Unit 1 Introduction to Sociology

Origin, Meaning and Definition of Sociology

* Society is the web of social relationship.
* Abstract and dynamic concept.
* Co-operation and conflict is in society
* Depend on the law of interdependence and mutual awareness.
* Likeness and difference is in society.
* August Comte is the founding father of sociology.
* It is originated in 1838, by his famous book “The Course of Positive Philosophy”
* Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber are known as the four founding father of sociology.
* Sociology is composed of two words, they are latin “Socius” and Greek “Logos”, Where socius means society and Logos means study or science. Thus the etymological meaning of sociology is the scientific study of society.
* Sociology study the pattern of social relationship, interaction, problems, and the holistic study of the society.
* Sociology is the science of society
* Sociology is the study of social relationship.
* Sociology is the study of social phenomena, behavior and functions.
* Sociology is the study of social groups.
* Sociology is the study of social interactions.

Sociology concentrated for the study of human society, its major elements and its dynamics. Sociology studies about social action, social change, social order, status, structure, function, stratification, agency, relation, interaction etc. In broadest sense social interactions their structure and functions are studied by sociology. Sociology studies human society, social action, social group, social institution as well as the various social, religious, political and economic organizations. It also studies the social interactions of people and groups trace the origin and growth of society and social process, and analyze the influence of group activities on individual and others. The sociologist seeks to provide an analysis of human society and its various forms in sociological perspective. Sociology has given sufficient attention to the study of primary unites of social life. Sociology has been concerned with the development, structure, and function of a wide variety of basic social institutions such as family, kinship, religion, economic, political, legal, and educational and other various institutions. Sociology also applies scientific method in social research.

Definitions of sociology

* Kingsley Davis: “Sociology is the general science of society.”
* George Simmel: “Sociology is the science of the forms of human interrelations.”
* Henry Fairchild: “Sociology is the study of man and his human environment in their relations to each other.
* Herbert Spencer: “Sociology is the study of interrelations between the different parts of society”.
* Max Weber: “Sociology is the science which attempts the interpretative understanding of social action.”

**Nature of sociology**

Whether Sociology is Science or Not?

Sociology is not a science:

* Lack of prediction
* Abstractness
* Lack of Lab

Sociology is a Science

* Follow scientific Methodology in its study
* Follow fielf work, data collection, editing, coding, classification, analysis and give a conclusion.

Robert Bierstedt’s View:

* Sociology is an independent science
* Sociology is a social science not a physical and natural science
* Sociology is an abstract science not a concrete one.
* Sociology is a pure science not an applied science.
* Sociology is a general science not a special science
* Sociology is a generalizing science not a particularing science
* Sociology is both logical and empirical science
* Sociology is a categorical science not a normative discipline.

Scope of Sociology:

The scope of Sociology is divided into two schools

1. Formalistic/ Specialist school: George Simmel leads this school of thought. The other thinkers of this school are Vierkandt, Max Weber, Tonnies, and Von Wise etc. Thought of this school opinion is that sociology is a pure and independent science. As a pure and independent science, it has its limited area or scope. It should confine itself to the study of certain aspects of human relationship only. Further, it should study only the forms of social relationship but not their content.Sociology as a specific social science describes, classifies and analyze the forms of social relationships or limited aspect of social life.

Criticism

* The formalistic school has unreasonably narrowed the field of sociology. Sociology should not only study the general forms of social relationships but also their content.
* Social forms cannot be distant from the content, because they are closely interrelated with each other
* Sociology has close relationship with other social sciences.
* It is impractical for the establishment of pure and specific sociology.
  + 1. The Synthetic School:

The main thinkers of this school are Emile Durkheim, Hob House, Ginsberg, Sorokin etc. This school wants to build sociology as synthesis of the social sciences. It wants to make sociology a general social science not a pure or special social science. The main argument of this school is that all parts of social life are intimately interrelated, where the study of one aspect is not sufficient and scientific for the understand of the entire social phenomenon.Hense, sociology should study social life as a whole.

Sociology and Anthropology

Sociology depends upon anthropology to understand the present social phenomena from the knowledge of the past which is often provided by anthropology.

These both disciplines are closely related with each other and frequently indistinguishable. These both are related as social science while study the various aspects of society and culture, the relation between sociology and anthropology is found more intimate. Because society and culture are closely interrelated with each other. Without sociological background the study of anthropology is incomplete and without the study of man, his works, culture and activities the sociology also incomplete. Sociology provides the actual holistic knowledge of the society and anthropology also provide the knowledge of the origin and development of human, their culture, activities etc.

Sociology and Psychology

Psychology is the study of human behavior, mental process, experiences behavior intelligences, attitudes, hopes, fears and other psychological aspect of human. On the other hand sociology studies the social phenomena. Psychology depends on sociology to understand about the social structure, relations, organization and total of the social phenomena. Sociology also depends on psychology to understand about the mental or psychological aspect of human. By studying the human psychology we can imagine about the society because society is the reflection of the individual behavior. Individual behavior also guided by the social structure.

Subject Matter of Sociology

Sociology concentrated for the study of human society, its major elements and its dynamics. Sociology studies about social relation, social action, social change, social order, status, structure, function, stratification, agency, relation, interaction etc. In broadest sense social interactions their structure and functions are studied by sociology. Sociology studies human society, social action, social group, social institution as well as the various social, religious, political and economic organizations. It also studies the social interactions of people and groups trace the origin and growth of society and social process, and analyze the influence of group activities on individual and others. The sociologist seeks to provide an analysis of human society and its various forms in sociological perspective. Sociology has given sufficient attention to the study of primary unites of social life. Sociology has been concerned with the development, structure, and function of a wide variety of basic social institutions such as family, kinship, religion, economic, political, legal, and educational and other various institutions. Sociology also applies scientific method in social research.

Emergence of Sociology

Sociology is one of the newer of the academic disciplines, tracing its origins no further back than the middle of the nineteenth century. It has a short history. Sociology, the science of society, is the youngest and it came to be established only in the nineteenth century. The French philosopher, August Comte gave sociology and a programme for its development. For thousands of years, society has been a subject for speculation and enquiry. Yet sociology is a modern science which originated only within last hundred fifty years or so.

Sociology has a long past, but only a short history. The study of human society in scientific way is said to have begun with August Comte. The emergence of sociology as a discipline of academic interest is of recent origin. Its emergence as a discipline can be attributed to the vast changes that took place in the nineteenth century.

Various strains and tendencies, some intellectual and some social, combined to-form the science of sociology. To quote Bottom ore, “The conditions which gave rise to sociology were both intellectual and social”.

Theoretically, sociology emerged historically as a kind of speculation about general laws, as illustrated in the broad theoretical schemes of August Comte, Herbert Spencer and other pioneers. In the twentieth century, most sociologists shifted their attention to much less ambitious problems and particularly to the gathering of empirical data about social life.

Sociological Imagination

Sociologists differ in their understanding of the concept, but the range suggests several important commonalities. Together, they conclude that C. Wright Mills defined sociological imagination as "the awareness of the relationship between personal experience and the wider society".

* Imagination for asking and answering various social questions or issues.
* For follow scientific or emparical study the social issues
* For critically analysis the social phenomena.
* Analysis the cause effect relationship.
* For normative interpretation of social issues