
BLOCK 2

**ANTHROPOLOGISTS
IN THE FIELD**

BLOCK 2 ANTHROPOLOGISTS IN THE FIELD

Unit 4 Anthropology and Development

Unit 5 Business and Corporate Anthropology

**Unit 6 Anthropology in Advocacy and Policy
Research**

Unit 7 Constitutional Perspective and Human Rights

UNIT 4 ANTHROPOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT*

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this unit we will learn about:

- different phases of development and anthropological engagement with development;
- anthropological critique of development in terms of the 'planetary bureaucratic culture' of development and development in practice; and
- the dilemmas and critiques faced by anthropologists when working in the area of development.

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The term 'Development' is a buzzword that dominates world politics, as the key concept that visualises transformation in society. We are today aligned to seventeen universally applicable, integrated objectives for sustainable development under Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and propagated by the United Nations, with a fifteen-year timeline, that is to be achieved by the year 2030. These goals bring with themselves a futuristic focus towards conserving the planet, and an acceptance that developmental concerns are to be understood in relationship with each other and that they need to be addressed by the world together. Before the SDGs, the development sector was strongly divided between the developed and the to be developed, termed over time as initially, the first world, the second and third world countries and subsequently

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western developed countries and the rest of the world, i.e., the developing and underdeveloped countries; also, at times recognised as the global north (developed) and the global south (needs development). However, over time the western developed world has itself been questioned on the various social issues it faces, as well as its contribution to environmental degradation and ecological imbalance. While the divide between the developed countries and the rest of the world still remains, it is now recognised that development has to be a universal feature with all countries working towards the prescribed causes. The SGDs have brought with themselves greater inclusion in terms of consultation with different countries as well as actors at different levels of the development management chain. However, it is still a nascent step to look at development from a holistic perspective, where development has a long historical tendency of the West leading the way for the rest of the world to catch up. We explore this history in the next subsection followed by the role of anthropology and anthropologists in development.

4.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF DEVELOPMENT

The term 'development' as an agenda was popularised by president Truman, post Second World War as an urgent need for America and the western world to provide a helping hand in alleviating the misery and backwardness in the far reaches of the world. Development has since travelled a long path which is recognised and explained through some key theoretical phases. The first phase was that of proposed 'modernisation' as conceptualised by W.W. Rostow, who spoke of five stages of unilinear growth of economic and technological advancements (with the help of the western world) through which society could ultimately reach self-sustaining growth. This growth was to be achieved through independent agencies standing as a united front for nations, formulated for implementational policy planning in the development process that facilitated the transfer of technology to underdeveloped countries and the funds to support this transfer. However, the operationalisation to the developmental process failed to follow the prescribed theory. The development plans were shunned by the local population of the underdeveloped countries, who were being seen as a hindrance to the development process. It also brought to light a multitude of social issues including poverty, poor health, and demographic indicators, lack of literacy and employment skills, which had earlier been predicted to be automatically solved through economic advancement (Robins, 1986). As the development process gained more ground, addressing social issues also found relevance along with economic and technological focus. This led to greater engagement with local cultures.

The recognition of the need for inclusion of social parameters in development allowed development agencies to gain greater inroads into the local communities. This led to two revisions in conceptualisation, i) the western world was able to find greater access to the natural resources in the underdeveloped countries, ii) the underdeveloped countries became dependent on funding from the western world for their development programmes. This next phase in development was recognised through dependency theory, identifying an economic relationship between the West and the underdeveloped countries in terms of core and periphery respectively, where the core provided funds and technology to the periphery at high rates of return, while it enjoyed easy access to local raw

material and natural resources from the periphery at economically profitable rates and augmented its own economy. Thus, the core continued to become richer while the periphery became poorer. This was also recognised as a form of neo-colonialism. The dependency theory was later replaced by the world system theory which recognised that the periphery was not necessarily a passive unit and that within the world economy there is a possibility for the periphery to change its relationship with the core, however, the overall model of economic power struggles remained (Wallerstein 1974).

The critique of development in the dependency phase in terms of dominance and subversion brought forth the phase of post-modern thinking where efforts were made to revamp the image of 'development', which spoke about the need to address social problems and focus on specific issues and social groups like human rights, migration, displacement, women, landlessness and so on. It emphasised community or grassroots level involvement in development as stakeholders, to promote a bottom-up approach. This has moved further today to use a comparatively inclusive process at the level of policy planning, as is seen in the case of the SGDs. Socially induced change however continues to remain a focus of the development agenda, where anthropologists have a significant role to play.

4.2 ANTHROPOLOGISTS AND DEVELOPMENT

Anthropology as a discipline had its genesis in the West, and in that, it had an association with administrators and the bureaucracy from the very nascent stages of the discipline, to gain access and funding for places and communities that were difficult to access (including western colonies); in this, the anthropologists also enjoyed a dominant position over the communities that they studied. The information generated by anthropologists often aided colonisation, further 'anthropologists were also used during the Second World War and the Cold War for military and counter-insurgency purposes' (Ouden 1997: 28). In the post-Second War era, came a time in Anthropological history where anthropologists took a retrospective role of strong critique to re-evaluate their role in society and towards the people they study. Thus, when the development agenda came into play in the post-second war scenario, anthropologists did not engage actively with the phenomena which were spearheaded by economists, geographers, and political science.

Around the 1970s the international development agencies realised that local communities could not be forced to change, they needed to be understood and motivated to join in with the development process. There was also a need to redirect focus towards social problems and concerns of the community and with this, anthropologists started finding relevance in the development circuit. This also opened up avenues for employment for anthropologists post a period of retrospection, on possible social engagement; however, it relegated anthropologists towards a position of the field worker. This is not to say that there weren't any anthropologists in the international agencies at the level of policy planning, but they were few and far between.

Anthropologists remained skeptical of the development process and engaged with the development differentially; while a few actively joined in, yet others remained critical bystanders, while still others opposed the very idea

of development and spoke of alternates to development. The 1990s saw a strong critique of development within Anthropology. While this was the case, anthropologists working with/in the development process also faced certain dilemmas and criticism which have been presented in the next two sections.

Check Your Progress

1. Mention three key features of the Sustainable Development Goals.

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2. How have anthropologists engaged with development?

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4.3 ANTHROPOLOGICAL CRITIQUE OF DEVELOPMENT: A BRIEF SUMMARY

In order for development to gain credence, there is a need to define society or at least a set of parameters within it to be ‘underdeveloped’. This puts the societies/ social categorisations/ social institutions in a position of just opposition where one becomes the developer and the ‘other’ gets compartmentalised as ‘needs to be developed’. The just opposition by its characterisation puts one in the position of dominance and know-how, and the other in the position of the recipient/beneficiary. The idea of ‘underdevelopment’ brings with it the need to alleviate the perceived problem as formulated in the dominant powers, thus “the relationship of developers and those to-be-developed is constituted by the developers’ knowledge and categories” (Hobart 1993:2). In the development discourse, the category of developers was monopolised by the western world and international funding agencies claiming dominance in terms of economic and technological superiority and knowledge based on scientific rationale. In the usurping of this dominance remained an un-vocalised but obvious categorisation of the society that ‘needed development’ as ignorant and lacking in knowledge. While over the years development practitioners including anthropologists have helped in bringing forth the realisation that in order to ensure any kind of expected results, the community being developed needs to be taken into confidence and has to be recognised as a stakeholder in the initiative, however, does not take away the fact that development parameters are still monopolised and understood through the developer’s parlance and control. In the next two subsections let us look at the critique of (a) the monopoly over development, (b) a critique of development in practice.

4.3.1 Questioning the Monopoly over Development

Development operates under what Mead had referred to as a ‘planetary bureaucratic culture’ (Mead 1977: 7). Bouju on his paper ‘Application of Development Anthropology’ (2011) writes that in the “first decade of the twenty-first century, international development appears to be one of the main vehicles of the globalisation process. It has become progressively institutionalized under the sway of a small group of very powerful multilateral organizations (the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the regional development banks, and the various UN agencies) that control the majority of the financing for international development, as well as the majority of the other resources needed to carry out interventions—information, workforces, and political influence” (pg.564-565). He further points out that while these organisations have exorbitant power, they are outside of all democratic control. Also, the organisations might be independent of each other; however, they share a commonality of thought and action often influenced by a common pool of employees that circulate among these agencies. The organisations have gained “influence and power over the most indebted countries, and today, through their involvement in the globalisation process driven by international financial capitalism, they are increasingly acting like remote guardians, cut off from the daily realities of the poverty of the communities that they are supposed to be helping” (Nolan 2002: 265). Bouju further points out that, “Development projects are undertakings that mobilise political, financial, technical, symbolic, and cognitive resources in response to what international agencies define as global emergencies” (Bouju 2011:566), and permeate down through all actors in the development management chain. Olivier de Sardan uses the term ‘configuration développementaliste’ for that whole, the largely cosmopolitan universe of experts, bureaucrats, NGO employees, researchers, technicians, project leaders, and field officers, who somehow live from the development of others and who mobilize or manage for that purpose considerable material and symbolic resources. Ouden further writes that “the ‘developmentist configuration’ defines the very existence of development from this perspective” (Ouden 1997:31) as a “problem susceptible to the solution or pathologically as a condition requiring a cure” (Hobart 1993:2). This opens the way for in-depth anthropological analysis of the interactions between the multiple social actors involved in or influenced by the policy and projects designed to transform other people’s way of life. “The interfaces between the various social actors in the process which brings about a particular development policy and its concomitant ideas/ideology and language/ discourse should also be included in such an analysis” (Ouden 1997: 31). While the conception of the SDGs has initiated greater inclusion with respect to different actors and practitioners within the development paradigm the monopoly with regard to universalisation of development remains and is indeed an area for critique and questioning by anthropologists.

4.3.2 Reflections on Development in Practice

Large sums of money have already been invested towards development, however, one of its biggest critiques lies in the fact that the expected results are still far from reality. As a matter of fact, contrary to what was expected, developmental activities have often led to substantial disquiet and unrest within society. One such simple example has been documented by Mark Hobart in

the introduction to the book, An Anthropological critique of development: The growth of ignorance? wherein a footnote he mentions an experience shared by Till Forster, “A development agency had undertaken to increase cattle production for marketing among the Poro of the North Ivory Coast. They left, regarding the project as highly successful, because they had succeeded in their aim. Not long after, the Poro with whom Forster worked said that they felt it was a disaster. This was both because overgrazing occurred and because the greater number of cattle, which were used in bridewealth payments, brought havoc to marriage arrangements” (Hobart 1993: 22, endnote 6). It is evident from an example like this that development is often based on the developers understanding of the need of the society to be developed and is often governed by economic parameters, without reflecting on how change in one institution of society is going to subsequently influence the other parameters of society/culture and in this particular case also natural resources (wherein the extra cattle lead to the problem of overgrazing).

Equally perplexing to the development initiatives is the difficulties of coping with unintended consequences, especially when what was neatly theorised through the developer’s understanding of a scientific rationale encounters the realities of practice. Hobart examines this disjunct as the limitations of a paradigm, which combines an idealist theory of rationality and a naturalist epistemology. He opines that the western point of view is ill-suited to the ways which involve reflexivity on the part of the human beings concerned. He explains this by saying that “healing, the patient is widely expected to participate actively in the diagnosis and cure. By contrast, scientific knowledge as observed in development practice generally represents the superior knowing expert as an agent and the people being developed as ignorant passive recipients or objects of this knowledge” (Hobart 1993: 5). This brings forth one of the biggest critiques of the development paradigm by the anthropologists, who point out that the development practitioners are dismissive of the local/ indigenous knowledge systems which are usually holistic in nature. Anthropological insight reflects on the value of treating local knowledge seriously and examining its potential contribution to peoples’ material, intellectual and general welfare. This point is taken forward in Hobart’s book where various anthropologists elaborate the link between knowledge and agency and the fact that “Local knowledge often constitute people as potential agents” (Hobart 1993: 5), thus reflecting on the significance of understanding local knowledge as well as the agency it provides. Further, “Many anthropologists who are highly critical of prefabricated assistance and development programs are nevertheless reluctant to become a part of any aid or development scheme, even schemes which appear to be “democratically” conceived and run due to dissatisfaction with “concealed” or political goals of the programs” (Manners, 1961: 268).

4.4 THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL DILEMMA AND CRITIQUE BY DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONERS

The discipline of Anthropology has established itself through the process of continued retrospection and self-critique especially in “understanding of our own position and subjectivity (as authors, researchers, people, and practitioners)

within the matrix of power in knowledge production” (Djohari 2011: 29). Further, “we have taken our insights beyond the boundaries of our discipline and subjecting our disciplinary neighbours to the same critical ‘gaze’” (Djohari 2011: 29). This should be more than evident from the brief to the critique of development provided in the previous section. Anthropologists have known to critique not just the policy and practice of development, power politics within the development management chain, the knowledge high-handedness, and disciplinary methodologies used in development but also development practitioners. “Anthropologists have doubts about the efficacy of results achieved through rapid policy-oriented research and problem identification and are inclined to label this type of research and its results as naïve” (Ouden 1997: 26). This does not necessarily make anthropologists a very welcome inclusion for the non-anthropologists in the development sector. It also puts anthropologists in a contradictory position when they have to work towards a cause that they are/have been so strongly critical of.

Another inherent contradiction within anthropology in the context of development remains in the idea of cultural relativism. Cultural relativity propounds that no two societies are the same “every society (or culture) is unique, that it has its own patterns and arrangements, its own values, beliefs, traditions, and customs” (Manners 1961: 269). The respect for the cultural arrangement of society often makes an anthropologist wary of consenting with top-down or externally induced change. For this, the anthropologists have often been critiqued by developmental practitioners as carrying a ‘museum view’, as every culture is seen as unique. Anthropologists advocate the preservation of cultural identity and caution against change that might wipe away the culture’s essence in the name of integration. This also brings us to the concept of the holistic approach in anthropology which believes that in the understanding of a people/community “the economic, political, and social fields have to be combined with the cultural sphere comprising cognitive orientations, secular and theological ideologies, values, norms, and attitudes. We are against compartmentalisation” (Hobart 1993: 14). This approach has also percolated to the research on social change where change is seen in holistic terms and studied for its influence on the varied aspect of society and culture, for this, anthropologists often explore in retrospect. Even while studying contemporary social changes the anthropologist takes a long-term perspective and is thus criticised for being oriented towards research and theory rather than action and induced change. Anthropologists are equally critiqued by the development practitioners for their acceptance of developmental ideas in urban/cosmopolitan areas, where they are comparatively readily influenced by western ideas and might actively become agents of induced change. In this, the anthropologists seem to be comparatively open to accepting the developmental regime in spaces of greater social exposure than not.

Anthropologists are also guided by research methods that prescribe intensive fieldwork over an extensive length of time. They are thus against “a few weeks’ research by a multi-disciplinary team let loose on a local population for several hours a day to carry out interviews (often also group interviews) and observation, can easily result in insufficient information about the situation and ongoing processes, with the result that researchers are too easily persuaded of the significance of the ‘problems’ ventilated by informants” (Ouden 1997:

26-27). Anthropologists are also reluctant to give recommendations especially when they feel that an issue of concern has not been adequately researched. Further, they also do not believe in definitive answers for a situation as “social change cannot be seen as a linear process with homogenous outcomes” (Hebinck et al. 2001: 4). The development agenda is in conflict with both these ideas as they are often time-bound and results-oriented, and are thus looking for quick solutions.

Over time development programmes have come to involve communities as active stakeholders in the development initiatives, and thus feel more confident of the expected outcomes, however, they have not often found success. Anthropologists point out that “community development approach that strongly believed in village homogeneity and harmony arrived at a stalemate because of the naive and insufficient understanding and knowledge of local reality” (Van Lier 1980: 16-17), “although actors are often limited in their choices by a lack of critical resources, they should not be seen as passive recipients or victims of planned change, or as ‘cultural dopes’ who simply follow existing rules or conventions. Actors also create room for manoeuvre for their own interests so that they might benefit from, or - if need to be - neutralise interventions by outside groups or agencies” (Hebinck et al. 2001: 4). Thus, developmental programmes themselves are given to local politics and monopoly that are often overlooked by development practitioners but are within the purview of the anthropologist. However, this might remain a contested space because development practitioners might be content with meeting the overall established parameter of a programme rather than the depth of its percolation. Working with development practitioners thus puts anthropologists in a position where they have to continuously juggle between micro field studies and macro interpretations.

Check Your Progress

3. What is the justification for the western world to monopolise the development discourse?

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4. Sight any two problems of the development discourse.

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5. State of two dilemmas faced by Anthropologists while working in the development sector.

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4.5 WHY SHOULD ANTHROPOLOGY ENGAGE WITH DEVELOPMENT?

In light of the two previous sections, the primary question remains that if the paradigm of development finds a strong critique in anthropology and if anthropology itself puts its practitioners in a position of contradiction and dilemma (with reference to the development process and practice) which is equally critiqued by the development practitioners then why and how can the two work together.

As has been mentioned earlier, anthropology has developed through self-retrospection and critical thinking. Thus, it has the ability to understand both sides of a coin i.e., reflect upon a phenomenon for both its pitfalls and advantages (and the grey areas in-between). Being able to see the possible downside can be used effectively as an advantage in a meaningful engagement. As Long mentions, intervention is “an ongoing, socially constructed and negotiated process”, “an ongoing transformational process that is constantly reshaped by its own internal organisational and political dynamic and by the specific conditions it encounters or itself creates, including the responses and strategies of local and regional groups who may struggle to define and defend their own social spaces, cultural boundaries and positions within the wider power field” (Long 1992: 35 and 37). While Long writes in the context of grassroots level communities, the recognition of power politics might be within the development management chain, between the programme implementers and the community, or the community’s own social undercurrents to utilise development programme for their own political agendas, are all issues that can and need to be negotiated and anthropologists have often been recognised for their role as facilitating communication and synergies.

Further, there is no denying the fact that there are social concerns that need anthropological reflections. Most of these concerns are being looked at within the paradigm of development, which is the dominant socio-political reality of today. Globalisation has opened up the world to multiple dimensions of influences and it can’t be overlooked that working towards interrelated social concerns needs multidisciplinary approaches. In this, anthropologists need to work with another disciplinary expert to contribute effectively, utilising their methodological standpoint, fieldwork methods, in-depth knowledge of local community, the significance of local/indigenous knowledge and agency, and critical analysis. Anthropology and its methods are finding increasing significance in the collaborative initiative. If intervention is an ongoing, socially constructed, and negotiated process, then anthropologists need to continue their negotiation with development in their different positionalities.

4.6 SUMMARY

The paradigm of development is continuously being questioned by anthropologists and other social scientists; however, this does not necessarily relegate anthropology and development to opposing positions. Most

developmental processes today are creating positions for anthropologists in the collaborative team at various levels of the development management team. One can hope for efforts towards, combined disciplinary inputs for necessary but balanced social transformations in the future.

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4.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

**Anthropology and
Development**

1. Refer to section 4.0, paragraph 1.
2. Refer to section 4.2, paragraph 3.
3. Refer to section 4.3, paragraph 1.
4. Refer to section 4.3.2, paragraph 1.
5. Refer to section 4.4, paragraph 3.



UNIT 5 BUSINESS AND CORPORATE ANTHROPOLOGY*

Contents

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- 5.2 History and Growth of Business Anthropology
 - 5.2.1 Business Anthropology in the 1980s : Few Important Studies
 - 5.2.2 The Contemporary Landscape and Relevance of Business Anthropology
- 5.3 Advancing Ethnography to Study Business and Corporate Cultures
 - 5.3.1 What/ Why/How do Anthropologists Study?
- 5.4 Summary
- 5.5 References
- 5.6 Answers to Check Your Progress

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- understand the rise of Business anthropology as a sub-discipline;
- comprehend what/how/why anthropologists do as a business anthropologist; and
- discuss the relevance of business anthropology in contemporary society.

5.0 INTRODUCTION

Anthropology has a distinct way of understanding the world, and its subject matter is extensive. The subject matter of anthropology and its unique set of methods or approaches have allowed anthropologists to investigate life situations as they are. As a discipline, it has provided a practical lens to view the cultural world of others. The anthropologist's task has always been of a keen observer who tries to understand the diversity and variation these cultural worlds offer. The main area of anthropology is to study how human beings are different at certain levels yet similar and how and why humans and societies change.

Traditionally anthropology has been known for its work at places that seem exotic to Westerners, mainly tribal societies or the cultures that were far and very different from their own. For example, Bronislaw Malinowski spent years studying the Trobriand Islanders in the Pacific in the 1910s. But the world today is very different from that in which Anthropology began. The discipline has kept pace with changing times, visible in the various theoretical approaches over the past few decades. The methods and techniques of data collection have become

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more sophisticated and are appended by sophisticated newer technologies like video recording, camera use, and audio recording. Today's ethnographies focus on aspects of a society or culture rather than mapping every element of culture as in previous ethnographies. Also, 'field' has been redefined and places like shopping malls, hospitals, offices, organisations, and streets are now fields where anthropologists conduct their study to understand human behaviour.

Anthropology has moved from a city, town, village, or jungle hut to places like corporate units, shopping malls/markets, industrial units, business organisations, and other autonomous and private entities. Applying anthropology to real-world studies/problems has gained importance in the recent decade, and anthropology has grown both as a discipline and as a profession. As a discipline, it generates knowledge focusing on theoretical approaches and procedures of conducting field studies. And as a profession, it applies this knowledge to the external world to solve problems. Practitioners with an advanced degree in anthropology often work as consultants for research firms, government and non-governmental organisations, international organisations, and more recently, corporate organisations. Such practitioners are called Practicing Anthropologists who use their anthropological knowledge and skills to solve various client-based issues and practical problems.

For instance, practice work would often include working in an organisation (government or non-government) collaborating and co-thinking with other consultants and experts to work on a community project and solve a practical problem affecting the community or society. Or for example, working in a market research firm to study consumer behaviour and helping the company deal with the bottlenecks it faces in selling its products by scanning the client's needs and delivering solutions. Here in this Unit, you will learn about how anthropologists have ventured into organisations. Recently, their engagement with the business and corporate world is more of a mutually benefiting situation for both, anthropology/anthropologists and the corporate/ business organisation. Let us briefly look at the history and development of business anthropology.

A Brief History of Practice in Anthropology

During the early 1950s, British anthropologists dealt with a very different issue in England, i.e., staff relationships and productivity in corporations. Similarly, in the US, after World War II (and later with the formation of the Society for Applied Anthropology in 1941), Anthropology had established in the Universities in America. There was also the high engagement of anthropologists in the International Development Organisations. During the 1970s, there was a substantial increase in the rise of the applied side of Anthropology, and most Anthropologists started working outside the academy. Such anthropologists were called 'Practitioners', and by the 1980s, the number of Practicing Anthropologists swelled. Their work in non-academic organisations stimulated an interest in the study of business and industry. By the mid-1980s, anthropological literature focussed on documenting the work of Practice Anthropology. *The Journal of Practicing Anthropology*, which started in 1978, followed by *NAPA Bulletins (now The Annals of Practicing Anthropology)* in 1985, documented the work done in various domains.

Today, Practitioners work in almost every field like social service, public administration, international development, manufacturing, public relations, marketing, corporate organisations to name a few. These Practitioners function as Managers, do evaluation and assessment studies, help in data collection and analysis, do needs assessment, and participate in advocacy and policy formulation. For instance, Practitioners working

in product design or marketing are helping the organisations create or promote new and different types of products. As Business Anthropology began to grow during the 1980s, it developed as a distinct and separate area of practice focusing on corporate cultures, product development and consumer research, and industrial and production arrangement.

Check Your Progress:

1. Define Practice Anthropology.

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2. What are the avenues for anthropologists other than academia?

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5.1 WHAT IS BUSINESS AND CORPORATE ANTHROPOLOGY?

The terms ‘business’ and ‘industry’ are fundamental structures of organised economic activity to meet basic human needs in modern marketing societies. Marietta L. Baba says ‘business’ means the buying and selling of goods and services in the marketplace, also known as commerce or trade. Whereas ‘industry’ refers to the organised production of goods and services on a large scale. There is another term, ‘corporate’ which we are using in this Unit. A corporate is a large company or a business group having a legal entity. These terms, when used by business anthropologists, are related to the study of:

- the process of producing goods and services;
- of corporate organisations in which the production takes place;
- ethnographically informed design of new products for the consumers and
- the behaviour of consumers in the marketplace.

The term ‘business anthropology’ became popular in the 1980s when anthropologists were hired full-time as non-academic practitioners to study consumer behaviour and marketing. Earlier terms like ‘industrial anthropology’, ‘anthropology of work’, or ‘applied anthropology in the industry’ were used more frequently to denote areas of research and practice focused on business-related phenomena. More recently, ‘business anthropology’ refers to any application of anthropology to business-oriented problems. Presently, ‘business anthropology’ is recognised as a subfield of the discipline in applied anthropology.

Business anthropology applies anthropological theories and practices to the needs of private sector organisations, especially industrial firms. Current research initiatives in the field are focused on:

- marketing and consumer behaviour,
- organisational theory and culture,
- intercultural communication, and
- product design and development.

Business anthropologists conduct ethnographic research, using participant observation, informal or structured interviews, and help organisations do business in culturally appropriate ways. They help organisations to have smooth working relations between employers and employees, study customers and their behaviour, and develop appropriate marketing strategies. Research at Wayne State University indicates that international business settings failures frequently result from the inability to understand and adapt to foreign thinking and acting. Understanding the cultural context of business is valuable. The importance of culture is vital during the present scenario where the business models should be inclined to global customers.

The term ‘culture’ (defined as an integrated system of shared ideas, behaviours, and material objects that characterise a group) needs to be mentioned here. The term has been defined and redefined and anthropologists have contributed by understanding human life by interpreting how humans are part of the culture. When an individual is part of an organisation, one gets immersed in a new culture and gets introduced to the shared behaviour patterns of employees; for instance, the shared idea of the employees, like the goal of \$1 billion in sales for the next fiscal year or shared behaviour of following a dress code to work and wearing the same company shirt.

A business anthropologist would see organisation as a culture and all features of the organisation like structure, reward system, rules of behaviour and goals would be components of the culture. Any organisation study would include research on division of labour, values and objectives of the company, organisational structure and leadership behaviour, group formation and communication, organisational artefacts like dress and logos, and building type. This idea of culture and qualitative fieldwork techniques that are applied to business to understand organisations has been a unique contribution of anthropology to organisational research (Jordan 2015). And we see later in the Unit how business anthropologists have used the culture construct not only to study the inside of the organisation but also to study the services/products the organisation offers to its consumers and to study cross-cultural communication.

Check Your Progress

3. What are the different domains to which business anthropologists can contribute?

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5.2 HISTORY AND GROWTH OF BUSINESS ANTHROPOLOGY

In the last three decades, there has been a phenomenal growth in the anthropological work in the organisations. From First World War, into the 1930s, sociologists and anthropologists at the University of Chicago conducted studies that pioneered modern urban studies. Chicago during the 1920s and 1930s was a bustling city that created jobs and was the centre of creativity and great intellectual activity. Between 1924 and 1933, most human relations studies in a business setting were done in Chicago. Lloyd Warner, an American anthropologist who had studied the Murngin Aborigines of Australia, participated as one of the scientists and researched Western Electric's Hawthorne Works manufacturing plant in 1931. Warner's team used anthropological theory and qualitative research techniques to study employee interactions at work. This research was significant in realising that understanding human relations was crucial to understanding performance in organisations and thus instituted human relations as a field of study.

It was the first qualitative study of an organisation and the researchers observed and recorded employee interactions while working. The researchers found that the worker's productivity increased even when there was manipulation of the physical and management-centered stimuli. The increase was a consequence of management's interest in the workers, demonstrated by the presence of researchers like Warner. The worker's response was called an example of the **Hawthorne Effect** (Jordan 2015: 11). The Hawthorne's studies and Warner's anthropological contribution made the organisational scientists realise a need to study human relations in the work setting. This was the beginning of Industrial Anthropology which later came to be known as Business Anthropology.

Reflections

The Hawthorne's study fell under severe criticism. The critics demonstrated that many of the study findings could not be tied to measurable variables like economic incentives and corrective discipline (Franke and Kaul 1978). Moreover, the functionalist theoretical approach that was used as the basis could not explain the tension, conflict, or dissent in the organisational studies. Also functionalism as its paradigm could not explain many issues of business organisations.

Organisational studies rebounded with the revival of the economy during World War II and Chicago continued to be the centre of the human relations school. In the 1940s, former students of Warner at Harvard, Conrad Arensberg and Eliot Chapple, began working in Industrial Anthropology and started the Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA in 1941), which is still the oldest and largest applied anthropology professional association in North America today. During this period, anthropologists trained at Harvard conducted numerous studies that gave impetus to Industrial Anthropology. Working within the functionalist theoretical paradigm, the studies combined quantitative and qualitative approaches and developed interactional analysis, a technique for measuring interactive human behaviour.

During the 1940s and 1950s, management hired anthropologists to work on specific problems like absenteeism, strikes, and poor worker-management cooperation, etc. They studied social structure and relations within the industrial enterprise, such as informal relations among workers, actual work processes, status hierarchies, relations between workers and managers, etc.

Reflections

Various scholars conducted studies like:

- Arensberg who studied teamwork and productivity in a shoe factory;
- William F. Whyte studied interrelations of supervisors, waitresses, cooks, and customers in local restaurants in Chicago and
- Richardson and Walker studied technology change on an assembly line at IBM's Endicott Plant in 1948.
- Whyte studied the incentive system at Bundy Tubing in 1948;
- Sayles studied leadership and change in Eastern Corporation's Lakeshore Mill in 1952;
- Walker and Guest studied work and informal relations on an automotive assembly line in 1952; and
- Whyte studied a strike at Chicago's Inland Steel Container Company in 1951.

In 1946, Burleigh Gardner and Lloyd Warner, and other business partners formed Social Research Incorporated, the first management consulting firm to include business anthropologists and to use anthropological techniques and theory to analyse problems in organisations and tackle questions about consumer behaviour. In the 1950s another influential business anthropologist came to prominence. Edward T. Hall, who worked for the US Department of State, provided training in cross-cultural communication to technicians who were supposed to work outside North America. He understood the significance of the failure to communicate effectively due to cultural differences. In his book *The Silent Language*, he explained communication as involving much more than just language, and it included nonverbal characteristics. Hall's contribution in intercultural communication and intercultural training has been monumental as he understood that errors in cross-cultural communication could destroy a business deal or a peace agreement (Jordan 2015: 14).

Check Your Progress:

4. Write a short note on Hawthorne Study.

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5.2.1 Business Anthropology in 1980s: Few Important Studies

By the 1980s a large number of anthropologists were working in diverse fields of applied anthropology and simultaneously, there was an increase in the studies being conducted on organisational culture. Few popular books spurred interest in culture and management. The art of *Japanese management* (1981) by Richard Pascale and Anthony Athos addressed the role of culture in Japanese business success. The following year Terrence Deal and Allan Kennedy published *Corporate Cultures* and Thomas Peters and Robert Waterman published. *In Search of Excellence* focus on the theme that successful businesses must be concerned with their organisational cultures. Mainly, these works and other studies conducted in organisations popularised the culture concept and attracted the business community's interest. The term **organisational culture** became popular and was described as an additional construct in studying organisations. Throughout the 1980s, anthropology's work on organisations set the stage for the new field of study of organisational anthropology. With its focus on the methodology, anthropology produced works on the culture of the organisations and cross-cultural management. Following years witnessed an increasing number of studies that addressed diverse issues of the organisations.

Scholars like Gerald Britan (1981), Ronald Cohen (1980), Dubinskas (1988), Tomoko Hamada (1991), Helen Schwartzman (1993) conducted ethnographic studies on organisations, and works on the dynamics of formal organisations began appearing. For instance, Tomoko Hamada (1991) conducted extensive research on American and Japanese organisational and cultural interactions. Marietta Baba (1989) studied the development of local knowledge systems among the workers. Corporations employed anthropologist, Elizabeth Brody, to conduct in-house research, which was published in anthropological journals. Anthropologists like Steve Barnett conducted a study in consumer research. The research methods were anthropological, including participant observation, ethnographic interviewing, and interactional analysis to view people in the act, i.e. seeing people work and interact in the workplaces. Anthropologists like Brigitte Jordan, Patricia Sachs, and Shelly Goldman were designing or re-designing workspaces to facilitate work.

By the 1990s anthropologists were being hired by corporate and business organisations. Anthropologists like Grant McCracken, John F. Sherry, Eric Arnould are a few who have played a critical role in the development of consumer studies in both their business school teaching environments and their discipline of anthropology.

In the last decade, the fields of business anthropology have further crystallised and grown. Some famous works include Susan Squires and Bryan Byrne's *Creating Breakthrough Ideas: The Collaboration of Anthropologists and Designers in the Product Development Industry* (2002); Ann Jordan's *Business Anthropology* (2003); Sarah Pink's *Applications of Anthropology* (2006); Brian Morean's *The Business of Ethnography* (2005); Patricia Sunderland and Rita Denny's *Doing Anthropology in Consumer Research* (2007).

In the field of design anthropology, anthropologists use ethnographic techniques to develop new product ideas. In 2005, the first Ethnographic Practice in Industry

Conference (EPIC) took place, which brought together Anthropologists from various industries to discuss the use of Ethnography in their Organisations and Business. EPIC's goals are to promote public recognition of practicing ethnography as a profession and support the continued professionalisation of the field. EPIC is attended by designers, design anthropologists, and others to promote ethnographic techniques to develop new products.

Check Your Progress

5. How do Business anthropologists contribute towards the study of organisations? Discuss with examples.

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5.2.2 The Contemporary Landscape and Relevance of Business Anthropology

In the contemporary world, we have witnessed the transformation of capitalist economies, marked by an increase in global flows of goods and services, worldwide deregulation, and the diffusion of converging information and telecommunication technologies, together known as globalisation (Baba 2006: 21). The rise in incomes of industrialised and newly industrialised countries, and demographic composition shifts have significantly altered the market situation. New markets are opening around the world, thereby enhancing the competition in every industry. People world-over are now the crucial actors and potential and lucrative targets as consumers to the goods and services offered by multinational firms. The growth in corporate units and multinational firms has again led to an increased anthropological interest in organisations. The research has focussed mainly on three main areas i.e., (a) organisational cultures in technology-based firms; (b) boundary crossing in a global context; and (c) regional perspectives on work and corporations.

Scholarly works on corporate culture have come into prominence. Some famous works by scholars like Tomoko Hamada, *Inventing Cultural Others in Organisations*, 1995; Carla Freeman, *High Tech and High Heels in the Global Economy*, 2000; Marietta Baba and et. al. *The Contexts of Knowing: Natural History of a Globally-Distributed Team*, 2004; Melissa Cefkin *Ethnography and the Corporate Encounter: Reflections on Research in and of Corporations*, 2009 are a few which have led to the development of **Corporate Ethnography**. Such works have not only aided in the growth of anthropological theory but have also increased the number of job opportunities for business anthropologists who, apart from studying the work processes or the organisational culture, are researching on areas like human-machine interaction. For instance, anthropologist Bonnie Nardi in her work *Information Ecologies: Using Technology with Heart* (1999) showed that human face-to-face communication has advantages that any of today's communication media cannot replicate. She opines that face-to-face communication is a prerequisite for effective distribution of work and therefore, the firm must choose appropriate technologies for effective communication.

The above discussion shows that the growth graph of business and corporate anthropology has been phenomenal and marked by ups and downs. As a sub-discipline (of Practice anthropology), it has created a niche for itself in academia and has also been able to gain acceptance in the business world.

5.3 ADVANCING ETHNOGRAPHY TO STUDY BUSINESS AND CORPORATE CULTURES

To research the organisation the anthropologist must be thorough with the methods and techniques of conducting fieldwork in the organisation and should be able to provide a solution or produce results. In the coming section, we would see how anthropology/ anthropologists contribute to business anthropology.

5.3.1 What/ Why/How do Anthropologists Study?

To understand **human experience** in business and corporate organisations, anthropologists apply their ethnographic methods and techniques to get valuable insights into the organisation's cultural and social worlds. For anthropologists who study work and organisations, doing good research still largely depends on doing good conventional ethnography (Gluesing 2013: 23). It requires spending time with people in their work settings, observing them as they do their work, and talking with them about what their work means to them.

Ethnography is the trademark methodology of anthropology and enables the researcher to learn about communities or institution's social and cultural life. Among anthropologists, the primary ethnographic method is Observation which allows 'the researcher to take part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture' (Dewalt and Dewalt 2002: 1). For instance, an anthropologist while observing the workspace in an office might focus on the amenities that the organisation provides to its employees, such as an eating area, a separate smoking area, play area (like most corporate offices have play zones and Gyms in their office buildings for their employees). This would reflect on the **workspace experience of the employees**. The anthropologists can help to improve the quality of the experience of the employees. Another example can be the observation of the parking space, which may indicate the organisation's hierarchy. Reserved parking spaces for executives and various levels of managers can give important clues about the hierarchical nature of the organisation.

Another famous example is from the study of Lucy Suchman, who researched in 1979. She was interested in relations between technology and work. Based on her observations, she could decipher the employee's difficulties while using a Xerox copy machine. The complex devices with many features were complicated for people to figure out, and as a result, people faced problems using the xerox machine. Now, all xerox copy machines have a single green copy button, and a simple copy of the document is generated with ease (Jordan 2015: 3).

Another example is from the work of Bonnie Nardi. She worked at Hewlett-Packard, Apple and AT&T. She was employed by high-tech companies to examine consumer behaviour. Her interest in Human-Computer interaction led

her to develop a better spreadsheet at Hewlett-Packard. Nardi observed how spreadsheets were filled and contrary to the methods that engineers had imagined, one person does not fill out the entire sheet. Instead, it was passed around and different workers fill in different portions. This led to the development of a more useful and efficient spreadsheet design (Weise 1999).

From the above examples, it is well understood that observation is invaluable in understanding the work processes but should be appended by interviews to learn about the employees, their work, and their concerns. Initially, it is not easy for the anthropologist to make the individuals/employees talk about the work processes, work culture, and expectations. The interviews can be highly structured where the same set of questions are asked to everyone, or it can be informal interviews where there are about 5-6 topic areas and the informants are encouraged to talk at length about them. The main areas could be career history, company history, employee work, teamwork, etc. The interview techniques allow the researcher to gather descriptive data about the work culture, organisational structure, employee involvement, perception, and satisfaction at the workplace.

Another study on **consumer behaviour** was by Susan Squires (2002). She studied the manufacture of personal care products. The manufacturing company made hand lotions and tissues and wanted to know if people would use its personal care products at the office, the way they use them at their homes. Through observation and interviews, Squires learned that people did not want to use these products at the office in front of others, even though they wanted to use them during the workday. People used personal care products which were available in designer containers. So, Squires recommended the company not to remake its products, instead repackaging the old product to use them in formal settings like an office.

Advertisers and marketing managers can use anthropological methods to get insights into consumer needs and expectations and thus gain a greater understanding and learn about the best ways to market their products. This is more important in a fast-changing technology-driven globalised market where many brands compete and consumers have a greater variety to choose from. For instance, while purchasing a cell phone, you make a checklist of various features that a cell phone brand provides and as per your requirement, you choose from the multiple options available in the market. For increasing sales in the market, the company has to keep pace with changing demands of the consumers and at the same time not compromise on the quality of the product (as multiple companies are providing good quality products). For this, the advertisers and marketers must understand the consumer's expectations and learn to market their product uniquely so that the consumers constantly and consistently recognise the product.

Grant David Mc Cracken, a Canadian anthropologist, is well known for his works on commerce and culture. He has been a consultant for many corporations, including Netflix, Google Amazon, IBM, IKEA, and Ford Foundation. He suggests that from the viewpoint of an anthropologist, consumption is the process at work. He studied how people use consumer goods to construct their concepts of self and the world. He explains the importance of consumer goods by analysing hairstyles that hair products allow us to create. For his fieldwork,

he spent hours in beauty salons, and through observation and interviews of hairdressers and their clients, he concluded how women used hair colour and style to create an image of the self.

Another anthropologist Daniel Miller (1998), has worked on consumer behaviour issues like consumer resistance. He gave an example from the consumer response to the New Coke introduced by Coca-Cola and it was seen that people resisted buying it. People chose the new formula 55% of the time and the original one 45% of the time, resulting in a decline in the company's sales. The consumers did not like the new coke's taste and were emotionally connected to the original product. Thus, the company reinstituted the traditional formula with the label 'classic,' and got a positive consumer response. This example explains the importance of cultural analysis of emotion in consumer research. The consumer's emotional connection with the old coke product led the company to reintroduce the old formula.

Business anthropologists contributing to **consumer research** focus on the social life and the modes of consumption give insights into the consumer mind. The consumption pattern talks about consumer practices (acceptance and resistance for the product), consumer experience, and consumption's contextual nature.

Another vital area where anthropologists contribute is **design research**. Anthropologists get close to their subject of study, i.e., the potential user of a product, to get a precise idea of what the end-users want. Here the anthropologist is studying user behaviour by observing the action as it is taking place. Lucy Suchman (1987) calls this 'situated action'. In **product design and development**, an anthropologist may create new products, services, or policies and use ethnographic techniques that consider the human factor (human cognitive abilities) to get insights into making a product easy for human use. For example, Christina Wasson (2000) describes a work done for a company named Steelcase that manufactured office furniture and office partitions. Office space is divided into cubicles (individual space) and meeting rooms (for group activities and discussions). Research showed that workers were using the space in ways the designers had never assumed. Workers met and discussed work in areas such as hallways not designed for group work. Consequently, Steelcase manufactured products like whiteboards used for writing with markers and chairs, which could be placed in communal spaces where workers generally met (like hallways).

Alice Peinado, Magdalena Jarvin, and Juliette Damoiseil (2011) worked on a project with designers and executives from three banks and two insurance companies to develop a new methodology for designing bank and insurance products for customers in France. The banks and insurance companies were confounded by what appeared to be irrational choices by their customers. These anthropologists used qualitative methods to study the client's socioeconomic status, perception of money, and relationship to banks and insurance companies. The research revealed that the customers brought up trust and lack of face-to-face interaction as the reason. They wanted a banker who knew them well and could advise them based on their specific situation. Consequently, designers designed an interactive-based interface that allowed clients to personalise their bank and insurance information and dialogue directly with their banks and insurances. So, in this case, no new products were created for the customers

instead the delivery method of the product had to be redesigned to suit the customer's needs.

Anthropologists' ability to get closer to the consumer and study the contextual issues surrounding product use has allowed anthropologists to contribute to design research.

Check Your Progress

6. Discuss the contemporary relevance of business anthropology as a sub-discipline in the globalised world.

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7. How have anthropological inputs benefited consumer Research and Design research?

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5.4 SUMMARY

Here in this Unit, we examined the history and growth of the field of business anthropology. We have read about the anthropological work in consumer behaviour, marketing, product design, and work process in an organisation. Anthropological theory and the techniques provide ways of seeing business organisations as different from those used in other disciplines. Anthropologists focus on holism and answer a specific question/problem by viewing it in a larger context by unpacking the complex, interrelated issues. For example, suppose the unit of analysis is a product that is to be distributed worldwide. In that case, we look at the product's response in the local market and then re-contextualise it in the new social, economic, and political arena in which it is to be applied. Businesses, corporations, and industries have provided an apt venue to study human interaction, intercultural communication, human-machine interface, and the study of consumer-product/service relationships. And with continued globalisation, where the world seems smaller, Business anthropology as a branch of Practice anthropology would continue to grow and understand human issues.

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5.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Refer to section 5.0
2. Refer to section 5.0
3. Refer to section 5.1
4. Refer to section 5.2
5. Refer to section 5.2.1
6. Refer to section 5.3.1
7. Refer to section 5.3.1

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UNIT 6 ANTHROPOLOGY IN ADVOCACY AND POLICY RESEARCH*

Contents

- 6.0 Introduction
- 6.1 Anthropology and Advocacy
- 6.2 Advocacy, Anthropology and Need for Caution
- 6.3 Anthropology and Policy Research
- 6.4 Summary
- 6.5 References
- 6.6 Answers to Check Your Progress

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this unit we will be able to:

- explore the continuum between advocacy and policy;
- understand the relationship between anthropology and advocacy;
- explore the possible dilemmas faced by anthropologists with reference to advocacy; and
- learn about the relationship of anthropology with policy and policy research.

6.0 INTRODUCTION

Administration or power centres of society, and ‘people’ in general or grass root embeddedness are both integral to, and can be considered as two ends of the spectrum of anthropological engagement. A spectrum to which the anthropologist remains obliged for their consent and participation in research. Anthropologists often engage with the administration for various reasons which might include sponsorship, personal safety and security, permission, introduction and access into their research space and so on. Simultaneously, an anthropological research requires that the community/people being studied are accepting and inclusive of the researcher. The nature of the discipline is such that more often than not it engages with the under-represented and the marginalised within the society/community, or at least attempts to embrace a magnitude of dimension and voices from the community, owing to its holistic perspective. At both these ends of the spectrum (i.e. the administration and the community) and the continuum within, remains the key question of the anthropologist’s responsibility and the research outcome. It brings to the forefront thought provoking queries:

- Whether the anthropologist is able to incorporate the voices of the people they study?

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- Voices of the people are not homogenous. How does an anthropologist find a balance in this representation while bringing forth a realistic representation; and not allow the local forces to take over the narrative and his/her own voice?
- The community being studied is not represented in a negative or pejorative light. While contentious in itself, this is essentially significant because anthropological research is expressed as an ethnographic present, which can become stereotypical over time and the community is unable to break away from the image and identity created through anthropological readings.
- Who do the anthropologists address or take their reflections or outcomes to i.e. other academicians, people of the community, implementation agencies, administration and policy makers, and the subsequent results of these researches, and so on.

In lending research insights to the administration, lies the possibility of reflective policies that would provide constructive direction to the people/community; however, it brings with it the fear of manipulation in the hands of power. The other end of the spectrum is ground level reality which finds representation in anthropological works at differential capacities from what can be recognised as passive/ removed / academic advocacy in the form of cultural documentation and ethnographic presentations to more apparent/ political/ activist advocacy; which aspire to influence policy decisions. In this unit let us explore the continuum between anthropological research, advocacy and policy implications as well as the critiques and challenges associated with them.

Reflection

The etymology of “advocacy” is in the Latin word ‘advocare’ which means ‘to call out for support’. Merriam-Webster defines advocacy as-the act or process of supporting a cause or proposal.

Merriam-Webster defines policy as- a definite course or method of action selected from among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decision

6.1 ANTHROPOLOGY AND ADVOCACY

“Anthropology is, so to speak, born of the cultural encounter, and anthropological practice always involves some kind of representation of ‘others’ (Hastrup and Elsass 1990: 307). This thought is echoed by other scholars where Layton (1996:40) opines that “advocacy derives naturally from the practice of anthropology... it is an integral part of the process of representing other people’s views and (Kellett 2009: 24) says that “all anthropologists are in some ways acting as advocates through documenting and communicating their informants’ perspectives to others”. Thus, it can be epistemologically argued that all anthropological work has a reflection of advocacy; however, Hastrup and Elsass (1990) point out an inherent dilemma in anthropological advocacy, highlighting that “Anthropology is concerned with context rather than interest, while advocacy means making a choice among interests within the context” (Hastrup and Elsass 1990: 307). An implication of this dilemma can be simply understood by looking at quotes from above. While Hastrup and Elsass, and Layton identify the community/people (subjects of the research) being the anthropological

‘other’; Kellett speaks of “communicating informants’ perspective to the others”, wherein the researcher becomes one with the ‘anthropological other’ and speaks out to various possible categories of ‘social others’. This brings into focus the plausible positions where the researchers situate their identity. Thus, while there is acceptance among these scholars with reference to the ‘context’ that all anthropological writings have a voice of advocacy in the representation of a community, their ‘interest’ with reference to how they position themselves as anthropologists reflects their stance with reference to advocacy. Okongwu and Mencher point out that (2002: 109) “there has long been a theoretical and individual divide between anthropologists focusing on pure research and those focusing on the problems faced by humans”. In this Hastrup and Elsass (who actually write a critique for advocacy anthropology saying that “advocating a particular cause can never be anthropological”; the dilemmas they faced point out that “anthropology may provide an important background for engaging in advocacy, which in some cases may present itself as a moral imperative” (Hastrup and Elsass 1990: 301).

Other than the fact that anthropological works take a flavour of advocacy due to their ethnographic character, the same can be said about its theoretical space which speaks loudly in terms of social inclusions and exclusions, marginalisation, discrimination, exploitation, violence and abuse, peace and security, rights and justice, ethics and morality with reference to race, age, gender, religion, geographical regions, vulnerable and subaltern groups and so on, in its academic writings. Further, advocacy has found a place in the discipline, from early on, through its own critique, where Franz Boas advocated against the classical evolutionist ideas of categorising communities based on western ethnocentrism and countered it with the concept of cultural relativism emphasising that all cultures are unique and equally significant, and need to be understood in their own context. Similarly, role of anthropologists in military and counter-insurgency during the Second World War and the Cold War, lead to the creation of ethical guidelines within the American Anthropological Association.

Reflection

Boas was involved with the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and championed the rights of immigrants and African Americans. He spoke out against a number of social issues including the First World War and the resulting xenophobia and jingoism, the rise of Nazism in Europe, racial discrimination, the intimidation of teachers in colleges and high schools, the poll tax and so on.

Anthropologists have tended to write mainly for other anthropologists, not for those who have the power to change the world (Okongwu and Mencher 2002: 109). There has been continued debate within the discipline in terms of pure anthropology and its applied aspects, which is visualised as non-theoretical and practical/practice oriented in nature. Several authors have suggested that there is an implicit hierarchy within anthropology which privileges academic, theoretical anthropology and regards any applied activity as inferior and second best (Stewart and Strathern 2005). While there is an obvious continuity between theory and its presumed/expected practical outcome, the historical biases within the discipline influences anthropologists to tread carefully in terms of the advocacy position that they choose with reference to applied anthropology.

British anthropology, “explicitly linked applied anthropology with studies of social change” (Mair 1969: 3), “especially social change that was externally induced and involved cooperation of the anthropologist with the local government” (Grillo and Rew 1985: 6). Thus, applied anthropology in some sense brings with it the role of anthropologist as an agent of social change. The historical perspective to this type of social change carried a colonial burden where the proposed change had a top-down western centric point of view. This brings to question the fact that if anthropologists are to take the position as active agents of social change then (other than the key issue of concern) who the anthropologists should write (speaking out) for i.e. ‘in favour of’.

Hastrup and Elsass (1990: 302) point out that “from the post-modern perspective, theory and application, subject and object merge, we are forced to consider the practical implications. These are more complicated when the people we study are articulate about their own opinions and rightfully expect something in return for their information”. One such example is that of anthropologist Nancy Scheper-Hughes and her experiences and research in Brazil. She reflects that (during her first two fieldworks, which were 20 years apart) as her role changed from a Peace Corps Volunteer who worked as a ‘politically committed community organiser’ to that of an anthropologist, there was a complacency towards political activism given the disciplinary outlook of an ‘objective’ engagement. However, during her research on infant mortality and chronic hunger in a poor favela (a shanty town), she was questioned by the women of the favela on why she had lost interest in their well-being and was implored by her research participants to partake in community action. Scheper-Hughes writes that she was told that “the next time I came back it would be on their terms, i.e., as a *companheira*, ‘accompanying’ them as I had before in the struggle and not just sitting idly by taking field notes. ‘What is this anthropology to us any way?’” (1995: 411). In her subsequent visits Scheper-Hughes tried to shuttle between her role as an anthropologist and a political activist. This lead her into a larger world of politics than her ethno-specific locus of research, she writes that “the more my *companheiras* gently but firmly pulled me away from the ‘private’ world of the wretched huts of the shantytown, where I felt most comfortable, and toward the ‘public’ world of the municipio of Bam Jesus da Mata, into the marketplace, the mayor’s office and the judge’s chambers, the police station and the public morgue, the mills and the rural union meetings the more my understandings of the community were enriched and my theoretical horizons were expanded.” (1995: 410). With this Scheper-Hughes opines that “the work of anthropology demands an explicit ethical orientation to ‘the other’” (1995: 418), suggesting that “politically engaged advocacy is not only morally correct, but theoretically valid and practically advantageous” (Kellett 2009: 26).

Further, Van Esterik (1985) points out that “there is a continuum of anthropological interest from the countering of Western, colonial ethnocentrism by providing systematic knowledge about other cultures to the active pleading of the cause of a particular ethnic group vis-à-vis a government (Hastrup and Elsass 1990: 302). Active advocacy which is often a consequence of work among deprived populations necessitates their ‘representation’ to others, this brings into the forefront not only ‘who is the anthropologist speaking for’ but also ‘who he/she is speaking to’. “The conventions of representation may differ vastly in the two instances, neither of which can be deemed superior in

any absolute way” (Hastrup and Elsass 1990: 307), however it might make a vast difference in how the information is presented. Anthropologist might have to take on the role of an expert witness and specialist in such cases. One such example is that of anthropologists Jack Campisi and William Sturtevant testifying before Congress about American Indian land rights for the Mashpee Wampanoag.

In spite of the acceptance that anthropological works have, an aspect of advocacy there continues to be a tug of war between a purely academic focus and its applied practice. Harries-Jones (1986) points out that academic discourse provides a necessarily well-informed point of departure for presenting the reality and the hopes of indigenous peoples both to themselves and to their governments. Advocacy, however, has its own discourse, because it is directed towards specific goals. The legitimisation of these goals remains a point of contention within applied/active/practicing/ activist advocacy in anthropology and needs to be considered and cautioned for its critique.

Check Your Progress

1. Does Anthropology and advocacy go hand in hand?

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2. Mention some key opinions expressed by Scheper-Hughes with regard to advocacy anthropology.

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6.2 ADVOCACY, ANTHROPOLOGY AND NEED FOR CAUTION AND CONSIDERATION

Van Esterik (1985: 81) suggests that advocacy, as a mode of communication is likely to be “over-emotional, over-simplified, rhetorical, over-dramatic, exaggerated, and single-minded, without footnotes: in short the exact opposite of our academic writing”. While this might be partially true, active advocacy certainly poses a number of challenges. Let us consider some of these dilemmas through the example of Hastrup and Elsass (1990) work, who studied the Arhuacos, an isolated indigenous group of northern Colombia, aimed towards revitalising the traditional cultural patterns, with women being its main beneficiaries.

Hastrup and Elsass were requested by some Arhuacos to help promote a ‘development’ project to increase their autonomy within Colombian society.

The anthropologists found that the Arhuacos themselves were divided into two political groups, the first being that of the traditionalist who were conservative about how they were represented culturally, and less akin to social change and, a second group which was more open to social change and modern ideas of their cultural representation. The traditionalists were more visible and the modernists more articulate. In this they caution that “the point of doing anthropology is to achieve a level of understanding beyond speech and to identify the context within which even contradictory statements gain meaning. Therefore, anthropological “speaking for” must be a presentation of the entire context rather than the “texts” of a selected group” (1990:306). Thus, Hastrup and Elsass found that both the key social groups representing their culture had a strong presence and voice, however these voices were contradictory to each other, they cautioned that if the anthropologists were to side with any one of these social forces, listening to their text without contextualising it in larger frame of contradictory ideas, they would be unfair in their representation of people.

Hastrup and Elsass decided that they were not comfortable advocating for either of the political groups. Further, they also found that the groups were articulate and well capable of representing themselves and did not necessarily need an external advocate. They believed that people had the agency and/or needed to develop it and speak for themselves and write that “in what sense could we ‘speak for’ them without possibly inflicting romantic post-colonial views up on them to the exclusion of a thorough understanding of the complex Colombian context?” (1990: 304). Moreover, in this case the Arhuacos were claiming their land against non-Indian peasant occupiers, Hastrup and Elsass found that while some outsiders (non-Indians) were ‘unscrupulous’, most of the surrounding peasant populations was “as marginalised and dispossessed as the Indians and no less alienated from government” (1990: 304). They felt that they could not justify speaking for one marginalised group against the other.

Hastrup and Elsass also bring out the role that foreign aid played in this complex scenario where they say that “Apparently all the powerful elements of the Colombian scene- be they Indians, bureaucrats, politicians, or guerrilleros- had a vested interest in funds”. (1990: 303). With reference to the Bureau of Indian Affairs they write that “On the one hand, the Bureau was interested in our supporting the Arhuacos by means of foreign aid, especially if that would increase its own budget for projects in the area. On the other hand, it was aware that our work for the Arhuacos might eventually turn out to be subversive of it in a complex and volatile political situation.” (1990: 303). Thus, Hastrup and Elsass, who had a good relation with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, while “convinced of the basic soundness of the project” (1990: 303) they had been implored to advocate, decided to keep away, taking this position in reflection of the probable holistic impact of their possible intervention.

It is clear from the discussion above that ‘the people’ that anthropologists work with, are not a homogenous group, they are a group given to differential opinion, local politics, individualistic aspirations and more. It is often difficult to decide who to advocate for especially when more than one marginalised or vulnerable group are involved in a position of opposition.

While Hastrup and Elsass found that the people they worked with were educated, articulate and could have easily represented themselves, there are a number of

cases when a group is unable to represent themselves effectively. This might require the anthropologist to actively advocate for or join hands with other advocacy groups working with the people of their interest. However, it cannot be denied that both the anthropologists and other intermediary groups belong to their own ideologies, worldviews, larger socio-political influences and agenda etc. It has been cautioned that if anthropologists use their knowledge for a particular cause, they can be charged with furthering “the colonial processes still at work by stealing crucial decisions and political initiatives from indigenous peoples” (Henriksen 1985: 124-125). Scheper-Hughes says that anthropology demands an explicit ethical orientation towards one’s research participants, the anthropologist however, needs to evaluate whether he/she is getting drawn into advocacy due to their emotional involvement towards their respondents’ expectation. There is a need to evaluate the holistic context, which can be done only by disengaging to some extent and analysing who or what controls the narrative. This also remains true because the anthropologist might find themselves in a space of fractured loyalty with reference to myriad of social institutions, organisations, people, social groups and individuals they work with and receive support from.

While one recognises that there is need for caution and considered reflection in area of advocacy whether academic or activist in nature, one cannot deny the vulnerability of the anthropologists themselves in these positions of critique and political debates. The anthropological community which is continuously given to deliberation and discussions within does come together to create a conscious support group with reference to advocacy. One such example is that of the World Anthropological Union (WAU), which spoke out in support of the French-Iranian anthropologist Dr. Fariba Adelhah’s in March 2020, demanding her release from Iranian imprisonment as a clear statement that Iran is committed to ensuring that the rights of scholars and academics are fully respected in the republic. Advocacy is a regular activity of WAU and they make such representations regularly.

While advocacy remains one necessary side of making a social difference, it essentially looks towards reaching out to an audience. One key audience that advocacies as well as anthropologists look towards addressing are those in a position of making policy decisions. Peacock (1997) pointed out the “importance of anthropology moving to shape public policy, to assist in formulating the critical issues of our society and all societies on this planet, to propose solutions that meet the desires and needs of local people, and to create a synergy between theory and practice” (Okongwu and Mencher 2000:109). In the next section, let us look at the role of anthropology vis-à-vis policy and policy research.

6.3 ANTHROPOLOGY AND POLICY RESEARCH

“With its focus on ‘othering’ anthropology has been a discipline of colonial power” (Pellissery 2014: 5). Anthropologists in their understanding of local and indigenous communities were often counsellors to administrative authorities, since early disciplinary history. Bronislaw Malinowski advocated a role for anthropologists as policy advisers to African colonial administrators while Evans-Pritchard urged them instead to do precisely the opposite and distance themselves from the tainted worlds of policy, as he pointed out (similar to

the conundrum of advocacy), that by indulging in applied space of policy the researcher would no longer be acting within the field of anthropology but in the non-scientific field of administration (Escobar 1991). However, “with the end of colonialism, and the beginning of the era of ‘development’, in reconstructing previous colonies, anthropologists had to learn to work with the State” (Pellissery 2014: 5). One such example is that of India where English anthropologist, Verrier Elwin was appointed the ‘Adviser on Tribal Affairs’ in 1953, to advise government on North East Frontier Area. Even in present Indian context, since being listed as ‘scheduled’ communities provides eligibility for various constitutional provisions through affirmative action, claim-making for identity is a constant challenge resulting in either wrongful inclusion of claimants, or unfair exclusion of eligible claimants, the expertise of anthropologists is often commissioned by the state on recommendations for the same. The engagement of anthropologists into policy research in the administrative framework however, posits certain adaptabilities and challenges.

Cochrane (1980) points out that this often requires anthropologists to work in; a) short or restricted duration of time, instead of through time intensive fieldwork; b) the primary objective of a policy study is not research and publication for colleagues, but adoption of a report by policy makers; c) policy studies try to assess future events and need to be futuristically oriented; d) policy studies makes friends and enemies as the researcher is often required to take a position on particular issue; e) policy researcher has a lower position in the administrative power structure and the sponsoring agency might control (and is accountable) for what is published; f) policy studies require advocacy, wherein the researcher needs to emphasise the significance of his/her recommendations to the decision makers; g) policy studies need to be impact oriented and employ some form of measurements or quantifiability, for the sake of information assimilation of the policy makers, as well as accessibility of policy goals. Most policies today are evaluated through ‘social impact assessment’ which employs both anthropologists as well as anthropological methods among others.

Anthropologists have also been involved in policy research outside of the administrative system. “A wide-spread phenomenon that is observed in Indian context is how anthropologists have assisted displaced communities (through processes of land acquisition or communal violence) for relocation and resettlement. The evidence that anthropologists generated (about the identity of displaced population, vulnerability that could happen through displacement and limits of livelihood options elsewhere) clearly influenced policy makers in the rehabilitation process. Beyond the power of their research, their ability to speak on behalf of the affected communities both brought recognition and representational voice in policy circles” (Pellissery 2014: 11). This form of involvement clearly displays the continuum between advocacy and policy.

Analysing policy is another area of interest in policy research, one such work is that of Okongwu (1998), comparing the United States with Namibia, to describes how the extreme inequality in each society results from policy decisions that lead to the lack of access to meaningful employment and to a high percentage of female-headed households.

Further, today, in this globalised world of neo-liberal economy, international competitiveness and corporate profitability have been adopted by national and

regional entities as well as by trans-national corporations (Barnet et al. 1995). This has led to “important changes that have taken place within and among international and regional policymaking institutions, states, and multinational quasi-governmental institutions and multinational private corporations shape the contours of much of what is called economic and social policy” (Okongwu and Mencher 2000: 110). Bello et al. (1994) suggest that this is a complex social process in which certain often-unspoken ideologies mediate between interests and policy. Pellissery writes that “anthropological approaches to study institutions, particularly focusing the knowledge- power nexus, is extremely powerful to reveal why there is huge difference in policies announced and policies practiced” (Pellissery 2014: 6). In this, one looks towards Nader’s idea of ‘studying up’. There is need for anthropologists to study elites, bureaucracies, multinational agencies and cooperation, media empires, business clubs, etc. i.e. “study of the colonisers rather than the colonised, the culture of power rather than the culture of the powerless, the culture of affluence rather than the culture of poverty” (Nader 1972: 289) in order to reflect on policy from the lens of anthropology. This is not to take away from classical ethnographic fieldwork, while studying public policy, but rather applying a multi sited approach to understanding what George Marcus refers to as a ‘logic of association’, the ethnographer’s task is then to find what connects to what, and to construct subjects in changing contexts as they act and are acted upon. A conceptual framework is needed in which the distinctions of global and local are blurred, and where the local is seen to be riddled with the global and the latter is seen as the product of multiple locales. In taking such a stance, the ethnography becomes ethnography of the system, too (Marcus 1995).

In the realm of policy, Anthropologists are now interacting with other disciplines to improve formulations of policies, design of the programmes and implementation of the same. In this context the contribution of Thomas Issac (economist) and Richard Franke (anthropologist), of decentralised planning programme of Kerala (India), to the design principles of institutional reform is significant. As many of the institutional reform projects were foiled by the vested interests, Issac and Franke (2002) suggested an alternative paradigm of ‘devolving the resources first, and then building the institutions’ (Pellissery 2014). Thus, in today’s context multidisciplinary collaborative works, use of mix method (including anthropological methods) and a multi-sited approach are finding increasing significance in policy research.

Check Your Progress

3. Mention any one caution that needs to be reflected upon in advocacy anthropology.

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4. In today's context, mention two ways in which anthropology can effectively engage in policy research.

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6.4 SUMMARY

Advocacy and policy reflections/implications with respect to anthropological research have been a key element within the discipline. They have often been debated about in terms of whether they qualify as anthropological in the pure academic sense; however, both anthropological works and anthropological stance has often reflected that more often than not there is an advocacy and policy reflection within anthropology in both the academic and the applied sense.

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6.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Refer to section 6.1
2. Refer to section 6.1
3. Refer to section 6.3
4. Refer to section 6.3

UNIT 7 CONSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE AND HUMAN RIGHTS*

Contents

- 7.0 Introduction
- 7.1 Constitutional Provisions for scheduled tribes, scheduled caste, and other backward classes
- 7.2 Evaluation, Planning and Development of Indian Populations
- 7.3 Interrelationships of Rights and Duties: Harmony and Conflict, Definitions and Types of Human Rights
- 7.4 Protection and Enforcement of Human Rights and Duties, Role of National and State Human Rights Commission and other Grievance Redressal Mechanism
- 7.5 Human Rights of Special Category and Marginal Groups, Emerging Trends of Human Rights Regarding Terrorism, Environment, and Globalisation
- 7.6 Summary
- 7.7 References
- 7.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, learners will be able to:

- appreciate human rights as a prerequisite condition to promote an inclusive society; and
- understand and explain the process of enforcement of human rights.

7.0 INTRODUCTION

The involvement of anthropologists to promote human rights has evolved with the active participation of civil society organisations with the state. In the anthropological debate of human rights, the concept indexes many domains of anthropological interests, such as political conflicts and violence, tribal development, nationalism, etc. Since the 1980s, anthropology has met its commitment towards the marginalised by “speaking truth to power” (Keppley-Mahmood 2002, 2003; Starn 1991) and as a form of humanitarian ethics (Pels 2002). Thus, anthropology’s engagement with human rights is dedicated to giving voice to victims and to providing expert assistance to bureaucratic and activist projects (Jean-Klein and Riles 2005). One of the best-known early advocates of the use of anthropology to promote human rights during colonial rule was Radcliffe-Brown. His School of African Studies at the University of Cape Town was developed to reduce conflict between the

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white and black populations. Similarly, Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict, whose ethnographies of Japanese-Americans during the Second World War were used to a great effect by the United States government in their efforts against Japan. An article, '*Some Emerging Areas of Research in Anthropology in India*' by Buddhadeb Chaudhury raises critical questions- 'can we really understand the scope and dimensions of human rights without considering the concerned society and culture? Can human rights be society, culture, and economy neutral?' These questions bring out the issue of holistic understanding of human rights where anthropology with its holistic approach can contribute significantly in understanding the causes and factors of human rights violations and strengthening the forces of the struggle for promoting and protecting human rights (Chaudhury 2015). According to Anthony Giddens, 'the issue today isn't more government or less, but recognising that governance must adjust to the new circumstances of the global age and that authority, including state legitimacy, has to be renewed on an active basis (1998). According to the American Anthropological Association, "today's anthropologists do not just work in exotic locations. Anthropologists can be found in corporations, all levels of government, educational institutions and non-profit associations (civil society organisations)".

In India, the role of anthropological knowledge and its relevance for State planning and administration dates back to 1807. Evidence suggests that anthropology was one of the subjects taught at the Haileybury College where the British civil servants going out to serve in India under the East India Company were trained. Time and again, anthropologists with their social, physical, and archeological knowledge of human society are considered as policy and practice alternatives to promote inclusive growth and good governance by reducing the gap between the State and the society. This paradigm of governance in the 1980s was the rediscovery and reinvention of civil society, especially to mediate between the 'power-hungry state and profit-driven market' (Chandhok 2009). Thus, in a democracy, the welfare state has two objectives:

1. to create an equitable society, and
2. to protect individuals across the life cycle.

Reflection

What are Human Rights?

According to Joel Feinberg, human right is "to have a right of something or against someone, the recognition of which is called for by legal rules or in case of moral rights, by the principles conscience". Wesley Hohfeld's classic book, *Fundamental Legal Conceptions* (1964) categorises four types of rights i.e., claim, liberty, power, and immunity. The principle idea behind a right is that A has a right over Y (Y=Free Speech); then B (B=Government) has a duty to ensure that A can obtain Y. It means that the State or the society recognises its duty and there is a corresponding right. Therefore, there are legal rights and moral rights. Legal rights exist by virtue of legislative enactment or common law while moral rights in a community are recognised and reinforced by norms and values in the society. Right to live with dignity is a legal right while respect to elders can be classified as a moral right.

A human right by definition is a universal moral right, "something which all men and women, everywhere, at all times ought to have, something of which no one may be deprived without a grave affront to justice, something which is owing to every human being simply because he is human" (Cranston 1973: 36). It is said that human rights

must satisfy at least four requirements: (1) It must be possessed by all human beings, as well as only by human beings; (2) because it is the same right that all human beings possess, it must be possessed equally; (3) because human rights are possessed by all human beings, we can rule out as possible candidates any of those rights which one might have by virtue of occupying any particular status or relationship, such as that of parents or president; (4) and, if there are any human rights, they have the additional characteristics of being assertable, in a manner of speaking or free speech.

Source: Renteln, A.D. (1988). The concept of human rights. *Anthropos*. 83(4.6), pp. 343-364

The presence of civil society leads to socio-economic, political, and cultural development and day-by-day its relevance. Civil society adheres to democratic principles and traditions and is characterised as a self-generating mechanism of social solidarity (Giddens 1999).

Since its emergence, anthropologists and anthropology, especially social anthropology is concerned with the analysis of value and meaning as experienced by the community. In 1947 and 1949, the American Anthropological Association and Society for Applied Anthropology respectively, promulgated statements on Human Rights. There are broadly two approaches adopted by anthropologists on Human Rights- 'outward' and 'inward'. The outward approach is concerned with the ways other cultures deal with human rights. It emphasises a search for principles and concepts useful to understanding human rights. The inward approach examines the anthropological ethos, seeking research findings and understandings that might be used to clarify or form human rights principles (Downing and Kushner 1988: pp. 5).

In 1947, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) invited a number of thinkers from UNESCO member states to draft statements on human rights to aid in the formulation of a Universal Declaration on Human Rights. In response to the invitation, the Executive Board of the American Anthropological Association submitted its now infamous Statement. That Statement, primarily authored by a well-known Boasian, Melville Herskovits is seen as a prototypical statement of American cultural relativism. Although the Statement has been the topic of much discussion in anthropology, it is rarely given a detailed reading. While the Statement calls for tolerance of difference, or cultural relativism, it is more nuanced than that description suggests. It also argues for biological sameness. That is, while cultures might be different (but are also similar) in many ways, and individuals develop their identities within their cultures, human beings are biologically the same. The argument for sameness is important for supporting the call for tolerance. Written in a time when colonialism was still commonplace and largely justified by a belief that colonised people were biologically inferior, the Statement was antiracist and anti-colonialist. Finally, the Statement acknowledged at some level that there might be conflicts within cultures, and that the dominant position within a given group should not necessarily define the group's culture. Indeed, one of the striking aspects of pro-rights anthropology is that it asserts a human right to culture (Engle 2001). Every human being as an individual is said to have rights recognised or sanctioned by society's customs or laws. Often its infringements are prevented by the society's customs or State laws. Typically society customs are enforced within the group with a common morality and while law of the land is universal and is applied irrespective of customs. The reason being we cannot expect that the sanctioning of what could be considered as the same right

will take the same form in different societies or the same society at different times. Thus customs and rights evolved with time and space.

Anthropologists both inside and outside of anthropology, have been largely involved in human rights formulation for five main reasons (1) anthropologists' insistence that human rights concepts are culturally relative, in opposition to universal formulations; (2) anthropologists' advocacy of collective and indigenous rights over and against the universal formulations framed in terms of the individual's rights; (3) anthropologists' commitment to applied anthropology and political economic action over human rights approaches to overcoming oppression and inequality; (4) the political sensitivities of doing fieldwork; and (5) anthropologists' involvement with small-scale socio-cultural analysis and comparative moral systems based on duties, gift-giving (Messer 1993).

The next section would deal with the descriptions, definitions, and constitutional safeguards vested on the different communities as per the Indian Constitution.

Constitutional Definition:

Article 341 and 342 of the Constitution of India define Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes concerning their residence in the State or Union Territory.

Article 341 (1) The President after consultation with the Governor of the State thereof, by public notification specifies a group to be Scheduled Caste.

Article 341 (2) The Parliament may by law include in or exclude a community from the list of Scheduled Castes.

Article 342 (1) The President after consultation with the Governor of the State thereof, by public notification specifies groups within tribes or tribal communities to be Scheduled Tribes.

Article 342 (2) The Parliament may by law include in or exclude from the list of Scheduled Tribes specified in a notification.

As per the Constitution Order (Scheduled Case), 1950 no person professing other than Hindu and Sikh can be deemed to be a member of Scheduled Caste. While for being notified as Scheduled Tribe there is no religious bar.

Other Backward Caste (OBCs)

The 127th Amendment Bill (OBC Bill) 2021 of the Constitution was unanimously passed by both the houses, the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha to undo a Supreme Court ruling that only the central Government can prepare the OBC list. The constitutional provision seeks to restore the State's power to make its OBC list. In 1993, National Backward Classes Commission was set up by the Government of India. Till 1985, the affairs of Backward Classes were looked after by the Backward Classes Cell (BCC) in the Ministry of Home Affairs. In 1985 a separate Ministry of Welfare was created and later in 1998, the Ministry was renamed as Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to address matters relating to SCs, STs, OBCs, and Minorities. The Backward Classes Division is responsible for planning, policies, and implementation. Simultaneously it looks

after two institutions, The National Backward Classes Finance and Development Cooperation (NBCFDC) and the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC).

Article 340 - Appointment of a Commission to investigate the conditions of backward classes. The President of India may appoint a Commission consisting of such persons as she/he thinks fit to investigate the conditions of socially and educationally backward classes within the territory of India.

Constitutional Safeguards

The Constitution of India provides two broad types of safeguards (1) people right to 'equality before the law' and 'equal protection of the laws'; and (2) prohibition of discrimination against a citizen on the ground of religion, caste, class, sex or place of birth. The first safeguards ensure provisions of justice for the social, economic, and political equality of all. And the second safeguard of the constitution protects specifically the interest of marginalised or backward communities. Overall these safeguards are broadly classified as:

1. Social Safeguards
2. Economic Safeguards
3. Educational and Cultural Safeguards
4. Political Safeguards

1. Social Safeguards: Article 17, 23, 24, and 25 (2, b) of the Constitution provision the States to provide social safeguards.

Article 17: The Article is on abolition of untouchability being practiced in the society. Though the constitution does not define "untouchability", however, traditionally, the manifestation of the caste system is based on the notion of purity and pollution which determines social exchange and social contact. This article provides protection from discriminatory practices based on "untouchable caste identity". In 1955, the Parliament enacted the Protection of Civil Rights Act and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Prevention of Atrocities Act in 1989.

Article 23: The Parliament enacted the abolition of Bonded Labor System Act in 1976 for the identification, liberation, and rehabilitation of bonded laborers. Article 23 prohibits traffic in human beings, beggars, and any form of forced labor. Though this applies to all sections of society, often due to social and economic backwardness SCs and STs were the most vulnerable. Bonded labor is a form of forced labor in which the compulsion of family members into servitude is derived from long-standing debt.

Article 24: The article prohibits any child below 14 years to be employed to work in any factory or mines or engaged in any other hazardous employment. In 1986, based on the recommendations of the Gurupadaswamy Committee, the Child Labor Prohibition & Regulation Act was enacted. However, studies across the globe reveal that due to economic compulsion it is still prevalent. In India, according to the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) survey

conducted in 2004-05, 90.75 lakh children are estimated to be working as child labors. The 2011 census, suggests a rapid decline in the number of children working in the age group of 5-14 years to 43.53 lakh.

Article 25 (2, b): This article provides for all Hindu religious institutions to be open for all sections of society. The term Hindu includes Sikhs, Jains, and Buddhists. The right to enter the temple was limited to high-caste. In one of the letters dated February 5th, 1933, Gandhi ji wrote after one month of a national temple entry campaign, he asked about the number of temples opened and the general method in which they were to be opened for backward castes. The same year, in 1933, the Indian National Congress introduced a Temple Entry Bill in the Madras Legislative Assembly and Central Legislative Assembly to open temples across India for the backward caste. However, till recent times the movement continues as backward castes demand their Constitutional rights to worship, as society and temple administration continue to prohibit them from entering the temple.

2. Economic Safeguards: To address the economic interest of the weaker sections of the society, apart from Article 23 and 24, Article 46 of the Constitution enjoins States to protect SCs, and STs from social injustice, and all forms of exploitation.

3. Education and Cultural Safeguards: The low education level among SCs and STs, including OBCs is embedded in social hierarchy and marginalisation.

Article 15 (4) enjoins the States to create special arrangements for promoting the interests and welfare of socially and educationally backward classes of the society. To provide universal education, in 2009 Government of India enacted The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act or Right to Education Act (RTE). The RTE provides free and compulsory education for all children between 6 years to 14 years under Article 21(a) of the Constitution. The Act came into force in April 2010, by doing so India became one among the 135 countries in the world to make education a fundamental right of every child. RTE requires all private schools to reserve 25 percent seats for children from economically backward weaker sections of society.

4. Political Safeguards: Political safeguards are rights or protection provided by the government to the people they govern. The function of the State is to protect individual political and civil rights.

Article 243D: The Constitution of India under this article provides for reservations for the SCs and STs in every Panchayat in the rural areas (Decentralized Government System). The reservation of seats is proportionate to the percentage of the population of SCs and STs in the area. No less than one-third of the seats are reserved for women belonging to the SCs and STs Community.

Article 243T: The Constitution of India under this article provides reservations for the SCs and STs in every Municipality. No less than one-third of the seats are reserved for the women belonging to the SCs and STs Community. Similarly, Article 332 provides reservation in the Legislative Assembly of the States.

The Constitution of India adopted reservation as one of the important remedies to address the evil effects of prior inequalities from historical discrimination. The objective is to eliminate limitations on access to equal opportunities in the matter of civil and political rights, employment and education, for the promotion of an equitable and just society.

The welfare State inclusive development as a policy was questioned from the 1980s and onward giving rise to civil society and NGOs to take more responsibility for social development. Despite the constitutional provisions, the rise in inequality was realised as a relative failure of the government and created feelings of exclusion amongst large segments of the population, specially among the backward class and castes. These in turn created sentiments of apathy and also facilitated civil society right based mobilisation based on ethnic/social identities such as ethnicity, religion, caste and gender. This has led to demands and collective actions which involves political parties as well as other parts of Indian civil society (Berglund 2009). It was round this moment that the civil society argument was propelled onto the center stage of political imagination, strategies and energies (Chandhoke 2009).

Check Your Progress

1. How is a community notified as Scheduled Tribe or Scheduled Caste?

2. Can Parliament exclude a community from STs or SCs?

3. Can a group/community other than Hindu or Sikh be notified as SC?

4. Did anthropologists play any role in promoting human rights issues?

7.1 CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS FOR SCHEDULED TRIBES, SCHEDULED CAST, AND OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES

The Constitution of India contains various rights and entitlements for inclusive development. By providing constitutional rights to the underprivileged and marginalised groups, for instance, Article 341 for SCs, Article 342 for STs, Article 340 for OBCs, Article 30 that provides the right to minorities to establish and administer educational institutions, etc. The Constitution of India guarantees protection from social injustice and all forms of exploitation (Article 46). It guarantees equality before the law (Art. 14) and enjoins upon the State not to discriminate against any citizen on grounds of caste (Art. 15(1)). Untouchability was abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden (Art. 17). The Constitution mandates that no citizen shall, on grounds only of caste or race, be subjected to any disability and restriction (Art. 15(2)). It empowers the State to make provisions for reservation in educational institutions (Art. 15(4) and (5)) and in appointments for posts in favor of SCs (Art. 16(4), 16(4A), 16(4B) and Art. 335).

Reservation of seats for SCs in the Lok Sabha is provided under Article 330, in the State Assemblies under Article 332, and in the Local Self-Government bodies under Articles 243D and 340T. In addition to the above, the Parliament has enacted the Untouchability (Offences)

Act, 1955, renamed as Protection of Civil Rights Act, in 1976. To check and deter atrocities against the Scheduled Castes, and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 has also been enacted.

The inherent message behind constitutional rights lies in the message by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the architect of the Indian Constitution.

“An ideal society should be mobile, should be full of channels for conveying a change taking place in one part to other parts. In an ideal society, there should be many interests consciously communicated and shared. There should be varied and free points of contact with other modes of association. In other words, there should be social endosmosis. This is a fraternity, which is only another name for democracy. Democracy is not merely a form of Government. It is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. It is essentially an attitude of respect and reverence towards fellowmen”. – Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in ‘Annihilation of Caste’.

According to him, society must be based on reason and not on atrocious traditions of the caste system.

The notion of tribe and caste has changed with time, from an ethnic-cultural distinctive identity, a political unit, or from the State (Government) perspective it indicates a group of people who are poor and marginalised. Thus, there was a need for government to adopt dedicated constitutional measures to promote inclusive development. To address social, economic, and educational inequality, the constitutional provision categorises a community or a place as a “Schedule” under the Articles of the Constitution. The special constitutional provision for

protection and development of The Scheduled Tribes (STs) and The Scheduled Castes (SCs) and 'Special Provisions Relating to Certain Classes' has been incorporated in part XVI of the Constitution. For specific areas or regions, special provisions have also been made for the Scheduled and Tribal areas in Part X of the Constitution. Apart from these, Articles in Parts III, IV, IX, IXA, and in the Fifth and Sixth Schedule of the Constitution reinforce the concerns of STs, SCs, and OBCs.

7.2 EVALUATION, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF INDIAN POPULATIONS

According to a NITI Aayog study on evaluation of centrally sponsored schemes in social inclusion, law and order, and justice delivery, 'the current Government of India (GoI) spends approximately ten lakh crore rupees annually on development through 750 schemes. Out of these 750 schemes, 128 are centrally sponsored schemes jointly funded by Central Government and the respective State governments. The evaluation, planning, and development of the Indian population were conducted till the 12th Five Year Plan. Now all these schemes are annually monitored and evaluations for development planning of the Indian population are conducted by the NITI Aayog along with the government departments.

In 1950, the Government of India established the Planning Commission as India's nodal planning body. NITI Aayog replaced Planning Commission in 2015 for providing technical support evaluation and monitoring and providing policy directions to the government of India. Before NITI Aayog, the Planning Commission through Five Year Plans provided government technical support for the development and planning of the Indian population and region. Five Year Plans continued up to the 12th Five Year Plan (2012 to 2017). The focus of the 1st and 2nd Five Year Plans was on economic development in the areas of agriculture, irrigation, and industrial development. While the 3rd, 4th, and the 5th Five Year Plans focused on addressing the regional disparity of development, social welfare, poverty alleviation, and social justice. The 6th and 7th Five Year Plans emphasised reducing unemployment and promoting growth. After 1991, post-liberalisation, the focus of 8th and 9th Five Year Plans was on universalisation of education and health care and accelerating economic development. The last three Five Year Plans, 10th, 11th, and 12th focused on sustainable development and inclusive growth, especially focused on reduction of social and spatial inequality (backward region). According to the Government of India, the Xaxa Committee Report (2014), 'despite these special provisions, tribes are among the poorest and most marginalised sections of Indian society. Although numerically only about 8.6 per cent, they disproportionately represent the people living below the poverty line, are illiterate and suffer from extremely poor physical health'. NITI Aayog to address the traditionally backward regions or spatial inequality, often known as BIMARU (Undivided Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and undivided Uttar Pradesh), in 2018 launched the "Aspirational District" program for addressing development in the backward districts. There are 115 districts in 28 states classified as "Aspirational Districts" for monitoring, evaluation, and planning. Overall, the Indian government has shifted from welfare mode public service delivery to a rights based approach.

The rights-based approach to food, education, and social security schemes provides entitlements and tools of participatory monitoring and evaluation for the promotion of transparency and accountability.

Check Your Progress

5. How has India's population planning evolved after independence?

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6. How is regional or spatial inequality in development addressed in India?

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7.3 INTERRELATIONSHIPS OF RIGHTS AND DUTIES: HARMONY AND CONFLICT, DEFINITIONS AND TYPES OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The history of judicial protection of human rights in India revolves principally around Article 21 of the Constitution. According to Article 21, 'Protection of Life and Liberty - No person shall be deprived of her/his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established. The constitution guarantees fundamental rights that include civil, political, cultural, social, and economic rights. The right to dignity and equality is guaranteed before the law against any form of discrimination based on gender, caste, religion, or place of birth. The rights are interwoven with duties. A right is enshrined in the constitution to ensure choice and freedom for every citizen. Thus the right of the citizen is to enjoy the interests secured by the Constitution. According to the Supreme Court of India, rights are defined as the interest which the law protects by imposing duties on other persons. However, when the right is given to a person, it is assumed that certain duties are also imposed on him or her. The duties can be of two kinds; legal and moral duty. Legal duties are subject to judicial regulation that arises from the constitution of India while moral duties are regulated by society often rooted in norms and values.

In 1949, at the time constitution was adopted, though there were Fundamental Rights in Part 111 of the Constitution, there were no provisions regarding Fundamental Duties to the Citizens. In 1976 on the recommendation by the Swaran Singh Committee, fundamental duties were added with the 42nd Amendment under Article 51 A part 4 A. Initially ten fundamental duties were

listed, in 2002 with the 86th Amendment of the Constitution 11th duty was added. The Constitution of India adopted the fundamental duties to ensure that every citizen of India respects them as his fundamental duty. These fundamental duties are as follows:

- i. To abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag and the National Anthem;
- ii. To cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom;
- iii. To uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity, and integrity of India;
- iv. To defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so;
- v. To promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic, and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women;
- vi. To value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture;
- vii. To protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers, wildlife, and to have compassion for living creatures;
- viii. To develop the scientific temper, humanism, and the spirit of inquiry and reform;
- ix. To safeguard public property and to abjure violence;
- x. To strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavor and achievement;
- xi. Who is a parent or guardian, to provide opportunities for education to his child, or as the case may be, ward between the age of six to fourteen years.

With the above fundamental duties and fundamental rights the vision of the socio-economic and political change through the object of the constitution emerges from the Preamble. The Preamble of India incorporates justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity with the initial “we the people of India...” emphasises that constitution is by the people and for the people-making citizen at the center stage of the constitution.

Check Your Progress

7. Are fundamental rights without duties in India?

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8. What are the fundamental duties in India?

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7.4 PROTECTION AND ENFORCEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND DUTIES, ROLE OF NATIONAL AND STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION AND OTHER GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL MECHANISM

In 1993, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) was set up by an Act of Parliament under the Protection of Human Rights Act for the protection and promotion of human rights. The function of NHRC is stated in Section 12 of the Act. It requires NHRC to enquire into complaints of violation or negligence of human rights by the public servant. The NHRC is to study international treaties and instruments on human rights and make recommendations for effective public services implementation. The NHRC is to create awareness about human rights. Section 2(1) of the Act defines human rights as the rights to life, liberty, equality, and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the Constitution of India and international treaties. On similar lines, in every state, there is a State Human Rights Commission.

Check Your Progress

9. What is the role of NHRC?

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10. How human rights are defined?

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7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS OF SPECIAL CATEGORY AND MARGINAL GROUPS, EMERGING TRENDS OF HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNING TERRORISM, ENVIRONMENT, AND GLOBALISATION

One of the challenges of the 21st century is mainstreaming the marginalised. Thus the current government focus is on participatory inclusive growth built upon trust. The idea of inclusive growth is rooted in dignity, freedom, and choice enshrined in human rights for all. Thus the government aims to secure freedom by breaking the cycle of vulnerability and discrimination against caste, tribe, gender, and poverty. The contemporary form of governance considers marginalisation of STs, SCs, and OBCs as unjust or unfair, avoidable, and individuals alone cannot overcome these structural barriers.

Post liberalisation, the rise of civil society, media, and technology has changed the pace and pattern of governance with increased transparency resulting in accountability. The government of India thus introduced several tools of accountability to ensure civil and political rights, including community development rights. The introduction of Right to Information, Public Interest Litigation has enabled the government to accelerate citizen-centric governance. However, with the rising inequality of capital and unemployment among the youth population, the government is under pressure to ensure that wealth is equitably distributed. With the rise of the private sector in India, to protect the environment and marginalised communities, specially STs living in forest areas, the government of India has introduced several mandatory laws to create opportunities for the poor, investing part of their profit for local development. Thus, the emerging trend of human rights in the paradigm of environmental degradation and climate change (Gasper 2014), conflicts and Globalisation (Goodale and Merry 2007), the democracy (Downing and Kushner 1988) will require more focus on participation and inclusion; justice and social security; transparency, and accountability.

Check Your Progress

11. What are the 21st-century emerging challenges for modern democracy?

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12. How human rights in India have evolved?

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7.6 SUMMARY

The unit on human rights and anthropological engagement reflects two sides to the practice of human rights and the provisions for mainstreaming the marginalised. As a rights based approach the government of India has initiated several policies and programs to promote inclusive development. To achieve these goals to overcome historical injustice reflected in marginalisation in terms of education, health, poverty will require collaborative efforts of government and civil society. As an anthropologist, one acts as an epistemological expert, able to provide a principled and theoretically informed empirical approach to human rights.

An attempt has been made in this unit to explain the concept of human rights, context of anthropological engagement and constitutional provisions for mainstreaming the marginalised.

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7.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Refer to section 7.0
2. Refer to section 7.0
3. Refer to section 7.0
4. Refer to section 7.0
5. Refer to section 7.2
6. Refer to section 7.2
7. Refer to section 7.3
8. Refer to section 7.3
9. Refer to section 7.4
10. Refer to section 7.4
11. Refer to section 7.5
12. Refer to section 7.4 and 7.5

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