

Block 2

**Relationship of Sociology
with
Other Social Sciences**

UNIT 2 RELATIONSHIP OF SOCIOLOGY WITH ANTHROPOLOGY*

Structure

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2.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you will be able to understand:

- Introduce the relationship of sociology with social anthropology;
- To understand the nature of sociology and social anthropology;
- To locate the emergence and history of sociology and social anthropology;
- To examine similarities and differences of sociology and social anthropology; and
- To understand the nature of sociology and social anthropology in contemporary times.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Sociology and social anthropology are closely related in many aspects. Sometimes, it is rather difficult to differentiate sociology from social anthropology in some areas of enquiry and methodology. There are also certain differences that can also be observed between the two subjects in terms of the areas and thrust of enquiry, methodology, practice and tradition. Such differences although minor in essence, also becomes a matter of differentiation with the development of varying academic disciplines and departments in the university systems. John Beattie (1980) rightly points out that “sociology is social anthropology’s closest companion discipline, and the two subjects share a great many of their theoretical problems and interests. Social anthropologists are sociologists as well, but they are at once something less, because their actual field of investigation has on the whole, been more restricted, and something more, because although they are concerned with social relationships, they are concerned with other aspects of culture as well” (p.31). It is, therefore, necessary to go through the historical as well as the contemporary development of the two subjects to understand its relationship.

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2.2 NATURE OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Sociology is the youngest of the social sciences. It is also one of the fastest growing academic disciplines. The word 'sociology' is derived from the Latin word – '*socius*' ('companion' or 'associate') and the Greek word '*logie*'/'*logos*' ('knowledge'). The term 'sociology' was coined by Auguste Comte in 1838. Sociology is a scientific study of human society which tries to explain the contexts of social phenomena. It emphasizes on the collective aspects of human behavior. The broad nature of the subject has resulted to overlap with many other social sciences disciplines, such as anthropology, political science, economics, psychology, geography, education, law and philosophy. Anthropology (derived from Greek words, '*anthropos*' meaning 'man', and '*logia*'/'*logos*' meaning 'study of') is the only subject that surpasses the scope of sociology in the study of human society with its branches encompassing social/Cultural anthropology (also called socio-cultural anthropology), physical anthropology, archaeological anthropology (also called pre-historic archaeology), and linguistic anthropology. According to Merriam Webster dictionary, the "word '*anthropology*' dates back to the late 16th century". The anglicised word 'anthropology' is said to have appeared for the first time in the year 1805 (McGee and Warms, 2012; 6).

Social/Cultural anthropology has been historically very close to sociology from their beginnings as they both study human society. Although, anthropology has been regarded as the study of pre-literate societies (wrongly labeled as 'primitive' societies by early anthropologists and other scholars) and sociology as dealing with the more contemporary, urban and developed societies, this distinction is no longer true. The earlier trend in Anthropology being associated with micro studies (particularly exotic village studies) and sociology being identified with macro studies (particularly the modern societies) is no longer true in the contemporary times. In the same way, the study of the rural communities once identified mainly with anthropologists and the study of the urban communities mainly identified with sociologists in the initial stages of the development of the disciplines has also become blurred. Today, a trend has set in where sociologists have carried out much studies on rural communities, villages and micro settings, while anthropologists have also ventured on the urban settings and macro studies. There are ample examples of this emerging trend which is most obvious in the studies carried out by both sociologists and anthropologists in the developing countries. Hence, there has been much overlapping in the areas of enquiry and interest between sociologists and anthropology, particularly social anthropology and/or cultural anthropology.

2.3 EMERGENCE AND HISTORY OF SOCIOLOGY

Sociology as a scientific study of society has a relatively short history of development. It emerged only in the early 19th century as an academic discipline. The study of society, although not specific to sociology, was for long of interest to the Greek philosophers such as Socrates as early as 5th century B.C., Plato and Aristotle in the 4th century B.C., and Marcus Tullius Cicero, the Roman philosopher, in the first century B.C. who made immense contribution to the understanding of society in their times. They attempted a systematic study of

human society, particularly on the general consideration of society, philosophy, politics, law and the state. By the 16th century A.D., the works of Thomas Hobbes and Machiavelli on society and state have been impactful to the understanding of the concepts of society and the state. By 18th century A.D. after the experience and influence of the Renaissance in Europe, there were many eminent philosophers who made immense contributions to the understanding of society, including Rousseau, Vico and Baron de Montesquieu who dealt with the social phenomena of those times. These earlier works certainly laid the philosophical foundation for the development of the social sciences and the science of human society including sociology and anthropology. The application of positivism to the study of human society transformed the conceptualization of society from a divine or God given condition to one that could be viewed as a product of human agency. This made the objectification of society possible and also introduced the notion of social transformation through human effort and action.

The most significant factors for the emergence of sociology is however attributed to the various intellectual and socio-political changes taking place in the 18th and 19th centuries in Europe. Some of the important influences include the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution in Europe. Although, Claude Henri Saint Simon used the idea of “the science of society”, it was August Comte (1798-1857), the French philosopher who is generally credited for laying the foundation of the emergence of sociology. The term ‘sociology’ is coined in 1838 by Auguste Comte in his book, *Positive Philosophy*. He considers sociology as a science based on systematic observation and classification of the social phenomenon. Herbert Spencer, an English social philosopher is one of the pioneers who laid the foundation of sociology. His book, *Principles of Sociology* (1876), based on organic analogy of human society, was an important contribution of those times. In America, social philosopher, Lester F. Ward, made a significant contribution to development of sociology through his book, *Dynamic Sociology* (1883) which engages with the concepts of social progress and social action. But the most significant contribution to the development of sociology using scientific methodology was made by Emile Durkheim in his works — *Rules of Sociological Method* (1895) and *Suicide* (1897). Max Weber, one of the pioneers of sociology, introduced a new kind of approach to the understanding of social phenomena. His well-known works include, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* and *Economy and Society*. Karl Marx also made significant contribution to the development of sociology although his contributions go much beyond sociology itself. His most popular work related to sociology is *Das Kapital* (*Das Capital*). Some of the other pioneers include George Herbert Mead, **Vilfredo Pareto**, Georg Simmel and Ferdinand Tonnies. These pioneers were followed by many well-known modern sociologists including Charles Horton Cooley, Pitirim Sorokin, C. Wright Mills, Talcott Parsons, Robert K. Merton, Erving Goffman, George C. Homans, Michel Foucault, Jurgen Habermas, Pierre Bourdieu and Anthony Giddens.

2.4 EMERGENCE AND HISTORY OF SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Anthropology is a diverse and comprehensive field that studies humans and their culture society. In fact, it is considered as the broadest discipline that deals with the study of human kind and its multiple aspects. The subject matter of

anthropology and its academic profession began as an intersection of natural science and humanities. This trend is largely followed even today. The main reason behind this position is that the subject has been considered as a 'holistic study of mankind'. It also emerged with the understanding that the humans as a species are evolved and follow the same natural laws as all other natural species and phenomenon. In view of the highly differentiated subject matter of anthropology, it is rather difficult to comprehensively locate the strands of intellectual development and the emergence of the discipline. Nevertheless, the hallmarks of the trends of the beginning and growth of the subject can be broadly situated. The historical delineation can be focused on socio-cultural anthropology (social anthropology as founded in Britain and cultural anthropology as used in the United States of America) as it is the closest branch of anthropology with sociology.

Like sociology, the emergence and development of anthropology is said to be directly linked to the scientific development in the western world. The foundation of anthropology has also been dated back to the Greco-Roman renaissance period, particularly beginning with the writings of Herodotus in the 5th Century B.C. According to Voget (1975:7), Herodotus "has been even cited as a likely forerunner, if not the "father," of ethnography". The Greek philosophers of the time, particularly, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle also influenced on the study of man and society. Later, the Roman philosopher Marcus Tullius Cicero also significantly contributed to the understanding of human society. After a gap of several centuries some philosophers began to take interest in the study of society and the state, particularly in the 16th century A.D. Some of these scholars include Thomas Hobbes and Machiavelli. Prior to this, mention may be made of the significant contribution of Ibn Khaldun in the 14th century A.D. on the moral-historical philosophy and structural-functional analysis of social phenomena.

By 18th century A.D. after the experience and influence of the renaissance in Europe, there were many eminent philosophers who have made immense contributions to the understanding of society, including Rousseau, Vico, Baron de Montesquieu and John Locke who dealt with the social phenomena of the time. These earlier works certainly laid the philosophical foundation for the development of the social sciences and the science of human society including anthropology. The development of anthropology and social science which makes departure to the earlier philosophical and historical studies came in two phases. The first phase (1725- 1840) "philosopher scientists succeeded in separating the study of man, society, and civilization from history and thereby formulated a general social science" (Voget, 1975:41). However, Hoebel (1958) is of the view that "anthropology stems primarily from natural science and carries a greater measure of the natural science tradition" (p.9) and not from history or philosophy. On the other hand, Marvin Harris (1979) opines that anthropology "began as the science of history" (p.1). The problem of its earlier association and the nature of anthropology are such that E.E. Evans-Pritchard even in the mid-20th century had to grapple with the situation in British Anthropology (particularly social anthropology). On the nature of social anthropology, he states that "there is a broad division of opinion between those who regard social anthropology as a natural science and those, like myself [Evans-Pritchard], who regards it as one of the humanities. This division is perhaps at its sharpest when relations between anthropology and history are being discussed" (Evans-Pritchard, 1951:7). An important stimulus for the development of anthropology as a discipline was the

spread of Europeans to other parts of the world for reasons of trade, travel and colonization. Anthropology also developed in an attempt to explain human diversity and variation. It was initially also referred to as the study of 'Other Cultures', thus differentiating it from sociology that was regarded by the western people as study of their won society.

In the second phase (1840-1890) there was "transition in the natural sciences from a static equilibrium model to a dynamic model. Its culmination came with the introduction of thermodynamic and Darwinian evolutionary theory" (Voget, 1975:42). With such a diverse field as anthropology, an attempt was made in the 1860s for integrating into a general anthropological discipline that would engage on the early history of man. By 1870 and after, "a distinctive character of anthropology began to manifest itself" by unifying physical anthropology, prehistory and ethnology (cf. *ibid.*). This period marks the emergence of anthropology into an academic discipline. It is through the inspiration of the "triumphs of the scientific method in the physical and organic domain, nineteenth-century anthropologists believed that socio-cultural phenomena were discoverable lawful principles. This conviction joined their interests with the aspiration of a still earlier period, extending back before the social sciences had been named, to the epochal stirrings of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment and the vision of a universal history of mankind" (Harris, 1979:1). However, it emerged as an academic discipline only in the nineteenth century. According to Kuper (2018), the "modern discourse of anthropology crystallized in the 1860s, fired by advances in biology, philology, and prehistoric archaeology". The division of Anthropology into distinct sub-disciplines (or specialized field areas), namely, Physical or Biological Anthropology, Archaeological Anthropology, Social or Cultural Anthropology (also called Socio-Cultural Anthropology), and Linguistic Anthropology — and some would still include Psychological Anthropology came about by the later part of the 19th century through the middle of the 20th century. Of these branches of anthropology, social or cultural anthropology (also called socio-cultural anthropology) has been the closest branch of anthropology to sociology.

The pioneers of anthropology (socio-cultural anthropology) among others include **Lewis Henry Morgan** (1818-1881), **John Ferguson McLennan** (1827-1881), **Sir Edward Burnett Tylor** (1832-1917), **Franz Boas** (1858-1942), Sir James George Frazer (1854-1941) and W.H.R. Rivers. Some decades later (since the 1920s), anthropology (socio-cultural anthropology) evolved into a 'modern anthropology', particularly with the works of two outstanding anthropologists, namely, Bronislaw Malinowski and A.R. Radcliffe-Brown. Malinowski's book *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922) on one hand, and Radcliffe-Brown's *The Andaman Islanders* (1922) were the earliest significant modern works which obviously mark the emergence of new modern phase of Anthropology. These works were primarily based on rigorous field works (ethnographic works) with theoretical orientations. The influence of the works of these two anthropologists soon spread beyond Britain, even to the extent of reaching North America, a region which was generally considered as the domain of cultural anthropology. There were also many anthropologists who contributed to the development of modern anthropology at that time and even later but they would not attain such stature as those of Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown.

2.5 SIMILARITIES BETWEEN SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY (SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY)

Sociology is very close to social/cultural (Socio-Cultural) anthropology. The relationship between the two is so close that in the contemporary times the difference has become very bleak. There are many eminent anthropologists who have opined the close relationship between Sociology and anthropology, particularly socio-cultural anthropology. For instance, Frazer is, perhaps, the first anthropologist who in his Inaugural Lecture as the first Professor of Social Anthropology in 1908 defined “social anthropology as that branch of sociology that deals with primitive societies” (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952:2; cf. Voget, 1975:143). According to Frazer, sociology “should be viewed as the most general science of society. Social anthropology would be a part of sociology, restricted to the “origin, or rather the rudimentary phases, the infancy and childhood of human society” By limiting social anthropology to a study of savage life, Frazer echoed the ideas of Waitz and of Tylor in placing the anthropological emphasis on the early history and institutions of mankind” (Voget, 1975:143).

According to Radcliffe-Brown (1983) social anthropology is a ‘comparative sociology’. By the term ‘comparative sociology’, he would mean “a science that applies the generalizing method of the natural sciences to the phenomena of the social life of man and to everything that we include under the term culture or civilisation” (p.55). Thus, he is of a considered view that social anthropology should look for ‘nomothetic’ approach (search for general laws of society) rather than the idiographic approach (search for particular scientific facts and processes, as distinct from general laws). It is a method to demonstrate “a particular phenomenon or event” to establish a “general law” (ibid.). There are also many other anthropologists who concur to his view. For instance, Evans-Pritchard, another well-known anthropologist considers social anthropology as “a branch of sociological studies, that branch which chiefly devotes itself to primitive societies” (1951:11). He opines that “[w]hen people speak of sociology they generally have in mind studies of particular problems in civilized societies. If we give this sense to the word, then the difference between social anthropology and sociology is a difference of field (ibid.). According to E.A. Hoebel, the relationship between sociology and social anthropology are, “in their broadest senses, one and the same. Both are the study of social interrelationships, i.e., the relations of men to men” (1958: 9). Lucy Mair (1965) and many other anthropologists also consider social anthropology as a ‘branch’ of sociology.

Although, anthropology (an integrated anthropology including physical anthropology) is said to have emerged earlier than sociology, from the very beginning it was very difficult to differentiate between the subject matters of the two, particularly with socio-cultural anthropology. While anthropology was formulated as a holistic study of mankind and related aspects, Auguste Comte also considered that sociology would be the overarching study of human society, and therefore, sociology should be the “queen of all sciences”. Anthropology and sociology also founded with the significant elements from the natural sciences in one way or another although the subject matter of anthropology (integrated anthropology), particularly due to the components of physical anthropology and archaeological anthropology exceeds sociology in terms of its linkage with the

physical sciences. Even when the discipline of sociology and socio-cultural anthropology were established their relationship still existed. The relationship is mainly because of the similarity in the subject matter and methodology. According to Fred W. Voget (1975), the difference between sociology and anthropology (particularly socio-cultural anthropology) is more on the application level rather than at the level of the scope, concept, and method. He states:

The procedural distinctions by which early sociologists sought to separate and to relate anthropology and sociology did not hold historic development of the disciplines. Both anthropology and sociology, following the model of science, combined description and generalization. The pragmatic distinction between these two disciplines came when their respective exponents began fieldwork (Voget, 1975:144).

In fact, there had been many universities and colleges where sociology and social anthropology existed in the same department in many universities of the world. It was only by the early 20th century that the distinction became more visible with the establishment of respective academic disciplines. The relationship has been growing even more in the contemporary times that it is becoming more difficult to distinguish between the two despite the maintenance of discipline-based barriers. The relationship of the two subjects is also due to the necessity of the cross-use of concepts and also the identical theoretical and research problems and their findings. This is for the fact that both the subjects need each other to strengthen their disciplines and also do justice to the scope of the study of society at large.

Since one significant difference between the two was, from the point of view of the western scholars, social anthropology was the study of the 'others', and sociology of their own society; when the 'others', that is the non-western scholars who were earlier only the subject matter of social anthropology, became scholars, the difference between the two disciplines became blurred. For example while western scholars would study caste as social anthropology, for the Indian scholars it could well be sociology.

In the non-European and non-Western regions, particularly in the context of 'Third World' countries, the distinction between "social anthropology and sociology at the level of theory and method is extremely tenuous" (Jain 1986:1). In the Indian context, it has become even more difficult to differentiate between sociology and social anthropology in many respects. The similarities include identical syllabi in Indian Universities, the methodology, theories and the universe of research studies. It is no wonder why many of the sociological well-known research works in India are village centric studies with a rural setting which otherwise is supposed to be the traditional domain of social anthropology. It is also true that some of the famous sociologists in India are trained social anthropologists. As a matter of fact, the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), the apex nodal funding agency of the social sciences considers sociology and social anthropology in the same unit. At present, it is also noticeable where many social anthropologists are absorbed as faculties in Sociology departments and/or sociological research works.

2.6 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY (SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY)

Although the subject matter, interests, theories and methodology overlap between sociology and Anthropology, there are also certain differences. The first and foremost difference lies in the definition of the scope of the subjects itself. Sociology is the study (or science) of society, whereas anthropology (integrated anthropology) is the study of man and everything that concerns man, including the physical and socio-cultural aspects. The distinction between sociology and socio-cultural anthropology (which shall be focused hereafter) is however much limited.

A notable difference between sociology and anthropology can be traced through historical roots. Anthropology is generally considered to have “no roots in philosophy” while “the former has” (Sarana 1983:14). While the emergence of sociology can be mainly attributed to the attempt to bring about social order in the society (in the European social context) after the great social transformation brought about by industrial revolution and French revolution, its influence on the emergence of anthropology was not as direct as with sociology or other social sciences; rather it was an indirect influence through the opening up of intellectual and geographical spaces to enable the European scholars to go outside the European society and study the pre-literate societies (the ‘other’ non-European societies) (cfr. Eriksen et al 2001; Sarana 1983). On the existence of the According to Merriam Webster dictionary, the “word *anthropology* dates back to the late 16th century” (The anglicised word ‘anthropology’ is said to have appeared for the first time in the year 1805 (McGee and Warms, 2012; 6) while sociology was coined somewhat later in 1838.

The original focus of the areas of interest between sociology and anthropology (socio-cultural) has been one of the main factors of divergences. Sociology began with the focal interest with the study of society-as a generalizing social science, particularly with a focus on a larger societal context to explain social phenomena. It focuses on the study of industrialized societies (the western societies, particularly Europe) who are considered as modern societies. On the other hand, the initial focal interest of anthropology was the study of the ‘other’ exotic communities that are non-European and/or non-western societies. Hence, their focus and practice was on the study of simple, small-scale, and pre-literate societies situated outside Europe and western societies. The trend changed particularly from about the mid-20th century when anthropologists have expanded their field studies to modern and urban settings while sociologists have also ventured out to the studies of rural and simple societies.

The other distinction between sociology and socio-cultural anthropology can be located in its methodology, particularly methods and techniques of research. Sociologists largely employ quantitative methods like questionnaires to collect data and subsequent analysis of the data with the help of statistical techniques. Anthropology began as a field-based science. Anthropologists largely use qualitative methods, particularly ‘participant observation’ along with other methods and techniques. Anthropologists go out to the field and live with the people for several months or even for years and learn their culture as one of the

insiders. However, over a period of time, the differences in the use of research methods and techniques have changed as sociologists began to extensively employ qualitative methods, while anthropologists also began to profusely use quantitative methods along with qualitative methods. The distinction of sociology and anthropology was also due to the historic development of the early exponents of the disciplines, particularly in the way they conducted their fieldworks. In this regard, Voget (1975:144) writes: At such time [early developmental stage] anthropologists and sociologists distinguished themselves and their disciplines not by what they said but what they did. Anthropologists entered the field to record the lifeways of Trobrianders, Zulus, and Zunis, while sociologists compiled information on urban life in the West from census data, interviews and questionnaires. The necessity for gathering firsthand facts about the beliefs, customs, ceremonial, art, technology, and social organization of pre-industrial peoples made an enduring impact on anthropology and emphasized a continuing collection of new data.

The differences in the nature of sociology and social anthropology till mid-20th century or even later can be summed up from the statement of Hoebel (1958) which he opines are mainly due to the following historical reasons:

“Each field [sociology and social anthropology — even including social psychology] has had a different background, uses somewhat different methods of investigation, and has differing traditional attitudes and concepts. Anthropology tends more to work in terms of culture and whole societies. Sociology tends more to work in terms of aspects of complex Western society. Anthropology stems primarily from natural science and carries a greater measure of the natural science tradition. Still the methodological differences between these fields of study grow less with each passing year, as anthropology becomes more analytical and sociology more objective, so that today the measure of difference is one of convenience. The anthropologist concentrates chiefly on the societies of primitive[sic] people and the sociologist concentrates on our own [European and/or Western Societies’] contemporary civilization” (p.9).

The relationship between sociology and social anthropology has not been the same in different countries and contexts. The perception and consideration of “what is sociology?” and “what is social anthropology?” takes regional variations. In this regard, Beteille (1974) writes:

In the United Kingdom the objective condition to which the distinction between sociology and social anthropology corresponded was the distinction between society and culture in the metropolitan country, and in the colonies, particularly the United States it was the distinction between life in the industrial city and in the tribal reservation. No two worlds could be more sharply separated than the aggressive, expanding world of the American city and the stagnant, moribund world of the American reservation. Small wonder, therefore, that the distinction between sociology and social anthropology was more marked in the United States than in any other country. Again, it may not be an accident that in the United Kingdom the distinction between the two became less marked after the loss of empire which reduced the sharpness of the distinction between the metropolitan country and the colonies (p.703).

There is also a general conception in Britain who makes “a simple distinction between themselves and the natives; when they studied themselves they were sociologists, when they studied the natives they became social anthropologists... [T] here is [also] a tendency for Americans to make a similar distinction, though not as explicitly. When they study the core of their own society and culture they are sociologists. When they study other societies and cultures, particularly in Africa, Asia and Latin America (or marginal groups in their own society), they tend to become ethno sociologists. The great pity is that some Indians are now inclined to feel that they ought to apply the same distinctions among themselves” (Beteille, 1974:704).

In the context of Third World countries, particularly India, the relationship of sociology and social anthropology is rather ambiguous. When sociology is introduced in India sometime in the 1920s, “sociology had already established its legitimacy; it had found a place for itself in some, though not in all, western universities, and it was relatively easy for Indian sociologists to claim a place for it in their universities” (Beteille, 2004:5). In fact, the “distinction between sociology and social anthropology that we find in the Indian university system was not devised by Indian scholars themselves, but was acquired from the West. In the West itself this distinction became most marked in the period between the two world wars which was precisely the time when the sciences of society and culture were beginning to take root in India. If many Indian social scientists are perplexed by this distinction today, it is because it does not correspond to their conditions of work, which in any case was not the main source from which it grew” (Beteille, 1974:703). This is for the fact that the “objective conditions of work in India are very different, although the old labels are still put to use. Almost all Indians — whether ‘sociologists’ or ‘social anthropologists’— study one or another sector of Indian society which is, on the whole, neither too primitive nor too advanced. When an Indian studies a ‘tribal’ village he is an ‘anthropologist’ and when he studies a ‘nontribal’ village he is a ‘sociologist’; or, when he studies a village, tribal or non-tribal, he is an ‘anthropologist’, but when he studies a town or city, he is a ‘sociologist’” (Ibid:703-704). Therefore, Beteille is of the view that “the distinction between ‘tribal’ and ‘nontribal’ village, or between village and town in India is of a totally different kind from the distinction between city and reservation in the United States, or between metropolitan country and colony in the British Empire” (ibid:704).

2.7 LET US SUM UP

The relationship of sociology with social anthropology is very close indeed. The two disciplines are very close that it is difficult to differentiate, particularly in the scope, interest areas, theories, methodology, and practice. The tradition in which they were evolved also had much convergence in its thrust areas of enquiry. This is due to the fact that both sociology and social anthropology study human society and largely share their theoretical problems and interests. This is also the reason why social anthropology is considered by many scholars to be part of sociology or a branch of sociology. Despite its similarities, there are also certain differences between the two subjects which can be located from the early developmental phase to the later phases as well in terms of the areas and thrust of enquiry, preference of the use of methodology, theories, and practice. Such differences although minor in essence, also becomes a matter for differentiation

in view of the development of varying academic disciplines and departments in the university systems. Another important aspect that needs consideration is the ambiguity of the conception of sociology and social anthropology, particularly in the context of third world countries including India. As much as sociology and social anthropology is the invention of the West, the conception and perception of the same subjects and also the practitioners have been perplex and blur. The reality is that the western sociologists, particularly in America and Britain largely consider sociologists as 'social' or 'cultural' anthropologists when the research studies pertain to tribal and/or rural areas and also in the colonial countries at large. On the other hand, they would consider the sociologists as 'sociologists' when the same sociologists study 'urban' and/or 'advanced' societies. This is very true even in the context of Indian sociologists. Therefore, in the perspective of the western sociologists, all Indian sociologists are social anthropologists for the fact that the sociologists in India study both 'tribal' and 'rural' communities and also urban communities at one time or another. The other consideration is that many trained anthropologists in India have also professed sociology right from the early phases of the establishment of sociology in India. Moreover, the increasing trend of the use (or incorporation) of methods and techniques by both sociologists and social anthropologists which were otherwise traditionally the domain of either sociology or social anthropology as distinct disciplines have further led to the entrenched relationship between sociology and social anthropology in India. If the trend is any indication sociology and social anthropology, the close relationship of the two disciplines is likely to continue even in the future.

2.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1) Discuss the emergence of sociology and social anthropology.
- 2) Examine the similarities and differences of sociology and social anthropology.
- 3) Discuss the relationship of sociology and social anthropology with special reference to India.

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UNIT 3 RELATIONSHIP OF SOCIOLOGY WITH PSYCHOLOGY*

Structure

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3.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you will be able to understand:

- Define sociology and psychology;
- Explain the major concerns of sociology and psychology;
- Describe the relationship between sociology and psychology;
- Explain how the concepts of sociology and psychology when applied together gave birth to a new discipline called sociological social psychology to understand the impact of society on individual relationships;
- To trace the historical development of Social psychology; and
- To understand the concepts and methods of sociology used in social psychology.

* This unit is contributed by Rajshree Chanchal, Assistant Professor, AUD, New Delhi.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Among all the living beings, human beings have the ability to think and interact with the environment make sense of it. Human is a social animal and lives in a group. As the human society has developed, systematic attempts have been made by scholars to understand and document social and cultural activities of human in different contexts across time and space. This quest to understand the human nature and relationships gave birth to academic disciplines such as sociology, psychology, and history which form the core of social sciences. Amongst these, the discipline of sociology is mainly concerned with the study of human society and relationships within it. Along with sociology, psychology also focuses on the study of human beings. The question arises is there any inter-relation between sociology and psychology, whether the theoretical premises of these disciplines could be integrated to develop a better understanding of the socio-psychological phenomena. By studying this unit we will be able to understand the nature of sociology and psychology and also the subject matter of social psychology.

3.2 DEFINITION OF SOCIOLOGY

The term sociology was coined by Auguste Comte, who is called the father of Sociology. Sociology is concerned with the study of human relationships and the society. It is believed that relationships develop when individuals come in close contact with other and interaction takes place between them. This leads to the formation of social groups and complex relationships among these groups develop as result of constant interaction. Hence, it can be said that social self and individual self are two parts of the same coin. Given this, scholars have attempted to define and explain the subject matter of sociology.

One of the founding fathers of sociology, Auguste Comte divided the subject matter of sociology into the study of *social static* and *social dynamic*. The static was concerned with the study of how the parts of the societies inter-relate, the dynamic was to focus on whole societies as the unit of analysis and to show how they developed and changed through time (Inkeles, 1964). According to Emile Durkheim sociology is the study of social facts. Sociology can be defined as the scientific study of human life, social relations, social groups and every aspect of the society as a whole. The scope of sociology is very wide, ranging from the analysis of the everyday interaction between individuals on the street to the investigation and comparison of societies across the globe.

3.2.1 Definition of Psychology

The term psychology is derived from two Greek words; *Psyche* means “soul or breath” and *Logos* means “knowledge or study” (study or investigation of something). Psychology developed as an independent academic discipline in 1879, when a German Professor named Wilhelm Wundt established the first laboratory for psychology at the University of Leipzig in Germany.

Initially, psychology was defined as ‘science of consciousness’. . In the simple words, we can define psychology as the systematic study of human behavior and experience. According to Baron (1990), psychology is the science of behaviour and cognitive processes. Psychology emphasizes on the process that occurs inside

3.3 SOCIOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY: THE POSSIBLE INTERLINK

Sociology and psychology together form the core of the social sciences. Right from their inception as separate academic disciplines, sociology and psychology have studied different aspects of human life. Most of the other species, work on instincts in the physical environment for their survival. While the survival of humans depends upon the learned behaviour patterns. An instinct involves a genetically programmed directive which informs behaviour in a particular way. It also involves specific instruction to perform a particular action (Haralambos and Holborn, 2008). For instance, birds have instincts to build nests and members of particular species are programmed to build a nest in a particular style and pattern. Unlike this, the human mind is influenced by the social culture, customs, norms, and values. It through socialization that humans learn specific behaviour patterns to suit them best in the physical environment. Humans process the information provided by the social context to make sense of their living conditions. Sociology's basic unit of analysis is the social system such as family, social groups, cultures etc.

The main subject matter of psychology is to study human mind to analyses attitude, behaviour emotions, perceptions and values which lead to the formation of individual personality living in the social environment. While sociology deals with the study of the social environment, social collectives which include family, communities and other social institutions psychology deals with the individual. For instance, while studying group dynamism, sociologist and psychologist initially share common interests in various types of groups, and their structures which are affected by the degree of cooperation, cohesion, conflict, information flow, the power of decision making and status hierarchies. This initial similarity of interest, takes on different focus, both the disciplines use different theoretical positions to explain the group phenomena.

3.4 SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The quest to study human behaviour on scientific principles started with the emergence and establishment of natural sciences during the nineteenth century. Comte thought that society could be studied using the scientific methods of natural sciences. Comte argued careful observation of the entities that are known directly to experience could be used to explain the relationship between the observed phenomena. By understanding the causal relationship between various events it is possible to predict future events. He also held the belief that once the rules governing the social life are identified, the social scientist can work towards the betterment of the society. This quest to produce knowledge about the society and place of the individual within it, on the basis evidence and observation is central to the origin of Social psychology. The ideas of early and later sociologist helped to shape the sociological social psychology. Mead studied the effect of social conditions on our sense of self. Other influence contributors in the development

of sociological social psychology include Georg Simmel (1858-1918), Charles Horton Cooley (1864-1929), and Ervin Goffman.

The emergence of modern social psychology could be traced from the nineteenth century onwards. One of the first systematic manual of social psychology *Social and Ethical Interpretation in Mental Development* was published in New York in the year 1987 by James Mark Baldwin. However, in the year 1908, it was the work of two authors; William McDougall and Edward A. Ross that gave social psychology the status of an independent scientific discipline. This year saw the publication of two books on social psychology. The names of the books are *An Introduction to Social Psychology* by William McDougall and *Social Psychology* by sociologist Edward A. Ross.

3.4.1 Defining Social Psychology

There is constant interaction between the intra-individual and social context and both influence each other mutually. Social psychology could be defined as the study of the “interface between these two sets of phenomena, the nature and cause of human social behaviour” (Michener & Delamater, 1999 cf. Delamater, 2006:11). G.W Allport (1954:5) defines social psychology with its emphasis on “the thought, feeling, and behaviour of individual as shaped by actual, imagined, or implied the presence of others”. A few other definitions of social psychology are as follows:

Social Psychology is the discipline that explores in an in-depth manner the various aspects of social interaction.

Baron and Byrne (2007) define social psychology as the scientific field that seeks to understand the nature and causes of individual behavior in social situations.

To sum up we can say that social psychology is the systematic study of people’s thoughts, feelings, and behaviour in the social context.

3.4.2 Inter-disciplinary Approach to Social Psychology

The definition given by Allport suggests that the roots of social psychology are embedded in sociology as well as psychology. Scholars such as Cook, Fine, and House (1995), Delamater (2006) are of the view that social psychology essentially includes analysis and synthesis of major works in the field of sociology and psychology hence, it is interdisciplinary in nature. The main subject matter of social psychology is the study of the individual in the social context. In other words, the mind, self and society are the subject matters of social psychology.

Society Internal Processes

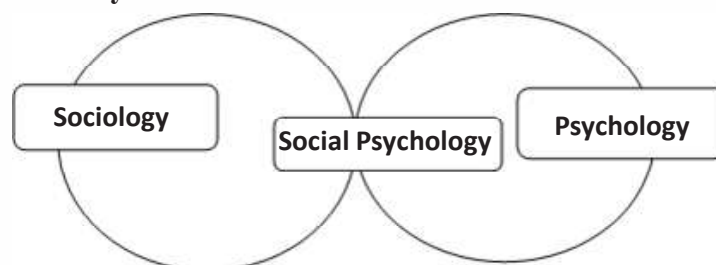


Fig.3.1: Social Psychology Mergers Elements of the Two Fields

Source: Rohall, Milkie, and Lucas (2011:9)

There are many sociological and psychological perspectives used in social psychology to explain and understand the constant influence of human and society on each other.

Depending upon the approach, purpose, and focus of the study social psychology could be further divided into *sociological social psychology* and *psychological social psychology* (this term is coined by House (1977) and Stryker (1977)). It is very difficult to make clear distinctions between the two, as social psychology tends to draw from both the disciplines of sociology and psychology.

The cognitive social psychology or the social cognition is an approach that investigates how information is processed and stored. According to Thoits (1995:1232) “information is stored as prototypes, schemas, and the like; information processing includes attending to cues, retrieving from memory, and making judgments, inferences and predictions about oneself and others.” In this approach, cognition is seen as social because it originates from the social experience and bears consequence on the interpersonal behaviour. Sociological social psychology concentrates on the mass psyche, the psychology of classes and the elements of group mentality such as customs, moral and traditions. In other words, it focuses on small group dynamics.

3.4.3 Scope of Social Psychology

As said social psychology studies human behaviour in the social context. Social psychology attempts to understand the relationship between individual's mind and thought the processes in a group as well as in isolation. Acquisition of knowledge about the springs of human behaviour is one of the most important tasks of social psychology. This field of relationships includes the study of humans in small as well as in large groups. It also According to Delamater (1995:11) the main concern of social psychology is:

- the impact of one individual on another
- the impact of a group on its individual members
- the impact of individuals on the group in which they participate and
- the impact of one group on another.

A reciprocal relation exists between the individual and the social environment. Hence, it could be said the social psychology attempts to present an integrated picture of the social and the psychological. For instance, the prevailing culture determines how individual members of the society think and feel. There is a general level of similarity in the thought process across all the individuals socialized in a particular society. The central topics of the research under the domain of sociological social psychology include life course analysis, socialization, social networks, group dynamics, stereotyping and stigma and social stratification. In the life, individuals pass through a number of stages such as childhood, adolescence, adult, and old age. Each of the life phases is influenced by existing social norms, values, religion, and customs. For instance, child rearing practices differ across the societies which in turn have different effects on the personality of the individuals. More specifically the family and family relationships influence individual personality development. At present given the social diversity, social psychologist tends to adopt a multicultural perspective- which recognizes the potential importance of class, gender, ethnicity, age, sexual

3.5 YOUR SOCIOLOGICAL TOOL KIT

You can take a few essential tools with you on your journey to study social psychology. These tools include concepts and terms which sociologists employ to develop and describe their research and theories.

3.5.1 The Sociological Imagination

Our day today life is influenced by a variety of factors, which include the family values and other norms which in turn are shaped by the larger social forces. An important tool to see forces at work in our everyday life is sociological imagination. C. Wright Mills (1959) defined sociological imagination as for how individuals understand their own and other's past in relation to history and social structure. Mills argued that sociologist must understand the larger cultural, structural, and historical factors that influence individual before arriving at any conclusion. By observing individuals and societies and how they interact through this lens sociologist are able to examine what influences attitudes, behaviour and culture.

Sociological imagination equips social psychologists with the vision essential to think about all the possible social factors and conditions that may influence individual's thought process, feelings, and behaviour.

3.5.2 Social Norms and Values

Social norms are behavioural guidelines that regulate our behaviour. It is associated with the rules of conduct which are ought to be followed by individuals. Values refer to some deeply held ideals and beliefs. Values portray an ideal, the standard that society would like to embrace and live upto.

3.5.3 Culture

Culture refers to the unique patterns of behaviour and beliefs specific to a particular society. All societies have their own culture. The components of culture include-symbols, language, values, beliefs, norms and material artifacts. Culture is shared.

3.5.4 Roles and Status

Roles are patterns of behaviour that we recognize in each other that are representative of a person's social status. For instance, while reading this text you play the role of the students, besides this, you have many other roles such as 'son/daughter', 'brother/sister', a 'neighbour' to name a few. The term status is used to describe the responsibilities, benefits, and prestige person experiences depending upon his/her rank and role in the society.

3.5.5 Socialisation

Socialisation is the process through which begins at birth and is a continuous process when new born child acquires the social norms behavior pattern, beliefs,

standards, and values deemed significant and appropriate by his social group. Socialisation serves many functions for the society, most important one to maintain the social order.

3.6 CONCEPTS AND METHODS OF SOCIOLOGY USED IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Social psychology draws on many concepts and methods of sociology to study the reciprocal relationship between human and social environment. In sociology, Max Weber emphasized that influence of culture on human behaviour had to be taken into account. He introduced the concept of *verstehen*, a German word that means “to understand in a deep way” “In *verstehen*, the researcher attempts to understand the social process or the cultural activities of the small social group from an insider’s point of view. This approach led to the development of methods, where the sociologists strive to capture the subjectivity involved in the social processes, cultural norms, and societal values. The aim of the researcher is to systematically gain an in-depth understanding of the social worlds he is observing rather than draw board generalizations. This is seen as the fundamental difference between the qualitative and quantitative research methods in sociology. Following this, research methods in social psychology could be qualitative or quantitative. Quantitative research in social psychology uses large-scale surveys (which involves a large number of participants), experiments (including two different groups), and statistical techniques are used to analyses the data which leads to predict general patterns of human behaviour. Qualitative research method seeks to understand the human behaviour using in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and analysis of content sources. With the expansion of social psychology, it is adopting methods such ethnography and qualitative approach which are the core methods in the domain of sociology.

3.6.1 Middle Range Theory

Middle range theory is principally used in sociology to guide empirical inquiry. The concept of Middle range theory was developed by American sociologist Robert K. Merton (1949). Middle range theory is intermediate to general theories of social systems which are too remote from particular classes of social behaviour, organization, and change to account for what is observed and to those detailed orderly descriptions of particulars that are not generalized at all. Middle range theories deal with delimited aspects of social phenomena. According to Merton the assumption of ‘functional unity of society’ (this assumption states that any part of the social system is functional for the entire system. All parts of the society are seen to work together for the maintenance and integration of society as a whole) is doubtful in the case of complex and highly differentiated societies. He provides the example of religious pluralism to prove his case. In a society with a variety of faiths, religion may tend to divide rather than enhance the unity. Hence, he postulates middle range theories to explain certain social processes and aspects of social behaviour which do not try to encompass the social as a whole. Middle range theories are used by social psychologists to explain certain phenomena. The field theory given by Kurt Lewin is an example of middle range theory. The social psychological theories such as theories of frustration, aggression, change of attitude, cooperation, and competition fall under the ambit of middle range theories.

3.7 PERSPECTIVES IN SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

We can understand from the previous discussions that there are many ways to investigate the role and impact of society on individual's day-to-day life. Depending upon your interest, you may focus on your immediate vicinity or you may try to understand the effects of larger social phenomena- for example, the effect of globalization on people's life. Sociological social psychologists work within the board perspectives and attempt to provide some general as well as specific explanations for behaviour across societies, time and space.

3.7.1 Symbolic Interactionism

The symbolic interactionism takes into account the mutual influences of society and self that shapes many social processes. George Herbert Mead (1863-1931) is one of the influential figures to develop symbolic interactionist perspective in the field of sociology. In his work, *Mind, Self, and Society from the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist*, Mead (1934) argued that meaning is created as a result of interaction with people. Symbolic interactionism originates from a concern with language and meaning making. It focuses on the details of interpersonal interaction and how that detail is used to make sense of what the others say and do. The meanings we attach to ourselves, other people, and objects are negotiated over time. Language and symbols are used to give meaning to everything in the world. According to Ervin Goffman (1956:1) "when an individual enters the presence of other they commonly seek information about him or to bring into play information about him already possessed". Hence, the interaction could be defined as "reciprocal influence of individuals upon on another's action when in one another's immediate physical presence." According to symbolic interactionism, society is a web of communication or interaction, where people make sense of their everyday life taking into account their mutual perspectives. The ideas and imagery are collective, where humans are not passive respondents to the external stimuli of the environment rather they are active and creative thinking beings who act and interact within the given environment and make sense of it. Social psychology depends on symbolic interactionists approach which pays attention to the "structural relationships, organizational features of social environments and generalized expectations or norms that influence behaviour" (Thoits, 1995:1233).

3.7.2 Social Structure and Personality

Social structure and Personality perspective is concerned with connections between larger societal events, conditions and its influence on the individuals. More specifically, it means the influence of social structure on individuals. Social structure and personality perspective assume that our position in the social structure is dictated by some larger social processes to some degree as we are expected to think, feel and behave in certain ways which correspond to the existing social norms. For instance, Karl Marx believed that the economic system we live in affect both our social relation and individual thinking process (Rohall, Milke and Lucas, 2011).

This sociological social psychology perspective lays emphasis on how basic social processes function in group contexts (Rohall, Milke and Lucas, 2011). The group is one of the most important components of the social life and both sociology and psychology spend a great deal of time and energy to study and understand group behaviour. A group needs a minimum of two individuals and human beings spend a most of their life time with different social groups such as family, friends, and co-workers. Cooley (1909) gave the theoretical formulation of primary and secondary groups. Primary groups are those where individual have face-to-face contact and close relationships, for instance, family and friends. The secondary group is large and relatively less intimate relationship exist between the group members. According to Cooley, there is a fundamental difference between the kind of interactions produced in primary and secondary groups.

The group processes perceptive attempts to analyses the interaction and positions of individuals within and across social groups. Status and roles become important while studying group behaviour. You must have noticed in your own group of friends that some talk more and give their opinion quite often and take leadership. While others remain silent. How are these differences determined? How is power within the group distributed? A social psychologist is interested in answering such sorts of questions by systematically studying the social context in which a group is located. Table 1 shows the three perspectives in sociological psychology in a comparative manner.

Table 3.1: Three Perspectives in Sociological Psychology: A Comparison

Perspective	View of Role of Individual in Society	Area of Focus
Symbolic Interaction	Individual is active participant in construction of society	Meaning-making Process
Social Structure and Personality	The nature of interaction is based on adherence to roles that people play	Emphasizes process of how larger social structures influence individuals
Group Processes	When individuals form into social groups, certain basic processes regularly emerge in interactions	Processes that occur in group contexts

Source: Rohall, Milkie, and Lucas, (2011:13)

3.8 OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

As mentioned earlier social psychology focuses on the analysis of individual's behaviour in relation to others as well as with the social environments. The main objectives of social psychology research could be categorized into the following heads:

- 1) **Observation and Description** – One of the main objectives of social psychology is to observe and describe social behaviour under different circumstances in a systematic manner so that possible reliable generalizations could be drawn from a large population.
- 2) **Cause and Effect Relationship** – All the studies based on scientific method seek to establish cause and effect relationship between different variables. The social psychologist attempts to analyse the effect of changes in a social institution such as change in values, culture, and tradition on the human behaviour. For example, does the provision of free and compulsory education till Elementary level have any impact on the attitudes of parents towards girls' education.
- 3) **Proposing New Theory** – One of the objectives of social psychology is to propose a new theory based on the causal analyses of the social behaviour to explain and understand why human beings under particular situation behave the way they do.
- 4) **Application** – the knowledge gained from the above efforts could be utilized to suggest possible solutions for some of the problems faced by individuals in their everyday life.

3.9 IMPORTANCE OF SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Sociological social psychology can make a diagnosis of contemporary situations to explain adequately the reciprocal influence of individuals and their social environment by attending all of its psychological and social level of analysis. Social psychology attempts to provide a two-way link between situation and behaviour and gives predicts the casual sequence of relations between groups.

3.10 LET US SUM UP

We have discussed the origin and evolution of sociology and psychology as an independent academic discipline. We have also defined sociology and psychology discussing the nature of respective disciplines. An attempt is also made to understand the linkages between sociology and psychology. Further, the origin of social psychology as an inter-disciplinary subject is also discussed. This introduction to the inter-relatedness of sociology, psychology and social psychology is useful for students who want to learn sociology and its relationship with other disciplines. Both psychological and sociological social psychologist studies the social context in which human thoughts, feelings, and behaviour is shaped and influenced. Perspectives and methods of the field of sociology are used in social psychology.

3.11 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1) Discuss the origin of social psychology.
- 2) Do you think sociology and psychology have something in common? If yes explain.

- 3) Explain the scope and nature of social psychology.
- 4) How would you define your role in the society using any of the sociological perspectives in social psychology?
- 5) What are the main objectives of research in social psychology?

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UNIT 4 RELATIONSHIP OF SOCIOLOGY WITH HISTORY*

Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Relationship of Sociology with History
 - 4.2.1 Defining History
 - 4.2.2 Relationship of Sociology with History
 - 4.2.3 Difference between Sociology and History
- 4.3 Historical Sociology as Sub-Discipline
- 4.4 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.5 References

4.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you will be able to understand:

- Definition of history as social science discipline;
- Interrelationship between Sociology and History;
- Difference between Sociology and History; and
- Understanding Historical Sociology as an outcome of intersection between Sociology and History.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This unit explains relationship of sociology with history. Both disciplines are very much interrelated. Sociology is often defined as study of society. Notably, no study of any society can be accomplished without looking into its history or past. It is immensely important to see how the society has evolved in the past? What kinds of circumstances and instances have been through which the society has moved on or evolved further? What has been the factors contributed to the changes in its structure and functions? Thus, to understand any society, group or institutions, one needs to appreciate its past to comprehend its present status. It may be noted that the emergence of sociology itself has been shaped up in the historical developments such as French and industrial revolutions, growth of cities and social institutions and growth of individual rights and liberties. Various earlier scholars or founding fathers of sociology such as Ibn Khaldun, Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, etc. gave importance to history or historical perspective in their analysis of social structure, changes and dynamics. Sociology and past (history) are deeply interconnected with each other. Furthermore, history also takes help of sociology in order to elaborate and analyse historical phenomenon. It essentially looks into social aspects of past human lives. It is primarily in this context that the both disciplines supplement each other in understanding social developments. Hence, the sub-

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field such as historical sociology, social history, and cultural history emerged as an outcome of intersection between sociology and history.

Sociologists often talk of the, 'context', while studying or explaining society in terms of its structure, functions and changes. Here, time and space are two important factors which inherit and explain the contextual aspects of social reality. Time is crucial factors in explaining the evolution of social reality as social realities get shaped over period of time. Since, history take care of factors such as time or periodical evolution of societies, it essentially helps sociologist to study society in much more systematic fashion. It helps sociologists in providing rationale to articulate present status and developmental trajectory of a society. Various sociologists such as Comte in his law of three stages, Spencer in his analysis of evolution of societies, Weber in his elaboration of ideal types and growth of city, and Marx in his analysis of class conflict and social changes, have used historical dimension in their sociological analysis. Hence, history and sociology are closely related to each other. However, we may also note that both the disciplines differ in their nature and approaches, nevertheless intersect or criss-cross each other on many points. Resultantly, historical sociology, as mentioned earlier, emerged as an off- shoot such intersection between the two disciplines. This unit focuses on elaborating such intersection and interrelationship between sociology and history.

4.2 RELATIONSHIP OF SOCIOLOGY WITH HISTORY

4.2.1 Defining History

History is often defined as study of past. Historians, who study history, do study cause and effects of past events and circumstances leading to social change and development. To Mallari (2013), the term, 'history', is embedded into numerous interrelated aspects; firstly, history as the past or things happened in the past, secondly, history as narrative that tells events happened in the past. Various thinkers describe history as the study of human's past based on archaeological evidences. It is important to understand that this so called past has its own social, cultural, political and economic aspects. Historians look types of societies, their structure, culture, civilisation and politics human societies had, and developed over the period of time. History studies all this social domain with respect to their time and space attributes.

Notably, history is important in many respects. First, history plays important role in the society similar to as memory does to an individual. Secondly, history like memory provides identity and recognition to any individual or groups or a community in the society. It indicates towards one's roots, historicity or trajectory of developments as it might have happened in the past. It is primarily because of such crucially important tasks that the role of history becomes critically important and crucial to unpack the social reality. It also then becomes a site where various contestations take place.

4.2.2 Relationship of Sociology with History

Sociology and history are interrelated to each other. Sociology study society and focuses on current issues by looking their historical background. Both present

and past come closer in such analysis. Sociologists often refer to history to explain social changes, developments and changing face of society over period of time. Similarly history also needs social aspects (sociological concepts) to explain past. The boundaries between the two disciplines get blurred and entangled which do entails a context to explain complex webs of social reality. These blurring of boundaries between the two disciplines are seen by many scholars as opportunity for productive research endeavours. E. H. Carr (1967), who wrote a book titled 'What is History', argued that the more sociological history becomes, and the more historical sociology becomes, the better for both. Let the frontier between them be kept open for two way traffic. Many sociologists have also advocated this proposition of transaction between the two disciplines so as to enrich the inter-disciplinarily and knowledge generation.

Social change is a reality. It has to happen. History shows mirror or truer way to analyse it with respect to time and space. History, in fact, said to be the constant reminder of the fact that change, even though permanent, is irregular and unpredictable. History thus provides a frame of reference and contextual tool to examine and analyse change carefully. Both sociology and history thus depends on each other to take complete stoke of reality. Sociology depends on history to understand past events, movements and social institutions. Needless to say that sociology is also concerned with the study of historical developments of society. Sociologist studies ancients or old traditions, culture, growth of civilisations, groups and institutions through historical analysis and interpretations. Notably, John Seely rightly said that history without sociology has no fruits and sociology without history has no roots. Both past and presets are equally important to understand any social issue in totality and in-depth.

Sociology as a discipline may provide help in terms of offering a particular frame of mind to study history and its phenomenal developments. For instance, the tool of sociological imagination may help one to go beyond the general facts, to look beyond the obvious and to examine aspects of any historical phenomena critically. In the words of C. Wright Mills (1959), who gave concept of social imagination, said that the tool of social imagination involves seeing the world in terms of biography and history. In his schemes of things, personal biographies, which sociology studies, are linked with social and historical context. Such linkages discreetly situated in the womb of historical phenomenon need to be explored. In fact, Mills emphasised on three aspects of human world; structure, biography and history. He developed his patterns of analysis at the intersection of above mentioned three dimensions of human world. He focuses on social structure in terms of formation and shaping of social world as a systemic reality. He further linked up human behaviour as shaped by particular patterns of social relationships. In his scheme of things, history added to the perception that the shape and formation of social structures are always specific to given time and space which vary from one period to another period, as they themselves are subject to change. Lastly, biography relates all such social structure and change with individual experiences delineating various aspects of social living by larger social and historical process and how their agency as member of society get shaped and re-shaped. To this effect, history may help to understand the context of any social issue to locate the problem and in understanding the issue thoroughly. To understand an issue, it may be noted that just going by one disciplinary approach or frame of reference may not help to obtain an enriched analysis of an

issue rather the real answer of many problems of both sociology and history may be in sociological history and/or historical sociology.

Auguste Comte's conception of sociology includes history in his analyses of growth of sociology and society. He dwells into causes and reasons of developments of humanity through various historical stages. Furthermore, as Tilly (2001) notes, Karl Marx's *Capital*, Max Weber's *Economy and Society* or Ferdinand Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft* have elaborately used historical dimension to enrich their sociological analysis. Such analysis demonstrate that sociology takes help of history (for instance Weber's elaboration of ideal type is an example of how sociologists have drawn to develop their sociological interpretations) to locate an issue and examine its significance. Furthermore, history has many things to offer to sociology. For instance, historical sources that are available provide a large body of data to sociologists for analysis on society, its growth and dynamics. For instance, social upheavals in Europe during late 1700s and 1800s motivated scholars to study society and understand the patterns of social developments. To this effect, there are ample examples which demonstrate linkages of sociology with history. For instance, many sociologists like Comte, Spencer, Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Simmel, Pareto, Parsons and even the contemporary sociologists such as Habermas, Mannheim, Wallerstein, Castells, etc. used historical dimension in their sociological analysis. They placed ample emphasis on the origin of modernity, models of development and problems of urban communities. Sociology in its earlier period and in the beginning of 20th century was interested in both present and past. It essentially got historical phenomena as its integral part to define concepts and situate the same into the context. Sociological concepts also help in causal explanation of historically and culturally significant phenomenon.

The development of sociological theories is traced in 19th and 20th century historical developments at the level of philosophy, epistemology and progressive thinking. Specifically, sociological theories have been product of intellectual, social, cultural and political climate within which they were developed. For instance, enlightenment was a period of remarkable intellectual development. Some of the important ideas and social thoughts emerged in this period. These ideas and thoughts newly developed replaced the old ones. The period gave birth to the society which can be understood by means of reason, rationality, scientific methods or empirical research. Similarly, in 1789 French revolution created a space when universal rights of man accepted as essential ingredients of social fabric. New ideas such as liberty, equality, nationalism etc. took shape. This influenced structure of society and created new set of ideologies and socio-political contestations. Many earlier sociologists were product of such epochal periods and carried forward a tradition of progressive thoughts. Saint Simon was directly influenced by French Revolution, whereas Comte lived in the aftermath of the French Revolution. These earlier sociologists gave thoughts to understand and examine ongoing socio-cultural upheavals and human affairs. For instance, Comte (ref) brings together moral and social philosophy, philosophy of history and epistemology and methods of particular of sciences. Karl Marx and Max Weber, who are also counted as founding fathers of sociology, have used history in their sociological analysis. Marx's analysis of social change and historical materialism are the examples. Similarly, Weber has found elaborations of his concepts such as rationalisation, modernity, capitalism, secular society, city and ideal types in the womb of history and its analysis. As indicated earlier too,

Weber in his work, 'Economy and Society', bring out historical explanations to elaborate his propositions of secular theories about the origin and consequences of particular historical phenomenon, from protestant ethic to the modern state.

Many in intellectual in the field of sociology have worked towards developing social history. More specifically, at the turn of 19th and 20th century few historians in German speaking countries and other nations, who dared to deviate the traditional pathways of the discipline, gradually began to appear to contribute to the development of social history. For instance, J. H. Turner explained America's position in terms of boundaries between civilisation and wilderness. C. A. Beard interpreted and analysed American civil War as a conflict between industrialised north and agrarian south. Similarly, Belgian Henri Pirenne developed a socio-economic history of Europe. Dutch Scholar John Huizinge dedicated his work to the late middle ages and made a significant contribution to cultural history. Further, after short-while sort of stagnation, in the in the 1920s there was a significant shift towards history. This shift was actually associated with Annals School which was initiated by two renowned professors of university of Strasbourg, Lucien Febvre (1878-1956) and Marc Bloch (1856-1944) who were influenced by Durkheim's sociology. They advocated for a broad based study of history. Furthermore, as time advanced, sociology too grew in its approach and methodological traditions. Although sociology and history during 20th century diverged a bit, but a complete separation could never occurred. It was primarily for this reason that a new and interesting research orientation namely historical sociology took shape and gradually got a prominent place in the sociological studies. History eventually helped in substantiating sociological analysis of past and its relevant to the present. If one look for its roots in sociological theories, Parsons' structural-functionalism may be said to be one of the critical motivating factor which bring sociology and history at one place. Further, Robert Neelly Bellah in 1957 published a book titled, 'Takigawa Religion', which revealed Japanese equivalence of the protestant ethic. Neil J. Smelser in 1959 in his book, 'Social change in Industrial Revolution', attempted to explain nature of social change by examining development of cotton industry during the English industrial revolution. Similarly, Talcott Parsons in 1960s developed his theory of social evolution based on concept of increasing adaptive capacity of the system through functional differentiation in works such as *Societies: Evolutionary and Comparative Perspective* (1971a) and, 'The System of Modern Societies' (1971b). Furthermore, in mid 1970s, Norbert Elias worked on theory of civilisation wherein he elaborately covers historical changes in personality, behaviour and the theory of state formation.

It is said that the golden age of sociology was probably was in the years from 1946 to 1960s, it was when it's scientific focus seemed candid, its future appeared prospective and its intellectual leaders sure of themselves on what to do and how to do. However, with the change of time, societal needs and overall social discourse since the 1960s globalisation, the emergence of interconnected world, network society, information revolution and cultural studies have transformed the context of sociology. Modernity became subject of past. Sociologist in last couple of decades become much concerned with 'post' such as post-industrialisation, post-colonialism, post-positivism, post-modernity or post-structuralism. Various sociologist such as Habermas (Communicate action and public sphere), Foucault (modernity and prison system), Anthony Giddens (Modernity) and others have worked and used historical perspective to elaborate their sociological analysis.

Even though both sociology and history are two different intellectual disciplines in the domain of social sciences, both the disciplines differ in their methods, approaches and purposes. John H. Goldthorpe (1991), who studied history in mid-twentieth century at university college, London, compares the research approaches of both sociology and history. He claims that both sociology and history differ in their orientation towards present and past respectively. Historians emphasise their findings as time-space localised whereas sociologists believe their understanding transcends space-time dimension. Thus, the major difference between sociology and history is with regard to the nature of data or evidences put for analysis. Sociologists much concerns with the past and primary data whereas historians are concerns with the past and look for secondary data in achieves or past events. For a richer sociological analysis, it is often argued that the sociologists should be historically aware- they should be aware of historical setting and limits which should inform their analysis of social issues. Goldthorpe (1991) argues that history and sociology are two significantly different intellectual enterprises. He concludes that it is wrong to conclude to consider sociology and history as one. History in no sense is a natural science like sociology. It does not seek colourless units. It is said that history interprets whereas natural science explains. Historians collect the concrete and interpret it as unique phenomenon whereas sociologists work on hypotheses, classify and arrange data in relevant and different categories to explore and formulate the typical propositions.

It is a fact that sociology and history do not speak same language. The two professions diverge on many counts. notably, one need not to see only just two different professions but structures with distinct languages, style of thinking and values shaped by differences in education and training. It is said that sociologists have crave for numbers, historian for dates and words; sociologists recognise rules and ignore variations whereas historians stress on the individuals and specific. Furthermore, sociology differ from history in the sense that the sociologists seek generalised uniformities and processes to form typology of concepts which differ

Sociology and History: Differences

Sociology and history are two different disciplines in the domain of social sciences differ in their methods, approaches and purposes. Sociologists have crave for numbers, historian for dates and words. Sociologists recognise rules and ignore variations whereas historians stress on the individuals and specific. Sociologists seek generalised uniformities and processes to form typology of concepts which differ from the exact data sets proposed in a particular case by the historians. History is seen as concrete and descriptive science of society. History attempts to construct a picture of social past. On the other side, sociology said to be abstract and theoretical science of society. Scope of sociology in this respect considered broader than the history.

from the exact data sets proposed in a particular case by the historians. Many scholars called history as concrete and descriptive science of society. History attempts to construct a picture of social past. On the other side, sociology said to be abstract and theoretical science of society. Scope of sociology in this respect considered broader than the history. Sociology is not only concerned with the social present, but with the social past too. Sociology thus covers a wider range of issues; often go with broad purpose and transcend time and space limits to produce generalisation grounded in theoretical propositions.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Discuss interrelationship between sociology and history.

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- 2) Discuss differences between sociology and history.

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- 3) Which of the following sociologist used history in their sociological analysis?

- a) Auguste Comte
- b) Emile Durkheim
- c) Karl Marx
- d) All given above

4.3 HISTORICAL SOCIOLOGY AS SUB-DISCIPLINE

Historical sociology is a branch or sub-discipline of sociology. It emerged as a result of intersection between sociology and history. Both the disciplines have come closer in terms of concepts and theoretical underpinnings to delineate on common themes which touch boundaries of the two. This boundary-crossing phenomenon has led to the development of sub-field named historical sociology. Historical sociology uses history in its analysis. Furthermore, it may be noted that the issues of change and growth in family, kinship issues, migration, dowry system, etc. all have past which have influences on their present status. This past holds important clues to understand the present status of the problem or issue under consideration. Historical sociology has been interested in how people, communities and societies have been changing over period of time, how they have transformed themselves to the contemporary modern societies? How have the great transformation such as imperialism, renaissance, French revolution and industrial revolution have shaped the modern world? Many earlier sociologists such as Khaldun, Comte, Spencer, Weber, Durkheim, etc. as discussed earlier, have enormously contributed to the field. For example, Max Weber, in his study,

'The City', published way back in 1921, used historical paradigm and examine the role of city as a carrier of modern capitalistic economy and as a precursor to modern nation-state. Besides critical contributions of earlier sociologist in drawing their theoretical proposition on line of history, it is said that George Balandier in France and Robert Nisbet in America were pioneers to draw attention towards relevance of historical perspective. S.N. Eisenstadt, B. Moore, T. Skocpol, C. Tilly, J. Habermas, M. Castells, A. G. Frank and I. Wallerstein all gave prominent place to history in their sociological analysis and theoretical reflection on development paradigms in the modern world.

Historical Sociology

Historical sociology is a branch or sub-discipline of sociology. It emerged, during the twentieth century, primarily as a result of intersection between sociology and history. Historical sociology as a sub-field of sociology is likely to make two major contributions to the discipline. First, it can fruitfully historicise sociological analysis helping to situate any sociological analysis historically. Secondly, it will help to draw on important social issues which critically required historical analysis but somehow avoided or remain neglected in sociological analysis.

The idea of distinct sub-field called historical sociology said to be formed during the twentieth century. It primarily developed due to the distinction sociologist started to make between evidences come from direct observation of the present and from indirect observation of the past. Historical sociologist actually started to make sense of present in relation to past. Situating causal connection or locating the issue in the context become important not only to understand but to examine the contemporary developments thoroughly. For instance, Jurgen Habermas has interpreted developments related to modern history in his work called, 'Theory of Communicative Action'. He critically analysed work of earlier sociologist such as Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Parsons and others on developments related to modernisation, communication, rationality and human liberation. Similarly, Manuel Castells in his well known work, 'The Information Age' has examined changing information systems and identities in the modern world at large in order to understand needs, choices and challenges that humanity is facing today. Furthermore, many scholars like Samir Amin (1989), James M. Blaut (1993), Jack Goody (1996), Andre Gunder Frank (1998) worked in the field of historical or political sociology. They explored the history of emergence of modern world to contest the privileged place of Europe as it got in the human social thought and affairs. They essentially challenged the idea that the modernity evolved in Europe and then spread to rest of the world. Within the domain of historical sociology, they contested the time and space binaries, disputed the very idea of euro-centric notion of development to bring out the critical role played by indigenous peoples beyond Europe and America.

Historical sociology which essentially goes to history to understand a problem is critically important to the growth of the interdisciplinary scholarship to widen the spectrum of knowledge creation. Historical sociology as a sub-field of sociology is likely to make two major contributions to the discipline. First, it can fruitfully historicise sociological analysis helping to situate any sociological analysis historically. This will not only add value to the analysis, but will ground the sociological analysis contextually by specifying their time and space limits and thus attaching the same with other empirical generalisations. Secondly, a greatly broadened historical sociology will help to draw on important social issues

which critically required historical analysis but somehow avoided or remain neglected in sociological analysis. Many sociologist advocates that history should inform sociological analysis or sensibilities of the sociologist not only while studying social evolution, change in culture and civilisation or developmental tradition, but even when we are studying stability or everyday life reality.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Discuss historical sociology as an outcome of intersection between sociology and history.

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- 2) Who are the prominent sociologists that have worked in the domain historical sociology? Discuss.

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- 3) Who among following inspired the growth of historical sociology in America?

- a) George Balandier
- b) Robert Nisbet
- c) Max Weber
- d) Karl Marx

4.4 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have examined the meaning and definition of history and its interrelationship with sociology. We have seen how sociology and history are closely interrelated and actually are dependent on each other? History of culture and institutions is helpful in understanding past society, its activities and

development. Similarly, sociology offers its tools such as social imagination, ideal types and so on which help in understanding and conceptualise past social events. We have also examined, how sociology is concerned with present but interested to situate its context in past. It was noted that the both disciplines need each other to make a complete assessment of an issue. Sociology need to see past to understand the context and add value to its analysis. Similarly history also takes into account socio-cultural aspects while studying historical phenomena. Historian also needs social background and at times sociological concepts as well to write and explain historical phenomenon elaborately.

In this unit, we have also made an assessment of differences between sociology and history. It is described that sociology is much concerned with present whereas history with past. Their approaches and purposes too differ accordingly. Furthermore, it may also be noted that the relationship between the two disciplines is marked by a number of myths and misconceptions too. For instance, sociologists are often considered by historians as professionals whose abstract jargons lacks sensitivity to particular time and places. On the other side, historians are often seen mere collectors of information who are unable to analyse their knowledge with required sophistication and methodical precision. History said to be more concrete and descriptive whereas sociology is considered more abstract and theoretical science. Though closely related to each other, the two disciplines are said to be two different intellectual enterprises in terms of their purposes, world views, approaches and methods.

we have also described how historical sociology as an outcome of intersection of the both the disciplines have emerged. It is also described that the historical sociology as branch of sociology has critically contributed to the growth of an interdisciplinary scholarship. Many sociologists, from the beginning of sociology as major discipline, such as Marx, Weber, Durkheim, later on Castells, Amin, Frank, Blaut as discussed, have elaborately contributed in this field. In nutshell, both sociology and history, though being two different disciplines in the domain of social sciences, are very much closely interrelated and supplements each other's field of studies.

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UNIT 5 RELATIONSHIP OF SOCIOLOGY WITH ECONOMICS*

Structure

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Relationship of Sociology with Economics
 - 5.2.1 Definition of Sociology
 - 5.2.2 Definition of Economics
 - 5.2.3 Differences Between Sociology and Economics
 - 5.2.4 Definitions Given by Different Economist and their Relation to Sociology
 - 5.2.5 Definitions Given by Different Sociologists and their Relation to Economics
- 5.3 Economic Sociology as a Sub-Discipline of Sociology
 - 5.3.1 History of Economic Sociology
 - 5.3.2 Contemporary Economic Sociology
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- 5.4 Common Issues Concerning Both Sociology and Economics
 - 5.4.1 Unemployment
 - 5.4.2 Child Labour
 - 5.4.3 Inequality
- 5.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 5.6 References

5.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the origin and development of the discipline;
- Describe its subject matter;
- Understand the reciprocal relationship between sociology and economics; and
- Analyze common issues concerning both sociology and economics.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses sociology and its relationship with economics. There is always a connection between the social conditions of a period and the ideas which are dominant in that period. The development of sociology as a scientific discipline can therefore be traced back to the period of European history which experienced tremendous social, political and economic changes as embodied in the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution of seventeenth-eighteenth century. This was also known as the Enlightenment period because of the development of science and the positivist philosophy. Social thought, Social Philosophy and Social theory are the various stages that signify the development of sociological theories over several periods and ages. Sociology as a branch of social sciences

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has its own characteristics. It is different from other social sciences in certain respects.

Following are the main characteristics of Sociology:

- a) *Sociology is an Independent Science:* Sociology has now become a completely independent discipline and it is no more treated as a branch of any other social sciences like history, political science or philosophy. As an independent discipline, it has developed its own field of study, boundary and method.
- b) *Sociology is a social science and not a physical science:* Sociology belongs to the network of social sciences and not to the physical sciences like Physics, Chemistry or Biology. As a social science it focuses on man, his social behavior, social activities and social life. Instead of the above we can say
- c) *Sociology developed as an independent discipline out of Social Philosophy*
- d) *It was a discipline that evolved when it was realized that society is a constructed entity and can change like it did during the French and American Revolutions.*

5.2 RELATIONSHIP OF SOCIOLOGY WITH ECONOMICS

5.2.1 Definition of Sociology

Sociology focuses on organization of social relationships and attempts to analyze the dynamics of organized patterns of social relations and social behavior. One can say that primarily it tries to answer three basic questions. Firstly, how and why societies emerge? Secondly how and why societies persist? And how and why societies change? Most of the sociologists agree on the following,

- a) The major concern of sociology is with the analysis of human social behavior and relationships.
- b) Sociology gives attention to the study of primary social institutions such as family and maintenance of social order.
- c) Sociology focuses on evolution, transformation and functioning of social life.
- d) Sociology deals with social process such as co-operation and competition, accommodation and assimilation, social conflict, communication in society, social differentiation and social stratification.

Sociology has its own methodology and is based on empirical data collection and inductive reasoning but also has deductive aspects at the level of generalizations.

Sociology

Sociology is an important discipline because it concerns our own lives as human beings. All humans are social- we could not develop as children or exist as adults without having social ties to others. Society is thus the very condition of human existence. At the same time, we all actively shape the society in which we live. Hence, sociology is a general science of society.

Economics is a social science that deals with human wants and their satisfaction. Classical economics assumes that people have unlimited wants and the resources to satisfy these wants are limited. They are always engaged in work to secure the things they need for the satisfaction of their wants. The farmer in the field, the worker in the factory, the clerk in the office, and the teacher in the school are all at work. The basic question that arises here is: Why different people undertake these activities? The answer is that they are working to earn income with which they satisfy their wants.

People have multiple wants to satisfy. People's multiple wants includes basic needs such as food, cloth, shelter and other needs like better education, better health facilities etc. According to one perspective it is assumed that there is no limit for human wants, it is insatiable. When one wants get satisfied, another want automatically takes place and so on in an endless succession. Hence, we say that it is impossible to satisfy one's want. People earn money by doing some work or activity and they use this money to satisfy their wants. Economics is about the conversion of raw material into usable good, called production. The use of these goods called consumption and the distribution of resources in society.

Thus human activities have two common aspects; first, we are all engaged in providing for our needs, and secondly, needs vary for different goods and services. This *action of acquiring resources and spending* is called *economic activity*. Seligman says, the starting point of all economic activity is the existence of human wants. Wants give rise to efforts and efforts secure satisfaction. The things which directly satisfy human wants are called consumption goods. A few consumption goods like air, sunshine, etc. are abundant. They are available at free cost. But most of goods are scarce. They are available only by paying a price. And, therefore, they are called economic goods. They do not exist in sufficient quantity to satisfy all wants.

Economics

Economics is the study of consumption, production and wealth distribution

As a science of society, Sociology is highly concerned with the institutions and associations of human beings. Sociology is the scientific studies of human interactions and inter-relations, their conditions and consequences. But Economics deals with economic activities of man. It is basically a science of wealth and choice. According to Prof. Robbins, "*Economics is a social science which studies human behavior in relation to his unlimited ends and scarce means which have alternative uses.*" It largely focuses on the activities of man such as production, consumption, distribution and exchange. It also studies the structure and functions of different economic organizations like banks, markets etc... From this, it is obvious that Economics is concerned with the material needs of humans as well as their material welfare.

However, there exists a great deal of inter-relationship between these two important branches of social sciences. Both are interdependent and inter-related. Because of this inter-relationship, Thomas opines that, "Economics is, in fact, but one branch of Sociology." Similarly Silverman opines that Economics is

regarded as an offshoot of sociology which studies the general principles of all social relations. Their inter-relationships are as follows:

Economics is concerned with material welfare of individuals which in turn is the basis for common welfare. In order to achieve common welfare, Economics takes help from all social sciences and mostly from sociology. For its own comprehension, economics takes help of sociology and depends on it. Economics is a part of sociology hence without the help from sociology; it is very difficult to understand economics completely.

We knew that economic welfare is a part of social welfare. When there are economic problems in society, such as inflation, poverty and unemployment, economists usually take the help of sociology and they take into account the social events occurred at that particular time. At the same time it is true that society controls the economic activities of an individual. Classical sociologists like Max Weber, Vilfredo Pareto etc have done extensive and rigorous research on economy and society which was later great beneficial for economics. Some economists also consider economic change as an aspect of social change. Usually generalization of any economic problem is based on the data collected/provided by sociology. Thus it is very clear that economics cannot go far alone or develop as an independent subject of social sciences without the help of sociology.

Similarly, Sociology too takes help from economics. Economics greatly enriches sociological knowledge. Economic factors greatly influence each and every aspects of social life. Some of the important social problems like dowry, suicide etc. cannot be sociologically analyzed without the help of economics because these social problems are mainly of economic crisis. Hence, we can say that economics is a part of sociology and without the help of economics; sociologists will not be able to find solutions for many social problems. Economics greatly contribute to the field of sociological knowledge and research. The well-known social scientist Karl Marx said that economic relations constitute the foundation of society. Economic factors play a vital role in every aspect of our social life and so, Sociologists are concerned with economic institutions. For this reason, Sociologists like Spencer, Weber, Durkheim and others have relied on economics in their analysis of social relationships.

The fact that society is largely influenced by economic factors while economic process determined by the social conditions does suggest that the relation between Sociology and Economics is very intimate. Economics can be defined as a study of human beings in ordinary business of life or in other words, it is the sciences of wealth in its three phases of production, distribution and consumption.

The area of co-operation between Sociology and Economics is widening. Economists are more and more making use of the sociological concepts in the study of economic problems. Economists work with sociologists in their study of the problems of economic development in underdeveloped countries. Combined efforts of both the experts may be of great practical help in meeting the challenges.

Thus it is clear from the foregoing paragraphs that both sociology and economics are very closely related to each other. There are some problems which are studied by both sociologists and economists. Economic changes result in social changes and vice versa.

5.2.3 Differences Between Sociology and Economics

Despite the above discussed interrelationship between sociology and economics, both the sciences have certain differences which are discussed below:

- 1) Sociology primarily studies about society and social relationships whereas economics studies about wealth and choice.
- 2) Sociology emerged as a science of society very recently whereas economics is comparatively an older science.
- 3) Sociology is considered as an abstract science whereas economics is considered as a concrete science in the domain of social sciences.
- 4) Sociology generally deals with all aspects of social science whereas economics deals specific aspects of social science.
- 5) Sociology has a very wide scope whereas economics scope is very limited.
- 6) Sociology is concerned with the social activities of individuals whereas economics is concerned with their economic activities.
- 7) Society is studied as a unit of study in Sociology whereas individual is taken as a unit of study in economics.
- 8) Both Sociology and economics differ from each other in respect of the methods and techniques they use for their study.

5.2.4 Definitions Given by Different Economists and their Relation to Sociology

According to A.C. Pigou, “Economics studies that part of social welfare which can be brought directly or indirectly into relationship with the measuring rod of money.” Here, instead of taking individualistic needs and concerns, he is concerned with the society as a whole which is the basis of the subject of Sociology. Here, he opines that social relations are formed due to the presence of wealth which is the domain of Economics. If we look at societal relations, we observe that in most of the cases, the rich wish to interact and spend time with the rich only and seem to ignore the presence of the poor. Moreover, the rich often feel superior over the poor owing to large chunks of money which they possess due to which they fulfill their material needs by buying both cheaper and expensive commodities. In addition, the poor often feel uncomfortable while interacting with the rich and develop a feeling of inferiority owing to lack of resources. Hence, wealth tends to affect the formation of social groups in the society.

John Stuart Mill (1844) defines the subject of economics in a social context as:- “The science which traces the laws of such of the phenomena of society as arise from the combined operations of mankind for the production of wealth, in so far as those phenomena are not modified by the pursuit of any other object.” Clearly, the concept of societal effect on the economic activities is reflected in the above definition and the laws of nature prevalent in the society which form the basis for the production of economic output.

According to Alfred Marshall, who was a neo-classical economist: “Economics is the study of mankind in the ordinary business of life; it examines that part of individual and social action which is most closely connected with the use and attainment of material requisites of well-being.” This shows that Economics is concerned with the study of man and deals with their activities in the social setup i.e. study the activities of human being in the social setup. It is the study of man in one hand and social organization of economic activities on the other hand. He developed an original view of the relation between individuality and societal aspect by saying that, “Perhaps the earlier English Economists confined their attention too much to the motives of individual action. But in fact economists, like all other students of social science, are concerned with individuals chiefly as members of the social organism. As a cathedral is something more than the stones of which it is made, as a person is something more than a series of thoughts and feelings, so the life of society is something more than the sum of lives of its individual members. It is true that the action of the whole is made up of that of its constituent parts; and that in most economic problems the best starting-point is to be found in the motives that affect the individual, regarded not indeed as an isolated atom, but as a member of some particular trade or industrial group. While including the welfare of the society as a whole, he is rejecting a way of characterizing society as set of isolated and competitive individuals which presupposes the human interaction to take place in the society for people to not have any clashes of interest.

Sir James Steuart (1767) is the premier English economist to use the concept of ‘political economy’ by saying that, Economy in general, is the art of providing for all the wants of the family’, so the science of political economy seeks ‘to secure a certain fund of subsistence for all the inhabitants, to obviate every circumstance which may render it precarious; to provide everything necessary for supplying the wants of the society, and to employ the inhabitants... in such a manner as naturally to create reciprocal relations and dependencies between them, so as to make their several interests lead them to supply one another.” He introduced many essential elements of society such as family, population, social interaction, exchange. which are subject matters of sociology. Hence, the relation between Economics and Sociology seems well established.

5.2.5 Definitions Given by Different Sociologists and their Relation to Economics

Max Weber defines sociology as “The science which attempts the interpretative understanding of social action in order thereby to arrive at a casual explanation of its cause and effects.” It deals with cause and effect principle which is commonly found in Economics and the various policies related to it. There are many causes that lead to different societal effects. For examples, The French Revolution was due to the atrocities and injustices faced by ordinary people leading to poor economic welfare and also due to sprouting up of the notion in the minds of the people about the notion of blaming humans for everything injurious they suffered and not finding out probable reason for the same. Thus, the given revolution was a result of economic and behavioral i.e. sociological aspect and both are interconnected to each other leading to a common effect i.e. revolution.

Morris Ginsberg defines sociology in the following way: “In the broadest sense, sociology is the study of human interactions and inter-relations, their conditions and consequences”

There are many factors that govern this interaction which includes emotional, behavioral, as well as economic factors. For example, Parents fulfill all the economic needs of their children (till the time they are competent and able to earn money) in a family i.e. social institution, by making available all the necessary goods and services for their children. Further, a man often looks after all the material needs of his wife which becomes the part of social interaction. Hence, these social interactions include the economic aspect which is of prime importance.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Discuss the relationship of sociology with economics.

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- 2) Elucidate the common issues concerning both sociology and economics.

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- 3) Illustrate the differences between sociology and economics.

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5.3 ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY AS A SUB-DISCIPLINE OF SOCIOLOGY

5.3.1 History of Economic Sociology

One can see the roots of economic sociology in the classical philosophical and social science tradition, however it emerged as a systematic academic subdivision of sociology in less than a century ago. After it became an academic sub discipline of its parent discipline, it has made remarkable contribution in analyzing society from an economic perspective. If we closely observe, we can find out that the birth of economic sociology in the writings of Karl Marx. Smelser, N, J and Swedberg, R says that the first use of the term *economic sociology* seems to have been in 1879, when it appears in a work by British economist W. Stanley Jevons ([1879] 1965). The term was taken over by the sociologists and appears, for example, in the works of Durkheim and Weber during the years 1890–1920. It is also during these decades that classical economic sociology is born, as exemplified by such works as *The Division of Labor in Society* (1893) by Durkheim, *The Philosophy of Money* (1900) by Simmel, and *Economy and Society* (produced 1908-20) by Weber. These classics of economic sociology are remarkable for the following characteristics. First, Weber and others shared the sense that they were pioneers, building up a type of analysis that had not existed before. Second, they focused on the most fundamental questions of the field: What is the role of the economy in society? How does the sociological analysis of the economy differ from that of the economists? What is an economic action? To this should be added that the classical figures were preoccupied with understanding capitalism and its impact on society — “the great transformation” that it had brought about.

5.3.2 Contemporary Economic Sociology

In the recent times, especially after 1980's, economic sociology experienced a remarkable revival. Few sociologists, who were doing rigorous research on the relationship between market and society, contributed a flurry of articles on the networks of market and society, which eventually lead to the revival of economic sociology into an important subfield of sociology. The main contributor of 1980's was Mark Granovetter, who emphasized on the embeddedness of economic action in concrete social relations. In the article *Economic Institutions as Social constructions*, Granovetter argues that institutions are actually congealed social networks, and, because economic action mostly takes place in these networks, social scientists must consider interpersonal relationships while studying economy. He further argues that in the contemporary economic sociology markets are considered as networks of producers watching each other and trying carve out niches. Hence, we can say that such networks are the core area of concern in the contemporary economic sociology.

Karl Polanyi is another renowned contributor to economic sociology, argued that the birth of the free market was an institutional transformation necessarily promoted by the state. This got a general acceptance in the domain of economic sociology.

Convert, B and Heilbron, J in their article *Where Did the New Economic Sociology Come From* provides a detailed account of the emergence of new economic sociology. They argue that the new economic sociology obtained its scientific legitimacy by bringing together two promising new currents: network analysis and neo-institutionalism, along with a more marginal cultural mode of analysis. This has led to the “new economic sociology,” to become one of the liveliest subfields of sociology.

Economic Sociology

According to Britannica encyclopedia, economic sociology is the application of sociological methods to understand the production, distribution, exchange, and consumption of goods and services. Economic sociology is particularly attentive to the relationships between economic activity, the rest of society, and changes in the institutions that contextualize and condition economic activity.

5.4 COMMON ISSUES CONCERNING BOTH SOCIOLOGY AND ECONOMICS

5.4.1 Unemployment

When we talk about unemployment, we generally consider it as an economic problem. However, when we look at the roots of unemployment, one can see that it is equally important for sociology as well. In the eyes of sociologist, unemployment is a social problem, sociologists argue that social factors equally contribute to unemployment. Many of the pioneer sociologists who worked on social problems described unemployment is a product of social factors such as degrading social status, rapid growth of population, drawback in educational system and geographical immobility. A few sociologists have also linked it with the personal factors such as illness, disability, professional unfitness and lack of experiences.

For economists, unemployment is an economic problem. They explain unemployment through the transition of capitalists' societies to post-industrial and in the present globalized economies. Economists argues that the occurrence of unemployment largely depends upon the demand for labour i.e the number of jobs available which falls short of labour supply i.e the number of persons who are willing to work. The reasons for unemployment in India is due to the increasing population of the country and rate at which it's increasing has surpassed the rate at which jobs are created, due to which many people in India are left jobless and they are unhappy in the society. It is also leading to declining welfare and human resource in the country.

5.4.2 Child Labour

Child Labour has become a common dismal practice in many developing countries like India wherein thousands of minors are made to work and are therefore deprived of education, health facilities, leisure activities, and basic freedoms, violating their rights. Most often, it is not the children who decide to start working

instead of going to schools but there are a host of other socioeconomic factors primarily related to their families or households that force them to work. Moreover, these children generally do not get sufficiently paid for their work. In most of the families in rural areas, children are often made to engage in agricultural activities and in urban areas, poor families often send their female children who are seen as a burden to work as maid servants in domestic households. Thus, the cause of child labour is lack of economic resources which force the parents to send their children to work.

5.4.3 Inequality

Inequality is also a common topic of academic enquiry in both economics and sociology. Economist will be looking upon economic inequality whereas sociologist will meticulously analyze the social inequality prevailing in society. Both economic and social inequality can be defined in the following way,

- a) **Economic Inequality** is shown by people on the basis of their different positions within the economic distribution such as people's income, pay and their wealth. Therefore economic inequality is divided into three. These are income inequality, pay inequality and wealth inequality. The first one i.e income inequality refers the extent to which income is distributed unevenly in a group of people. Here we must note that income is not just pay but all the money received from job which includes wages, salaries and even bonuses as well.

Pay inequality is another kind of economic inequality which refers to a person's pay is different to their income. Here pay refers to payment from employment only. And the last type of economic inequality i.e wealth inequality refers to the unequal distribution of assets in a group of people. Here wealth refers to the total amount of assets of an individual or household. It includes their financial assets such as bonds, stocks, property and their pensions.

- b) **Social Inequality**

Social inequality occurs when the social resources are distributed unequally. We can say that it mainly occurs on the basis of class, caste, race and gender. We know that all these are characterized by the existence of unequal opportunities and rewards for the social positions and status it holds. M Haralambos in his much-celebrated book *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives* discusses about social versus natural inequalities. He argues that many stratification systems are accompanied by beliefs that state that social inequalities are biologically based. For example racial inequality/ racial discrimination where whites claims biological superiority over blacks and see this as the basis for their dominance.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) How do you conceive economic sociology as a sub discipline of sociology?

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- 2) What are the common issues concerning for both sociology and explain. Illustrate your answer with suitable examples.

5.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have tried to understand the relationship of sociology with economics. The relation of sociology with economics has been extensively proved in this unit by showing how society is greatly influenced by economic factors and how economic processes are determined by social environment. The conflicts and hatred among the people in the society has its deep route in economics such as property conflicts between parents and their children. We have proved that that most of the economic phenomena has been constantly determined by numerous social needs and social status such as excessive spending on goods and resources in order to raise one's status in the society. Rich people often buy luxury goods for showing off their superiority in terms of wealth over others. An individual's social life such as the type of family, education, authority, marriage, structure, determines factors like family expenditure, credit facilities, and expenditure at the time of marriage, etc. It is the economic factor which influences the individual's life style and needs. The economic needs of the society are generally met through social institutions. Thus, the two subjects are complementary to each other and it is difficult, rather impossible, to study one subject by leaving the other.

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UNIT 6 RELATIONSHIP OF SOCIOLOGY WITH POLITICAL SCIENCE*

Structure

- 6.0 Objectives
- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Relationship of Sociology with Political Science
 - 6.2.1 Definition of Political Science
 - 6.2.2 Shift in the Focus of Political Science
 - 6.2.3 Relationship Between Sociology and Political Science
- 6.3 Political Sociology as Sub-field of Sociology
 - 6.3.1 Distinguishing Between Political Sociology and Sociology of Politics
 - 6.3.2 Concepts Used in Political Sociology
 - 6.3.2.1 Political Culture
 - 6.3.2.2 Political Socialisation
 - 6.3.2.3 Political Capital
- 6.4 Let Us Sum Up
- 6.5 References

6.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you will be able to understand:

- Definition of political science and its interrelationship with Sociology;
- Understanding political sociology as a burgeoning sub-field of Sociology; and
- Concepts used in the field of political sociology.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This unit explains relationship of sociology with political science. Sociology being the study of society and social life also touches various political aspects of human life. Both disciplines, by intersecting each other, attempt to provide useful answers to various issues and concerns of everyday life and policy matters or the issues which we think are of very pressing concerns to society and its functions. For instance, the issues such as governance, civil society, social class and social capital, voting behaviour, power relations among groups, participatory democracy, voluntary associations, government policies and their implications to society, are of vital importance. In fact, these are critical issues which bring boundaries of both sociology and political science closer. As result of this intersection, various sub-disciplines such as political sociology, political anthropology and political economy has cropped up to study socio-political facets of human life with an interdisciplinary framework.

Both Sociology and Political Science essentially deals with human social life and widely share their common interest. However, we may also acknowledge the fact that the approaches of both the disciplines differs, and gives divergent

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views of social life and its dynamics. It is thus important to look into relationship between sociology and political science so as to get a clearer understanding on how both the disciplines deal with the social realities and where does both the disciplines intersect and differ too.

6.2 RELATIONSHIP OF SOCIOLOGY WITH POLITICAL SCIENCE

6.2.1 Definition of Political Science

Political science is generally defined as a scientific study of state, government and politics. Here, probably, the most frequently used concepts are politics, state, power, political socialisation, leadership, governance, decision taking, policy making and its impacts. The concept of politics is central to political science. In fact, sometimes both are used interchangeably. In general, politics is also defined as a process whereby people form, preserve and modify general rules which govern their lives. Such processes generally involve both cooperation and conflict. Politics as an art of governance is thus engaged with the issues of public affair, conflict, multiple decisions making, compromises and consensus at different levels and, thus, essentially delineating concerns related to power and distribution of resources. Now, let us look at some of the meanings attached to the word politics:

Firstly, politics is often considered as an art of government. There are however competing arguments whether politics is a science or an art just as we often have debates on scientific status of sociology as a discipline. In fact, as various scholars note, the word politics is derived from the word, '*polis*' which literally means, '*the city state*'. In the ancient times, Greek society was divided into independent city states, each of which had their own system of governance. In this context, politics or political science is often referred to affairs of polis- means the concerns or the matters related to state and its affairs. Political science as an academic discipline has largely adopted this definition of politics or political science.

Secondly, most essential aspect which defines politics and its nature is what we most often refer to public affair or related to public. Truly, the realm, definition and scope of political science go beyond narrower definition of political science which is simply considered as the study of government or state. Furthermore, the word public as mentioned above may be contested with the word 'private'. These distinctions often classified basing itself on two divergent views of human life. The same categorisation further corresponds to distinction between the state and the civil society as two conceptual categories. For instance, various institutions of state such as bureaucratic machinery, the ministries, the court and tribunals, the police, the army, the social security system and so on can be regarded as public in the sense that these are responsible for the society at large for its organisation, management, and the smooth functioning of social life in the state. Moreover, they are funded at the public expenses, primarily out of tax payers' money. In contrast to this, the civil society is consisted of various social institutions such as family, kinship groups, trade unions, clubs, community groups, private businesses, and so on. They are private in the sense that they are funded and set up by individual citizens to satisfy their own needs and interest rather than those of the larger society at many a times. Thus, there nature is private or individual centric.

Thirdly, politics is often defined in terms its distinctive nature in engaging with the critical issues of compromise, decision making and consensus. Politics is often related with the social machinery aiming towards resolving conflict, mostly through compromise, conciliation and negotiation rather than through the force and naked power all alone. It is primarily in this context that various scholars often define politics and its related processes as, ‘the art of possible’ which is mainly due to the in politics to bring peaceful solutions through dialogue, debates and arbitrations as alternate means of resolving conflict as against often called military solutions. In this effect, rather politics is also qualified to be defined as dispersal of power and resources, as societies required running their community life smoothly and peacefully.

Lastly, the politics is often associated with power and exercise of influence. Scholars thus often define politics as the heart of all collective social activity embedded with formal and informal, public and private binaries in all social groups and institutions. In this sense, politics takes place at every level of social interaction in the society. It can be found within families, peer and kin groups, organisations and nation-state at regional and global levels. In its broadest sense, politics is essentially related to power which is the ability to influence others and achieving desired outcome by whatever possible at one’s disposal. Given the competing demands and limited resources, human beings often put contesting claims and counter claims. Politics is thus often seen as a struggle over limited resources. And power can be seen as the means through which the struggles for such resources take place. In nutshell, Political science is primarily an intellectual discipline, a body of knowledge about structure and function of politics, power, governance and the state. Like the discipline of Sociology, its special task is to impart knowledge about politics rather than the providing practical training to learners about the politics. However, over the period of time the discipline of political science in terms of its nature and scope transformed due its openness to borrow concepts, terms and methods from other disciplines, more so from sociology, thus becoming an intellectual discipline with interdisciplinary approach. It is important to understand that such shift, and appreciate the same before examining relationship between sociology and political science.

6.2.2 Shift in the Focus of Political Science

Nature of political science as a discipline has transformed and changed over a period of time. Hence, the changes from politics to political systems, government to governance and political reasons to social determinants too has taken place in the past. This transformation in political science did not occur in isolation from society. The changes in contemporary globalised and interconnected world essentially reflected in the changing scope and nature of the discipline. Political science is not only shifted its focus but subsequently refined its concepts and approaches towards becoming more of typical social science intellectual discipline in its orientation and approach. Though the historical roots may be deeper, cold war period make political scientists to think around critical issues such as democratic capitalism and authoritarian socialism, political identity focusing on national membership, class, status and hegemony which later on evolved as issues of teaching and research in political science departments across the world.

Furthermore, as mentioned above, it is actually during the cold war years that approach to see political world changed drastically. In fact, the major changes in

political science took place with the advent of behaviourism after World War II. Since then political science began to study political processes and behaviour (Smith 2004). The aim of political science became to study and analyse political phenomena by examining nature of politics, political leadership, decision making and behaviour patterns of individuals and groups as most part of a political system. Moreover, the period from the World War II through the 1990s experienced the disappearing of dominance of Western Europe powers and the rise of new nations in the continents of Africa and Asia. This dismantling of empires eventually coincided with the collapse of Soviet Union and many other communist powers of that time.

Subsequently, the post cold war period witnessed proliferation of transnational economic entities such as the old European market, North American Free Trade Agreement, World Trade Organisation, and the development of regional political bodies such as European Union, Non-Alignment Movement, African Union and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the growth of many transnational/multinational corporations as well as movement organisations such as on environment, labour and human rights groups. All of these generated new forms of political community, debates of political identity and critical concerns around various sociologically crucial issues such as rights, identity, religion, and politics development. Further, in 1990s and afterwards we can also notice a visible spurt in the development of identity politics or politics of identity. For instance, politics around racial and ethnic issues gender justice, communalism and secularism, immigrant politics, ecology and development, indigenous people's politics, politics and issues of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT), along with globalisation as a major discourse; cosmopolitan citizenship, transnational social movement occurred which were earlier absent from the political science discipline (Smith 2004) emerged forcefully. Resultantly, the scope and nature of the discipline has not only widened over the period of time but it has significantly transformed from a traditional base to a new and modern one by incorporating more of an interdisciplinary issues, debates and thus it refined its conceptual categories. Political science in this context has taken a turn and has covered more of sociologically relevant issues such as ethnicity, identity, religion, etc. as discussed earlier. The debates on globalisation, transnationalism, secularism, communalism, identity politics and issues of new media and many other contemporary debates around development significantly revamped political science as mature and typically social science discipline.

6.2.3 Relationship Between Sociology with Political Science

Sociology and political science are closely related to each other in many respects. It is said that the disciplines of sociology and political science are closely interwoven in their analysis of power, authority structures, administration and governance (Lipset 1964). Similarities between sociology and political science are many. Firstly, political science relies heavily upon sociology for its basic theories and methods. For example in mid 20th century Michigan social psychologists and Parsonians at Harvard significantly shaped political science agendas in political behaviour and political development respectively. Secondly, focal specialties in both the discipline borrowed from similar third party disciplines such as economics, history, anthropology and psychology. Thirdly, a large number of scholars such as Marx, Weber, Gramsci, Pareto, Parsons and Mosca, etc. equally have contributed to the growth and development of both the disciplines.

In the same vein, Harold Lasswell's treatise, 'Politics: Who Gets what, When and How' (1936) was an important work from which both sociologists and political scientists get inspired and take lead to work in an interdisciplinary framework (Lipset 1964). It may be noted that given the changing societal need and aspirations in contemporary globalised world an interdisciplinary approach is necessary to understand social problems and find answers to the problems of modern society.

Sociology is often defined as scientific study of society. We may also note that society is nothing but a complex network of various groups, institutions, communities, associations, people and their everyday life activities. Politics and power dynamics forms integral to all of these conceptions of human lives. Notably, polity or political formations has always been the essential components of any human society. In modern times, no society can be imagined without polity, political institutions or, so to say, any form of political life. State and governance are basic to any society both in terms of its function, development and meeting essential needs of social life such as law and order, security and development. Sociology too essentially reflect on status of social world with a focus on social issues and on the condition of human society, the network of social relationships in an increasingly globalised interconnected world, the growing variety of political traditions, caste and politics, ethnicity, cultural background, economic conditions and linguistic affiliations. Sociology examines various aspects of political behaviour with special focus on their social implications. This in fact indicates deeper intersection between sociology and political science. However both the disciplines differ in their approach. Political scientists investigate into rise, fall and changes of governments and their leaders whereas sociologists see governments as social institutions, political behaviour as outcome of social dynamics and leadership as social phenomena having multifarious implications for social developments.

Both sociology and political science intersect at multitude of points and provide a broader analysis of the social reality. Thus, the similarities, between the two, are well appreciated by scholars. However, both the disciplines have differences too which also need to be critically assessed. Sociologists most importantly talk of interaction system, be it within groups, institutions or organisations, whereas political science talk about control mechanism within such groups or organisations. Hence, the frame of reference or perspectives of sociology and political science differ. The former primarily concerned about interactionist views, whereas later focuses on power structure, order and control mechanisms. Scholars argued that when sociological perspective of interaction system is applied to the analysis of political phenomena it tends to become political sociology.

According to Jain and Doshi (1974), when vocabulary of political science is translated into the vocabulary of sociological analysis it is then what we call political sociology. It is in this sense that we can say that Almond Coleman's *The Politics of Developing Areas* (1960) and Rajni Kothari's *Politics in India* (1970) are earlier examples of growing political Sociology. Resultantly, political sociology which is basically an outcome of intersection between sociology and political science, is relatively a newer branch of sociology, studies various political intuitions, associations, organisations, interest groups and multitude of power dynamics in society. Political sociology, which we would elaborate in the subsequent section in this unit, also studies interest groups, political parties,

administrative and bureaucratic behaviour, social legislations, state policies, reforms and political ideologies as its areas of the study.

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Discuss changes in political science in last couple of decades.

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- 2) Discuss relationship between sociology and political science.

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- 3) Which of the following issues are covered by both sociology and political science.

- a) Religion
- b) Ethnicity
- c) Language debates
- d) All the above

6.3 POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY AS SUB-FIELD OF SOCIOLOGY

Political sociology often sees as a new, growing and burgeoning sub-field within the discipline of sociology. It is considered as a connecting bridge between sociology and political science. Sociologists see two way relationships between the two (Rathore 1986). Both have a give and take relationship. Various other scholars see political sociology as a marriage between sociology and political science which studies and brings critically important and newer areas as mentioned earlier which touches both sociology and political science, but could not be adequately studied by either one.

Box 6.1: Political Sociology

Political sociology as a sub-field develops in an attempt to overcome lacuna of behaviouralism, which emerged in 1960s in political science, by correcting its overemphasis on psychological explanation of human behaviour. Political sociology essentially looks into social determinants, social context and more importantly an organic interconnection between politics and society to unpack social aspects of politics and its processes. It is actually in this sense that structures of society and social organs of politics became primary units of analysis in the discipline of political sociology.

Furthermore, the application of sociological tools of analysis to the political phenomena has added to our understanding of political behaviour (Sharma 1978). This cross-bordering of both the disciplines has not only led to develop political sociology as crucial sub-field but both the disciplines have refined themselves, added to their reservoir of concepts and widen their themes and issues and applications to understand and analyse social reality embedded into human society. Areas of research in this domain include analysis of functioning of public agencies, groups and family as an agent of socialisation. Certain other areas such as voting behaviour, political ecology and political community reflect upon themes of political functioning. It is actually political processes through which conception of political membership, allegiance, ideological contestations, value orientation of the groups and identities are formed and transformed, and added to the growing maturity of political sociology as an intellectual discipline. Anthony Giddens's social theory on international relations and European studies, Weber's analysis of spheres of life and Bourdieu's analysis of politics like any other areas of social activity such as education and economics etc are some of the examples indicating the trajectory of growth of the discipline.

6.3.1 Distinguishing Between Political Sociology and Sociology of Politics

Like political sociology, sociology of politics is a subfield of sociology. Sociology of politics also throws light on sociological appraisals of political processes and institutional mechanisms. In contrast to this, political sociology focuses to explain and understand political phenomena and process while relating it to social determinants. As discussed earlier too, political sociology actually underlines the links between politics and society, between social structure and political structure, and also between political behaviour and social behaviour. Political sociology essentially deals with social reasons and contextual aspects of a phenomenon while explaining why people act the way they do. Political sociology unlike sociology of politics is a cross-disciplinary breakthrough which gave a contextualised treatment to any issue under consideration.

Furthermore, if we take an example of party system, political sociology not only investigates functions of a political party, but also underlines its social conditioning and contextual location in order to unpack critical issues under consideration. Similarly sociology of politics sees Indian politics in terms of caste ridden society, whereas political sociology looks into the ways politics has affected the Indian caste system, in what ways this has encouraged politicisation of caste or caste system in the country. In nutshell, sociology of politics provides superficial treatment of the issues whereas political sociology is a perspectival analysis which essentially embedded its examination of the issue in social context.

6.3.2 Concepts Used in Political Sociology

6.3.2.1 Political Culture

This is one of the most used and frequently mentioned concepts in political sociology. It is said that the origin and growth of the terms goes back to 1950s when the terms popularly used and became part of the disciplinary conceptual tools to define social issues and processes. Notably, each nation has certain political norms, values and beliefs which direct how people think and should act about politics. These all constitute political culture of a particular nation. Each nation has its own distinct political culture too. In terms of definition, political culture refers to a set of norms, traditions, conventions, belief systems, and values which are essentially oriented towards the political system. Such cultural elements are shared by the society and relatively distinctive to the given political system of the respective society or the nation concerned.

Box 6.2: Political Culture

The use of the term of Political Culture goes back to the pioneering works of Johann Gottfried Herder, Alexis de Tocqueville and Montesquieu. The recent and modern use of terms appears to begin in political science with Almond's seminal article, "*Comparative Political System*" published in 1956. In the words of Almond the terms political culture refers to the system of orientation to any political action (Forminsano 2001, p. 6).

Political culture is also defined as a subjective orientation of a particular political psychology (belief /cognition), political thought (ideology), and political institutions (preference for certain form of governance system). In this sense, political culture is a distinctive and patterned way of thinking about how a political and economic life of the people ought to be governed. It also reflects on how the society is, how it treats its people and more importantly political culture is about how people think, what are their beliefs and values which set political traditions and direct their political goals. For example, liberty, equality, secularism and democracy are elements of political culture of India. Here, we should also distinguish between ideology and culture. Culture here refers to common beliefs, values and traditions about the government whereas ideology is a set of ideas or policies government ought to pursue. Liberalism, neo-liberalism, capitalism or communism are set of ideologies which certain states see as desirable and organise their political system accordingly. For instance, India after independence adopted democracy as a desired form of polity and mixed economy as its form of economic system and the same has gradually been adopted as political culture in the country. However, it was after 1990s that the neo-liberalism as ideology of the state appears to take precedence over earlier political orientations in India. In this sense, political culture is dynamic too as it keeps changing in accordance with the need of time and convenience of the state and its policy objectives.

6.3.2.2 Political Socialisation

The terms political socialisation is also frequently used term in political sociology. Sociologically, socialisation is a lifelong learning process. The term political socialisation is related to learning of political role or behaviour. People are educated and thus made part and parcel of the larger political culture which continues over generations. Political socialisation is thus basically a social process about how people forms their political attitude, learn their political role and thus

form their political culture. In simple terms, political socialisation refers to a social process whereby people or groups learn political behaviour to fulfil certain expected political role. Most children learn their political values and traditions quite early in their younger age. However, attitudes and norms keep evolving and changing over the period of time as people come in contact with the wider society through various agencies which act as socializing agents. For instance, family, neighbourhood, school and peer groups influence children's attitude and shape their ideas in early age, whereas agencies like mass media, political parties, state, civil society, interest groups shapes people's attitude in later age. Such agencies play critical role in shaping attitude of people. For instance, in contemporary globalised and interconnected world mass media has immense influence to shape thinking and ideas of the people. Information technology driven media is considered a highly empowered entity which spread and share lot of information in short span of time and influence people's opinion and political attitudes tremendously.

Political socialisation may be direct or indirect and unifying or divisive. For instance, socialisation may take place through personal experience or through an agent or agency as mentioned above. Similarly, socialisation creates feeling for unification or 'the other' against certain groups. Thus it may divisive too. The processes of socialisation may or may not be ideologically guided. For instance, certain political parties do train their cadres or target population on the lines of their agenda whereas civil/human rights groups, not going with any particular political ideology or party politics, just attempt to make people aware of their rights.

In nutshell, political socialisation helps in shaping up of political role. Political parties, interest groups and other such organisations train their cadre or members on the line of their agendas. As a concept, political role is related to political behaviour. Sociologically speaking, a role is a socially expected behaviour. The term political role refers to a process when an individual is attached with the set of status and responsibilities to perform within the political field. The society expects it member to perform the same within a given political system. This performance of given role goes hand in hand with the processes of political socialisation by which an individual passes through. This further helps to transmit political culture from one generation to another generation.

6.3.2.3 Political Capital

Political capital is the type of resource which agents accumulate, struggle for and exercises in the field of politics to influence decision and action of others (Kauppi 2003). Political capital is actually a symbolic capital in the field of politics. In general parlance, political capital is a sort of goodwill, trust and prestige a person or politician earn with the public to gain political benefits. Such goodwill and trust a politician or a person earns are actually assets with them to gain public favour.

To understand and assess political capital, any unit such as political party, a regional political formation such as an interest group, a caste association, a confederation of nation-state can be analysed to understand power dynamics, dominance, hegemony and control mechanism embedded into social relations. People with richer political capital often may control more power and dominance.

They may take hold on the same for longer time. Notably, political capital may act as both product and process while winning an election, sustaining an elected office and influencing or mobilising people.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Discuss the emergence of political sociology as an intersection of sociology and political science.

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- 2) What is political socialisation?

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- 3) What are the agencies of political socialisation?

- a) Mass Media
- b) Political Parties
- c) Interest groups
- d) All the above

6.4 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have explained the meaning of political science and its relationship with sociology. We have described how both the disciplines are interwoven and how both the disciplines have borrowed, refined and enriched their terms and concepts over the period of time. We understood how sociology has got intersected with the political science in developing an interdisciplinary framework to understand society and its issues.

As we have also discussed the sub-field called political sociology which is primarily an off shoot of intersection, and conceptual give and take between sociology and political science. The issue such as identity, communalism, civil society, voting behaviour etc are some of the critical concerns which are closer to both political science and sociology. These issues are covered in political sociology, as sub-field of sociology, reflecting on existing intersection between sociology and political science.

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