

SOCIOLOGY

CHAPTER-17

MAN AND SOCIETY



After studying this chapter you learn :

- Justify that 'man is a social animal'.
- Understand socialization and human expressions through such process.
- Identify the early sociologists.

Among all the living beings on earth, it is only human beings who have complete awareness about their existence. They contemplate over their goals and purposes in life. It is due to this that innumerable questions arise in people's minds. Why is man called a social being? Is man God's creation? Why are there differences between groups? What is that strength which unites people and groups? Why does society undergo constant change? Is this change a sign of progress? In order to find answers to such questions, and to study human society in a methodical manner, many attempts were made in a scientific manner in the past.

As a result of all these attempts, a new branch of study originated. This study was called sociology. In order to carry out a scientific study of human society, we will have to understand the differences between animal society and human society.

Man differs from all other animals. He is civilized and is different from other animals. He is creative. There are many reasons for this. One of them is the structure of his fingers, especially his thumb. We realize the significance of the thumb when we write. Though animals too have fingers, these fingers are not of much use to them. The second reason is his upright posture. This is very helpful in tackling any danger. Thirdly, it is man's teeth. They enable his consumption of food and are, indirectly, the cause for his physical and mental development. The fourth, and the most important reason is man's brain. It is due to the development of this brain, its perceptions and

creativity that the civilized society which we see today has been created. But animal's lives are limited to indulgence in food, fear and pleasure.

Man is a Social Being

The relationship between man and society is unique. There is no society without man, nor man without society. That is the reason many sociologists are of the opinion that man is the creation of society, and society, that of man. If we close our eyes and ask ourselves, "Would it be possible for me to live all alone in my town?" everyone would come up with the same answer. And that is, impossible. Isn't that so? Man is a social animal. He desires to live with others around him. Society is necessary for the development of all of us, because social relationships are necessary for man's existence. That is the reason human society has been called a web of social relationships, and man, a social being.

Socialization

If we have to become members of society, we have to live amidst society. If we do not live among people, we will not be able to learn language, study, play games, experience thought processes or the body language that we have learnt now. This process of learning is called socialization. The family, school, peer groups, mass communication etc., enable our socialization. The family provides us food, nurturance, education and security. Parents help us to grow mentally and physically healthy.

The school provides formal education. We learn to co-operate and live with others interacting with our peer groups. The mass media give us knowledge about the world around us and enable us to live in harmony with it. Due to all this help from various quarters, man is able to lead a successful life in society.

The Necessity of the Social Environment

If man does not grow in a social environment, he cannot imbibe the qualities of a human being. An individual cannot be socialized outside the society and group. In order to understand the truth of this statement, the following instance can be studied:

Kamala, a girl who was found in Midnapore in 1920, had spent nine years among the animals in the forest. She used to walk on all fours like an animal and eat raw flesh. Later, in the company of human beings, she learnt to eat cooked food, to speak and behave like other children. But she was not aware of her own nature. What is evident from this instance is that man, if he is not in human society, becomes an animal. This has been proved by many other experiments by social scientists.

Human Beings and Language

How do we express our feelings? We can express hunger, thirst, sleepiness, sorrow and happiness through our bodily gestures and signals. But we cannot convey all our feelings only through body language. Language becomes inevitable in such situations.

Our languages have words such as father, mother, brother, sister, uncle, aunt etc., including relations between human beings. Thus language is needed to understand specific relationships and feelings perfectly.

Man knows language, whereas animals do not. This is the difference between man and animals. Just imagine how the world would be without language. There would be no textbooks, schools, mass media or civilization! Human society would be just like animal society. Therefore, while studying society, language is treated as a very important aspect of the society.

Early Sociologists

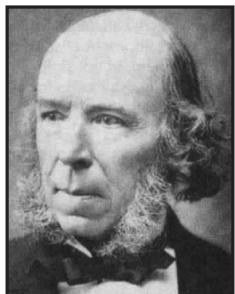
Let us know about the sociologists who developed sociology in the early stages. Sociologists are those who study the society, culture, behaviour, social relationships, etc. Some of the early sociologists are as below:

Auguste Comte was the one who gave the name Sociology to the scientific study of society. Hence he is considered the Father of Sociology. Herbert Spencer was the British sociologist who



Auguste Comte

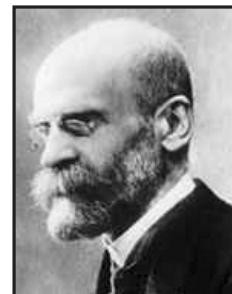
lived in the 19th century. He studied the evolution of society.



Herbert Spencer



Max Weber

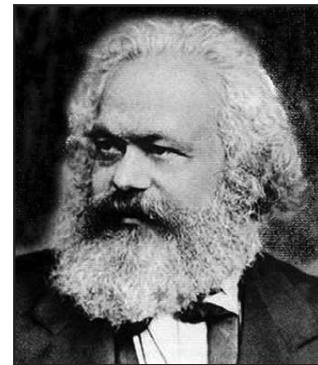


Emile Durkheim

Emile Durkheim, the French sociologist, lived in the latter part of the 19th century and the early part of the 20th century. He worked hard at making sociology a science. Max Weber was a German sociologist. He was also a great scholar in the fields of Economics, Philosophy and History. He did a sociological study of the Labour force and the Christian religion.

Karl Marx was a German philosopher. He was highly knowledgeable about History, Economics, Philosophy and Christian Religion. He extended the scope of sociology.

The British introduced Sociology in the Bombay University in 1914. Leading Indian sociologists have been G.S.Ghurye, M.N.Srinivas, A.R.Desai, Iravati Karve, S.C.Dubey and others.



Karl Marx

EXERCISES

I Fill in the blanks with suitable words :

- 1 Man is a _____ animal.
- 2 Formal education is provided by the _____.
- 3 The Father of Sociology is _____.
- 4 Man to become a human being _____ is necessary.
- 5 Human beings express their feelings through _____.

II Answer the following questions in 2/3 sentence each :

- 6 How is man a social being?
- 7 What is socialisation?
- 8 Describe Kamala, the one who was found in Midnapura.
- 9 Name some early sociologists.

III Answer the following questions in 4/5 sentences each :

- 10 Explain 'Man is a social being'.
- 11 Explain the relationship between human beings and language.
- 12 What are the differences between human society and animal society?
- 13 What does Sociology deal with?

IV Activity :

- 14 Collect the pictures of Sociologists.

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