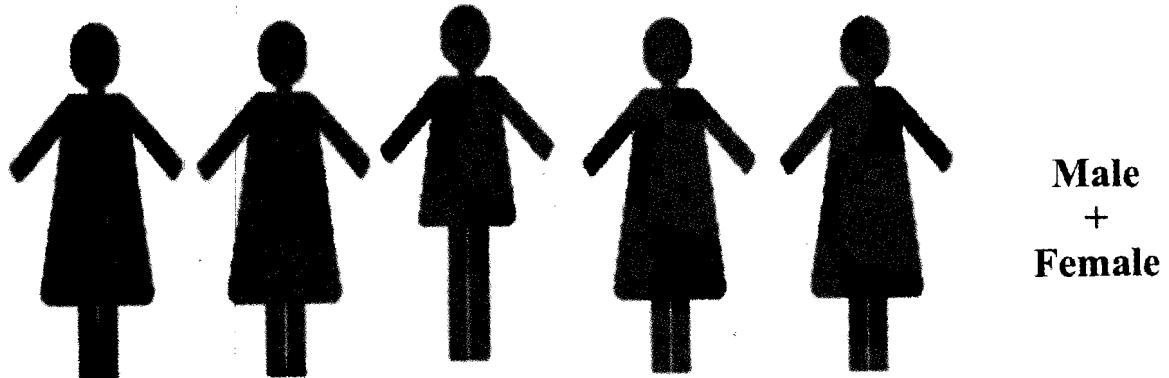
6.3.2 Polygamy

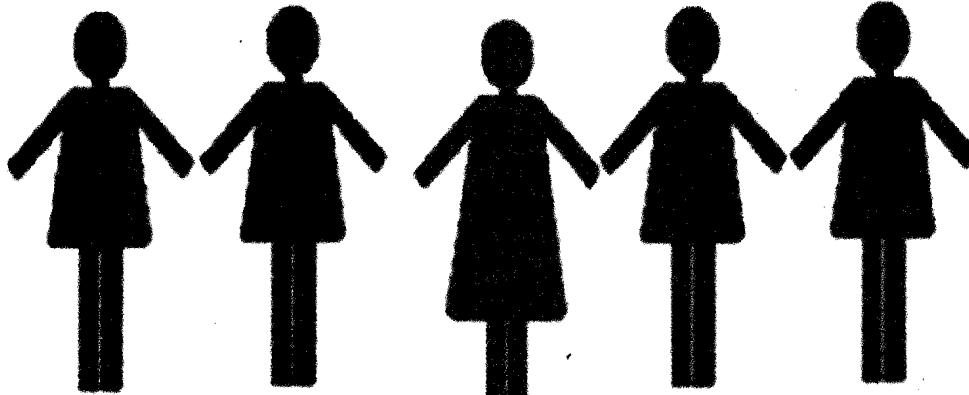
Polygamy denotes marriage to more than one mate at one time and takes the form of either: **Polygyny** (one husband with two or more wives) or **Polyandry** (one wife with two or more husbands).

While monogamy is permitted in all societies, polygamy, in the form of **polygyny**, is the preferred form in several societies. **Murdock's** research, based on an analysis of 283 societies, revealed that 193 of these were characterised by **polygyny**, 43 were **monogamous** and only 2 practiced **polyandry**.

Preferential rules for the choice of wives/husbands are followed in some polygamous societies. In certain societies males marry the wife's sisters, and females their husband's brothers. Such marriages are termed as **sororal polygyny** and **fraternal polyandry**, respectively.

i) Polygyny





**Female
+
Male**

Polyyandry

Among polyandrous societies, “fraternal” polyandry is by far the most common. In these societies, a group of brothers, real or classificatory, are collectively the husbands of a woman. This kind of polyandry has been found by the researchers in various parts of the world. Tibet has been described as the largest and most flourishing polyandrous community by Prince Peter. Polyandry is reported to be widely prevalent among some tribes in South India, Todas are considered a classic example of polyandrous people. In North India some groups of Jats are reported to be polyandrous.

Usually where economic conditions are harsh, polyandry may be one response of society, since in such situations a single male cannot adequately support a wife and children. Also, extreme poverty conditions pressurise a group to limit its population.

Activity 1

Which type of marriage has been frequently practiced by your family members and friends and why? Write a short note on “Type of Marriage in My Community” and discuss your note with other learners at your study centre.

6.3.3 Rules of Endogamy and Exogamy

All societies have prescriptions and proscriptions regarding who may or may not marry whom. In some societies these restrictions are subtle, while in some others, individuals who can or cannot be married, are more explicitly and specifically defined. Forms of marriage based on rules governing eligibility/ineligibility of mates is classified as endogamy and exogamy.

Endogamy requires an individual to marry within a culturally defined group of which he or she is already a member, as for example, caste. Exogamy, on the other hand, the reverse of endogamy, requires the individual to marry outside of his/her own group. Endogamy and exogamy are in reference to certain kinship units, such as, clan, caste and racial, ethnic or religious groupings. In India, even village exogamy is practised in certain parts of north India.

- i) Religious endogamy is one of the most pervasive form of endogamy. Most religious groups do not permit or like their members to marry individuals of other faiths. In addition, various groups in the social hierarchy such as caste and class also tend to be endogamous. Endogamy is a very important characteristic of the Indian caste system. Among Hindus, there are over three hundred castes/sub-castes and each one of them is endogamous. Despite modernising trends in India, which

have diluted caste restrictions in many respects, inter-caste marriages are still few and mostly limited to educated urban individuals. Although the norms of caste endogamy were widely prevalent, Hindu scriptures by allowing **anuloma** and **pratiloma** marriages, institutionalised, to a limited extent, inter-caste marital alliances. The **anuloma** marriage permits an alliance between a lower class woman and higher caste man, while the **pratiloma** marriage is an alliance between higher caste woman and a lower caste man. The former is referred to by the sociologists as hypergamy and the latter as hypogamy.

- ii) Rules of exogamy among Hindus are very specific. Hindus are traditionally prohibited from marrying in their own gotra, pravara and sapinda (gotra, pravara and sapinda refer to a group of individuals assumed to have descended from a paternal or maternal ancestor and are variously termed as clan, sib or lineage). The Hindu Marriage Act (1955) forbids marriage between sapinda, and specifies that marriage between two persons related within five generations on the father's side and three on the mother's side is void, unless permitted by local custom.

The exogamic rule, prohibiting marriage between siblings (brother-sister) and parent-child is followed in virtually all societies. Sexual relations between the members of an elementary nuclear family (other than parents) are termed as incest.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use space below for your answers.

ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Distinguish between monogamy and polygamy. Use about three lines.

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- 2) Write a brief note on endogamy and exogamy. Use about four lines.

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6.4 MATE SELECTION

The process whereby people choose marriage partners is called mate selection. While in some societies, individuals are relatively free to choose their mate from the 'field of eligibles', in some other societies those getting married have almost no say regarding whom they wish to marry. Even in the former situation individuals are not entirely free to choose their mates. Culture and social pressures, in subtle or explicit ways, do influence choice.

In all societies there is some notion of a 'good match'. Further, within endogamous limits also, certain relationships are preferred. Thus, mate selection is usually influenced by considerations of 'good match' and preferential mating.

In India, considerations of caste, religious and family background have traditionally been of great importance in selection of mates. In addition, looks of the girl and her competence as housewife, are also considered to be important. In urban middle class families, the earning capacity of the girl is also given considerable weightage, these days, in the selection of a bride.

6.4.1 Preferential Marriage

While some societies prohibit marriage between certain categories of relations (kins), other societies permit or even require certain kind of relatives to get married to. Thus marriage with particular cross cousins (father's, sister's or mother's brother's offsprings) are approved or permitted in many societies. Among Arabs and Muslims in India, marriage between parallel cousins (child of father's brother or mother's sister) is common. Possible reasons for permitting or preferring cousin marriages are: (a) family wealth is not dispersed as it remains within related family groups; and (b) relationships do not fade away as they are constantly renewed among offsprings of related families.

i) Marriage arrangements

In some societies, the decisions regarding mate selection are made by parents/ relatives; in some other societies individuals are relatively free to choose their own mates. Marriage arrangements thus tend to follow two patterns, namely, parent arranged (arranged marriage) and self-choice (love marriage)

ii) Arranged marriage

Traditional societies like India, where extended family network has been crucial, arranging marriage has been the concern of parents and elders. In additions, gains in terms of family prestige, economic prosperity and power (especially in affluent families) have also been sought through 'proper' marriage alliances. Consequently, marriage has been considered to be a serious matter which could not be left to the 'fancies' of the immature. As such, in traditional societies 'arranged' marriages have been the norm. Such marriages have also been unavoidable because in these societies there used to exist rigid sex-segregation, due to which marriageable young girls and boys could not come together and know one another. Even today, heterosexual intermingling is not widely prevalent, and young people especially girls, themselves, seem to prefer arranged marriages, which saves them from many psychological tensions which modern youth undergo in many of the western societies.

However it should be remembered that arranged marriages are rarely forced marriages; the needs and preferences of the young people getting married are not entirely ignored.

6.4.2 Love Marriage

In the western urban-industrial method of mate selection, individuals go through the process of dating and courtship, they make selections, based on the consideration of feelings for one another. This is termed as 'love marriage' by Asians/Indians. For, in such marriages, mate choice is done by the individuals concerned on grounds of mutual affection and love, rather than on pragmatic considerations of social status, wealth or other familial advantages. These 'love marriages' stress the individual's supreme right to love and be loved in a romantic-sensual sense. Such love is considered as the essence of happiness in marriage.

There is an important difference between love marriage and arranged marriage. Whereas in the latter at the individual's level one has vague expectations from marriage (in fact, individuals enter into it primarily for performing their social duty), in self-choice marriage there are great expectations of happiness and companionship from one's partner in marriage. However, these are not very easy to attain and retain in day-to-day life after marriage, where practical problems of existence confront the couple. Mature personalities are able to adjust to this gap between dream and reality. The less mature find it difficult to adjust. At times the gap between fantasy of romantic love and exigencies of practical life is so wide that the strain becomes impossible to bear and marriage ends in a failure.

Evidently such marriages involve a risk, and since the partners entering such a union had not done so for familial or social reasons, the love marriage tends to be more fragile than the arranged marriage. Many of the love marriages become unstable not so much because of the mistaken selection but because of non-fulfilled expectations in marriage.

Activity 2

Try to arrange a debate cum discussion with students at your study centre on the topic of “Love Marriage Versus Arranged Marriage in the Contemporary Urban Society; and Why?” Request your Academic Counsellors to Co-ordinate the debate.

6.4.3 Mate Selection among Tribals

Though premarital relationships among tribals are tolerated, and self-selection is permitted, all regular marriages are parent arranged. Even marriage by ‘capture’ is effected, in some tribes, at the instance or connivance of parents. Irregular marriages are effected through elopement, intrusion or forcible application of vermillion, all of which are eventually accepted by the parents and the families concerned, as signifying wedlock. In practice various other forms of mate selection are in existence. The more important among these are discussed below.

i) Selection by purchase and service

Mate selection ‘by purchase’ is the most prevalent practice. In this, bride-price has to be paid to the girl’s parents. The amount of bride-price rates from a nominal price (as in case of Regma Naga) to such a high price (as in case of Ho) that many young men and women have to remain unmarried.

Some tribes (Gond) have found a way out of the high bride-price. The would-be groom lives and works in his would-be father-in law’s house as a suitor-servant for a number of years before he can ask for the girl’s hand in marriage.

Another way of avoiding the payment of bride-price is through an exchange of girls/women among eligible families.

ii) Youth dormitories

Tribes having youth dormitories provide a wide scope for the youth to choose their mates. Therefore, marriage by mutual consent with parents approval has been the general practice. Where parents object, elopement is a solution. Eventually the parents welcome the couple’s return.

iii) Selection by capture

Mate selection ‘by capture’ has been a feature of Naga, Ho, Bhil and Gond tribes. Among Nagas, female infanticide was resorted to because of fear of raids for bride capturing. Among the Gond capture takes place often at the instance of parents of the bride and amongst the Ho it is prearranged. Besides physical capture, there is also a ceremonial capture. Among Central Indian tribes peaceful captures are effected on the occasion of certain inter village festivals.

iv) Selection by trial

Mate selection by trial also exists among some tribals. A young Bhil has to prove his prowess before he can claim the hand of any girl. This is generally done through a dance game. On Holi festival, young women dancers make a circle around a tree or pole on which a coconut and gud are tied. The men folk make an outer ring. The trial of strength begins when a young man attempts to break the inner circle in order to reach the tree/pole. The women resist his attempt with all their might; and in case the

man is able to reach the tree and eat the gud and break open the coconut. He can choose any girl from the surrounding inner circle, as his wife.

Cases are reported among some tribals, where a girl desirous of marrying an unwilling mate thrusts herself on him, bears all humiliations and harsh treatment till the man yields. Such a marriage is termed as marriage by intrusion.

In addition to the above-mentioned ways of mate selection, probationary marriages are also reported among the Kuki, who permit a young man and woman to live together at the girls home for some weeks, and then decide whether to get married or not. In case they decide to separate, the young man has to pay cash compensation to the girl's parents.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Use space below for your answers.
ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Explain what is meant by preferential marriage. Use about three lines for your answer.

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- 2) Explain with examples how mate selection is done among tribals. Use about three lines for your answer.

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6.5 CHANGES IN MARRIAGE

Industrialisation and urbanisation have ushered in changes which have profoundly affected the institution of marriage all over the world. While different societies, and within each society different groups, have responded differentially to industrialisation and urbanisation, nonetheless certain common trends in the changes affecting marriage are discernible.

6.5.1 Changes in the Forms of Marriage

Societies with traditions of plural marriages are turning towards monogamy. Due to the general improvement in the status of woman and her gradual emancipation from the clutches of male dominance, even in those societies where polygamy is permissible, incidence of polygamous marriages, and plurality of wives, are on the decrease. In India, the Hindu Marriage Act has banned both polygynous and polyandrous marriages. Even in a Muslim country like Pakistan, legislation was introduced making it necessary for the kazi to solemnize plural marriages only if the first wife gave her written consent. The trend towards monogamy has also been encouraged by the new idea of romantic love as the basis for marriage propagated by the western societies. It is a marriage in which one specific individual is considered to be the ideal partner.

However, it would perhaps be wrong to assume that this trend towards monogamy is also towards straight monogamy. While conditions in modern society have made marriage unstable and the marriage bond is revokable, individuals are willing to risk another marriage in order to find happiness. Parents and friends too are sympathetic in this matter. Hence, societies are likely to move towards the condition of serial monogamy, rather than maintain straight monogamy.

6.5.2 Changes in Mate Selection

In traditional societies like India, where mate selection was entirely a prerogative of parents and elders, a dent has been made. Young men and women are increasingly being given some say in the matter of mate selection. From a position in which they had no say whatsoever concerning whom they were to get married to, a stage has now come in which the concerned individuals are consulted and their consent obtained. In urban middle class families, sons and daughters have even come to enjoy the right to veto marriage proposals initiated by others. In the more advanced and enlightened urban families, parents are now giving opportunities to their children to become acquainted with prospective mates. "Dating" a practice in which a boy and a girl meet each other to get to know each other and enjoy themselves with relative freedom is a phenomenon which can be seen in different colleges and universities of predominantly metropolitan cities in India. It is again an imitation of the Western Society and is the result of exposure of people to Western culture to a far greater extent than it was earlier.

In India, mate selection through newspaper advertisement has become quite a popular practice among urban middle classes and the latest development is the reported harnessing of the services of computers in bringing potentially compatible mates together.

6.5.3 Changes in Age of Marriage

In India where, traditionally, child marriages were prescribed, preferred and encouraged, various efforts were made by social reformers to bring this practice to an end; accordingly, the Child Marriage Restraint Act, popularly known as the Sarda Act, was passed in 1929. However, early marriage continues, in spite of the impact of modern industrialisation and urbanisation, especially among the rural people. In urban areas, too, there was a strong tendency to get a daughter married off as soon as possible.

But with increasing enrolment of girls in schools and colleges, and their desire to take up employment, along with the problems of 'settling down' in life for the vast majority of boys, the age at marriage is perforce being pushed up. Further, as part of its population policy, the Government has now prescribed the minimum age of marriage as 18 years for girls and 20 years for boys. In urban areas, however, marriages are now generally taking place beyond these prescribed minimum ages.

6.5.4 Changes in Marriage Rituals and Customs

Contemporary changes in India present us with a paradoxical situation. With greater intrusion of technology and science, it was expected that a secular-scientific outlook would emerge and, consequently, the non-essential rituals and customs have always pleaded for avoiding of wasteful expenditures on meaningless customs and rituals. But observation indicates that, contrary to the expectations of enlightened people, marriages in India are tending to become more traditional insofar as the ritual-custom complex is concerned. Today, there is a revival of many rituals and customs, which, soon after independence, appeared to have become weak. To an extent, this revival is a function of affluence. Many people in society have a lot of money to spend lavishly on weddings, and there is a tendency among the not-so affluent to imitate the affluent.

6.5.5 Changes in Marriage : Goals and Stability

It was seen earlier that procreation has been the most important function of marriage in traditional societies. In all communities, a large number of children, bestowed higher status upon parents and among Hindus sons were particularly desired. Thus, a large-sized family was one of the cherished goals of marriage, and the blessings showered upon the bridal couple included good wishes for several children.

But modern conditions of life have made a large family burdensome; in fact, even those with three or four children are being disfavoured.

Several developing Countries are seized of the problems that exploding populations can cause and are, therefore, committed to encouraging the small family norm. Restriction of family size is the declared official policy of many of these. India, in fact, was the first country to adopt an official family planning programme. In those Asian and African countries where there are democratic governments, through vigorous education efforts, citizens are being made to realise and accept the advantages of limited procreation.

China has also adopted a very strict population control programmes which involves certain disincentives and punishments for couples that do not restrict procreation.

All these efforts are gradually influencing the values of people in India, and other countries. It is being realised that it is better to have about two healthy and well-cared for children than a large number who cannot be adequately fed, clothed or looked after.

As procreation, and along with it parenting role, are tending to become less important, other functions like companionship and emotional support from the spouse and children are becoming the more important goals of marriage. In fact, the younger people today are entering matrimony for happiness and personal fulfilment.

The conditions causing marital instability are likely to worsen rather than improve in the future. Our outlook, values and ideals pertaining to marriage are also undergoing change. What then is the future of marriage? Predictions concerning social life are difficult and risky. But, there appears to be little chance that marriage, as a major event in individual and social life will ever be given up and abandoned. If evidence from western societies is any guide, high rates of divorce will not automatically deter people from getting married. Notwithstanding marital instability, the individual's quest for finding happiness in marriage will continue.

Check Your Progress 3

- Note:** i) Use space below for your answer.
ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Comment briefly upon changes in the forms of marriage. Use about five lines for your answer.

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- 2) Describe how the goals and stability of marriage are changing. Use about five lines for your answer.

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6.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit various practices related to the institution of marriage were discussed. We have presented the institution and forms of marriage early in the unit. These indicate the wide differences in marriage practices and procedures. Our discussions on mate selections indicate that society and social rules are based upon different aspects of marriage. In many cases marriage happens within a very narrow choice. Finally we have indicated how marriage as an institution has been changing. This shows that marriage itself is a dynamic institution, always undergoing modification.

6.7 FURTHER READINGS

- 1) Gore, M.S., 1965. "The Traditional Indian Family" in M.F. Nimkoff (ed.), *Comparative Family Systems*, Houghton-Mifflin: Boston.
- 2) Kapadia, K.M., 1966. *Marriage and Family in India*, Oxford University Press: Mumbai.

6.8 KEY WORDS

- Endogamy** : When marriage is within a specific caste, class or tribal group.
- Exogamy** : When marriage occurs outside a certain group of relations.
- Monogamy** : When marriage involves one husband and one wife alone.
- Polygamy** : When marriage involves more than one mate at one time.
- Polyandry** : When more than one man is married to a woman.
- Polygyny** : When more than one woman is married to a man.

6.9 MODEL ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) In monogamy there is one husband and one wife. In polygamy there is more than one mate at one time. Polygamy has two sub-types: polyandry and polygyny.
- 2) Endogamy requires that a person marries within a clearly defined group. He or she is forbidden to marry outside it. Exogamy requires that a person marries outside a particular group. There is a certain group within which a person should not marry.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Preferential marriage refers to that type of marriage, which defines, whom we should marry. Such marriages are common in South Indian (Cross cousins) and among Muslims (Parallel cousins)
- 2) Mate selection among tribals is done in several ways. These include; (i) by purchase of bride, (ii) youth dormitories; (iii) selection by capture of bride; (iv) by athletic trial of bridegrooms.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) The forms of marriage are undergoing change. Societies with a tradition of plural marriage are turning towards monogamy. In this way women's place in marriage has improved. However, remarriage for another partner is now acceptable. Thus, serial monogamy is becoming a generally accepted practice.
- 2) In earlier times marriage had procreation as one of the main objectives. Today the goal is a small family and the drive is to restrict family size. Couples are now entering marriage with the hope of personal and emotional fulfilment. This makes for very high expectations on the part of both, husband and wife.

UNIT 7 KINSHIP

Structure

- 7.0 Objectives
- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 Significance of Kinship
- 7.3 Basic Concepts of Kinship
 - 7.3.1 The Principles of Descent
 - 7.3.2 Types of Descent
 - 7.3.3 Functions of Descent Groups
 - 7.3.4 Inheritance Rules
 - 7.3.5 Rules of Residence
 - 7.3.6 Patriarchy and Matriarchy
- 7.4 Descent Systems - Further Details
 - 7.4.1 Patrilineal Descent
 - 7.4.2 Matrilineal Descent
 - 7.4.3 Nayars of Kerala: An Illustration
 - 7.4.4 Other Matrilineal Communities
- 7.5 Kinship in India
- 7.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 7.7 Further Readings
- 7.8 Key words
- 7.9 Model Answers to Check Your Progress

7.0 OBJECTIVES

After you have read this unit you should be able to describe:

- the significance of kinship;
- the basic concepts of kinship;
- the principles of descent;
- the types of descent; and
- kinship system in India.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we will be giving you the basic aspects of kinship. We explain the significance of kinship in social life. We then define the basic concepts of kinship. These include the concepts of descent, inheritance, residence rules and so on. Next we take up descent systems, including the patrilineal and the matrilineal systems. Finally, we deal with kinship modes in India. This unit provides a broad idea about the concept of kinship.

7.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF KINSHIP

The kinship system refers to a set of persons recognised as relatives, either by virtue of a blood relationship technically called consanguinity, or by virtue of a marriage relationship, that is through what is called affinity.

Most of us tend to regard the kinship system into which we are born and in which we are reared as natural. It will seem natural and right to us that certain close relatives should be tabooed as marriage and sexual partners, and we feel quite certain that disastrous consequences would follow any infringement of the taboos. We may similarly think it natural that certain classes of persons be preferred as marriage partners, or we may on the contrary think it very unnatural that any persons be so designated.

We all have very strong ideas, too, about what is the correct and proper behaviour of different kin towards each other—deference, respect, familiarity, avoidance, kindness, protectiveness, and so on, as the case may be. All such aspects of kinship relations tend to be taken for granted unless, or until, one is confronted with the kinship practices of other peoples. Initially, different practices may appear as disgusting or inhuman, exotic or fantastic, strange or primitive, etc. Earlier anthropologists spent a great deal of labour on trying to work out the various stages through which they believed kinship systems had progressed in the course of human history. However strange other peoples' kinship practices may at first appear to be, a closer look will usually show them to be functional. They are useful for the maintenance of the society as a whole, contributing to its continuity over time and containing the conflicts that might potentially disrupt it.

This is not to say that all practices are for the best for all members of the society and for all time. One certainly need not justify customs like sati, female infanticide, child marriage, amniocentesis or killing of the female foetus etc. One would here try to understand how these practices are (or were) consistent with the principles and values at work in the wider society.

7.3 BASIC CONCEPTS OF KINSHIP

We have already made the general point that kinship relations are the outcome of the cultural interpretation of relations given in nature, and discussed some of the different ways in which sociologists have looked at the kinship system. In doing so, we have indirectly introduced some of the basic terms and concepts in kinship studies, which we will now set out more systematically. You certainly do not need to memorise this rather overwhelming set of technical terms, but you should try to understand the basic principles and distinctions that these key terms seek to convey.

7.3.1 The Principles of Descent

Descent is the principle whereby a child is socially affiliated with the group of his or her parents. In some societies the child is regarded as a descendant equally of both the father and the mother, except that titles and surnames are usually passed down along the male line. Such a system is termed Bilateral or Cognatic. The individual belongs simultaneously to several descent groups - those of the two parents, the four grandparents, the eight great-grandparents, and so on. This link is limited only by memory or by some conventionally determined cut-off point at, say, four or five degrees removal. In small intermarrying communities, membership will probably overlap, and in case of dispute or feud, the individual might find his or her loyalties divided. There are some cognatic systems where the individual has the right by descent to membership of several cognatically recruited groups, but this right is actualised only if the person is able to reside in a particular group's territory. Modern nationality laws often make this type of requirement.

7.3.2 Types of Descent

In other societies, by contrast and your own is most probably one of them—descent is reckoned UNILINEALLY, that is, in one line only. The child is affiliated either with the group of the father, that is, PATRILINEAL DESCENT, or with the group of the mother, that is, MATRILINEAL DESCENT. Theories of the physiology of procreation

and conception often correlate with these different modes of reckoning descent. In the former, the father is often given the primary role in procreation while the mother is regarded as merely the carrier of the child; in systems of the latter type the father's role may not be acknowledged at all.

Additionally, in some societies one finds that the child is affiliated to the group of either parent, depending on choice, or to one parent for some purposes (for instance, inheritance of property) and to the other parent for other purposes (for instance, the inheritance of ritual or ceremonial roles). This is called DOUBLE UNILINEAL DESCENT.

The principle of unilineal descent provides the individual an unambiguous identification with a bounded social group that exists before he or she is born and that has continuity after he or she dies. Members of a descent group have a sense of shared identity, often referring to each other as 'brother' and 'sister' even when no genealogical relationship can be traced. Descent groups are also very often, (though not inevitably), characterised by exogamy. That is, marriage must be with persons outside this group. For instance, traditional Chinese society was divided among approximately a hundred 'surname' groups—you could perhaps call them CLANS-within which marriage was disallowed, and these groups further divided into LINEAGES, whose members claimed to be able to trace their descent, perhaps for several hundred years, from a founding ancestor, and then into further localised SUBLINEAGES and so on down to the individual co-resident families. Sometimes a whole village might be settled by members of a single lineage. The gotras of Indian caste society are also exogamous descent groups, segmented in rather the same way.

Activity 1

Interview or discuss with some members of your family and prepare a chart indicating five generations of your family on your fathers' side or mothers' side whichever is relevant to you. Write a note of one page on "The kinship structure of My Family". Discuss your note with other students and Academic Counsellor at your study centre.

7.3.3 Functions of Descent Groups

Apart from the function of exogamy, unilineal descent groups tend to be 'corporate' in several other senses. Their members may often come together for ritual and ceremonial functions, for instance, for collective worship of lineage gods, totems or ancestors. The descent group will have a built-in authority structure, with power normally exercised by senior males, and it may well own corporate property. An individual's economic rights and responsibilities will be defined by his or her position in the descent group.

In many societies unilineal descent groups are also jural units, internally deciding their own disputes, and externally acting as a unified group in the conduct of feud, etc. For this reason, lineage structure is often coterminous with the political structure in societies lacking a centralised state structure.

Lineages cannot expand indefinitely in a single locality and often segment into smaller, more manageable and economically viable lineage segments. You can see the lines of segmentation of the ground, as it were. Consider the pattern of land ownership in an Indian village; or at the pattern of village or urban settlement; a particular quarter of the village or town may be inhabited by the descendants of a single founding ancestor. Often, the large havelis divide among brothers or step-brothers, and these quarters are further divided among their descendants. In case a line dies out, the property would be reconsolidated.

Given the range of social functions that descent groups may potentially perform, it is little wonder that concern with the principles of unilineal descent has dominated the work of many students of comparative kinship. However, even these scholars realise that unilineal descent is not the whole story. In ancient Rome, women after marriage severed all contact with their natal group. In certain slave societies, the slave has no 'family' of his or her own. In patrilineal systems, the mother's father, mother's sister, and especially the mother's brother, are important relationships which need further discussion. To take note of the importance of relationships, the scholars have identified another principle. This has been termed the principle of COMPLEMENTARY FILIATION which explains the significant ritual and social roles of the mother's brother(s) in the lives of their sister's children. It reminds us that, in most societies, an individual is a child of both parents, however descent is formally reckoned.

7.3.4 Inheritance Rules

Rules of inheritance tend to co-ordinate with the reckoning of descent in most societies, but not necessarily in a one-to-one manner. In fact, it is quite often the case that certain types of property pass from father to son, and other types from mother to daughter. In most parts of India, in the past, immovable property such as land and housing, was inherited only by sons. In the absence of sons, except under rare circumstances, by the nearest male relatives on the father's side. On the other hand, movable property in the form of cash and jewellery was given to the daughter at the time of her marriage, with a certain amount of jewellery also passing from the mother-in-law to the daughter-in-law.

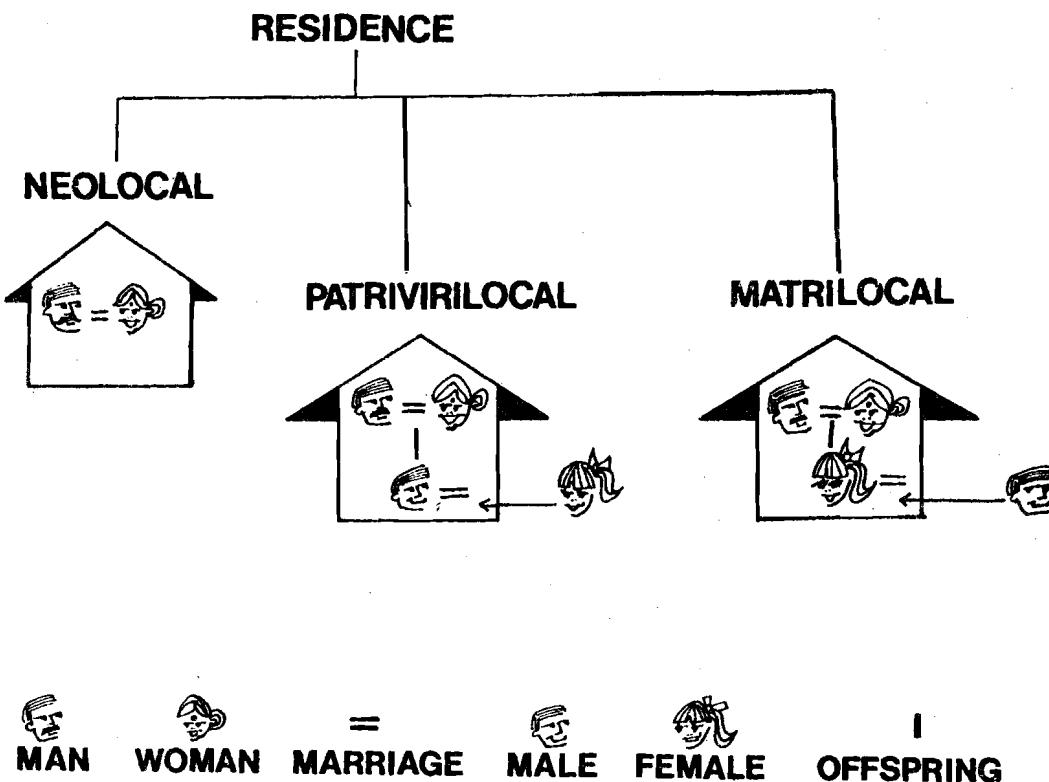
In addition to property of various kinds, rights and obligations, esoteric knowledge, crafts and skills, etc., might be passed on in accordance with kinship roles, succession to office to chieftainship, kingship, etc.-and to other social roles and statuses, is also very often determined by kinship criteria. In such cases, the individual's status is said to be 'ascribed', not 'achieved'. It is commonly asserted that ascriptive status of modern, industrial societies. There is a great deal of truth in this statement, but one should not underestimate the importance of kinship connections in modern societies too. Often one finds that in a family if father is a doctor or lawyer the son or daughter is also likely to choose the same occupation. Most of the Indian women who have been successful in the political domain are either daughters, sisters or wives of people who have been active in politics. One such example is the Nehru family of India.

7.3.5 Rules of Residence

Rules of residence, meaning residence after marriage, are an important variable in a kinship system, and substantially affect the quality of personal relations within the kin network. If husband and wife set up their own independent home after marriage, as is usually the case in modern western society, residence is said to be NEOLOCAL. Where the wife goes to live with the husband in his parents' home, residence is described as VIRILOCAL, PATRILOCAL, or PATRIVIRILOCAL, and where the husband moves to live with the wife, it is termed MATRILOCAL or Rules of residence may or may not 'harmonise' with the rules of descent. On the whole, patrilineal descent systems correlate with either neolocal or patrivilocal residence patterns. However, matrilineal descent systems may be combined with all three types of residence. It is also combined with what is called AVUNCULOCAL residence, that is, residence with the mother's brother.

ILLUSTRATION : 1 different types of Residence

(i) Neolocal (ii) Patrivilocal (iii) Matrilocal

**7.3.6 Patriarchy and Matriarchy**

A society is said to have a patriarchal structure when a number of factors coincide, i.e. when descent is reckoned patrilineally, when inheritance of major property is from father to son, when residence is patrilocal, and when authority is concentrated in the hands of senior males. There is, however, no society on earth, nor any society actually known to have existed, whose features are the exact reverse of these. For even in matrilineal, matrilocal systems, which are fairly rare, major property is usually controlled by males. And authority is normally exercised by males, though women may well have a higher status in the family and greater powers of decision-making than in the patriarchal set up. Some anthropologists assert that in societies with very simple technology and minimal property, relations between the sexes are relatively egalitarian, whether descent is formally matrilineal, patrilineal or bilateral, but others insist that women, and children, have played subordinate roles in all human societies.

For this reason, the term 'matriarchy', though often found in the literature, is probably a misnomer, best avoided, and there is certainly no conclusive evidence to support the view that matriarchy was a universal early stage in the development of kinship systems.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use space below for your answers.
ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) What is the principle of descent? Explain in one line.

.....
.....

- 2) Explain the types of descent. Use about three lines for your answer.
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7.4 DESCENT SYSTEMS-FURTHER DETAILS

The patrilineal descent systems of India have many of the features noted in similar groups elsewhere. A boy at birth becomes a member of his descent group, and a coparcener (partner) in a joint estate. A girl, by contrast, is only a residual member of her natal group: at marriage she is incorporated into her husband's descent group and ultimately (i.e. after her death) offered worship by their male descendants. Residence, as we have already noted, is usually partilocal.

The descent group may participate in joint rituals such as the worship of certain deities and ancestor worship, and will observe mourning restrictions, in various degrees, following a death in the family. It may also own a certain amount of common property. Immovable property such as land and housing is inherited in the male line only (of course, we are speaking here of the traditional system, before the several changes sought to be brought about by post-independence legislation). Whereas daughters are given goods, cash and jewellery as 'dowry' at the time of marriage. The descent group has an in built authority structure based on generation and age. Senior members have the authority to settle disputes within the kin group, and to represent the group in its dealing with outsiders.

7.4.1 Patrilineal Descent

Taken together, the above mentioned features approach the 'patriarchal' model of society. This has patrilineal descent, patrilocal residence, inheritance from father to son, and authority in the hands of seniors as against juniors, and males as against females. A number of social practices testify to the fact that a woman's only legitimate roles are those of wife and mother. Spinsterhood and widowhood are inauspicious and unenviable conditions. A girl is regarded as merely a guest in her natal home and, initially at least, as a rather threatening outsider in her marital home. The poignancy of the transition between these two locales and these two statuses is captured in folklore and folksongs with which you are probably familiar.

The patrilineal systems of the south are not so markedly patriarchal as those of the north. Also a woman after marriage continues to have materially and psychologically important relations with members of her natal group. This is more so with her parents and her brothers, and the residual right to maintenance in their estate in adverse circumstances. And in many other partilineal systems, the mother's brothers have significant ritual and social roles in the lives of their sister's children, and an especially tender and affectionate relationship with them.

Further modifying the starkly 'patriarchal' picture a number of social anthropologists, speaking comparatively, have also drawn attention to the fairly substantial property that devolves on a daughter at her marriage. Others, however, insist that this property cannot be considered as a daughter's 'inheritance', comparable to that of the son, since the greater portion of it is neither owned nor controlled by the girl in her own right. It is really a form of 'bridegroom price', that is, an enticement to the groom's family as part of the settlement of the marriage contract. However, equal rights of inheritance by both son and daughter in one's father's or mother's self made property is recognised and some states have even introduced it in their legislation,

7.4.2 Matrilineal Descent

Matrilineal descent systems, of which there are several well-known examples in south-western and north-eastern India, have their own distinctive characteristics. Empirically you never find matrilineal systems that are an exact inverse of the patrilineal-patriarchal model which we have already described and which is fairly well approximated by the patrilineal descent systems of north and south (but especially north) India. The reason is quite simple: whatever the descent system, that is, matrilineal, patrilineal or indeed bilateral, authority is usually exercised by males, only in extremely simple societies one comes across a fair degree of mutual inter-dependence between males and females. Also, though rights in property might be determined by the principles of matrilineal descent (for instance, passing from mother to daughter or from mother's brother to sister's son rather than from father to son as in patrilineal societies), major property is usually controlled (if not actually owned) by males.

For obvious reasons, residence arrangements are problematic in matrilineal societies. A man may not have authority over his own children, who belong to his wife's descent group and who may also reside after maturity with their mother's brother. Conversely, in cases where the husband customarily resides with his wife and children, he may have difficulty managing the property in which he has an interest by virtue of descent, and in exercising authority over his sister's children. In other words, there seems to be some sort of contradiction in matrilineal kinship systems, brought out in the dilemma over residence, between a man's role as father and his role as mother's brother. His natural love for his own children might easily come into conflict with his special jural responsibilities towards his sister's children.

7.4.3 Nayars of Kerala: An Illustration

Among the matrilineal Nayars of Kerala, formerly, men resided in large and matrilineally recruited joint families, called **taravad**, along with their sisters, sister's children and sister's daughter's children. They visited their wives in other **taravads** at night (this is why the system has been popularly called the 'visiting husband' system). Their own children resided with their mother in their mother's **taravad**. In this system the bond between brother and sister was strongly emphasised, and the bond between husband and wife correspondingly de-emphasised, this is more so because Nayar women could legitimately have a number of visiting husbands (polyandry), provided they were of the correct status (i.e. higher status Nayars or Namboodiri Brahmins). Also, Nayar men could have a number of wives (polygyny). In fact, the marital bond was so minimised among the Nayars that anthropologists have debated endlessly whether Nayar society had the institution of marriage at all! Anthropologists have also cited that the Nayar system disproves the proposition that the elementary or nuclear family is a "universal" human institution. The details of these debates need not detain us here. Indeed, the unique institutions and customs described by the anthropologists no longer exist and have not existed for generations, but the Nayar case is a useful one for illustrating the types of tensions that seem to be coming into matrilineal systems. They had a rather unique way of coping with what anthropologists have called 'the matrilineal puzzle'. Effectively they ensured the unity of the matrilineal at the expense of the solidarity of the marital bond between husband and wife.

7.4.4 Other Matrilineal Communities

There are many other matrilineal communities in India whose kinship organisation is rather different to that of the Nayars. For instance, the Khasis of Assam are matrilineal in descent, inheritance and succession, and practise matrilocal residence. The youngest daughter is the heiress, and lives in her mother's house alone with her husband and her children. The older daughter however may move out of the matrilineal household on marriage and make new nuclear families; their husbands have greater independent

authority than does the husband of the youngest daughter still residing matrilocally. The Garo, also of Assam, have yet another arrangement. Marriage is matrilocal for the husband of the daughter who becomes the head of the household and its manager. A rule of preferential cross-cousin marriage ensures that a man is succeeded in this position by his sister's son in an ongoing alliance relationship between the two linked lineages.

Earlier anthropologists, working within an evolutionary framework, had maintained that the matrilineal descent systems are the surviving traces of an earlier matriarchal or 'mother-right' stage in the development of human kinship organisation, and that these would automatically give way to patriarchal and then bilateral models. There is no conclusive evidence that this has happened or is currently happening. At least in the Nayar case it appears that the decline of the Nayar **taravad** over the last century has given rise to a wide variety of residential patterns in the area, and it has become exactly like the patrilineal groups in their neighbourhood.

Sociologists and anthropologists continue to find matrilineal descent groups of special interest, not only because of the ramifications of the 'matrilineal puzzle', referred to above, but also because issues concerning the status of women or gender relations have come very much to the fore in recent years. It may be, as we have stated, that males have authority and exercise control over property in both patrilineal and matrilineal societies, but most scholars working on matrilineal societies, and the members of these societies themselves, feel that there is nonetheless a qualitative difference in the status of women in matrilineal, as against patrilineal, societies.

Activity 2

Think about emergency situation in your own family, such as, economic crises, death, birth etc. Try to recall the people from whom you sought help and how these people were linked with you. Write a report on "kinship in my Family/Community" and discuss it with other students at your study centre.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Use space below for your answers.

ii) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Write a brief note on the patriarchal model of society. Use about three lines for your answer.

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- 2) Explain matrilineal descent. Use about two lines for your answer.

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7.5 KINSHIP IN INDIA

From your general knowledge, what would you say are the distinctive features of kinship in the north and south of India? Almost everyone, spontaneously, thinks of the different rules of marriage, and of the kinship practices that derive from these. We will now briefly enumerate here the sort of contrasts that Iravati Karve, the famous sociologist, had described.

In the Southern Zone, you usually find a preference for marriage with certain categories of close kin, in particular with one or the other or both of the cross-cousins (but never parallel cousins), or even with the elder sister's daughter. On the whole, the intermarrying groups are of comparable status. Though the actual marriage relationship might give rise to a temporary inferiority of wife-givers in relations to wife-takers. The marriage will probably involve groups which are geographically quite proximate—even from the same village—and the bride will already be familiar with her in-laws. You don't really expect a young bride to be badly treated by her mother-in-laws if that woman is also her aunt or her maternal grandmother!

In north India, by contrast, marriages are never between persons who are already closely related. A rule of village exogamy also ensures that brides are given to and taken from other villages or towns, often at a considerable distance. The bride therefore comes to her husband's family as a 'stranger'. She will always be suspected of trying to alienate her husband's affections, and will usually be blamed for the break up of the joint family, should a partition subsequently take place. The distinction between 'daughters' and 'brides' is very sharply emphasised in this system (think of the practice of veiling), and the new bride's position is relatively vulnerable, unless and until she becomes the mother of a son. In this region it is also often the case that marriages unite groups whose social status is already unequal, the wife-givers being of inferior status to the wife-takers (hypergamy), while the marriage transaction commonly (though again not invariably) takes the form of a 'dowry' payment. However legally taking dowry or giving it, both have become illegal offences punishable by the state. But, in reality it continues to affect a large category of people in India. Even other religions, such as, Muslims, Christians and SC/STs are getting influenced by it. All in all, we have in this combination of features the social-structural locale of also such practices as levirate marriage, sati, female infanticide and, lately, 'bride-burning' or dowry deaths.

Box 7.1

In 1980 the government of India began to take notice of the issue of dowry as oppression against women and took legal action against it. In December 1983 the Criminal Law (Second Amendment) Act was passed. Section 498-A was added to the Indian Penal Code. Under this Act cruelty to a wife was made a cognisable non-bailable offence, punishable up to three years imprisonment, and a fine. Section 113-A of the Evidence Act was amended so that court could draw an inference of abetment to suicide (which most dowry deaths are claimed to be) under section 174 of the Criminal Procedure Code. (IGNOU: 2000, WED Programme, WED-01, pp. 34)

Other differences between the northern and southern systems noted by Iravati Karve (and others) relate to the rules of descent, inheritance and marriage. In brief, the northern zone is universally patrilineal, though patrilineal systems are also found among different communities in the southern or dravidian zone, along with a variety of residence patterns. We should add here that there are a number of important matrilineal groups (for instance the Khasis and the Garos) in north-eastern India (eastern zone) as well.

Of course, the division of the kinship may develop into major culture areas zones can give only a very crude idea of the salient variations in kinship practices throughout the subcontinent. A more precise picture emerges when one considers the sub-regional varieties corresponding to the different regional languages and dialects. In analysing these regional kinship systems, scholars pay attention not only to kinship terminologies and to the way the people concerned speak about kinship relations and about the moral obligations that stem from them, but also to the data of ritual practices, gift exchanges folklore and other forms of cultural communication.

7.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have provided information about kinship. We have shown quite clearly that kinship is significant to society. Moreover we have clearly indicated that the basic kinship concepts like descent, inheritance and residence are important in all societies. We also showed how patrilineal and matrilineal system are aspects of descent systems. Finally kinship in India was examined in this unit. This unit therefore provides adequate information about various aspects of kinship.

7.7 FURTHER READINGS

- 1) Faber, Bernard (ed.), 1966. *Kinship and Family Organisation*, Johan Wiley and Sons: New York.
- 2) Fox, Robin 1967, *Kinship and Marriage*. Penguin Books : New York.

7.8 KEY WORDS

Consanguinity	: The principle of recognising kinship by virtue of blood relationships.
Affinity	: The principle of recognising relationship through marriages.
Descent	: The system of deriving relationships from an ancestor.
Bilateral or Cognatic	: The system of descent in which a child is recognised as a descendant equally of both the father and the mother.
Unilineal	: The system of descent in which relationship with the ancestor is recognised in one line only, i.e. either of father or of mother.
Double unilineal	: The system of descent in which the child is affiliated to the group of either parent.
Patrilineal	: Implies that descent is traced from the father's side.
Matrilineal	: Where descent is traced from the mother's side.
Patriarchal	: Where the father is the main authority in the family.
Complementary filiation	: The principle which explains the significant ritual and social role of mother's brother in a patrilineal society.

7.9 MODEL ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Descent is the principle by which a person traces his/her ancestors.
- 2) The following is the list of the types of descent:
 - i) unilineal descent including (a) patrilineal descent (b) matrilineal descent.
 - ii) double-unilineal descent
 - iii) bilateral or cognatic descent.

- 1) The patriarchal model of society combines (i) patrilineal descent; (ii) patrilocal residence; (iii) inheritance from father to son; (iv) authority in the hands of senior males.
- 2) In matrilineal descent, though, inheritance goes through the mother to daughter, major property is controlled by males and authority is also exercised by males.

REFERENCES

References, cited in Block II. (These and other works are given here for those students who wish to follow certain points in detail.)

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UNIT 8 NATURE OF SOCIALIZATION

Structure

- 8.0 Objectives
- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 What is Socialisation?
 - 8.2.1 Shared Meanings and Values
 - 8.2.2 Education and Socialisation
- 8.3 Socialisation: Norms and Values
 - 8.3.1 Transmission of Knowledge
 - 8.3.2 Conformity
- 8.4 Conscious and Unconscious Socialisation
 - 8.4.1 Explicit and Implicit Directions
 - 8.4.2 Behaviour Patterns
- 8.5 Role and Socialisation
 - 8.5.1 Primary and Secondary Socialisation
 - 8.5.2 Child and Adult Socialisation
- 8.6 Re-socialisation
 - 8.6.1 Marital Re-socialisation
 - 8.6.2 Attitudinal Change
 - 8.6.3 Extensive and Intensive Socialisation
- 8.7 Anticipatory Socialisation
- 8.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 8.9 Further Readings
- 8.10 Key Words
- 8.11 Model Answers to Check Your Progress

8.0 OBJECTIVES

On going through this unit you should be able to:

- describe the process of socialisation of human infants to become members of their society;
- explain distinctive features of socialisation that takes place in different social settings; and
- analyse types of socialisation.

8.1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we shall discuss various aspects of socialisation. It begins with the process and concept of socialisation and discusses its aims and functions. Among the important aspects of this unit is a discussion on types of socialisation. This includes conscious and unconscious socialisation and socialisation into role playing, anticipatory socialisation and re-socialisation. This unit, thereby, provides an in-depth view of the nature of socialisation.

8.2 WHAT IS SOCIALIZATION?

All societies are concerned with the question: "How are the raw products or the human infants born into the society to be transformed into workable human objects or trained to

become members of their societies?" The human infant is born as a biological organism with only animal needs and impulses. It learns to control bowel movements and regulate hunger as it grows up because the child has an inborn capacity to learn and to communicate.

Gradually it also learns the group-defined ways of acting and feeling. The process through which it learns to internalise the values and norms into its self or the mode of learning to live in society is called the process of socialisation. To internalise is to absorb something within the mind so deeply that it becomes part of the person's behaviour, e.g., good manners. Therefore, socialisation is basically the learning of social values and roles by its members. In other words, most human behaviour is learned. It is not spontaneous.

Social scientists have referred to this capacity of the child to learn and to internalise as the plasticity of human nature. This capacity to learn is realised through socialisation; and human infants develop into adequate members of human societies through the training received in the family. This development is largely a process of learning. Therefore, we would like to stress the point that what are known as seemingly inborn attitudes are determined and moulded through the process of socialisation or learning of social norms, values, attitudes beliefs and behaviour patterns.

8.2.1 Shared Meanings and Values

The socialisation of the young means that they learn to appreciate the shared meanings and values of the culture at large or take them and that as guides to direct behaviour patterns in their own life. As the young child grows, he or she learns to utilise role-learning so as to internalise what to expect from other people and how to produce for them what is expected of children. A child learns to recognise and to respond to the shared meanings and expectations from others only through the process of socialisation.

The process of socialisation begins at birth. It is a continuous process because social learning never ends. However, childhood is the most important stage in the process of socialisation during which a child internalises or learns most of the values, beliefs, norms, attitudes and behaviour patterns of its family. The parents can be viewed as the socialising agents and the child as the socialise. "Parents are usually the most potent socialising force working on the individual in the early stages of childhood. Both consciously and unconsciously they push the child in certain directions disposing him to learn in a particular way." (White, G. 1977 : 1) It is viewed by sociologists as a continuous and dynamic process that continues throughout life and demands re-socialisation (discussed in 8-6) at different stages of one's life.

Thus, from the point of view of society, socialisation trains a child to become a member of a society by transmitting its norms, values and beliefs. It also transforms the biological organism into a self, with a sense of identity, capable of disciplining and ordering behaviour endowed with ideals, values and ambitions. However, socialisation regulates behaviour, it is also an indispensable condition for individuality and self-awareness (Broom and Selznick, 1955 : 43).

Activity 1

Do you think a boy and a girl are socialised in the same way in your family/kin group? If not, then why? Write an essay on "Gender Difference and Socialisation in My Family" in about 500 words. Share your ideas and essay with other students and Academic Counsellor at your study centre.

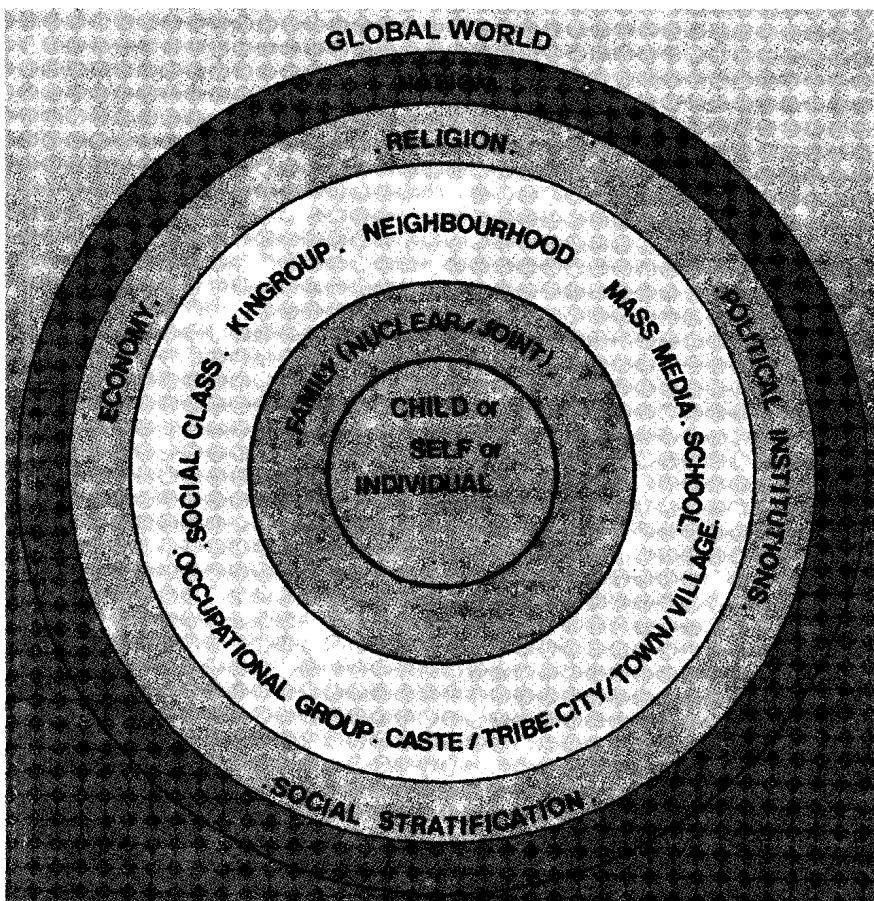
8.2.2 Education and Socialisation

In some societies, especially in tribal societies, the education and socialisation of the young takes place without extensive formal educational institutions. However, education as a process of learning is universal and takes place everywhere whether one lives in a city, village, and jungle or in a desert. The universality of learning however, does not mean that all learning is socialisation just as all education is not socialisation.

We may also mention that all learning is not socialisation since some of what one learns may not be relevant or necessary for participation in given social roles. One could give the example of, learning to smoke cigarette, cigar, etc. which may be irrelevant to that norms of participation in the given social roles among certain social groups. However, the process by

which individuals acquire these values and norms (these are also referred to as culture) is in many ways similar in all societies. They may differ from society to society and according to certain factors within specific societies.

A child, in the first instance, is a member of a family. But he or she is also a member of a larger kin-group (Biradri, Khandan etc.) consisting of brothers, sisters and other relatives of the parents. The family into which he or she is born may be a nuclear family or an extended family (for the difference see Unit 5 of this course). It is also a member of a larger society. Membership of these groups and institutions imposes certain behavioural norms and values on each member. Thus, we are members of various groups simultaneously. For instance, we are a member of family, a biradri, a khandan, or a kunba, or a society, of a school or college all at the same time. Corresponding to these memberships there are roles that are performed, e.g., that of a son, daughter, grand child or a student. These are multiple roles which are performed simultaneously. The process of learning the norms, attitudes, values or behavioural patterns of these groups begins early in life and continues throughout one's life.



Nature of Socialisation

Check Your Progress 1

- Note: a) Use the space below for your answer.
 b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.
- 1) Explain in three lines what is meant by socialisation.

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8.3 SOCIALISATION: NORMS AND VALUES

The norms, and values may differ within a society in different families belonging to different castes, regions or social classes or religious groups according to whether one lives in a

village or in a city or one belongs to a tribe and whether one is a boy or girl. These social groups can be viewed as socialising agencies. Their role confirms that the variation in norms and values takes place according to some of these affiliations mentioned above. For example, emphasis on cleanliness may vary according to social class. Also the language that one speaks depends on the region one belongs to. A child is not born knowing a particular language but learns it after birth. Again, some people do not eat meat altogether or abstain only from beef or pork according to the religious groups they belong to. Thus the same human infant is capable of growing into different kinds of adults. The adult personality formed in one society will be different from that of an adult in another society: he or she may be unfit for participation in many others. For example, a person who does not eat meat, smoke or drink alcohol may look odd in a family where all these are permitted. Is socialisation a one way process in which the child merely receives from the parents passively without being actively involved in it? There are different views on it. However, in this unit, our position is that it is a two-way process involving mutuality of interaction. True, the young child is not as active as the adult member, it is never a passive receiver.

What we have emphasised so far is that the aim of the socialisation process is to help the child learn to conform to the societal norms, values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviour patterns. Here when we refer to societal expectation, it means that there are various levels of expectation. When the individual is born, the first societal experience is through the family but as the child grows up in the modern contemporary societies, his/her experiences expand. It becomes a member of a number of agencies. The school is the second agency of which children become members. Later on they will also become members of the religious groups to which their parents belong. They will also be members of the social classes to which their families belong. They will also become members of the occupational groups. The specific aim of socialisation is to help the child to internalise these norms and become an active member of the society.

A child is integrated into the society in the manner discussed above. Therefore, socialisation is the process of social control to strengthen group life and also to foster the development of the individual. It teaches or trains the individual to conform to the expectations of the social group or groups. Thus, conformity to the group norms and behaviour is basic to the process of socialisation through which society exerts social control on the individual members.

8.3.1 Transmission of Knowledge

According to Emile Durkheim, the categories of thought in the mind of individuals develop during the course of socialisation. Socialisation also transmits knowledge from one generation to the next. Social solidarity requires conformity to norms, rules and values as prescribed by the society. When groups assemble and reinforce the feelings of solidarity e.g., wedding, or religious festivals, mourning etc., these occasions help express the solidarity of the family and the kin group. On the other hand, the Republic Day and the Independence Day are occasions to express the solidarity of the nation. The social customs, rituals and social ceremonies and occasions which bring members of a group together are called socialisation practices. Through these practices, knowledge about norms values and behaviour pattern is transmitted among members of human social groups.

The individual, through socialisation, helps maintain the social order. Thus socialisation brings about social control by enabling the individual to know what to think and what not to think, what to do and what not to do. Here, apart from the sense of group solidarity, the individual has the fear of disapproval, punishment etc. which the society metes out for various acts of deviance from the normal course of conduct.

8.3.2 Conformity

While socialisation produces a degree of conformity to social norms behaviour in every society, yet some individuals may still not conform. In other words, socialisation may not be able to command complete conformity from all members of the society. Many factors may encourage conflict. There may be conflicts between the aims and functions of the socialising agents and of the socialisee. We have already mentioned that an individual is socialised by many agencies – the family, the school, playmates, peer group, occupational group, and in the modern society, also by the written word (i.e. books, magazines) and by the mass media (television, radio, cinema). If they emphasise different values, the individual's conformity to the values of a group or groups will be reduced. For example, students may be encouraged to

be exposed to mass-media. However, if mass-media teaches fundamentalism and extreme conservatism, the conformity of students to liberal values is likely to be reduced.

The cases of non-conformity are referred to as those of deviance from the norms of the group (see unit 30 on Social Control and unit 31 on Social Deviance). The values of the children from the poor families will be at variance with those of the school. These children are referred to as deviants and in extreme cases as juvenile delinquents.

8.4 CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS SOCIALIZATION

Much of the socialisation of the child within a family and the school is conscious. In other words, parents consciously inculcate in the child certain behaviour patterns and values that they consider desirable. They achieve this by constantly telling the child what is good from what is bad, what is right form of behaviour from what is wrong. They also reward the child if it conforms to these expectations, and punish in the opposite case. Therefore, the process of socialisation is reinforced through a system of rewards and punishments. For example, the emphasis on cleanliness, obedience, promptness, manliness and womanliness begins early in life in most families. This is conscious socialisation since the socialising agents (parents) are conscious about the aims of socialisation process. Yet a major part of the process of socialisation is unconscious and consists of learning through observation.

However, socialisation process within the family is conscious, as well as unconscious. The same is true of the school where the aims of the school are explicit and are sought to be inculcated in the classroom through text books. For instance, the explicit aim of the school is to teach and to help students to succeed in their examinations. At the same time, the children interact or mix with other children outside the classroom. They make friends and form small groups called peer groups. These are important sources of influence on children. They also become members of peer groups within their neighbourhood where they have a small number of friends with whom they play almost regularly. Sometimes children learn the norms and behaviour patterns of the members of their groups and these may be contradictory to those of their family or the school. For example, if children begin to smoke because their friends smoke whereas their families are opposed to it, there is going to be conflict. Or, children may begin to take serious interest in schoolwork although no member of their families is intellectually inclined. On the other hand, interest in studies may be common to the members of the family as well as to their friends. This process is the unconscious process of the socialisation where children who learn and the children from whom they learn are not conscious of or do not anticipate the consequences of their association and interaction.

8.4.1 Explicit and Implicit Directions

We have distinguished between conscious and unconscious socialisation processes and have given examples of the explicit and implicit injunctions against certain behaviour patterns. The aims of the process within the families are not deliberate, and explicit. Families do not say that they are training the children to become honest or hard working, or boys to become fearless, or girls to become passive. On the other hand, the cognitive aims of the schools are well-known. The students are to read well. Pass their examination and so on. Therefore there is a difference between the two processes that take place within the family, on the one hand, and the school and other formal agencies, on the other. We may therefore draw a distinction between the two processes and state that the aims of socialisation process within the secondary groups such as schools are deliberate, more explicit and conscious compared with that of the family. But both the processes take place simultaneously.

8.4.2 Behaviour Patterns

The learning of different behaviour patterns and values from one's friends or peers is the unconscious process of socialisation. In fact, it is difficult to draw a distinction between a socialising agent and a socialisee i.e., the peer group and the socialisee. The staying away from the school could be one such example. A child may become friendly with those children who play truant very often and remain absent from classes, and may learn to play truant after becoming a member of that group. On the other hand, another child who initially did not place high value on punctuality within the school, may learn to do so because he happens to

become friendly with children who are very punctual. These are examples of unconscious socialisation.

In contemporary societies, much of the unconscious learning takes place through the mass media such as the cinema, the television, the comics, and novels (i.e., the print medium). The emulation of the hero in the Indian cinema by the college going youth is a good example of unconscious socialisation.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: a) Use the space below for your answer

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) Fill in the blanks given in the following sentences:

- i) The aim of the socialisation process is to help the child to learn to conform to the societal
and
- ii) Socialisation may not be able to command complete from all members of the society.
- iii) Socialisation process within the family is as well as
- iv) The aim of socialisation process within the secondary groups such as schools is more and as compared with that of the family.

8.5 ROLE AND SOCIALIZATION

A human infant is born in a social group. And soon after birth it becomes a member of the social group and occupies the social position of a son or a daughter or of a grandson or a grand-daughter. Thus the role refers to the social position one occupies by virtue of one's position in a particular social group, and it entails rights as well as obligations.



An individual has to play different roles, the role of a son or a daughter, the role of a grandson or a grand-daughter in the due course of his/her life. In other words, a person occupies different social positions which are interrelated. The term role-set is used to refer to the complex of roles occupied or performed by a person at one time (see Unit 25). The implication of this is that a child learns to behave in the manner that is expected of it by different socialising agents. For instance, a child's behaviour with a parent has to be different from that with the sister, or friends or neighbours or classmates. These roles need not follow one after the other but may be performed simultaneously, other roles may be added or deleted. The list however is not exhaustive.

Similarly the behaviour with one's grandmother has to be different from that with one's own mother. The child learns to perceive and internalise these subtleties as part of growing up. As one learns a role well, one is able to interact with others, playing other roles and to engage in role-interaction over time. This is what is called role and role socialisation.

Thus, role is the behaviour pattern based on norms. However, it is invested with specific meaning e.g., the role of a boy/girl in a particular society is part of the culture of that society.

How does one learn a role? Initially, a child merely observes the roles of parents and other members of the family and re-enacts them. Gradually, one learns to distinguish oneself from others and one's role from the roles of others. One learns through observation, constant reinforcement and reminders along with rewards for conformity and punishment for non-conformity.

Activity 2

Do you observe any changes in parent child relationship within your family or friends circle which did not exist earlier? Discuss with your friends and family members and write a one page report on "The Impact of Social Change on the Process of Socialisation Including Parent Child Interaction". Compare your report with those of other students at your study center. Also, discuss the topic with your Academic Counsellor.

8.5.1 Primary and Secondary Socialisation

The needs of individuals are divided by psychologists into primary and secondary needs. The primary needs are those which are in-born such as thirst and hunger. The secondary needs are, for example, the need for learning or to work. Secondary needs are those which emerge, in the way, to satisfy primary needs. Similarly, institutions in the society are also divided into primary and secondary institutions. The family is the first social group in which the child is born, it is also the first group which satisfies and meets the primary needs of the human-infant. It is called a primary group whereas a school is a secondary group because it meets the derived needs of the child. Parents are the primary or the chief socialising agents for the child whereas the school teachers are the secondary socialising agents. We may also distinguish between primary and secondary roles and between primary socialisation and secondary socialisation. Norms and values within the family may be called the process of primary socialisation whereas the learning of the behavioural patterns, norms and values of the school may be called secondary socialisation.

8.5.2 Child and Adult Socialisation

As we have mentioned earlier, the process of socialisation or learning of social roles continues throughout life. As the individual becomes a member of different social groups and institutions, it begins to learn new norms and values. For example, when one joins school one has to learn the discipline of the school and the role of a student. Later on, as an adult, one has to learn to become a parent and to assume family responsibilities. When one takes up an occupation and becomes a member of an occupational group one has to learn the responsibilities and roles that are implied in the membership of that particular group. For example, the role of an executive will be very different from that of a small tea-stall owner, or of a labourer. People have to be socialised in taking on these roles and values. That is why, sociologists believe that the process of socialisation continues throughout life and does not end at adolescence.

8.6 RE-SOCIALISATION

Re-socialisation is a process of altering ones behaviour pattern and in the process imbibing new social values and behaviour patterns. An individual is constantly learning new roles. As a member of different social groups or institutions throughout one's life. For instance, a child becomes a member of its family first, and learns to play the role of a son or daughter, or that of a grandson or a grand-daughter if it is living in an extended family. If the father's sister is living in the family the child also learns to play the role of a nephew or niece. Later when beginning to play in the neighbourhood, one makes friends and follows the norms of the group. For example, if a child disrupts the game too often or fights or cheats, others will boycott that child till he/she stops causing disruption.

Later, a child goes to school and learns to play the role of a student. Still later s/he takes up a job and joins an organisation or sets up one's own enterprise or business. Whatever work is taken up, one has to follow the work ethics of that occupational group and abide by the norms. Thus, one is constantly learning new roles.

However, in some instances an individual has not only to learn a new role but simultaneously has to unlearn part of the norms and behaviour patterns associated with an earlier role in order to be effective in the new role. A very good example of unlearning the old role and learning a new one is the role of an Indian girl before and after marriage. While there may be differences in emphasis and also in the norms and behaviour patterns expected of girls in different parts of India, we may safely generalise behaviour pattern of a daughter before and after marriage.

8.6.1 Marital Re-socialisation

When a daughter is engaged to be married the process of new socialisation or re-socialisation starts. She may be given instructions on how to behave in the presence of her in-laws. Among Punjabi Hindu families a daughter does not cover her head in front of her elders before her marriage nor does she touch their feet. After her engagement she may be trained to cover her head and also to touch the feet of elders, since she will have to do this soon after the marriage. Though, we may mention that this may not be practised any more among the upper and middle class families, especially among the educated in the metropolitan cities.

Her re-socialisation begins after marriage. She has already been given countless instructions to give up the carefree behaviour of her maiden days in the home of her in-laws, and to pay deference to nearly every elder in her husband's family and how not to seem to be independent. A newly married girl goes through the process of unlearning her earlier behaviour gradually. In the initial stage she may only hide it or suppress it, and one may see her behaving normally when she visits her parental home. As for example, she may laugh freely in her parent's home – something that may be considered inappropriate in the home of her in-laws.

Another example of re-socialisation is that of a widowed woman. This is particularly marked in some parts of India where a widow's behaviour has to change very drastically after the death of her husband. The external marks of a married woman are removed from her body, that is, she has to wear a particular dress or a saree of a particular colour, all her jewellery has to be removed, the kumkum and vermillion marks on her forehead and parting between her hair have also to be removed ceremoniously through certain rituals which are performed in these families. Her head is shaven. In addition she has to live in a different part of the house. The kind of tasks she is to perform in the family also change suddenly. She is considered inauspicious and cannot participate in marriage rituals and other religious ceremonies.

8.6.2 Attitudinal Change

Re-socialisation refers to the process through which during their life span, individuals change or are forced to change their attitudes, values, behaviour and self-conceptions as they assume new roles and undergo new experiences. Though the long-range change may be profound, single steps along the way may or may not be gradual. For instance, the new role may be a continuation of the old role or the past roles or may require discontinuation. Again, it may need only minor changes or radical changes involving a wholly new set of behaviour patterns. In addition, it may affect either a part or the whole of the personality or the self of an

individual. It may also involve breaking away from the past values and norms or may just be a projection of the past values and norms.

Thus changes in adulthood that are gradual and partial are called continuous socialisation. Re-socialisation denotes more basic, rapid and radical changes. It involves giving up one way of life for another. It is not only different from the former but is at times incompatible with it. The usual examples given are brain-washing or indoctrination or rehabilitation of criminals. The aim is to fundamentally change the person and to effect a break with the past. Another example would be of persons who have lived all their life in Bombay, Kolkata or Delhi and are asked to live among tribals in a remote village in Madhya Pradesh or vice-versa. If you belong to a city, you may also be familiar with the villagers trying to adjust themselves to city life, by changing their notions of what is proper and what is improper and by changing their behaviour. Similarly if you belong to a village, you may have seen the problems faced by the person from the city, for example, school teacher or medical doctors or nurses or midwives and how they adapt to the village life.

8.6.3 Extensive and Intensive Socialisation

Certain occupational and life roles demand extensive and intensive socialisation. This socialisation approximates to re-socialisation, for example, the role of a Christian priest or a nun or a Granthi in a Gurdwara or the role for combat only. Cadets are systematically removed from the society of which they are a part and then they are given assignments involving new personal and social identities; and a sense of identity with the nation and solidarity among themselves is instilled into them through the training given in the institutions. Similarly we have given the example of an Indian girl after marriage or that of a widow.

Re-socialisation of a mature individual is difficult to accomplish. Generally speaking it requires that the conditions of childhood socialisation be reproduced in intense and extreme form, specially when this is done through a very deliberate process as in the case of re-socialisation of a cadet or a criminal or of a widow. Re-socialisation may be forced upon the individual (as in brain-washing or indoctrination) or voluntary (as in the case of an anthropologist living in a tribe).

The process of re-socialisation, if it contradicts with the initial socialisation and if the individual is unable to cope with the demand made by the new role, may create conflict in the life of an individual. This is especially so where differing value systems are concerned. For eg. A person coming from a conservative family background in India finds it extremely difficult to adjust to a cultural environment where social taboos, sexual taboos, etc. of his or her own culture do not match at all. In such an environment a person suffers a culture shock and can end up being a mental patient.

8.7 ANTICIPATORY SOCIALIZATION

Anticipatory socialisation refers to the process whereby an individual or a group emulates the values, norms and behaviour patterns of a group other than to which one belongs, in anticipation of being accepted as its member. Thus, the concept of anticipatory socialisation is related to the reference group theory. According to this theory, the behaviour, values and norms of an individual are determined with reference to a particular group or groups. As the membership of these groups varies, the individuals who are in the process of moving from one group to another will emulate the behaviour of the members of the group or with reference to the group they wish to belong. An excellent example would be that of individuals who have acquired sudden wealth and who try to conform to the values, and behaviour of the upper strata or upper castes of the society. They will change their dress, behaviour, dietary habits and even their language and customs. For example, those who did not give dowry may start doing so and those women who did not observe parda may be expected to do so.

Anticipatory socialisation is undergone by individuals as well as groups and it happens or takes place in situations of social mobility and social change. Lower castes in the villages, after becoming well-off, try to emulate the upper castes. For example, if the dominant caste in a village are the Brahmins, the lower caste or castes who attain wealth will become vegetarian and teetotallers; they will change their caste names, wear the sacred thread to claim the status of the twice-born, stop sending their women to work for wages and adopt the

rites of Brahmins such as head shaving (Mundan). They may also impose rigid behavioural norms on their widows.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: a) Use the space below for your answer
 b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Answer the following questions in 'yes' or 'no' by marking one box:
- | | |
|--|-------------|
| i) Does a child play only one role in the family. | Yes No |
| ii) Are thirst and hunger the secondary needs of individuals? | Yes No |
| iii) Does a person constantly learn new roles throughout one's life? | Yes No |
| iv) Is it easy to accomplish the re-socialisation of mature individuals? | Yes No |

8.8 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have studied various aspects of socialisation. We began with providing an understanding of socialisation and its various aspects. It includes the norms and values that socialisation inculcates. We also studied in this unit the process by which knowledge is transmitted from one generation to another. The aspects of implicit and explicit socialisation, re-socialisation, and anticipatory socialisation are also discussed here.

8.9 FURTHER READINGS

- 1) Broom, L and Selznick, P. 1973. Sociology. Harper and Row Publishers: New York.
- 2) White, G. 1977. Socialisation. Longman : London.

8.10 KEY WORDS

- Conformity** : To absorb certain social rules and regulations in behaviour, e.g., being appropriately dressed in social gatherings.
- Internalisation** : To absorb something within the mind so deeply that it becomes part of one's behaviour, e.g., to internalize good manners.
- Re-socialisation** : To alter one's behaviour pattern and in the process imbibing new social values and behaviour pattern.
- Socialisee** : A person who is being socialised into the ways of society.

8.11 MODEL ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Socialisation is a learning process whereby one imbibes social values and behaviour patterns.

Check Your Progress 2

- i) norms, values, belief, attitudes, behaviour pattern
- ii) conformity
- iii) conscious, unconscious
- iv) deliberate explicit conscious

Check Your Progress 3

- i) No
- ii) No
- iii) Yes
- iv) No

UNIT 9 AGENCIES OF SOCIALIZATION

Structure

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Agencies of Socialisation
 - 9.2.1 Growing Up
 - 9.2.2 Religion and Socialisation
- 9.3 Differences in Socialisation
 - 9.3.1 The Caste Factor
 - 9.3.2 Socialisation in Tribes
 - 9.3.3 Other Institutions: The Ghotul
- 9.4 Family, Social Class and Socialisation
 - 9.4.1 Behaviour and Family
 - 9.4.2 Socialisation and Communication
 - 9.4.3 School and Socialisation
- 9.5 Sex and Gender Identity
 - 9.5.1 Gender Related Studies
 - 9.5.2 Sexual Discrimination
- 9.6 Mass Media and Socialisation
 - 9.6.1 Messages in Mass Media
 - 9.6.2 Impact of Television
- 9.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 9.8 Further Readings
- 9.9 Key Words
- 9.10 Model Answers to Check Your Progress

9.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you should be able to:

- describe different factors in and agencies of socialisation;
- state the differences in socialisation process with the illustrations of some societies;
- assess the impact of family, class, caste and mass media on socialisation; and
- explain the ways in which socialisation process takes care of gender identity formation.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

This unit examines the various agencies of socialisation. These include the family, religious organisations, mass media, etc. It also discusses differences in socialisation of boys and girls. The significance of caste and tribal culture in the process of socialisation in the Indian context is also discussed. The effect of social class on socialisation and sexual discrimination in the socialisation process are also examined in detail.

9.2 AGENCIES OF SOCIALIZATION

The child is socialised by several agencies and institutions in which he or she participates, viz., his or her family, school, peer group, the neighbourhood, the occupational group and by the social class. The position of the family in the social structure is determined by the social class, caste, religion, etc., and by the fact that the family lives in the rural or in the urban areas. We shall also mention some of the other factors which are important. For example,

there is variation in the socialisation process, according to whether one is rich or poor, whether one is tribal or non-tribal, whether one is a boy or a girl or whether one is a child or an adult. The differentiation in socialisation may also be reflected through music, rituals, language, art and literature, which form part of one's culture consisting of complex set of variables.

These are the factors and agencies which introduce differentiation in the socialisation process within different societies. These are very crucial and should be taken into account to dispel the impression that socialisation is uniform across all societies or within a particular society. We shall first discuss some of the factors responsible for the variation in the socialisation process namely age, religion, caste, region, etc. In the next section, we discuss the different agencies of socialisation (namely, family, school etc.) which also prevent uniformity. In the last section, we outline the role of gender and the mass media (especially television) since these cut across all boundaries.

9.2.1 Growing Up

The socialisation process in infancy and childhood is different from that during adulthood. Some social scientists divide socialisation into stages of the life of an individual. Some have referred to various Hindu rites or samskaras as being equivalent to different stages. In addition, there are the ashrams, which divide the life of an individual into stages.

There are various traditional Hindu rites or samskaras which divide childhood into several stages. These are namakarana, nishakarmana, annaprasana, chudakarana or tonsure, vidyarambha and upanayana. Moreover, traditionally the division of an individual's life into four stages, namely, brahmacharya, grihasthashrama, vanaprastha and sanyasa are a direct reflection of the socialisation of a Hindu male.

The agencies of socialisation change as the individual matures. For example, school and the peer group compete with the family for access to the individual through childhood and adolescence. The occupational group and the newly established family after marriage become more important during adulthood.

9.2.2 Religion and Socialisation

Difference in the socialisation processes and practices is noticeable among certain religious communities. As for example, the rites and ceremonies, customs, dress, sometimes language and beliefs, attitudes and values and the behaviour patterns of Christians, Hindus, Sikhs or Muslims are different. These may be at variance with one another although some of the external symbols such as dress, speech, and deportment have become uniform for all religious groups in the big cities during the last few years, so that it has become difficult to distinguish members of one religious community from another on the basis of dress, etc. In the villages, a significant section of people are continuing to wear their traditional dresses and can still be distinguished on the basis of these outward symbols. In addition, and more importantly, the emphasis on what constitutes a good Hindu or a good Muslim or a good Sikh or a good Christian, also creates differences in the values and behaviour of members of a larger society. For instance, a good Muslim must perform prayers five times a day, a Christian must attend church on Sundays, a Sikh should do service at a Gurdwara and a Hindu must give charity in the temples. Similarly, further subdivisions can be drawn on the basis of Shaivite and Vaishnavite Brahmins of southern India. So also the marriage ceremony and rites differ among those who follow the Arya Samaj and Sanatana Dharma, the two Hindu sects in the Punjab. Thus, the differences are not confined to religious ideology but are reflected in the socialisation process through the beliefs, attitudes, norms and behaviour patterns of the people belonging to these sects and subsects.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: a) Use the space below for your answer

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

- I) Write a brief note on the major agencies that socialise a person. Use about five lines.

2) Select the correct matching

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| A) Childhood | Family |
| B) Adolescence | Professional Group |
| C) Adulthood | Peer-Group |

9.3 DIFFERENCES IN SOCIALISATION

A city-bred person who comes across a person from the village is likely to notice him or her because of the differences in their dress, speech and their deportment. The villager is recognisable not only by the outward symbols mentioned but also by his or her values norms and behaviour patterns he/she upholds and considers appropriate. On the other hand, a person living in a village will be struck by the difference in dress, speech and deportment of those who belong to the city. You may have often heard that a person hailing from a village or a small town feels that people in the city are too involved in their own affairs to be bothered about their guests or the elders in the family. These differential responses are the outcome of differential socialisation processes in the rural and urban areas.

Box 9.01

An Indian villager generally believes that a “guest” is to be honoured in the same manner as God himself and whatever his/her capacity may be will not neglect a guest. But a city person, especially in the metropolis, may not welcome a guest who has no prior appointment. Reason for visit becomes an essential criteria.

It is not that a city person does not desire or know how to honour a guest but other life style factors, such as, living space, expensive everyday expenditure, children’s education often forces people to curtail excessive entertainment of guests. Thus, circumstances change the values which ideally are believed by most Indians.

9.3.1 The Caste Factor

If you are living in a village or in a small town, you may be aware of the behaviour that is expected of you as a member of a small town. Thus, there are certain value norms and behaviour patterns that are common to most villages. Certain rituals and ceremonies may also be common to all the members of a village. However, a village community is also divided into small groups called castes. The castes are divided on the basis of birth because people are born into them. You may be at least able to distinguish a Brahmin from a Harijan or you may even be able to distinguish a blacksmith from a goldsmith or from a washerman. Therefore, within a village, there are likely to be subcultures while the culture of a village itself may have something in common which is shared by all its members and bind all the members together. The language or the dialect also tends to vary. The upper castes speak more refined and sophisticated form of the language than spoken by the lower castes. Similarly, there are differences in the dress that is considered appropriate or inappropriate for a particular caste. Again, the behaviour that is considered proper by one caste may not be so considered by the other. For example, vegetarianism may not be so considered by the other. For example, vegetarianism may be more popular among the Brahmins than among other castes.

9.3.2 Socialisation in Tribes

The socialisation process differs according to whether it occurs in a tribe or non-tribe. We shall give extracts of the socialisation process in a tribe called Muria which inhabits the Bastar district of Madhya Pradesh in central India. However, this should not give the impression that the Muria represent the whole tribal culture. There are several tribes in India about which you have read in Units 5 and 6. There are tremendous variations in the socialisation process among them as are in the non-tribal world. Therefore, this example of socialisation process among the Murias is only one such example. You may be able to think of several others. If you meet people from different parts of India or have such friends, you may notice the differences.

9.3.3 Other Institutions: The Ghotuls

Similar institutions are found among communities of Austro-Asiatic cultures. But Bastar ghotul is highly developed and the most organised in the world. One could think of communes in contemporary society, as for example, the Kibbutz in Israel where an effort was made to bring up children on community-basis by taking them away from their families. Similar institutions are found among other tribals in India, as for example, the village guardroom among the Nagas and the boys' club among the Oraon. Ghotul for the Murias is the centre of social and religious life. It also assigns educational tasks among children. All unmarried Muria boys and girls from the age of five or six years are members of ghotul. They sleep at night in the ghotul and are directly responsible for its care and maintenance. During the day, they go to their parents' home and help them in various tasks. They leave the ghotul after marriage.

The membership of ghotul is carefully organised. After a period of testing, boys and girls are initiated and given a special title which carries graded rank and social duty. Leaders are appointed to organise and discipline the society. The boys' leader is Sirdar and the girl's Belosa. Boy members are known as Chelik and girl members as Motiari. The relations between Chelik and Motiari are governed by the customary rules and regulation of ghotul to which they belong. Indeed, ghotul teaches discipline and introduces the feeling of fraternity and friendship among its members.

9.4 FAMILY, SOCIAL CLASS AND SOCIALIZATION

These two dimensions are being taken together because 'family' here includes not only the size, the composition and the type but the social position. The social position of a family is determined by caste, race and social class, etc. However, it is the last dimension namely social class which have received attention of sociologists in the West while race too has been given some importance. Not many studies on socialisation with reference to family or caste or any other dimension or agency have been undertaken in India. Therefore, we shall depend on our own observations to illustrate the relationship between family and socialisation. We shall also take examples from other countries to substantiate the relationship between social class, family and socialisation in the context of school.

It has already been mentioned in the sub section 9.2 that a key agency of socialisation in all human societies is the family which transforms the young infant into a member of a human community. It is the first prolonged and intimate interaction system the individual encounters after birth.

However, the things that members of a given family wish to teach or transmit to the child are limited by that family's unique historical and societal experience. As a result of this, we observe familial differences in child-rearing practices as well as attitudinal and behavioural outcomes regarding social relationships and skills. Each child is more or less uniquely prepared for the cultural reality that his or her family has experienced or wishes to experience.

9.4.1 Behaviour and Family

Family inculcates attitudes relating to proper behaviour, decision-making and obedience to authority, etc. In addition, children learn the attitudes and skills necessary to play a role in the production and consumption of goods and services. Each family adopts division of labour regarding family tasks and prepares its young for the notion of work. Thus, early socialisation into economic roles also takes place within the family.

As contact with others grows, other alternatives, become available to the child. He or she is introduced to the new social institutions or agencies such as the school and the peer group in the neighbourhood. The influence of parents is reduced because new reference groups such as peer group become more important. Thus, a number of secondary group relations and pressures must be coped with by the child alongside the group relations learnt initially in the family.

A number of studies have been undertaken on the effect of family background on the educational performance of the child, which are pertinent to socialisation. One of the salient findings of these studies is the negative impact of a school on a child if he or she belongs to

a working class home with little emphasis on cognitive achievement. This is because the school emphasises good results and a behaviour pattern which is alien to the child's family. Moreover, researchers have also pointed out that middle-class parents more than working-class parents are likely to put emphasis on the need for success in studies to reinforce the socialising function of the school and stress, in general, achievement-oriented values. Again, a relationship is seen between the occupational role of the father and the difference in the socialisation-orientations of the children. For instance, since a working-class father has less autonomy and satisfaction in the work situation, he tends to be authoritarian and severe towards his family members, especially his son.

Activity 1

From your own experience, find out whether your socialisation was done in an authoritarian atmosphere or liberal atmosphere i.e. whether your parents were very strict disciplinarians, allowing you no opinion of your own or were ready to listen to you and guide you on the right path with persuasion rather than tyranny. Write one page essay on "I and my Parents" on this issue. Discuss it with other students at your study centre.

9.4.2 Socialisation and Communication

The importance of language and difference in the pattern of communication between parents and children according to social class are the other dimensions which have been studied by sociologists, notable among them being Basil Bernstein. According to him, patterns of language-use and the teaching styles are class-based. He saw a relationship between social structure, forms of speech and the subsequent regulation of behaviour in the schools. For instance, he argued that children from different social classes respond differently to educational opportunities and an important determinant of their response to the school's cognitive aims and teacher's style etc., is the language or linguistic code of the child. He also argued that different social structures produce different types of speech systems. As the child learns his speech, he learns the requirements of his social structure, which vary according to social class. Therefore, the language of the working-class child is limited in vocabulary while that of the middle-class child does not suffer from this limitation. The teacher is, by and large, from the middle class and can communicate better with the middle-class child since they share the same linguistic code or language with its vocabulary, meanings, syntax etc. Thus, the working class child cannot communicate as well with the teacher and begins with a handicap which affects him or her throughout his/her school career because of this restricted co-operation.

The same factors can be observed in schools in India, where most teachers came from upper caste/class backgrounds in schools and students who belonged to scheduled caste or tribes could not some time even understand the language of the teacher, let alone feel at par with other upper caste/class students.

Several studies have been undertaken linking different dimensions of schooling with the family of the child. We have only given some examples to demonstrate the importance of family and social class in socialisation at home and outside the home, particularly in the school. However, we may also mention that these studies merely indicate a direction and are not conclusive.

9.4.3 School and Socialisation

'School' is used here to refer to a whole range of formal educational institutions which are the characteristics of the contemporary industrial and industrialising, urban complex-societies. We shall only mention here that schools provide two contexts for the students. The first is the formal context of the classroom wherein the content of socialisation is determined by the text books and the cognitive aims of the process of teaching. The second context is informal and can be perceived in the inter-personal relations of students with teachers and those among students (peer group).

Social control comes to be exercised by the school and the increased professionalisation of teaching helps to undermine the authority base of the family as a socialising agency. Again, the content of socialisation as well as the knowledge to be transmitted become the focus of the curriculum and syllabi and a set of carefully prescribed practices. What parents did or do by instinct and with love, professionals must do with clear regulations and justifications.

The socialisation process within the school may or may not supplement and reinforce the process within the family. In fact, it may be in conflict with the socialising values, norms and behaviour patterns of the family.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: a) Use the space below for your answer

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Discuss briefly how socialisation occurs in tribes. Use about five lines.

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- 2) Write a comment on the role of school on the socialisation process. Use about five lines.

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9.5 SEX AND GENDER IDENTITY

Every society has a systematic way to deal with sex or gender roles. In other words every culture has a process by which it prepares the children to play the roles that society expects and requires of them as adults and these roles vary according to sex, ethnicity and social class etc. Of course, sex is almost universally the most basic category and refers to biological differences (i.e. differences in their bodies) between men and women while gender refers to the social differences assigned to sex. In other words, it refers to the division between masculine and feminine roles, tasks, attributes, etc. For example, the division of sexual labour refers to the fact that women bear children and men do not. This division is based on biological differences. The sexual division of labour or gender-based division, on the other hand, refers to different tasks, such as agricultural work being masculine and household work as feminine. This division also includes traits such as aggressiveness being masculine and submissiveness being feminine. Of course, the sexual division may vary among societies and social groups.

The success of socialisation process is indicated by the studies which show that gender identity is the unchanging core of the personality formation and is firmly established in the early stages of one's life. However, although biological differences between men and women are universal, there is differentiation of roles by gender, across cultures and societies. This is because when biological differences are projected into the social sphere they give rise to masculine and feminine roles although they are not innate. Anthropologists have given examples from different cultures to demonstrate variation in sex roles from one culture and society to another. For example, in the hunting societies while the male folk took active role in the hunting, in making tools and weapons, females are mostly passive. Their females took active roles in the reproductive activities. On the other hand, in the agricultural society in Africa women play considerably active role in the productive activities. In spite of the stereotype of gender roles which exist in all societies, in reality women may be participating equally in the so-called masculine work, such as, agriculture, unskilled work in factories etc. In the same manner, men quite often assist women folk in domestic work, especially amongst the nuclear families in urban areas where both husband and wife work.

9.5.1 Gender Related Studies

Systematic interest by social scientists in gender-related studies has been very recent. The most widely researched field is the socialisation process which differentiates between men and women in almost all societies, and produces what are called masculine and feminine roles, images, behaviour patterns and tasks. In other words, it helps in producing stereotypes of male and female. For example, in several societies women are considered submissive, passive and dependent as if these were inborn traits whereas the masculine traits are active, aggressive and independent. Again, the division of labour is along gender. For example, housekeeping tasks are assigned to women and most of the external, public and production-related tasks are given to men. (Yet there may be differences among different tribes, see for example, Muria.)

You may have observed that girls have to be obedient, submissive (not only to parents but also to their brothers in most Indian families) not outgoing or to take initiative. They are given elaborate instructions on what dress to wear and on what occasion. There is emphasis on modesty. They are not expected to laugh loudly although the situation may be changing in metropolitan cities. However, the situation goes back to square one at the time of a girl's marriage even in the most enlightened families. In many families they are discouraged to take subjects at school which involve hard work (science and mathematics) or which are likely to lead to a career (for example, medicine or engineering). It may be so even in families where sons are not doing as well in studies as are the daughters. Even then the sons will be encouraged to take up courses like science and other professional courses. When parents can afford to spend only on the education of one child (even in Delhi or Chennai etc.) the chances are higher that the son will be sent for higher education instead of the daughter.

9.5.2 Sexual Discrimination

This is discrimination based on the social expectation that a girl from the upper and middle class will not be working even though a large number of them are working in the metropolitan cities these days. Also, that they will get married and become full-time housewives and leave their families.

Since parents, grand-parents, friends, teachers etc. are agents of socialisation, the situation is further complicated because it takes place within the home and is very personal. Again, it takes place through people who are also emotionally involved in the process. It is further complicated by the fact that boys and girls like to approximate their behaviour to that expected by parents since it is likely to make the latter happy. They would also not like to offend those whom they love i.e., the significant others'.

The discussion of socialisation and sex roles is linked to that of stereotypes and discrimination. When social roles are assigned on the basis of gender, which results in discrimination or puts unreasonable limitations on women, then it needs to be questioned. The other words, used in this context are bias, sexism, and stereotyping. Although, each has separate meanings, these terms underline the discriminatory treatment given to and inferior position assigned to women in society. For example, (a) men are considered superior to women and (b) women are denied access to positions of power. Some well-known examples of discrimination are: paying women less than men for the same jobs and denying them educational opportunities and certain jobs because of their sex. It may be illustrated with the fact that in agriculture women labourers are paid less than their male counterparts. Again boys may be encouraged to go in for higher education because they will bring higher income to the family. But this may not be the case for girls in a majority of the families. Such discrimination is rooted in stereotyping (mental picture held in common by members of a group). It represents an over simplified opinion and judgement about the members of a group, be they women, Hindus or Negroes.

Therefore, when we said earlier that society socialises the new born infant or that it socialises the child into becoming fit member of the society, we referred to certain traits which are expected of all members of society regardless of whether they are boys or girls. Hindus or Muslims, villagers or urbanites, tribals or non-tribals. The task of socialisation is undertaken by various agencies, however, we have focussed on the family since it is the primary agency of socialisation.

9.6 MASS MEDIA AND SOCIALIZATION

In contemporary societies, the means of mass communication such as the books radio, newspapers, films or cinema, records, and video are very potent sources of socialising those who are either their readers or the listeners or the viewers. These mass media, especially the films, the radio and the television simultaneously communicate the same message to a nation wide audience cutting across all boundaries. Therefore, its impact on socialisation is crucial.

Here we are concerned basically with the message that is conveyed, the images that are projected because they form the content of the socialisation process through the mass media and the impact of the message and the images. Thus, for example, the specific questions in the context of gender and socialisation will be: What are the images of men and women portrayed on the mass media especially on the television? In the context of the rural population we may ask: What are the images of the rural folk and is the message relevant for the villagers? Is their image really representative of their experience and if that is so, which part of village India does it represent? Or, what is the impact of violence in films on the children? Similar questions can be asked with reference to all the dimensions that cut across Indian society.

Activity 2

Observe at least 5 children between the age group five to ten years in your neighbourhood for at least two days. Write a report of about one page on "Impact of Mass Media (esp. TV) on Children's Behaviour" in your society. Compare your answer with your peers at your study centre.

Another question which is of general relevance would be: Which is/are the most important medium/media and for whom? For example, while television in India has become the most important medium for almost everyone in India, comics are important for the children in the metropolitan cities while the video and now Cable T.V., Computer CD's and Internet communication has become a rage among the elite families even in the rural areas.

9.6.1 Messages in Mass Media

However, the crucial question in the context of socialisation is related to the message as well as the image. Scientific studies on media-use and media-impact are few and far between in our country. Very recently, the images of women in the text books and the comics as well as in the films and television and their impact on children have attracted the attention of scholars, and social activists. For instance, most school text-books portray women as being housewives and men as bread earners. Experts are arguing that this is not true in so far as the lower income strata are concerned since women in these strata always worked to earn money to meet the basic necessities of life. Moreover, even the middle class women in big cities are now-a-days working in order to meet the high cost of living as well as the rising social expectations arising out of higher education. Thus, the portrayal of women's images should reflect this reality.

Most studies on media conducted in other countries have either focused on television or have concluded that television is the predominant medium used by children although other important media exist (e.g., comics, books, films etc.). Watching television has become a central leisure time activity all over the world and remains a major source of leisure time gratification. We shall discuss television as only one example of socialisation through the mass media. While some of the points raised here will be applicable to other media as well, certain others may not be relevant.

9.6.2 Impact of Television

Television contacts the viewer directly through its message and does not involve social and interpersonal interaction. Moreover, it is embedded in another agency, namely, the family since it is generally viewed at home. It can propagate values in contradiction to those rooted in a specific social context. Its message may also get distorted because a large proportion of our population is illiterate and lives in the rural areas while the programmes are oriented to

the urban viewer. Thus, the values and behaviour patterns transmitted through it may be in conflict with those upheld by the parents. Parents react to this in several ways such as rigorous control of viewing (especially on Sundays or during the examination) and not permitting the watching of certain programmes (e.g., late night adult movies). However, the child's peers or friends at school or in the neighbourhood will influence him or her by discussing specific programmes. Teachers may also comment on them. In addition, parents have no direct control over the content of programmes.

What are the dominant concerns of the studies conducted in other countries? Most focus on children as the audience and the effects of television on children. The most widespread view of socialisation through the mass media is that it contains harmful experiences, particularly for children, but also for families in general. Some refer to the hypothesised tendency of television (and even cinema) to incite young people to crime and violence. Although these studies are only speculative, they are pointers to further research.

So far, the impression you may get is that the impact of television is only unidirectional or one way. While it is true that its impact is direct, it is not devoid of the social context. Viewing is a social activity insofar as it is done within the home and in the presence of family members. Viewers comment on programmes favourably or unfavourably. The interpersonal elements of other viewers are important as much as are the timing and the physical environment. Therefore, television is one element in an interlocking system. It does not exist in a vacuum and its effects are mediated and modified by the social context of viewing. In other words, the reaction to the programme is determined to some extent, by the fact that you are watching it along with your parents or not, and whether you are watching it at home or outside, and so on.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: a) Use the space below for your answer
 b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Write a description of how gender-based or sexual discrimination occurs in the socialisation process. Use about five lines.

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- 2) Comment on the effect of mass media on the process of socialisation. Use about five lines.

.....

9.7 LET US SUM UP

We have seen in this unit that socialisation has many agencies. It works through these agencies and disseminates different types of behaviour modes. Some of these agencies are the family, caste group, tribe, school, etc. In fact we have emphasised that even gender differences (between boys and girls, men and women) are largely learned processes. Very often the mass media such as cinema and television reinforce ideas and stereotypes of social behaviour. But sometimes they do not. This unit has also examined the impact of mass media on the process of socialisation.

9.8 FURTHER READINGS

Kammeyer, Keaneth C.W. and Yetman, Norman R. 1979, Sociology: Experiencing Changing society. Mass Allyn and Bacon, Inc. Boston

McKee James, B. 1981, Sociology: The Study of Society. Holt, Rinehart and Winston. New York.

9.9 KEY WORDS

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| Agencies | : The means whereby the process of socialisation (in our case) is facilitated, e.g. family and school. |
| Dialect | : This is the subordinate form of a language peculiar to a region or a social group with non-standard vocabulary and pronunciation. |
| Gender | : There are two sexes, male and female. It is the social dimension of the differences in the work roles, behaviour and traits of men and women. |
| Ghotul | : Bachelor's hall of both men and women of the Murias of Bastar in Madhya Pradesh. |
| Linguistic Code | : Language including vocabulary, speech patterns etc. used and understood by members of a given social group while communication through them may be difficult across social groups. |

9.10 MODEL ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) The major agencies that socialise a person are the family, school, peer group, the neighbourhood etc. The examples of factors that influence socialisation are (i) membership to a social class or caste, and (ii) whether one is a boy or a girl.

2) A) Childhood Family
B) Adolescence Peer-Group
C) Adulthood Professional Group

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Socialisation occurs in tribes through special institutions like the Ghotuls amongst Murias, village guardroom amongst Nagas etc. In these institutions all unmarried boys and girls from the age of five or six live together. They are assigned educational tasks and are held responsible for its maintenance. During daytime they go to their parents home and help them in various tasks but at night they sleep in the Ghotul. After marriage they leave the Ghotul.
 - 2) The two contexts of socialisation that school provide are formal context and informal context. Formal context is determined by the text books and the cognitive aims of the process of teaching while informal context can be perceived in the interpersonal relations of students with teachers and those among the students (peer group).

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) During the process of socialisation discrimination occurs. For example, it is assumed that a girl will not work even though a large number are working in the metropolitan cities these days.
 - 2) Sexual stereotypes are certain sets of attitudes, values, norms, customs and expectations based on social differences between men and women but justified on biological grounds, which shape the differential socialisation of men and women. Men are supposed to be independent, capable and aggressive and women, to be dependent, timid and submissive.
 - 3) The mass media for example, radio, television, films, books, cinema, newspapers, etc. cut across all boundaries of region, religion, sex, caste or class. They convey the same message to a nation-wide population. Therefore, its impact on socialisation is crucial. It portrays the messages and images; as in the case of video, film and T.V. etc. They affect the minds of adults as well as children and helps to shape and reshape their values, behaviours and expectations through their messages and images.

UNIT 10 PROCESSES OF EDUCATION

Structure

- 10.0 Objectives
- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 Meaning of Education
 - 10.2.1 Life-long Learning and Education
 - 10.2.2 Formal and Non-formal Education
- 10.3 Historical Development of the Educational System in India
- 10.4 Education and Inequality
 - 10.4.1 Expansion of Education
 - 10.4.2 Findings on Education
- 10.5 Women's Education
 - 10.5.1 Schooling and Literacy
 - 10.5.2 Question of Illiteracy
 - 10.5.3 Education and Employment
- 10.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 10.7 Further Readings
- 10.8 Key Words
- 10.9 Model Answers to Check Your Progress

10.0 OBJECTIVES

On going through this lesson you should be able to:

- explain the differences between education and learning processes;
- describe various techniques of education such as formal and non-formal;
- analyse the historical shifts in the system of education in India; and
- narrate the extent of unequal distribution of educational opportunities in society.

10.1 INTRODUCTION

In the earlier units (Units 8&9) of this block we have introduced you with the nature and agencies of socialisation. In the earlier Units educational institutions have been pointed out to be the important agencies of socialisation. In the forthcoming two units we shall be discussing with you the processes of and the features of educational institutions in India.

In this unit we will explore the meaning of education and its usefulness to us throughout our life. It specifically, focuses upon the formal and non-formal aspects of the educational system. It describes the history and the development of modern education system in India. It also explains the inequality inherent in the system of education; in women's education, and discusses the problem of illiteracy. Problem of education and employment has also been dealt with. The unit, in fact, presents a broad picture of the educational process in the context of Indian society.

10.2 MEANING OF EDUCATION

As you sit down to study and understand the pages of this lesson you are participating in the organised system of education. Presumably you chose to be educated in this manner because you had either left school early and not pursued a college degree or had studied some other subject. These reasons, which may appear to you simple and straight forward, can often be

the result of several factors. Before we go into an examination of these factors, it is necessary to see how this form of education is different from others.

To start with, what do we mean by education? The dictionary meaning stresses “systematic instruction” for the “development of character and of mental powers.” The words systematic instruction are of significance implying an organised way of conveying specific meanings or symbols. Instruction is a process where by the learner acquires knowledge from the teacher, which has been processed and graded according to the age and intelligence levels of the average student. When a student goes to school, college or university, he or she is participating in the **formal system of education**. In your case, you do not have before you a teacher; instead what you are reading now seeks to provide to you relevant information in a comprehensive manner so that you do not feel the need for a person to interpret and explain the material being presented. Nonetheless, the information has been provided to you, and you cannot really exercise choices on what comprises your course and what does not. This is where there is an important difference between education and learning.

10.2.1 Life-long Learning and Education

You have probably heard of the phrase ‘life-long learning’: this means that your capacity or ability to learn is not limited to a specific phase of your life. Every experience can be a potential learning experience; however, unlike education, it is not necessarily imparted through any specific agency like the school. for instance, you can learn about people and perhaps the variety of occupation available to them when you wander through a shopping complex. Similarly you can learn about the caste system. In fact, your learning experiences are essentially enriching and perhaps only something which you alone can appreciate. On the other hand, education in a specific area is something you share in common with a larger group; participation in it is based on a system, an ordering of various topics in a range of subjects or disciplines, and finally an assessment or evaluation by the teacher, or a test which you would have to send in for evaluation. Education is not random and sporadic as learning may be, but it is regular and regulated. To put it briefly, education involves learning but all learning is not education, in the sense in which we are now using the terms. The renowned sociologists Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons believed that the school class, teacher and the entire school-oriented learning process would help in the integration of the child in society. In fact, the school was essential for the child’s proper adjustment. However, as we shall see, they did not seem to take into account the social class differences among children and how these created difficulties in adjustment to school.

Activity 1

There are two situations. 1st. A young girl is doing an experiment in a laboratory along with her other class-mates and her teacher supervising them.

2nd. A young girl is learning to knit a sweater from her mother along with her two friends.

Out of these two activities which one is education and which one is learning and why? Write a note of one page on this and share it with other students at your study centre.

10.2.2 Formal and Non-formal Education

Education can be formal or non-formal, be directly transmitted by the teacher or through a prepared text such as this one. In reading this text, you are now participating in the technique of education known as distance-learning. Here your instructional material as well as proposals for projects, additional reading and other related activities are conveyed to you through the written word, and perhaps the radio, and visual media such as TV and Video programmes. You are aiming for a degree in sociology; using the same technique of distance learning, a busy professional may take time off to get packaged information on art history or the restoration of art pieces. This can be done through the written word as well as through audio-visual modes. This would not be a part of his or her formal training as a lawyer or doctor but something that he or she may nonetheless have a deep interest in. While a degree or diploma might not follow, the person concerned would have acquired a certain degree of relevant information in an area quite unrelated to that in which he or she is formally qualified. Thus distance learning, can be used to train for a formal degree as well as to increase one’s knowledge

in a range of topics. While in some cases evaluations are important and essential, in others this may not be the case.

Similarly, the non-formal stream in our educational system also aims to give relevant information without necessarily involving assessments, tests and so on. However, there is an important difference in the content as well as the methods of distance teaching and those of non-formal education. In India, non-formal education has had as its target group those section of the population who, due to poverty and/or other related factors, have not been able to participate in formal education. In other words they have either not gone to school or have left or dropped out at an early age. The aim of this programme is to provide functional literacy to those who are left out of the formal educational system. The typical target groups are children from under-privileged categories such as the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as well as those living in urban slums and remote rural areas. As we shall see, girls form a substantial proportion of those out of school. However, a variety of socio-economic problems limit their participation even in non-formal classes.

A major programme entitled Non-Formal Education was launched in India in 1975/76 for those in the age group of 15-25 years. The object of this, as also of the later National Adult Education Programmes (NAEP), was to provide "meaningful education" to deprived groups. The NAEP which was initiated in April 1979 was to reach out to 10 crores illiterates, particularly in the age group of 15 to 35 years. The curricula, borrowed from Mahatma Gandhi's nai talim or basic education, stressed on learning through the acquisition of a skill. In addition, the programme was to pay attention to the specific needs of the target group which included, apart from the relevance of the course material, flexibility in timing, duration and location of the courses. The aim of these programmes which lie outside the formal educational system, in combination with the latter, is to combat the problem of rampant illiteracy: even after forty years of independence and well over a century and a half since the first school was started in India, only 50 per cent of the population is literate. Of the illiterates, more than half are women and girls. However, some inroad has been made to eradicate rampant illiteracy in India, in general as well as amongst the special target groups like the scheduled castes/scheduled tribes; women etc. As per the provisional figures of 2001 Census (India 2003: pp. 78-79: GOI) during the decade 1991-2001, there has been unprecedented progress in the field of literacy. For the first time since Independence, the absolute number of illiterates declined by over 31.9 million. A significant milestone reached during this period is that while the 7 plus age-groups of population increased by 171.6 million persons during 1991-2001, 203.6 million additional persons became literate during this decade. It should be now clear to you then that the process of education is linked not only to the availability of resources but also to a variety of other socio-economic factors as well. This is equally applicable in the case of formal and informal education, whether imparted directly in a classroom, or through a text book, a radio broadcast or a class on how to take care of cattle and other livestock.

Box 10.01

In order to make the Non-formal Education scheme (NFE) a more viable alternative to formal education it has been revised as Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovation Education (EGS and AIE). The revised scheme is to cover all the unreserved habitations throughout the country where there are no learning centres within a radius of one kilometer and is a part of an overall national programme framework for universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE), the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). This revised scheme was made operational w.e.f. 1 April, 2001 with enhanced cost details. It has become part of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) w.e.f 1 April 2002. (India 2003: pp. 78-100: GOI)

10.3 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN INDIA

If we look briefly at the beginnings of education we find that in India its history can be traced to the **guru-shishya parampara** or tradition of a personalised teaching by the **guru**. While much of this interaction was based on the rich oral tradition, it later became based on the understanding and interpretation of text which discussed anything from the techniques of

warfare to personal ethics. Necessarily such an education was limited to a tiny minority, usually young men from the upper castes and privileged social groups. Sparing a child for a life of prolonged education was possible only among the more affluent. Access to literacy was a closely-guarded secret, and the owners of this privileged knowledge, usually Brahmins among the Hindus, were held in great esteem and treated with reverence. By the end of the eighteenth century, the situation started changing gradually. With the growth of urban areas, newer occupations and groups learning became more wide spread. This was the basis for the indigenous primary school or pathshala which soon came into being in a number of homes.

In the early nineteenth century the British rulers turned their attention to the education of Indians: expanding trade, commerce, business as well as the bureaucracy required local participation, at least at the lower levels. Prior to the introduction of the Western-style schools, a well-knit network of pathshalas existed in large parts of the country. These primary schools were established by the landed and trading elite's with the specific purpose of training the next generation for definite roles and functions. Each pathshala had a male teacher and the average number of students was a little less than 10. Boys normally began their education when they were about 8 years old, and continued for four to six years. That teaching in the pathshala was structured according to very specific rules of pedagogy and discipline. This is evident from a number of descriptions available in the writings of this time.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: a) Use the space below for your answer

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Explain what is meant by education. Use about five lines

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- 2) What is the distinction between education and learning? Use about five lines.

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- 3) What is formal education and informal education? Use about five lines.

.....

- 4) Write a note on the education system in India. use about five lines.

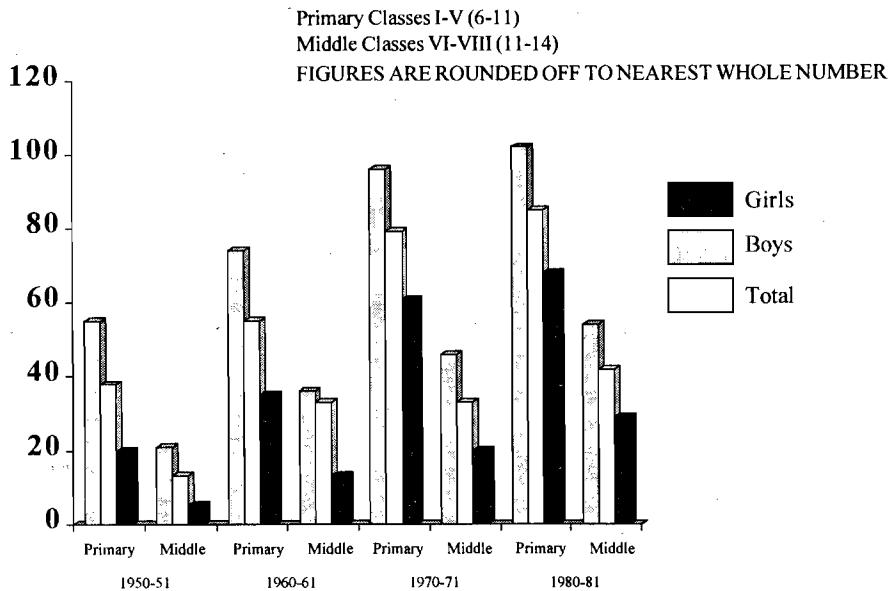
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10.4 EDUCATION AND INEQUALITY

We find that when the British left India, there was a well-established network of formal educational institutions; further, there had been some headway in non-formal education as well. Yet, a look at the bar chart will make it clear that as yet, there are large sections of the population which have not been affected by the agencies of education. On the one hand, we have a fast-growing sector which can compete with the best professionals in the world, on the other, there is the expanding population of illiterates and non-school-goers.

Bar Chart: 1

Enrolment at Elementary Stage as Percentage of the Population in the Corresponding Age-Group



There are other Third World Countries which share our problem of illiteracy. In the so-called developed world, the problem is not of illiteracy, but a search for alternatives to the formal school and attempts to create greater equality in access to educational opportunities are important issues. In countries such as the USA, UK, and even the Netherlands, the presence of immigrant group with a substantial percentage of first generation learners, as well as a relative lack of resources among sections of the local population, has made increasingly relevant, the debate on the equality of educational opportunities.

10.4.1 Expansion of Education

During the last few decades, the view that educational institution should play a more active role in bringing about greater equality among individuals, has led to considerable educational expansion. It has also resulted in various interpretations of the notion of equality and its relationship with education. Before we proceed further, it is necessary to have a workable definition of equality in the context of education. Does it imply equal education for all, or does it mean equal opportunity to be educated? For, as it has been pointed out, there is a world of difference between the equal right to education, and the right to equal education. A commitment to equal education for all is based on the assumption that every one is exactly alike. This clearly is not the case. In an unequal society like ours, equality of opportunity means equal opportunity to try for education. In the West, where most of the debates on equality of educational opportunity have originated, the preoccupation is more with differences in the kind of education received rather than with the question of access to the facility itself.

In most developed countries raised questions which relate increasingly to what happens to children who have access to the assorted educational bread basket. Can everyone expect to have a piece of bread which, in relation to another, is of the same size and quality? Or will some, because of certain advantages, be able to stake a claim for a bigger and better slice? To put it more sharply, once within the system, the distribution of bread is determined by causes which may have nothing to do with the basket itself. There are factors which work in favour of some children and against others. This is manifested in a higher rate of drop out, and

unsatisfactory performance in school, among those from socially and economically underprivileged groups; the better quality bread goes to those with inherent advantages. By 'drop out' we mean the phenomenon whereby children – or adults – leave a school or a literacy class before its completion. This is due to a variety of reasons. When we began this lesson we asked you to think about why you may have opted for this kind of education rather than the conventional college degree. We also drew your attention to the fact that substantial percentage of the Indian school-going population leaves school or college without finishing. Unlike you, they do not, or cannot, look for alternatives. We shall now look briefly at some of the reasons why individuals cannot or do not stay on to be educated.

10.4.2 Findings on Education

In the nineteen fifties, the work of some British social scientists established that the working class child was disadvantaged in relation to its middle class peers. It has been shown that environmental and socio-economic factors determine the child's ability to adjust to a largely middle-class school ethos. Other sociologists came to the conclusion that differences in family background account for more differences in achievement than school background.

The stage was set for state intervention as Britain launched its programmes for the identification of Educational Priority areas (EPS), and the USA started Project Head start. Briefly, both aimed at providing disadvantaged children in selected geographical pockets, with special teaching capsules, psychological enrichment programmes and stress on extra and co-curricular activities. Started earlier in India, our policy of reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, had the same goal in mind: to enable the under-privileged needed some extra help so that they have a fair chance to compete against the privileged students. By the end of the nineteen sixties it was quite clear that such concessions were not sufficient to cope with an increasingly unequal situation. Further, there was a growing feeling that educational institutions themselves worked against the integration of the child. In the rest of this unit we shall briefly examine empirical data from India, which show us how family background hamper educational progress. In the next unit, we will attempt to discuss these in the light of the functioning of institutions.

Check Your Progress 2

- Note:** a) Use the space below for your answer
 b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.
- 1) Write a note on education and inequality. Use about five lines.

.....

10.5 WOMEN'S EDUCATION

It is the relatively lower enrolment of girls which accounts for the overall low enrolment rate. However, these facts only tell us a part of the story: even if all girls were in school in 1990, it is equally important to keep track of where they are in 1995: are they still in school or are they back at work in the fields or at home? For instance, in 1975-76, 66.1 per cent of girls in the age group 6 to 11 years were enrolled in primary school classes. Most of them were in class I; if we look at the corresponding 1980/81 figures, namely at the time when these girls should have been going into class VI, the enrolment figure in this class had dropped to 29.1 per cent. In other words, before primary school is complete, over 50 per cent of girls leave the system. Latest figures made available by the government, reiterate that out of the 10 girls who join class I, barely 2 reach class VIII. Most of those who leave or do not join at all, are from among the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, and from among the urban and rural poor. Relatively far fewer Muslim girls are in schools.

But this dismal picture of literacy in India has however, begun, to change. As per the provisional figures of census 2001 there were 562.01 million literate persons in the country

and 3/4 of the male population and more than half of the female population are literate. The female literacy rate has increased by 14.87 percentage point (from 39.3% to 54.16%) as against 11.72% (from 64.3% to 75.8%) in case of males. Also, the gap between male-female literacy rate has decreased from 28.84 in 1991 census to 21.70 percentage point in 2001.

10.5.1 Schooling and Literacy

It has been pointed out that in order to be meaningful, a minimum of four to five years of schooling is essential so as to ensure that recipients do not lapse back into illiteracy. However, in a situation where 44 million children comprise the child labour force, and every third household has an earning child, national educational goals have to contend with individual strategies for survival. Sociologists as well as economists and educational planners have been concerned with finding ways to explain, as well as resolve this crisis. It has been clearly established that the high opportunity cost of education in relation to the poverty of families, makes schooling unattractive. The returns on education which normally takes as few years at school are low. Being in school means foregoing, or at any rate, limiting participation in paid work. When families live at the subsistence level, the costs in real terms are too high, and schooling is perceived as a poor investment which provides no definite access to better employment.

A number of studies in urban slums have borne out that formal schooling has a marginal role to play in the lives of girls. A recent Delhi study of Balmikis a sub-caste of the North Indian Bhangis or sweepers, found that as girls were expected to combine housework and traditional employment with marriage, schooling was found to be of little consequence. Almost 75 per cent of mothers whose sons were being educated, wanted them to complete school, while 50 per cent with daughters, admitted that their girls had not studied beyond class III. They left school because they had secured jobs, were married off or were needed to help with the housework, look after a younger sibling and so on. Also see Table I, showing the reasons for low enrolment of girls as reported by headmaster and teachers.

Table 1: Reasons for Low Enrolment of Girls as Reported by Headmasters and Teachers

Reasons	Percentage (%) of Headmasters	Responses from Teachers
Economic Backwardness	49	61
Girls engage in domestic/gainful activities	45	37
Indifference/apathy of parents	41	49
Another School nearby	16	7
Social backwardness	14	12
Social backwardness	10	15
Inadequate teaching aids/craft/class equipment/lack of playgrounds	4	6
Schools at a distance/communication difficulty	—	—
No separate girls' schools	1	7

10.5.2 Question of Illiteracy

In a Bombay slum it was found that illiteracy was three times higher since migrant population were prepared to send their daughters for only a few years to primary school, but hoped that their sons would finish school. As you know, competition for jobs of all kinds is becoming more and more intense. Coupled with the urbanisation process, we have a situation where young men from families with little or no education among the older generation, eagerly flock to classes and courses of various kinds whether one hopes to become a bus conductor, office clerk, or join the civil service, certificates, diplomas and degrees are valuable assets. This increased competitiveness also means that when resources are scarce, families will be more eager to spend them on a son, the traditional bread-winner, than on a daughter. Nonetheless across socio-economic classes and religious and ethnic groups, we find that more and more girls are participating in formal and non-formal methods of education. Among the growing middle classes an educated daughter is an asset. Often, their earnings are crucial for the well-being of the family.

For the bulk of Indian women however, the question, whether or not to work, is of no relevance: for generations, working class women have toiled in the fields, tended cattle, cooked meals for a large family, helped in building roads and so on. It is also among these groups that the indifference to education for girls is the greatest. Early marriage and restraints on the girls who are nearing puberty, reinforce this indifference. In the last two units, you have been introduced to the concept of socialisation; you are therefore familiar with how the family socialises boys and girls differently. When young girls perform deftly the job of stacking together large piles of firewood or make cow dung cakes of the right size and consistency, we know that they have learnt these skills at their mother's side. They do not need to go to school so as to help their families. The process of socialisation takes care of these functions. This is also true of the socialisation of young boys who go in to traditional occupations or are apprenticed early in occupations such as the match-stick making, lock-making and glass bangle industries.

Activity 2

In your family identify 3 women of different generations (such as, your Grandmother, mother, sister) and find out from them what level of education they have had (if at all). What were the reasons for them to dropout. Write a report of one page on "Women's Education in India" based on your findings. Share it with other students and discuss with your Academic Counsellor at your study centre.

10.5.3 Education and Employment

Thus, when poor families send their daughters to school, they rarely do so with hopes of better employment prospects: while it would be incorrect on our part to ignore the fact that there is a growing consciousness regarding the benefits of schooling, we should also be aware of the fact that education means different things to different groups. When a share cropper decided to send his six year old girl to the village school he probably does so because others in the village have sent their girls to school. Further, in a society where there is substantial violence against women there is a feeling that if a girl can read and write, she can at least communicate with her family after marriage. This creates a sense of security in the minds of many a parent, troubled by thoughts of their daughter's future. Of greater relevance to policy makers, however, is the view that the school can act as a care-taker for a few hours in the day: in a situation where institutionalised child care facilities are so woefully inadequate, policy planners are now thinking of ways by which the school can be made more attractive to older children as well. Mid-day meals, attaching a balwadi or creche to the primary school, as well as involving health workers in the process of education, are some of the measures being considered.

Thus, the process of making school more attractive to groups which have so far been indifferent, if not hostile, is not always easy. When such efforts have to contend with institutions and individuals who are not themselves convinced of the need to integrate children from varying backgrounds, the problems are magnified.

The fast growing higher education sector which caters to only a small segment of the population, absorbs almost as much, by way of resources, as the primary education sector meant for a much larger section of Indian society. In one way or another, most societies are faced with this issue of the demands of the few versus the needs of the many. Put in another way, quality, and therefore elite education, has to co-exist with mass education. The point at issue of course is whether enough attention is being devoted to strategies for making primary education more relevant, and hence popular. While there is no single crisis affecting Indian education as a whole there are many problem areas in each sector. It is nonetheless true that the issues arising out of the problem of privilege are of paramount importance. Inequalities of access to vital resources necessary for survival, render irrelevant and peripheral city-based discussions on how to increase educational enrolments. In the next unit we shall look at the internal workings of the educational system; this may help to understand better how the school or the text-book has also internalised the values of a hierarchical society. We shall also examine some proposed solutions on how to overcome the problems of illiteracy as well as the more general question, is the school relevant anymore?

- Note:** a) Use the space below for your answer
b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Write a note on women's education. Use about five lines.

- 2) Discuss the question of schooling and illiteracy. Use about five lines.

10.6 LET US SUM UP

We have seen in this unit how education implies a particular system of imparting knowledge. We have seen that this can be done both in formal and informal ways. We have mentioned in this unit how the system of education in India developed. The unit also informed us clearly on the development of education including that meant for women. More is being done to expand education, however, the situation today is much better than ever before.

10.7 FURTHER READINGS

- 1) McKee, James B., 1974, Sociology: The Study of Society Holt, Rinehart and Winston New York.
- 2) Worsley, Peter, 1987, The New Introduction Sociology Penguin Books Ltd.. Middlesex.

10.8 KEY WORDS

Education : Teaching given through a specific organised system e.g. school and college.

Formal : Where there is a clear cut organisation following specific rules.

Inequality : When there is a lack of balance in distribution of rewards of money, benefit of education etc.

Literacy : Ability to read, write and comprehend in any language.

Nai Talim : Basic Education

10.9 MODEL ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Education has been defined as ‘systematic instruction’ for the “development of character and of mental powers”. Instruction refers to a process where by the learner acquires knowledge from the teacher. This knowledge has been processed and graded according to the age and intelligence levels of the average student.
- 2) The distinction between education and learning is that education is conducted in a formal organised system like school, college or university. In this system the teacher

organises the activity of the student. Learning process is one where knowledge is acquired informally without the need of a teacher. It is not time bound and can be life long.

- 3) Formal education is directly transmitted by the teacher in an organised and structured system. It leads to the acquisition of a formal degree or diploma. In comparison, non-formal education inspite of providing relevant information does not necessarily involves assessments, tests, etc. It imparts information through unconventional means such as use of songs, story-telling, etc.
- 4) The educational system in India can be traced back to the guru-shishya parampara or tradition of a personalised teaching by the guru. Later the understanding and interpretation of the religious texts became the basis of education. It was, thereby, confined to a minority of elite's who were generally the Brahmins. At the end of eighteenth century growth of urban area lead to the development of indigenous primary school or pathshala. In the early nineteenth century, the British rulers introduced Western style schools and expanded the field of learning trade, commerce, business, as well as, bureaucracy.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) It has been universally accepted that educational institutions should play a more active role in bringing about greater equality amongst individuals. However, there is a difference between equal right to education and the right to equal education. A commitment to equal education for all is based on the assumption that everyone is alike. This is not the case. In an unequal society like ours, equality of opportunity means equal opportunity to try for education

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) The enrolment of girls in schools is very low in India. Even those who go to school are seldom able to complete even their primary education. Girls are the major dropouts in schools due to certain socio-economic reasons. They are required to learn household jobs and help in the care of younger siblings.
- 2) It is essential to have a minimum of four to five years of schooling. This is to ensure that the recipient of this schooling does not lapse back into illiteracy. The function of schooling is different for different class and section of people. Amongst the poorer section the rate of drop outs from school is very high. This is because very little immediate reward is perceived by them in remaining in school. Going to school means foregoing paid work or being available at home.