

1MSW4

SOCIOLOGY

&

SOCIAL WORK



DR. C.V. RAMAN UNIVERSITY

Chhattisgarh, Bilaspur AN AISECT GROUP UNIVERSITY

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DR. C.V. RAMAN UNIVERSITY

Kargi Road, Kota, Bilaspur, (C. G.),

Ph. 07753-253801, 07753-253872

E-mail: info@cvru.ac.in, Website: www.cvru.ac.in

1MSW4
SOCIOLOGY & SOCIAL WORK

Credit- 4

Subject Expert Team

Dr. Richa Yadav

Professor, Dr. C.V. Raman University Kota,
Bilaspur (C.G)

Dr. Reena Tiwari

Associate Professor, Dr. C.V. Raman University
Kota, Bilaspur (C.G)

Dr. Renu Sharan

Associate Professor, Dr. C.V. Raman
University Kota, Bilaspur (C.G)

Ms Annpurna Manikpuri

Associate Professor, Dr. C.V. Raman University
Kota, Bilaspur (C.G)

Course Edited By:

Dr. Dhruv Kumar Dixit

Professor, Sociology Kasarwani P. G. college Jabalpur (M.P.)

Unit Written By:

Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Pathak

Assistant Professor, Dr. C.V. Raman University Kota, Bilaspur (C.G)

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STRUCTURE OF PROGRAM

Title of the Program	: MASTER IN SOCIAL WORK
Program Type	: POSTGRADUATE
Program Credits	: 80
Program Duration	: 2 Years
Eligibility Criteria	: GRADUATION

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE

1. To provide theoretical knowledge and practical understanding of social work, social welfare, human rights, and social development.
2. To develop professional skills and ethical values required for effective social work practice.
3. To promote social responsibility, empathy, and humanitarian values among students.
4. To create awareness about Indian social problems, welfare policies, and development programmes.
5. To prepare students for professional practice, research, and community development activities.
6. To enhance students' ability to work with individuals, groups, communities, and organizations.

PROGRAMME OUTCOME

1. Understand the concepts, principles, values, and methods of social work.
2. Analyze social problems, human needs, and welfare issues at local, national, and global levels.
3. Apply social work methods and skills in different practice settings.
4. Demonstrate professional ethics, empathy, and social responsibility.
5. Understand the role of NGOs, government organizations, and welfare agencies.
6. Develop communication, leadership, and teamwork skills.
7. Promote human rights, social justice, and inclusive development.
8. Engage in community development, social reform, and social welfare programmes.
9. Use critical thinking and problem-solving abilities in social work practice.
10. Prepare for employment, higher education, research, and social service careers.

STRUCTURE OF COURSE

Course Title	:	SOCIOLOGY & SOCIAL WORK
Course Type	:	CORE COURSE
Course Code	:	1MSW4
Course Credits	:	4
Semester	:	1

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Students can able to know the correction of Society and social work .
- Students can learn about community committee.
- Students can get the knowledge of women children welfare programs , problem of backward cast and settlement.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Student should be able to relate society with social work
- Student should know about community and committee
- Student should know the different welfare programs
- Student should know problems of backward caste and settlement

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This block provides a foundational understanding of Sociology and its relevance to Social Work. It introduces students to the basic concepts required to understand how societies function and how social relationships influence human behaviour. The block explains the nature and scope of sociology and highlights its importance in studying social structures, institutions, and interactions. It also emphasizes the connection between sociological knowledge and professional social work practice, showing how sociological perspectives help social workers understand social problems and design effective interventions. In addition, the block explores the concept of human society and explains how it differs from animal society in terms of culture, values, norms, and organized social relationships. Through these discussions, learners gain insight into the complex nature of human social life and the factors that shape social organization. Overall, this block builds a conceptual base that helps students analyze social realities and prepares them to apply sociological understanding in addressing social issues through social work practice.

UNIT 1

Sociology – Meaning, Definition, Nature and Scope

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Objectives
- 1.3 Meaning and Definition
- 1.4 Nature of sociology
- 1.5 Scope and subject matter
- 1.6 preamble
- 1.7 Summary
- 1.8 Glossary
- 1.9 Answer to check your progress
- 1.10 Suggested readings - OER
- 1.11 Reference
- 1.12 Exercise

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In your previous learning experiences, you have already been exposed to basic ideas about society, social life, and human interaction through everyday observations, earlier education, and general knowledge. Human beings live in society and continuously interact with family, community, institutions, and social groups. These interactions shape behaviour, attitudes, and social relationships. Sociology builds upon this existing knowledge by providing a scientific and systematic understanding of society and social behaviour.

This unit introduces Sociology as a discipline by explaining its meaning, definition, nature, scope, objectives, and preamble. It also highlights the close relationship between Sociology and Social Work, emphasizing how sociological knowledge supports professional social work practice through Applied Sociology. Further, the unit discusses the concept of society, its basic elements, and explains human society and animal society along with their differences. Through these themes, learners will gain a comprehensive understanding of the foundational concepts required for the study of Social Work.

The contents of this unit will help learners relate sociological concepts to real-life situations such as family life, community living, social institutions, and social problems. By connecting theory with everyday social experiences, learners will be able to better understand human behaviour, social structures, and social change. This understanding

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will serve as a strong base for further units and will assist learners in applying sociological knowledge effectively in social work education and practice.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF SOCIOLOGY

After reading this section, you will be able to:

- Define the concept of social structure and social institutions.
- Explain the objectives of studying society scientifically.
- Describe the role of sociology in analyzing social relationships.
- List the causes and consequences of major social problems.
- Examine the factors responsible for social change.
- Analyze the role of sociological research in policy planning.

1.3 MEANING AND DEFINITION

Sociology is the scientific study of society, social relationships, social institutions, and social processes. It seeks to understand how human behaviour is shaped by social interactions and social structures. Sociology explains patterns of social life, social change, and social problems in a systematic manner.

The term Sociology is derived from the Latin word Socius meaning society and the Greek word Logos meaning study or science. Thus, Sociology means the science of society.

Some important definitions of Sociology are:

- **Auguste Comte:** Sociology is the science of social phenomena.
- **MacIver and Page:** Sociology is the study of social relationships.
- **Giddings:** Sociology is the science of social behaviour.

These definitions show that Sociology focuses on society, social interactions, and social relationships rather than individual behaviour alone.

Thinker	Definition	Focus
Auguste Comte	Science of social phenomena	Society as a whole
MacIver & Page	Study of social relationships	Social relations
Giddings	Science of social behaviour	Social behaviour

Table 1.1: Definitions of Sociology by Thinkers

These definitions show that Sociology focuses on society, social interactions, and social relationships rather than individual behaviour alone.

NOTE

1.4 NATURE OF SOCIOLOGY

The nature of Sociology can be understood through the following points:

- 1 Sociology is a social science as it studies social life and social behaviour.
- 2 It is scientific in nature, using systematic methods of observation, analysis, and research.
- 3 Sociology is abstract, as it studies social relationships rather than physical objects.
- 4 It is both theoretical and applied, providing knowledge as well as solutions to social problems.
- 5 Sociology studies social relationships, institutions, and processes such as family, religion, cooperation, and conflict.

Thus, Sociology helps in understanding society in a scientific and objective manner.

Aspect	Explanation
Social Science	Studies social life and behaviour
Scientific	Uses systematic methods
Abstract	Studies relationships, not objects
Theoretical & Applied	Knowledge and practice oriented

Table 1.2: Nature of Sociology

Thus, Sociology helps in understanding society in a scientific and objective manner.

1.5 SCOPE AND SUBJECT MATTER

The scope of Sociology is extremely wide because it studies society in its totality as well as in its specific parts. It examines the structure, organization, and functioning of society and analyzes the patterns of social relationships that exist among individuals and groups. Sociology does not limit itself to a single aspect of human life; rather, it covers all dimensions of social existence such as institutions, culture, social processes, and social change.

One of the major areas within the scope of Sociology is the study of social institutions. Social institutions are organized systems of social

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relationships that fulfill essential needs of society. Institutions such as family, marriage, education, religion, economy, and state play a vital role in maintaining social order. Sociology studies how these institutions function, how they influence individual behaviour, and how they contribute to social stability and social change. For example, the family as a primary institution shapes personality and socialization, while educational institutions contribute to knowledge transmission and social mobility.

Another important component of the scope of Sociology is the study of social groups and communities. Human beings live in groups such as family, peer groups, caste groups, class groups, and communities. Sociology examines the structure, functions, and dynamics of these groups. It also studies group interaction, leadership, power structure, and social roles. Understanding group behaviour is essential for analyzing cooperation, unity, and conflict within society.

Sociology also focuses on social processes such as cooperation, competition, conflict, accommodation, and assimilation. These processes explain how individuals and groups interact with each other. Cooperation promotes unity and collective welfare, while conflict may lead to change or transformation in social structures. Through the study of these processes, Sociology helps in understanding the dynamic nature of society.

The study of social change and development is another significant area within its scope. Society is not static; it continuously changes due to technological advancements, economic transformations, cultural shifts, and political developments. Sociology analyzes the causes, patterns, and consequences of social change. It examines how modernization, urbanization, globalization, and industrialization affect social life and social institutions.

Furthermore, Sociology includes the study of social problems such as poverty, unemployment, crime, inequality, discrimination, and social exclusion. By identifying the root causes of these problems, Sociology contributes to social reform and social welfare. In countries like India, sociological studies of caste, gender inequality, and rural-urban disparities play a crucial role in planning developmental policies and welfare programs.

The scope of Sociology is also reflected in its specialized branches such as rural sociology, urban sociology, sociology of education, sociology of religion, political sociology, industrial sociology, and

medical sociology. These subfields expand the discipline's reach into various sectors of society.

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Thus, the scope of Sociology is comprehensive and multidisciplinary. It provides a broad framework for understanding social structure, social interaction, and social change. For students of Social Work, this wide scope offers a theoretical foundation for analyzing social realities and planning professional interventions.

The scope of Sociology is very wide and includes the study of various aspects of social life. It covers:

- 1 Social institutions such as family, marriage, education, religion, and economy.
- 2 Social groups and communities.
- 3 Social processes like cooperation, competition, conflict, and accommodation.
- 4 Social change and social development.
- 5 Social problems such as poverty, unemployment, crime, and inequality.

Through its wide scope, Sociology helps in understanding the structure and functioning of society and provides a base for social planning and social work practice.

Area	Examples
Social Institutions	Family, education, religion
Social Processes	Cooperati

Table 1.3: Scope of Sociology

1.6 PREAMBLE OF SOCIOLOGY

The preamble of Sociology outlines the fundamental purpose and philosophical foundation of the discipline. Sociology emerged as a scientific study of society during the nineteenth century, largely influenced by thinkers like Auguste Comte, who emphasized the need to study society using scientific methods. The preamble highlights Sociology's commitment to understanding social order, social relationships, and social change through systematic observation and analysis.

At its core, the preamble of Sociology emphasizes that society is not merely a collection of individuals but a structured system of relationships, norms, institutions, and values. Sociology seeks to uncover the patterns that regulate social life and maintain social stability. It examines how individuals are influenced by social

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institutions such as family, religion, education, and state, and how these institutions interact with one another.

Another important aspect of the preamble is the focus on scientific and objective analysis. Sociology rejects assumptions and personal biases, instead relying on empirical research, data collection, and logical reasoning. This scientific orientation differentiates Sociology from common-sense knowledge about society. It aims to explain social phenomena based on evidence rather than opinion.

The preamble also underscores the discipline's concern for social harmony, justice, and development. Sociology not only studies society but also contributes to improving it. By analyzing issues like inequality, discrimination, and social conflict, Sociology provides insights that help policymakers, administrators, and social workers design effective social welfare programs.

Moreover, Sociology recognizes the interconnectedness of social phenomena. Economic conditions influence family life; political systems affect education; cultural values shape gender roles. The preamble therefore stresses a holistic understanding of society, where each part is related to the whole.

In relation to Social Work, the preamble highlights the practical application of sociological knowledge. Applied Sociology helps professionals understand community dynamics, social problems, and human behaviour in social contexts. This knowledge is essential for planning interventions, promoting social change, and empowering marginalized groups.

The preamble further acknowledges that society is dynamic. Social change is inevitable, and Sociology seeks to understand both the causes and consequences of change. Whether it is technological progress, globalization, or demographic transition, sociologists analyze how these transformations reshape social institutions and relationships.

In summary, the preamble of Sociology establishes the discipline as a scientific, analytical, and socially relevant field of study. It defines Sociology as a tool for understanding, explaining, and improving society. For social work students, this foundational perspective strengthens their ability to connect theory with practice and to work effectively for social welfare and development.

Check Your Progress – 1

Note: (a) Space is given below for your answer.

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

1. Define Sociology and explain its meaning.

2. Mention any two definitions of Sociology given by sociologists and state their focus.

3. Explain the objectives of Sociology

4. Describe the nature of Sociology with suitable points

5. Discuss the scope of Sociology in brief.

1.7 SUMMARY

This unit introduced Sociology as the scientific study of society, social relationships, institutions, and processes. The meaning and definitions provided by thinkers such as Auguste Comte, MacIver and Page, and Giddings highlight that Sociology focuses on social phenomena, social relationships, and social behaviour.

The objectives of Sociology include studying society scientifically, understanding social institutions, analyzing social problems, and contributing to social development. The nature of Sociology shows that it is a social science, scientific, abstract, and both theoretical and applied.

The scope of Sociology is broad and includes social institutions, social groups, social processes, social change, and social problems. It

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also consists of various specialized branches that examine different aspects of society.

The preamble emphasizes Sociology's commitment to scientific analysis, social harmony, justice, and development. It underlines the importance of understanding society systematically and applying sociological knowledge in professional fields like Social Work.

Overall, this unit provides a strong foundation for understanding society and prepares learners to apply sociological concepts in real-life situations and social work practice.

1.8 GLOSSARY

- **Society** – A group of individuals living together in an organized system of relationships.
- **Sociology** – The scientific study of society, social relationships, and social behaviour.
- **Social Institution** – An organized system of social relationships that fulfills basic needs of society (e.g., family, education).
- **Social Group** – A collection of individuals who interact and share common interests or goals.
- **Social Process** – Patterns of interaction such as cooperation, competition, and conflict.
- **Social Change** – Transformation in social structure and social relationships over time.
- **Social Development** – Improvement in social, economic, and cultural conditions of society.
- **Applied Sociology** – The practical use of sociological knowledge to solve social problems.
- **Social Problem** – A condition that negatively affects a large number of people and requires collective action.
- **Scientific Method** – A systematic process of observation, data collection, analysis, and interpretation used in research

1.9 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-POSSIBLE ONE

Check Your Progress 1

Q1.Answer: Sociology is the scientific study of society, social relationships, social institutions, and social behaviour. It examines how individuals interact within groups and how social structures influence human actions. The term Sociology is derived from the Latin

word *Socius* meaning society and the Greek word *Logos* meaning study or science. Therefore, Sociology literally means the science of society. It seeks to understand patterns of social life, social change, and social problems through systematic and objective methods.

Q2.Answer: Auguste Comte defined Sociology as the “science of social phenomena.”

Focus: Society as a whole and systematic study of social facts.

- MacIver and Page defined Sociology as the “study of social relationships.”

Focus: Social relations among individuals and groups.

These definitions show that Sociology studies society scientifically and emphasizes social relationships rather than individual behaviour alone.

Q3.Answer: The main objectives of Sociology are:

1. To study society and social behaviour in a scientific manner.
2. To understand social relationships and social institutions.
3. To analyze social problems such as poverty, inequality, and crime.
4. To contribute to social welfare and development.
5. To provide useful knowledge for professions like Social Work, education, and administration.

These objectives make Sociology important for understanding and improving society.

Q4. Answer: The nature of Sociology can be understood as follows:

1. It is a social science because it studies social life and human interactions.
2. It is scientific as it uses systematic research methods like observation and analysis.
3. It is abstract because it studies social relationships rather than physical objects.
4. It is both theoretical and applied, providing knowledge as well as practical solutions.
5. It studies social institutions and processes such as family, religion, cooperation, and conflict.

Thus, Sociology helps in understanding society objectively and scientifically.

Q5.Answer: The scope of Sociology is wide and includes:

1. Study of social institutions like family, education, religion, and economy.

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2. Study of social groups and communities.
3. Study of social processes such as cooperation, competition, and conflict.
4. Study of social change and development.
5. Study of social problems like poverty, unemployment, and inequality.

Through its broad scope, Sociology helps in understanding the structure and functioning of society and provides a foundation for social planning and social work practice.

1.10 SUGGESTED READINGS – OER

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectionline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13617	

1.11 REFERENCE

1. Anthony Giddens (2013). *Sociology* (7th ed.). Cambridge: Polity Press.
2. Haralambos Michael & Martin Holborn (2013). *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives* (8th ed.). London: Collins.
3. Horton Paul B. & Hunt Chester L. (2004). *Sociology*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
4. C. N. Shankar Rao (2012). *Sociology: Principles of Sociology with an Introduction to Social Thought*. New Delhi: S. Chand.
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6. Ian Robertson (1987). *Sociology*. New York: Worth Publishers.
7. John J. Macionis (2012). *Sociology* (14th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
8. Alex Inkeles (1964). *What is Sociology? An Introduction to the Discipline and Profession*. New Delhi: Prentice Hall.
9. Auguste Comte (1853/2009). *The Positive Philosophy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

10. Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels (1848/2002). *The Communist Manifesto*. London: Penguin Classics.

1.12 EXERCISE

Part 1

A. Multiple choice question

Q1. Sociology is the scientific study of:

- a) Individual psychology
- b) Society and social relationships
- c) Political systems only
- d) Economic development only

Q2. The term Sociology is derived from which two words?

- a) Greek and French
- b) Latin and Greek
- c) English and Latin
- d) Sanskrit and Greek

Q3. Who is known as the founder of Sociology?

- a) Karl Marx
- b) Emile Durkheim
- c) Auguste Comte
- d) Max Weber

Q4. Sociology is considered a scientific discipline because it:

- a) Studies ancient history
- b) Uses systematic research methods
- c) Focuses only on philosophy
- d) Deals only with political issues

Q5. Which of the following is a social institution?

- a) Mountain

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- b) River
- c) Family
- d) Forest

Answers with Explanations:

1. Correct Answer: (b) Society and social relationships

Explanation:

Sociology focuses on the systematic and scientific study of society, social interactions, and social relationships. It examines how individuals behave within social groups and institutions. It does not study only individual psychology or a single system like politics or economics, but society as a whole.

2. Correct Answer: (b) Latin and Greek

Explanation:

The term Sociology is derived from the Latin word *Socius* meaning companion or society, and the Greek word *Logos* meaning study or science. Therefore, Sociology literally means the science or study of society.

3. Correct Answer: (c) Auguste Comte

Explanation:

Auguste Comte is regarded as the founder of Sociology because he first coined the term "Sociology" and emphasized the scientific study of society. He believed that social phenomena should be studied using scientific methods similar to those used in natural sciences.

4. Correct Answer: (b) Uses systematic research methods

Explanation:

Sociology follows scientific procedures such as observation, data collection, classification, analysis, and interpretation. It relies on empirical evidence and logical reasoning rather than personal opinions or assumptions, which makes it a scientific social science.

5. Correct Answer: (c) Family

Explanation:

A social institution is an organized system of relationships established to fulfill basic social needs. The family is a primary social institution responsible for socialization, reproduction, and emotional support. Mountains, rivers, and forests are natural features, not social institutions.

B. Small answer type question

Fill in the Blanks

SOCIOLOGY – MEANING, DEFINITION, NATURE AND SCOPE

1. Sociology is the scientific study of _____.
2. The term Sociology is derived from the Latin word *Socius* and the Greek word _____.
3. _____ is known as the founder of Sociology.
4. Sociology studies social institutions such as family, education, and _____.
5. _____ refers to transformation in social structure and relationships over time.

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Part 2

C. Long answer type question (answer in 200 words)

Q1. Explain the nature of Sociology?

Q2 Define Sociology and explain its basic meaning?

Q3 State any two objectives of Sociology?

Q4 What is meant by the nature of Sociology? Mention any two features.

Part 3

D. Long answer type question (answer in 300 words)

Q1. Discuss the scope and preamble of Sociology. Explain how Sociology is related to Social Work and contributes to social development.

Q2. Define Sociology and explain its meaning, objectives, nature, and importance in detail.

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UNIT 2

Sociology and social work (Applied Sociology)

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UNIT STRUCTURE

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 objective
- 2.3 Nature of sociology and social work and scope
- 2.4 contents of sociology
- 2.5 Applied Sociology
- 2.6 Relationship between Sociology and Social Work
- 2.7 Use of sociological knowledge in social work intervention
- 2.8 Sociological perspectives in social work practice
- 2.9 Summary
- 2.10 Glossary
- 2.11 Answer to check your progress
- 2.12 Suggested readings - OER
- 2.13 Reference
- 2.14 Exercise

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Sociology and Social Work are closely interconnected disciplines that focus on understanding and improving human life in society. Sociology provides the scientific and theoretical foundation for studying social relationships, social institutions, social structure, and social change. Social Work, on the other hand, is a professional discipline that applies this knowledge to address social problems and promote social welfare. The relationship between the two becomes clear through the concept of Applied Sociology.

The discipline of Sociology was formally established by Auguste Comte, who emphasized the need to study society scientifically. Sociology analyzes how institutions such as family, education, religion, economy, and state influence human behaviour. It examines issues like inequality, poverty, discrimination, crime, and social conflict. This systematic understanding of society forms the theoretical base upon which Social Work practice is built.

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Social Work is concerned with helping individuals, families, groups, and communities to enhance their well-being and cope with social challenges. However, effective intervention requires a clear understanding of social structure, cultural norms, power relations, and community dynamics. Applied Sociology bridges this gap by translating sociological theories and research findings into practical strategies for social intervention and development.

Through Applied Sociology, concepts such as social stratification, social change, social institutions, and community organization are used in designing welfare programs, policy planning, and social reform initiatives. In countries like India, sociological insights are particularly important in addressing issues related to caste, gender inequality, rural development, and urbanization.

Thus, Sociology and Social Work complement each other. Sociology provides analytical tools and theoretical frameworks, while Social Work applies this knowledge to bring about positive social change. Together, they contribute to social justice, empowerment, and sustainable social development.

Meaning and Definition

Applied Sociology refers to the practical application of sociological theories, concepts, principles, and research methods to understand and solve social problems. While Sociology primarily focuses on developing theoretical knowledge about society, Applied Sociology emphasizes the use of that knowledge in real-life situations for social improvement and welfare.

Sociology studies social structure, institutions, relationships, and processes. Social Work, as a professional discipline, utilizes this sociological knowledge to address issues such as poverty, inequality, crime, unemployment, family disorganization, and social exclusion. Therefore, Applied Sociology acts as a bridge between sociological theory and social work practice.

The scientific foundation of Sociology was laid by Auguste Comte, who stressed that society should be studied using scientific methods. Later sociologists expanded this discipline to include applied dimensions, which became highly relevant for professional fields like Social Work.

In simple terms, Applied Sociology means using sociological understanding for practical purposes such as social planning, policy formulation, community development, and welfare administration.

Definition - Applied Sociology may be defined as:

- The practical use of sociological knowledge and research to solve social problems and improve social conditions.

- A branch of Sociology that focuses on applying sociological theories and methods in professional fields such as Social Work, public administration, education, and community development.
- The systematic application of sociological principles to bring about social change, social justice, and social development.

Thus, Applied Sociology provides the theoretical base and analytical tools necessary for effective social work practice and social welfare interventions.

2.2 OBJECTIVE

After completing this unit, learners will be able to:

1. **Apply** sociological concepts and principles to social work practice and interventions.
2. **Analyse** the relationship between sociology and social work in addressing individual, group, and community-level social issues.
3. **Differentiate** between sociological and social work perspectives in examining social problems and human behaviour.
4. **Evaluate** the relevance of sociological theories and concepts in understanding contemporary social issues and social work practice.
5. **Develop** appropriate sociological perspectives for analysing social situations and designing effective social work interventions.

2.3 NATURE OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK AND SCOPE

The nature of Applied Sociology in relation to Social Work reflects its practical, scientific, and problem-solving orientation. It combines theoretical understanding with professional action. The main features of its nature are as follows:

1. Scientific in Approach

Applied Sociology is scientific because it uses systematic methods such as observation, survey, data collection, and analysis to understand social problems. The scientific foundation of Sociology was emphasized by Auguste Comte, who believed that social phenomena should be studied objectively.

2. Practical and Action-Oriented

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Unlike pure Sociology, which mainly focuses on theory building, Applied Sociology is concerned with the practical application of knowledge. It aims at solving real-life social issues through planned intervention and social welfare programs.

3. Problem-Solving in Nature

Applied Sociology identifies the root causes of social problems such as poverty, unemployment, crime, inequality, and social disorganization. It provides analytical tools to develop effective solutions and strategies.

4. Interdisciplinary

It draws knowledge from related disciplines such as psychology, economics, political science, and anthropology to understand complex social issues comprehensively.

5. Change-Oriented

Applied Sociology aims to bring about social change and development. It focuses on improving social conditions and promoting social justice, especially in developing societies like India.

6. Professional and Welfare-Oriented

It supports Social Work practice by providing theoretical frameworks and research-based knowledge necessary for community development, policy planning, and social welfare administration.

Thus, the nature of Applied Sociology is scientific, practical, interdisciplinary, and focused on social change and social welfare.

2.3.1 Scope of Sociology and Social Work

The scope of Applied Sociology is broad and practical in nature. It extends beyond theoretical study and focuses on applying sociological knowledge to address social issues and improve social welfare. Applied Sociology connects sociological concepts with professional social work practice, policy planning, and community development.

1. Study of Social Problems

A major area within the scope of Applied Sociology is the identification and analysis of social problems such as poverty, unemployment, crime, inequality, domestic violence, child labour, and discrimination. It examines the root causes of these problems and suggests practical solutions for their prevention and control.

2. Community Development

Applied Sociology plays an important role in understanding community structure, leadership patterns, power relations, and local resources. It helps in planning and implementing community development programs, especially in rural and urban settings.

3. Social Welfare and Policy Planning

The scope includes the formulation and evaluation of social welfare policies and programs. Sociological research helps governments and organizations design schemes related to health, education, housing, and employment. In countries like India, sociological insights are crucial for addressing caste inequality, gender issues, and rural development challenges.

4. Social Work Practice

Applied Sociology provides theoretical frameworks and research-based knowledge for working with individuals, families, groups, and communities. Concepts such as social stratification, social change, social institutions, and social processes guide professional intervention strategies.

5. Social Change and Reform

It contributes to social reform by promoting awareness, social justice, equality, and empowerment of marginalized groups. It supports initiatives aimed at improving living conditions and ensuring sustainable development.

6. Institutional and Organizational Analysis

Applied Sociology studies the functioning of institutions such as family, schools, hospitals, NGOs, and government agencies to improve service delivery and social welfare administration.

Thus, the scope of Applied Sociology is extensive and multidisciplinary. It bridges theory and practice by applying sociological knowledge to promote social welfare, policy development, and community empowerment.

2.4 CONTENTS OF SOCIOLOGY

The contents of Sociology refer to the main subject matter that Sociology studies as a discipline. It includes various aspects of social life, social structure, and social processes. Sociology is concerned with understanding society in a systematic and scientific manner. The major contents of Sociology are as follows:

1. Society

Society is the primary subject matter of Sociology. It studies the structure, organization, and functioning of society. Sociology examines

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how individuals live together, form relationships, and create social systems.

2. Social Relationships

Sociology studies the network of relationships among individuals and groups. These relationships form the basis of social interaction and social organization.

3. Social Institutions

Social institutions such as family, marriage, education, religion, economy, and state are important contents of Sociology. These institutions regulate behaviour and fulfill essential needs of society.

4. Social Groups

Sociology studies different types of groups such as primary and secondary groups, formal and informal groups, caste and class groups, and communities. It analyzes group structure, roles, and leadership.

5. Social Processes

Social processes like cooperation, competition, conflict, accommodation, and assimilation are key areas of study. These processes explain how individuals and groups interact within society.

6. Social Control

Sociology examines mechanisms of social control such as customs, traditions, laws, norms, and values that maintain order and stability in society.

7. Social Stratification

It studies systems of inequality such as caste, class, gender, and status. In countries like India, caste and class are important areas of sociological analysis.

8. Social Change

Sociology studies the causes and consequences of social change due to factors like industrialization, modernization, urbanization, and globalization.

9. Culture

Culture, including beliefs, values, norms, language, and traditions, is a significant content of Sociology as it shapes social behaviour and identity.

10. Social Problems

Issues such as poverty, unemployment, crime, inequality, and discrimination are studied to understand their causes and suggest solutions.

Thus, the contents of Sociology cover all major aspects of social life. These areas collectively help in understanding society scientifically and provide a foundation for fields like Social Work and social policy planning.

2.5 APPLIED SOCIOLOGY

Applied Sociology is a branch of Sociology that focuses on the practical application of sociological knowledge to solve real-life social problems. While pure Sociology is concerned with developing theories and understanding social phenomena, Applied Sociology uses these theories, concepts, and research findings in practical fields such as Social Work, public administration, policy planning, community development, and welfare services.

The scientific foundation of Sociology was laid by Auguste Comte, who emphasized that society should be studied systematically and scientifically. Over time, sociologists realized that sociological knowledge should not remain limited to theory but should also be used for improving social conditions. This practical dimension led to the development of Applied Sociology.

Meaning of Applied Sociology

Applied Sociology refers to the use of sociological theories, research methods, and concepts to understand, analyze, and solve social problems. It bridges the gap between sociological theory and social action.

Features of Applied Sociology**1. Problem-Solving Oriented:**

It identifies the causes of social problems such as poverty, unemployment, inequality, crime, and discrimination, and suggests practical solutions.

2. Scientific and Research-Based:

It relies on surveys, case studies, interviews, and statistical analysis to design interventions.

3. Action-Oriented:

It emphasizes planning, implementation, and evaluation of social welfare programs.

4. Interdisciplinary in Nature:

It integrates knowledge from psychology, economics, political science, and anthropology.

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5. Development-Focused:

In developing countries like India, Applied Sociology plays a significant role in rural development, gender empowerment, and social policy planning.

Importance of Applied Sociology

Applied Sociology is important because it supports professional fields such as Social Work. Social workers use sociological concepts like social stratification, social change, community organization, and social institutions to understand client situations and plan effective interventions. It also helps governments and NGOs in designing welfare schemes and development programs.

Thus, Applied Sociology transforms theoretical knowledge into practical action. It contributes to social reform, social justice, and sustainable social development by linking academic understanding with real-world application.

2.6 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK

Sociology and Social Work are closely interrelated disciplines. Sociology is the scientific study of society, social relationships, institutions, and patterns of behavior, while Social Work is a professional discipline that applies scientific knowledge to solve social problems and promote social welfare. Sociology provides the theoretical and analytical foundation, whereas Social Work applies this knowledge in practice to bring about social change.

Conceptual Relationship

Sociology helps social workers understand how social structures such as family, caste, class, religion, and education influence individual and group behavior. Social work, in turn, utilizes sociological concepts to design interventions at micro (individual), mezzo (group), and macro (community) levels.

For example:

- A social worker dealing with domestic violence must understand gender roles and patriarchy, concepts explained in sociology.
- When working with marginalized communities, knowledge of social stratification and caste system becomes essential.
- In community development projects, sociological insights into social institutions and power structures guide effective planning.

Thus, sociology provides theoretical tools, while social work provides practical application.

Areas of Relationship with Examples

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1. Social Structure and Social Problems

Sociology studies poverty, unemployment, crime, and inequality as structural issues. Social workers apply this knowledge to develop welfare schemes and rehabilitation programs.

Example: Sociological analysis of poverty (class inequality) helps social workers design livelihood programs for urban slum communities.

2. Socialization and Human Behavior

Sociology explains how individuals learn norms and values through socialization. Social workers use this understanding in counseling and behavior modification.

Example: A child showing delinquent behavior may be influenced by peer groups and family environment. Sociological insight helps in casework intervention.

3. Social Institutions

Sociology examines institutions like family, religion, education, and state. Social work interacts directly with these institutions in practice.

Example: When resolving school dropout issues, a social worker analyzes family background, economic condition, and educational structure.

4. Social Change and Development

Sociology studies modernization, globalization, and secularization. Social workers implement programs that facilitate planned social change.

Example: Understanding modernization theory helps social workers promote women's empowerment initiatives in rural areas.

5. Research and Policy Formulation

Sociology emphasizes scientific research methods. Social work uses these methods for needs assessment and program evaluation.

Example: A social worker conducts surveys to assess the impact of a government welfare scheme before recommending policy improvements.

Basis	Sociology	Social Work	Example
Nature	Theoretical and analytical discipline	Applied and professional discipline	Sociology explains poverty; social work designs poverty

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			alleviation programs
Focus	Study of society and social behavior	Intervention in social problems	Study of caste → Community empowerment programs
Objective	Understand social structure and change	Promote social welfare and justice	Research on unemployment → Skill development initiatives
Method	Research, observation, analysis	Casework, group work, community organization	Study of family conflict → Family counseling
Level of Work	Macro-level (societal analysis)	Micro, mezzo, and macro levels	Social inequality study → Policy advocacy

Sociology and Social Work are complementary disciplines. Sociology offers conceptual clarity and analytical depth, while Social Work operationalizes this knowledge to address real-life social issues. For MSW students, sociological understanding is essential for professional competence, ethical practice, and effective intervention. Without sociology, social work would lack theoretical direction; without social work, sociology would lack practical application.

2.7 USE OF SOCIOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE IN SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION

Sociological knowledge provides the conceptual and analytical foundation for professional social work intervention. It enables social workers to move beyond individual symptoms and examine the structural, cultural, and institutional factors that shape human behavior. By applying sociological theories and concepts, social workers can design interventions that are socially informed, culturally sensitive, and structurally responsive.

1. Understanding Social Structure and Stratification

Sociology explains how class, caste, gender, religion, and ethnicity create inequalities in access to resources and opportunities. Social workers use this knowledge to identify root causes of marginalization.

Example: In a rural village where a Scheduled Caste family faces exclusion from community resources, sociological knowledge of caste stratification helps the social worker advocate for inclusion under constitutional safeguards and implement community awareness programs.

2. Application of Socialization Theory

Sociology studies how individuals acquire norms, values, and behaviors through family, school, and peer groups. This helps social workers understand behavioral issues.

Example: A juvenile involved in delinquency may have been influenced by deviant peer groups. Using sociological insight into differential association theory, the social worker can design group interventions and mentoring programs.

3. Role of Social Institutions

Sociology examines institutions such as family, education, religion, and state. Social workers assess how these institutions affect client well-being.

Example: In cases of school dropout, the intervention includes analyzing family income, parental education, and institutional barriers. The social worker collaborates with schools and government schemes to reintegrate the child.

4. Social Change and Modernization

Sociological understanding of modernization, globalization, and secularization helps social workers manage transition-related conflicts.

Example: In urban migration cases, families experience stress due to cultural dislocation. A social worker uses knowledge of urbanization to provide community support and skill development programs.

5. Use of Conflict Theory in Advocacy

Conflict theory, associated with Karl Marx, highlights power imbalances and structural inequality. Social workers apply this perspective in advocacy and policy reform.

Example: In cases of labor exploitation, social workers organize workers, promote legal awareness, and advocate for labor rights.

6. Functionalist Perspective in Community Work

The functionalist approach, linked with Emile Durkheim, views society as an interrelated system. Social workers assess how dysfunction in one institution affects others.

Example: Substance abuse in a community may reflect unemployment and weak family bonds. Intervention includes employment programs and family counseling.

7. Research and Evidence-Based Practice

Sociology promotes scientific research methods. Social workers use surveys, interviews, and data analysis for needs assessment and program evaluation.

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Example: Before implementing a women empowerment project, a baseline survey is conducted to assess literacy levels, income status, and gender norms.

8. Cultural Sensitivity and Pluralism

Sociological knowledge of culture, norms, and values helps social workers respect diversity.

Example: When working with tribal communities, the social worker considers traditional governance systems and cultural practices while designing development programs.

Sociological knowledge strengthens social work intervention by providing structural analysis, theoretical frameworks, and research tools. It enables social workers to address not only individual problems but also systemic inequalities. Effective intervention requires integrating sociological insight with professional skills in casework, group work, and community organization.

2.8 SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

Sociological perspectives provide conceptual frameworks that help social workers analyze social reality, understand client situations in context, and design appropriate interventions. Rather than viewing problems as purely individual, sociological perspectives situate them within broader structures such as family, economy, polity, culture, and social stratification. In professional social work practice, these perspectives guide assessment, diagnosis, intervention, advocacy, and policy engagement.

1. Functionalist Perspective

Associated with thinkers like Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons, the functionalist perspective views society as a system of interrelated parts working together to maintain stability and order.

Key Assumptions:

- Society is a structured system.
- Each institution performs specific functions.
- Social problems arise due to dysfunction or imbalance.

Application in Social Work:

Social workers analyze how breakdowns in institutions (family, education, economy) affect individuals.

Example: If a child exhibits behavioral issues, the social worker assesses family dynamics, school environment, and peer relationships

to restore social balance through counseling and institutional coordination.

NOTE**2. Conflict Perspective**

Rooted in the ideas of Karl Marx, the conflict perspective emphasizes inequality, power relations, and exploitation within society.

Key Assumptions:

- Society is characterized by competition for resources.
- Social structures benefit dominant groups.
- Inequality leads to social conflict.

Application in Social Work:

Social workers advocate for marginalized groups and challenge systemic oppression.

Example: In cases of labor exploitation or caste discrimination, social workers engage in rights-based advocacy, legal awareness, and community mobilization.

3. Symbolic Interactionist Perspective

Associated with George Herbert Mead and Herbert Blumer, this perspective focuses on everyday interactions and meanings.

Key Assumptions:

- Social reality is constructed through interaction.
- Meaning influences behavior.
- Identity develops through social interaction.

Application in Social Work:

Useful in casework and counseling, where understanding the client's perception of their situation is essential.

Example: A person labeled as "addict" may internalize stigma. The social worker uses therapeutic dialogue to reconstruct positive identity and self-concept.

4. Feminist Perspective

The feminist perspective analyzes gender inequality and patriarchy in social structures.

Key Assumptions:

- Gender is socially constructed.
- Patriarchal systems create unequal power relations.
- Women and marginalized genders face structural oppression.

NOTE

Application in Social Work:

Social workers address domestic violence, gender discrimination, and women's empowerment.

Example: In domestic abuse cases, intervention includes legal aid, counseling, and economic rehabilitation to challenge patriarchal norms.

5. Structural Perspective

This perspective focuses on macro-level social structures such as economic systems, policies, and institutions.

Key Assumptions:

- Social problems are rooted in structural inequalities.
- Individual issues reflect systemic failures.

Application in Social Work:

Promotes policy advocacy, social reform, and structural change.

Example: Homelessness is addressed not only through shelter services but also through housing policy reform and employment programs.

6. Ecological (Systems) Perspective

This approach views individuals as interacting with multiple environmental systems.

Key Assumptions:

- Person and environment are interconnected.
- Problems arise due to poor person-environment fit.

Application in Social Work:

Commonly used in assessment and intervention planning.

Example: A migrant family facing urban stress is supported through community networking, employment linkage, and school enrollment assistance.

Comparative Table: Sociological Perspectives in Social Work

Perspective	Focus	Nature of Problem	Social Work Application	Example
Functionalist	Social stability	Institutional dysfunction	Restore balance	Family counseling
Conflict	Inequality & power	Structural exploitation	Advocacy & empowerment	Labor rights movement
Interactionist	Meaning &	Labeling &	Counseling &	Addiction

SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK (APPLIED SOCIOLOGY)

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	identity	stigma	identity reconstruction	rehabilitation
Feminist	Gender inequality	Patriarchy	Women empowerment programs	Domestic violence intervention
Structural	Systemic barriers	Policy failure	Policy reform & macro practice	Housing rights advocacy
Ecological	Person–environment fit	Environmental stress	Holistic assessment	Migrant support services

Sociological perspectives enrich social work practice by providing multiple lenses to analyze social problems. Functionalism emphasizes stability, conflict theory highlights inequality, interactionism focuses on meaning, feminist theory addresses gender power, structural theory advocates systemic reform, and ecological theory promotes holistic intervention.

Effective social work practice requires integrating these perspectives depending on the context. A competent social worker must analyze problems at micro, mezzo, and macro levels, ensuring interventions are both theoretically informed and practically relevant.

Check Your Progress 1

Notes: a) Space is given below for your answer.

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

1. What is Applied Sociology?

Q2 Who is known as the founder of Sociology?

Q3 State any two objectives of Applied Sociology.

Q4 Mention any two features of the nature of Applied Sociology.

5. How is Applied Sociology related to Social Work?

2.9 SUMMARY

Applied Sociology refers to the practical application of sociological knowledge, theories, and research methods to address real-life social problems and improve social conditions. While pure Sociology focuses on theoretical understanding of society, Applied Sociology emphasizes action, intervention, and social development. It bridges the gap between sociological theory and professional practice.

The foundation of Sociology was laid by Auguste Comte, who emphasized the scientific study of social phenomena. Building on this scientific base, Applied Sociology uses systematic research methods such as surveys, observation, case studies, and data analysis to identify the causes and consequences of social issues.

NOTE

The scope of Applied Sociology includes the study of social problems such as poverty, unemployment, crime, inequality, and discrimination. It plays an important role in community development, social welfare administration, policy formulation, and evaluation of development programs. It is interdisciplinary in nature and draws knowledge from related social sciences.

Applied Sociology is closely related to Social Work. It provides theoretical frameworks and analytical tools that help social workers understand community structure, social institutions, social stratification, and social change. In countries like India, Applied Sociology contributes significantly to rural development, gender empowerment, and social justice initiatives.

Overall, Applied Sociology transforms sociological knowledge into practical solutions. It promotes social reform, supports welfare planning, and contributes to sustainable social development by linking academic study with real-world application.

2.10 GLOSSARY

Applied Sociology – The practical use of sociological theories, concepts, and research methods to solve social problems and improve social conditions.

Social Work – A professional discipline that helps individuals, families, groups, and communities enhance their well-being and cope with social challenges.

Social Institution – An organized system of social relationships established to fulfill basic needs of society, such as family, education, religion, and economy.

Social Structure – The organized pattern of social relationships and institutions that form the framework of society.

Social Problem – A condition that negatively affects a large number of people and requires collective action for resolution.

Social Change – Transformation in social structure, cultural patterns, and social relationships over time.

Social Development – Improvement in social, economic, and cultural conditions aimed at enhancing quality of life.

Community Development – A process of empowering communities to improve their social, economic, and environmental conditions.

Social Stratification – The system of inequality in society based on factors such as caste, class, gender, or status.

Scientific Method – A systematic process of observation, data collection, analysis, and interpretation used in sociological research.

Social Welfare – Organized efforts and services designed to promote the well-being of individuals and communities.

Policy Formulation – The process of developing rules, laws, and programs to address social issues and promote development.

NOTE

2.11 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS- POSSIBLE ONE

1. Answer: Applied Sociology is the practical application of sociological theories, concepts, and research methods to solve social problems and improve social conditions. It bridges the gap between sociological theory and professional practice, especially in fields like Social Work and social welfare.

2. Answer: Auguste Comte is known as the founder of Sociology. He emphasized the scientific study of society and introduced the term “Sociology.”

3. Answer:

1. To apply sociological knowledge in solving social problems.
2. To promote social development and social welfare through planned interventions.

4. Answer:

1. It is scientific in approach and uses systematic research methods.
2. It is action-oriented and focuses on practical solutions to social issues.

4. Answer: Applied Sociology provides theoretical frameworks and research-based knowledge that help social workers understand social institutions, community structure, and social problems. This knowledge supports effective planning, intervention, and policy development for social welfare and development

2.12 SUGGESTED READINGS – OER

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectonline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13618	

NOTE**2.13 REFERENCE**

The following books and academic sources are useful for the study of Sociology and Applied Sociology:

1. Auguste Comte (1830–1842). *Course of Positive Philosophy*. (Foundational work introducing Sociology as a scientific discipline.)
2. MacIver, R. M., & Page, C. H. (2014). *Society: An Introductory Analysis*. New Delhi: Macmillan.
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4. Anthony Giddens (2009). *Sociology*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
5. Haralambos & Holborn, M. (2013). *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*. London: Collins.
6. Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). *MSW and BA Sociology Study Materials*. New Delhi: IGNOU.
7. Ahuja, R. (2016). *Social Problems in India*. Jaipur: Rawat Publications.

2.14 EXERCISE**Part 1****Multiple choice question**

Q1. Applied Sociology mainly focuses on:

- a) Developing abstract theories only
- b) Studying ancient civilizations
- c) Applying sociological knowledge to solve social problems
- d) Studying natural sciences

Q2. Who is known as the founder of Sociology?

- a) Karl Marx
- b) Auguste Comte
- c) Max Weber
- d) Emile Durkheim

Q3. Applied Sociology is closely related to which professional field?

- a) Engineering
- b) Medicine
- c) Social Work
- d) Architecture

Q4. Which of the following is a major area within the scope of Applied Sociology?

- a) Astronomy
- b) Social Welfare Policy
- c) Geology
- d) Botany

Q5. Applied Sociology is considered action-oriented because it:

- a) Focuses only on theoretical discussions
- b) Avoids practical application
- c) Emphasizes intervention and social development
- d) Studies only historical events

Answers with Explanations – Applied Sociology

Q1. Applied Sociology mainly focuses on:

Correct Answer: (c) Applying sociological knowledge to solve social problems

Explanation:

Applied Sociology uses sociological theories, concepts, and research methods to address real-life social issues such as poverty, inequality, unemployment, and crime. Unlike pure Sociology, which emphasizes theory-building, Applied Sociology focuses on practical problem-solving and social intervention.

Q2. Who is known as the founder of Sociology?

Correct Answer: (b) Auguste Comte

Explanation:

Auguste Comte introduced the term “Sociology” and emphasized the scientific study of society. He believed that social phenomena should be studied using systematic and objective methods, similar to natural sciences. Therefore, he is regarded as the founder of Sociology.

Q3. Applied Sociology is closely related to which professional field?

Correct Answer: (c) Social Work

Explanation:

Applied Sociology provides theoretical frameworks and analytical tools

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that guide Social Work practice. Social workers use sociological knowledge to understand community structure, social institutions, and social problems in order to plan effective interventions.

Q4. Which of the following is a major area within the scope of Applied Sociology?

Correct Answer: (b) Social Welfare Policy

Explanation:

Applied Sociology plays an important role in policy formulation, social planning, and welfare administration. It helps in designing and evaluating programs related to health, education, employment, and social development.

Q5. Applied Sociology is considered action-oriented because it:

Correct Answer: (c) Emphasizes intervention and social development

Explanation:

Applied Sociology is not limited to theoretical discussion. It focuses on planning, implementing, and evaluating social welfare programs. Its aim is to bring about social change, promote social justice, and improve living conditions through practical action.

B. Small answer type question

Fill in the Blanks

1. Applied Sociology focuses on the _____ application of sociological knowledge.
2. The founder of Sociology is _____.
3. Applied Sociology helps in solving various _____ problems.
4. Social Work uses sociological concepts to understand _____ structure.
5. In developing countries like _____, Applied Sociology plays an important role in social development.

Part 2

C. Long answer type question (answer in 200 words)

Q1. Explain the meaning and importance of Applied Sociology.

Part 3

D. Long answer type question (answer in 300 words)

Q1. Discuss the scope and nature of Applied Sociology in detail.

UNIT 3

Human Society and Animal Society

NOTE

UNIT STRUCTURE

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Objective

3.2 Basic Elements, Type and Characteristics of Society

3.2.1 Basic Elements of Society

3.2.2 Types of Society

3.2.3 Characteristics of Society

3.3 Human Society and Animal Society

3.4.1 Human Society

3.4.2 Animal Society

3.4 Difference between Human Society and Animal Society

3.5 Relationship between Society and Social Work

3.6 Summary

3.7 Glossary

3.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

3.9 Suggested Readings – OER

3.10 References

3.11 Exercise

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Society is one of the central concepts in Sociology. Human beings are social animals who cannot live in isolation. From birth to death, individuals remain part of various social groups such as family, community, school, workplace, and nation. Society provides structure, norms, values, and systems that regulate human behaviour. Sociology studies society scientifically in order to understand social relationships, institutions, and processes.

This unit introduces the concept of society, its basic elements, types, and characteristics. It further explains the distinction between human society and animal society. Although both humans and animals live in groups, there are fundamental differences in terms of culture,

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language, organization, and conscious social interaction. The unit also highlights the relationship between society and Social Work, emphasizing why understanding society is essential for effective social work practice.

3.2 OBJECTIVE

After completing this unit, learners will be able to:

1. **Apply** sociological concepts to distinguish the characteristics of human society from those of animal society.
2. **Analyse** the major features, structures, and patterns of human and animal societies.
3. **Differentiate** human social behaviour from animal social behaviour on the basis of social organisation, communication, culture, and cooperation.
4. **Evaluate** the significance of culture, language, social institutions, and learned behaviour in shaping human society.
5. **Assess** the relevance of the differences between human and animal societies for social work practice and the study of human behaviour.

3.2 BASIC ELEMENTS, TYPES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIETY

3.2.1 Basic Elements of Society

A society is not merely a collection of individuals; it is a system of organized relationships. The basic elements of society include:

1. **Population** – A group of people living in a particular geographical area.
2. **Social Relationships** – Interaction among individuals forms the foundation of society.
3. **Culture** – Shared beliefs, values, norms, customs, and traditions guide behaviour.
4. **Social Institutions** – Family, education, religion, economy, and state regulate social life.
5. **Territory** – A definite geographical area where people reside.
6. **Cooperation and Interaction** – Continuous interaction and cooperation maintain social order.

3.2.2 Types of Society

Societies have evolved over time. Major types include:

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- **Primitive Society** – Small, simple societies based on hunting and gathering.
- **Agrarian Society** – Based on agriculture and rural life.
- **Industrial Society** – Characterized by industrialization and urbanization.
- **Post-Industrial Society** – Dominated by information, technology, and service sectors.

In countries like India, elements of agrarian, industrial, and post-industrial societies exist simultaneously.

3.2.3 Characteristics of Society

- Society is abstract in nature.
- It is based on social relationships.
- It involves cooperation as well as conflict.
- It is dynamic and changes over time.
- It has a culture that guides behaviour.
- It ensures social control through norms and laws.

3.3 Human Society and Animal Society

3.3.1 Human Society

Human society is highly organized and complex. It is characterized by:

- Use of language for communication.
- Development of culture and traditions.
- Existence of social institutions.
- Division of labour and specialization.
- Conscious cooperation and planning.
- Moral values and legal systems.

Human beings possess reasoning ability, creativity, and the capacity for innovation. These qualities distinguish human society from other forms of group living.

3.3.2 Animal Society

Animals also live in groups such as herds, packs, and colonies. Examples include ants, bees, wolves, and primates. Animal society is generally based on instinct rather than conscious planning. Their behaviour is biologically determined and limited in scope.

Animal groups may show cooperation and division of labour (e.g., worker bees), but they lack culture, moral systems, and complex institutions found in human society.

NOTE**3.5 Difference between Human Society and Animal Society**

The main differences between human and animal societies are:

Basis	Human Society	Animal Society
Basis of Behaviour	Reason and culture	Instinct
Language	Highly developed language	Limited signals
Social Institutions	Present	Absent
Culture	Developed and transmitted	Not developed
Social Change	Continuous and progressive	Limited
Moral System	Exists	Absent

Human society is dynamic, creative, and culturally rich, while animal society is instinctive and biologically regulated.

3.6 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIETY AND SOCIAL WORK

Social Work is directly concerned with society and its problems. To understand issues such as poverty, inequality, crime, unemployment, and discrimination, social workers must understand the structure and functioning of society.

The scientific study of society was formally established by Auguste Comte. Sociological knowledge helps social workers analyze social institutions, social stratification, community structure, and social change.

In a diverse society like India, understanding caste, class, gender, and rural-urban differences is essential for effective intervention. Social Work applies sociological concepts in community development, policy planning, and welfare administration.

Thus, society provides the context within which Social Work operates. Without understanding society, effective social intervention is not possible.

Check Your Progress – 1

Note: (a) Space is given below for your answer.

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

1. Define Sociology and explain its meaning.

NOTE

3. Explain the objectives of Sociology

4. Describe the nature of Sociology with suitable points

5. Discuss the scope of Sociology in brief.

3.7 SUMMARY

This unit explained the concept of society and its essential elements such as population, social relationships, culture, and institutions. It discussed different types of societies and highlighted their characteristics. The unit also differentiated between human society and animal society, emphasizing the role of culture, language, and reasoning in human life. Finally, it explained the relationship between society and Social Work, showing how sociological knowledge supports professional practice.

3.7 GLOSSARY

Society – A system of social relationships among individuals living in a defined area.

Culture – Shared beliefs, values, norms, and traditions of a group.

Social Institution – Organized system fulfilling basic social needs.

Primitive Society – Simple society based on hunting and gathering.

Industrial Society – Society based on industry and urban life.

Human Society – Organized social system based on culture and reasoning.

Animal Society – Group living among animals based on instinct.

Social Change – Transformation in social structure over time.

3.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Define Sociology and explain its meaning.

NOTE

Answer: Sociology is the scientific study of society, social relationships, institutions, and patterns of social interaction. The term sociology is derived from the Latin word “*Socius*” meaning companion or society and the Greek word “*Logos*” meaning study or science. Therefore, sociology literally means the study of society.

According to Auguste Comte, sociology is the science that studies social phenomena and social laws governing society. Sociology helps us understand how individuals interact with each other within social groups and institutions such as family, education, religion, and government. It examines social structures, cultural values, norms, and social change. Sociology is important because it provides knowledge about how society functions and how social problems can be understood and solved.

2. Mention any two definitions of Sociology given by sociologists and state their focus.

Answer:

1. Definition by Max Weber:

Weber defined sociology as the science that attempts to interpret and understand social action.

Focus: His definition emphasizes understanding human behaviour and the meaning behind social actions.

2. Definition by Emile Durkheim:

Durkheim defined sociology as the study of social facts which influence the behaviour of individuals.

Focus: His definition highlights the role of social institutions and structures in shaping human behaviour.

3. Explain the objectives of Sociology.

Answer: The main objectives of sociology are to understand the structure and functioning of society and to analyze social relationships among individuals and groups. Sociology aims to study social institutions such as family, religion, education, and economy to understand their roles in society. It also seeks to identify social problems like poverty, inequality, discrimination, and unemployment. Another objective is to analyze social change and understand how societies develop over time. Sociology also provides knowledge that helps in social planning, policy making, and improving social welfare.

4. Describe the nature of Sociology with suitable points.

Answer: The nature of sociology can be explained through the following points:

1. **Scientific Discipline:** Sociology follows scientific methods such as observation, analysis, and interpretation to study social phenomena.

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2. **Social Science:** It focuses on the study of human society and social relationships.
3. **Analytical Study:** Sociology analyzes social facts objectively rather than judging them morally.
4. **Generalizing Science:** It studies general patterns of social relationships and behaviour rather than specific events.
5. **Dynamic Discipline:** Sociology studies the changing nature of society and social institutions over time.

5. Discuss the scope of Sociology in brief.

Answer: The scope of sociology is very broad because it studies various aspects of human society. It includes the study of social institutions such as family, education, religion, economy, and political systems. Sociology also examines social groups, social stratification, culture, social change, and social control. It studies problems like poverty, crime, gender inequality, and caste discrimination. The scope also includes applied fields such as rural sociology, urban sociology, medical sociology, and sociology of education. Through these areas, sociology helps in understanding society and contributes to solving social problems.

3.10 SUGGESTED READINGS – OER

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectonline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13619	

3.11 REFERENCES

- Anthony Giddens (2009). *Sociology*.
- MacIver & Page. *Society: An Introductory Analysis*.
- Auguste Comte. *Positive Philosophy*.

3.12 EXERCISE**Part 1****A. Multiple choice question**

1. Society is best defined as:
 - a) A group of people living in one house

NOTE

- b) A system of social relationships
 - c) A political organization
 - d) A religious institution
2. Which of the following is a basic element of society?
- a) Instinct
 - b) Territory
 - c) Isolation
 - d) Silence
3. Behaviour in animal society is mainly based on:
- a) Culture
 - b) Law
 - c) Instinct
 - d) Education
4. The scientific study of society was founded by:
- a) Karl Marx
 - b) Auguste Comte
 - c) Emile Durkheim
 - d) Max Weber
5. Which of the following is a characteristic of human society?
- a) Absence of language
 - b) Lack of institutions
 - c) Development of culture
 - d) Purely biological behaviour

Answer

- 1. b) A system of social relationships
- 2. b) Territory
- 3. c) Instinct
- 4. b) Auguste Comte
- 5. c) Development of culture

Part II

Short Answer Questions (Answer in 50–80 words)

- 1. Define society.
- 2. Mention any four basic elements of society.
- 3. What is human society?
- 4. What is animal society?
- 5. Why is the study of society important for Social Work?

Part III**NOTE****C. Long Essay Questions**

1. Explain the basic elements, types, and characteristics of society.
2. Differentiate between human society and animal society. Discuss their features in detail.

NOTE



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SLM FEEDBACK FORM

PROGRAMME : _____

COURSE : _____

BLOCK : _____

UNIT : _____

Dear Student,

While studying the units of this block, you may have found certain portions of the text difficult to comprehend. We wish to know your difficulties and suggestions, in order to improve the course. Therefore, we request you to fill up and send us the following questionnaire, which pertains to this block. If you find the space provided insufficient, kindly use a separate sheet.

Please mail to aisectcontent@aisect.org/ for online submission please scan QR code:

Questionnaire

1. Name : _____

2. Enrolment No. :

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3. How many hours did you need for studying the units? :

--

4. Please give your reactions to the following items based on your reading of the block:

Items	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Poor	Give specific Examples (If poor)
Presentation Quality					
Language and Style					
Illustrations					
Used (diagrams, tables, etc.)					
Conceptual Clarity					
Check Your Progress Questions					
Suggested Readings - OER					

5. Any other comments:

BLOCK II	COMMUNITY, INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION	47
Unit 4	Social Groups	49
Unit 5	Community – Concept and Types	61
Unit 6	Committees and Social Organizations	71
Unit 7	Social Institutions	83

This block focuses on communities, social institutions, and patterns of social organization that structure collective life. It introduces the concept of community and examines its different forms, characteristics, functions, and significance in social life. Learners explore important social institutions such as family, marriage, education, religion, economy, and political organizations, and examine their roles in maintaining social order and meeting individual and collective needs. The block also discusses social groups, associations, organizations, and networks through which people establish relationships and participate in community life. Understanding these structures is particularly important for social work because interventions often take place within families, communities, institutions, and organized social settings. The block enables learners to identify how institutions influence behaviour, opportunities, responsibilities, and social relationships. It further develops an understanding of cooperation, conflict, leadership, participation, and collective action. These concepts help social work learners assess community needs, recognize existing resources, and develop approaches that encourage participation, empowerment, and sustainable social development.

UNIT 4

Social Group

NOTE

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Objective
- 4.2 Meaning and Definition of Social Group
- 4.3 Elements of a Social Group
- 4.4 Characteristics of Social Group
- 4.5 Classification of Social Groups
- 4.6 Importance of Social Groups in Society
- 4.7 Relationship between Social Group and Social Work
- 4.8 Summary
- 4.9 Glossary
- 4.10 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 4.11 Suggested Readings – OER
- 4.12 References
- 4.13 Exercise

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Human beings are inherently social. From birth to death, individuals participate in various groups such as family, peer groups, educational institutions, professional associations, and communities. These groups shape personality, behaviour, values, and identity. Sociology examines these organized forms of association under the concept of “social group.”

A social group is not merely a physical collection of individuals but a structured system of interaction characterized by shared interests, norms, and mutual awareness. Social groups constitute the building blocks of society. Without groups, society cannot function because all social institutions—family, religion, education, economy, and polity—operate through organized group life.

For postgraduate learners, understanding social groups is essential for analyzing social structure, social cohesion, identity formation, and

NOTE

collective behaviour. In applied fields such as Social Work, knowledge of social groups forms the theoretical base for group work practice, community organization, and social intervention strategies.

4.1 OBJECTIVE

After reading this section, you will be able to:

- Define the concept of a social group and identify its essential characteristics.
- Categorize various social groups (such as primary, secondary, in-groups, and out-groups).
- Analyze the influence of group dynamics on individual behavior and identity formation.

4.2 MEANING AND DEFINITION OF SOCIAL GROUP

4.2.1 Concept of Social Group

A social group refers to two or more individuals who interact with one another, share common interests or goals, and develop a sense of unity and belonging. The defining feature of a social group is interaction. Mere physical proximity, such as people waiting at a bus stop, does not constitute a social group unless sustained interaction and mutual awareness exist.

A social group involves:

- Social relationships
- Shared norms and expectations
- Organized roles and statuses
- Collective identity

Thus, a social group is a dynamic and structured unit of social life.

4.2.2 Definitions by Sociologists

Several classical sociologists have defined social groups:

- **MacIver and Page** defined a social group as “any collection of human beings who are brought into social relationships with one another.” Their definition emphasizes interaction and relational bonds.
- **Charles Horton Cooley** described primary groups as those characterized by intimate, face-to-face association and cooperation, highlighting emotional closeness.
- **William Graham Sumner** introduced the concepts of in-group and out-group, emphasizing the psychological dimensions of group belonging.

These definitions collectively indicate that social groups are relational, interactive, and structured units central to social organization.

4.3 ELEMENTS OF A SOCIAL GROUP

A social group is constituted by essential elements that sustain its existence and continuity.

1. Interaction

Interaction is the foundational element of any group. Members communicate, influence, and respond to each other. Interaction may be direct (face-to-face) or indirect (through digital platforms). Without interaction, no group can exist. It creates relationships, establishes roles, and facilitates cooperation.

2 Common Interest

Members of a group share common interests, objectives, or purposes. For example, students in a university share academic goals, while members of a professional association share occupational interests. Common interest provides direction and cohesion.

3 Sense of Unity

A group develops a collective consciousness or sense of unity among its members. This sense of “we-feeling” strengthens solidarity and promotes cooperation. It distinguishes group members from outsiders.

4 Group Norms

Groups develop norms—shared rules and expectations that regulate behaviour. Norms may be formal (written rules) or informal (customs and traditions). They ensure order, predictability, and stability within the group.

4.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL GROUP

1 Collection of Individuals

A group requires at least two individuals. However, mere aggregation does not qualify as a group unless interaction exists.

2 Mutual Awareness

Members must be conscious of one another’s presence and recognize themselves as part of the same group. Mutual awareness differentiates a group from a crowd.

3 Common Goals

Every group is goal-oriented. Whether economic, social, educational, or political, shared objectives guide collective action.

4 Social Interaction

NOTE

Continuous interaction creates patterns of behaviour and establishes social relationships. These interactions form the structure of the group.

5 Structure and Organization

Groups possess internal organization. Members occupy statuses and perform roles. Leadership, authority, and division of responsibilities contribute to structural stability.

6 Norms and Values

Groups operate within a normative framework. Values define what is desirable, while norms prescribe appropriate behaviour. Violation of norms may lead to sanctions.

7 Sense of Belongingness

Members develop emotional attachment and loyalty to the group. This sense of belonging enhances commitment and identity formation.

4.5 CLASSIFICATION OF SOCIAL GROUPS

Social groups are classified based on size, intimacy, organization, and psychological attachment.

1 Primary and Secondary Groups

The distinction was introduced by **Charles Horton Cooley**.

- **Primary Groups** are small, intimate, and characterized by face-to-face interaction (e.g., family, close friends). Relationships are personal and enduring.
- **Secondary Groups** are larger, formal, and goal-oriented (e.g., corporations, universities). Relationships are impersonal and contractual.

2 In-group and Out-group

Concept introduced by **William Graham Sumner**.

- **In-group**: The group with which an individual identifies ("we").
- **Out-group**: Groups perceived as different or external ("they").

This classification explains group loyalty, ethnocentrism, and intergroup conflict.

3 Formal and Informal Groups

- **Formal Groups** have official structure, defined roles, and written rules (e.g., government departments).
- **Informal Groups** develop naturally through personal relationships (e.g., peer groups).

4 Reference Group

The concept of reference group was elaborated by **Robert K. Merton**. A reference group is one to which individuals compare themselves for self-evaluation, aspiration, or behaviour modeling.

5 Membership and Non-membership Groups

- **Membership Group:** A group to which a person actually belongs.
- **Non-membership Group:** A group to which a person does not belong but may aspire to join.

4.6 IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL GROUPS IN SOCIETY

Social groups perform essential social functions. They provide socialization, transmit culture, and shape personality. Groups offer emotional security and social identity. They regulate behaviour through norms and sanctions. Groups also facilitate cooperation and collective action.

At the macro level, social groups maintain social order and promote integration. They contribute to social change by mobilizing collective efforts for reform and development. In democratic societies, groups play a significant role in representation and participation.

4.7 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL GROUP AND SOCIAL WORK

In Social Work, group dynamics form the foundation of group work practice. Social workers utilize small groups for therapeutic, educational, and developmental purposes. Understanding group structure, leadership patterns, and interaction processes enhances effective intervention.

Knowledge of primary, secondary, formal, and informal groups helps social workers design community-based programs. Group work promotes empowerment, participation, and social inclusion. Thus, sociological understanding of social groups directly informs professional practice.

Check Your Progress – 1

Note: (a) Space is given below for your answer.

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

1. Define a Social Group. What is its most essential element?

2. Distinguish between a Primary Group and a Secondary Group.

NOTE

3. What is meant by In-group and Out-group?

4. Explain the importance of group norms in maintaining social order.

5. What is a Reference Group? Why is it significant?

4.8 SUMMARY

A social group is a structured system of interaction among individuals sharing common interests and a sense of unity. It is characterized by interaction, norms, organization, and belongingness. Social groups are classified into primary and secondary, in-group and out-group, formal and informal, reference, and membership groups. Groups perform vital functions such as socialization, identity formation, and social regulation. For postgraduate students, the study of social groups provides analytical tools for understanding social structure and practical applications in Social Work and community development.

4.9 GLOSSARY

- **Social Group:** A collection of individuals engaged in sustained social interaction.
- **Interaction:** Reciprocal action between individuals.
- **Norms:** Accepted standards of behaviour.
- **Primary Group:** Small, intimate group with close relationships.
- **Secondary Group:** Large, formal, goal-oriented group.
- **In-group:** Group with which an individual identifies.
- **Out-group:** Group perceived as external.
- **Reference Group:** Group used for comparison.

- **Social Structure:** Organized pattern of relationships.

4.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1. Define a Social Group. What is its most essential element?

Answer with Explanation:

A social group is a collection of two or more individuals who engage in sustained social interaction, share common interests or goals, and develop a sense of unity and belonging.

The most essential element of a social group is interaction. Without interaction, individuals remain a mere aggregate (for example, passengers in a train compartment). Interaction creates relationships, establishes roles, and generates group norms. Therefore, interaction transforms a collection of individuals into a structured social unit.

Q2. Distinguish between a Primary Group and a Secondary Group.

Answer with Explanation:

The distinction between primary and secondary groups was introduced by **Charles Horton Cooley**.

- **Primary Groups** are small, intimate, and characterized by close, face-to-face relationships (e.g., family, close friends). Emotional bonds are strong and relationships are long-lasting.
- **Secondary Groups** are larger, formal, and goal-oriented (e.g., universities, corporations). Relationships are impersonal and based on specific objectives.

The key difference lies in the **nature of relationships**—personal and emotional in primary groups, impersonal and contractual in secondary groups.

Q3. What is meant by In-group and Out-group?

Answer with Explanation:

The concepts of in-group and out-group were developed by **William Graham Sumner**.

- An **In-group** is a group with which an individual identifies and feels loyalty (“we”).
- An **Out-group** refers to groups perceived as different or external (“they”).

This classification explains social phenomena such as group solidarity, ethnocentrism, prejudice, and intergroup conflict. Psychological identification is the core element distinguishing the two.

Q4. Explain the importance of group norms in maintaining social order.

Answer with Explanation:

Group norms are shared rules or standards that guide members’

NOTE

behaviour. They define acceptable and unacceptable actions within the group.

Norms are important because they:

- Maintain discipline and order
- Promote predictability in behaviour
- Strengthen unity and cooperation
- Provide mechanisms for social control through sanctions

Without norms, group functioning would become disorganized and conflict-prone. Thus, norms ensure stability and cohesion within social groups.

Q5. What is a Reference Group? Why is it significant?**Answer with Explanation:**

The concept of reference group was elaborated by **Robert K. Merton**.

A reference group is a group that individuals use as a standard for self-evaluation, aspiration, or behavioural guidance, even if they are not members of that group.

Its significance lies in:

- Influencing attitudes and behaviour
- Shaping aspirations and lifestyle choices
- Guiding self-identity and social comparison

For example, a student may model behaviour based on successful professionals, even without direct membership in that group.

4.11 SUGGESTED READINGS – OER

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectonline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13620	

4.12 REFERENCES

Standard sociological works by:

- Charles Horton Cooley

- William Graham Sumner
- Robert K. Merton
- MacIver and Page

4.12 EXERCISE

Part 1

A. Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

Q1. A social group is primarily characterized by:

- a) Physical proximity only
- b) Social interaction and common interest
- c) Economic similarity
- d) Political authority

Q2. The concept of Primary Group was introduced by:

- a) William Graham Sumner
- b) Robert K. Merton
- c) Charles Horton Cooley
- d) Emile Durkheim

Q3. Which of the following is an example of a Secondary Group?

- a) Family
- b) Peer group
- c) Close friendship circle
- d) University

Q4. In-group and Out-group classification was developed by:

- a) William Graham Sumner
- b) Karl Marx
- c) Max Weber
- d) Auguste Comte

Q5. A Reference Group is mainly used for:

- a) Legal control
- b) Economic exchange
- c) Social comparison and self-evaluation
- d) Political administration

Answers with Explanations:

Correct Answer: b) Social interaction and common interest

Explanation:

A social group is not merely a collection of individuals or people who are physically present in the same location. The defining characteristics of a social group are sustained **interaction** and shared

NOTE

common interests or goals. Interaction creates relationships, while common interests provide unity and direction. Without these elements, individuals remain an aggregate rather than a group.

Q2. The concept of Primary Group was introduced by:

Correct Answer: c) Charles Horton Cooley

Explanation:

Charles Horton Cooley introduced the concept of the Primary Group to describe small, intimate groups characterized by close, face-to-face interaction and emotional bonds. Examples include family and close friends. These groups play a crucial role in personality development and socialization. Cooley emphasized that primary groups are fundamental in shaping an individual's self-concept.

Q3. Which of the following is an example of a Secondary Group?

Correct Answer: d) University

Explanation:

A secondary group is large, formal, and goal-oriented. Relationships in such groups are impersonal and often temporary. A university fits this description because it operates through formal structures, defined roles (teachers, students, administrators), and specific objectives such as education and research. In contrast, family and close peer groups are primary groups due to emotional closeness.

Q4. In-group and Out-group classification was developed by:

Correct Answer: a) William Graham Sumner

Explanation:

William Graham Sumner developed the concepts of **In-group** and **Out-group**. An in-group is the group with which individuals identify and feel loyalty ("we"), while an out-group refers to groups perceived as different or external ("they"). This distinction explains group solidarity, ethnocentrism, prejudice, and social conflict.

Q5. A Reference Group is mainly used for:

Correct Answer: c) Social comparison and self-evaluation

Explanation:

The concept of reference group was elaborated by **Robert K. Merton**. A reference group serves as a standard for individuals to evaluate their behaviour, aspirations, and status. Even if a person is not a member of the group, it can influence attitudes and lifestyle choices. For example, students may model themselves after successful professionals.

NOTE

B. Small answer type question

1. A social group is formed through sustained _____ among individuals.
2. The concept of primary group was introduced by _____.
3. Groups that are characterized by official structure and written rules are called _____ groups.
4. The “we-feeling” associated with strong group loyalty is known as _____.
5. The concept of reference group was elaborated by _____.

Part 2

C. Long answer type question (answer in 200 words)

- Q1. Define a social group and mention its essential elements.
- Q2. Explain the importance of interaction in forming a social group.
- Q3. What are primary groups? Give two examples.
- Q4. Differentiate between formal and informal groups.
- Q5. What is meant by a reference group? Why is it important in social life?

Part 3

D. Long answer type question (answer in 300 words)

- Q1. Discuss the scope of Sociology in detail.
- Q2. Discuss the scope and nature of Applied Sociology in detail.

NOTE

UNIT 5

Community – Concept and Types

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Objective
- 5.2 Meaning and definition of community
- 5.3 Basic elements of community
- 5.4 Rural and urban communities
- 5.5 Difference between community and society
- 5.6 Summary
- 5.7 Glossary
- 5.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 5.9 Suggested Readings – OER
- 5.10 References
- 5.11 Exercise

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Human beings are social beings who live together in organized groups and communities. The concept of community is central to the study of sociology as well as social work. A community represents a group of people who share a common geographical area, social relationships, cultural values, and a sense of belonging. Communities play a significant role in shaping the social, cultural, economic, and political life of individuals.

In sociology, the study of community helps us understand how individuals interact with each other and how social relationships are organized within a particular locality. Communities provide the basic framework through which individuals develop social identity, cultural values, and social norms. They also create opportunities for cooperation, mutual support, and collective action.

Communities exist in various forms across the world. Some communities are based on geographical locations such as

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villages, towns, and cities, while others may be formed on the basis of shared interests, culture, religion, or occupation. In traditional societies, communities were often small and homogeneous, with strong interpersonal relationships and close social bonds. However, with modernization, urbanization, and globalization, communities have become more complex and diverse.

The concept of community is especially important in the field of social work. Social workers frequently engage with communities to identify social problems, mobilize resources, and promote social welfare. Community-based interventions help address issues such as poverty, inequality, health problems, lack of education, and social exclusion. Through community organization and participation, social workers empower individuals and groups to improve their living conditions and achieve sustainable development.

The study of community involves examining its meaning, characteristics, elements, and types. Understanding the differences between rural and urban communities is also essential because each type has distinct social structures, cultural patterns, and developmental challenges. Rural communities are generally characterized by close social relationships, agricultural occupations, and traditional lifestyles. In contrast, urban communities are often marked by diversity, industrial occupations, and complex social interactions.

Another important aspect of sociological analysis is distinguishing between the concepts of community and society. Although these terms are sometimes used interchangeably, they represent different levels of social organization. A community refers to a localized group of people with shared relationships and identity, whereas society refers to the larger system of social relationships that encompasses many communities.

This unit aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the concept of community, its meaning, elements, and types. It also discusses rural and urban communities and explains the differences between community and society. The knowledge gained from this unit will help students understand the importance of community in social life and its relevance in social work practice.

5.2 OBJECTIVE

After reading this section, you will be able to:

- Define the sociological concept of community and distinguish it from society at large.
- Classify different types of communities, including rural, urban, and tribal settlements.
- Assess the spatial and social factors that define community boundaries.

5.2 MEANING AND DEFINITION OF COMMUNITY

The term **community** refers to a group of people living together in a particular area who share common interests, values, traditions, and social relationships. Community is one of the fundamental concepts in sociology because it represents the basic unit of social organization.

The word community is derived from the Latin word “**communis**”, which means “common” or “shared by all.” Thus, a community refers to people who share a common life and collective identity.

Definitions of Community

Several sociologists have defined community in different ways:

Sociologist	Definition
MacIver and Page	Community is an area of social living marked by some degree of social coherence.
Bogardus	Community is a social group with some degree of “we-feeling” and living in a given area.
Ogburn and Nimkoff	Community is the total organization of social life within a limited area.

From these definitions, it is clear that a community includes three essential aspects:

1. A group of people
2. A specific geographical area
3. A sense of belonging or “we-feeling”

Example of Community

A **village** is a typical example of a community where people live in a defined locality, interact regularly, share traditions, and participate in collective activities such as festivals, farming, and social gatherings.

NOTE

Similarly, an **urban neighborhood** can also be considered a community because people living in the area share facilities, services, and social interactions.

Importance of Community

Communities play a significant role in shaping human life. They provide:

- Social support networks
- Cultural identity
- Economic opportunities
- Shared values and traditions

In social work practice, understanding community dynamics helps professionals design effective welfare programmes and development initiatives.

5.3 BASIC ELEMENTS OF COMMUNITY

A community is composed of several fundamental elements that help maintain its structure and functioning.

Basic Elements of Community

Element	Description	Example
Population	A group of people living together	Residents of a village
Geographical Area	A specific locality or territory	Town, city, or village
We-feeling	Sense of belonging among members	Community festivals
Social Interaction	Regular interaction among people	Market activities
Common Culture	Shared traditions, values, and norms	Language, customs

1 Population

A community must consist of people who interact with each other. Without a population, the concept of community cannot exist.

Example: A tribal settlement where people share common traditions and lifestyle.

2 Geographical Area

Community members usually live within a defined geographical boundary such as a village, neighborhood, or town.

Example: A housing colony where residents share facilities such as parks and markets.

3 We-feeling

“We-feeling” refers to the emotional bond that connects members of a community. It creates solidarity and cooperation.

Example: People in a village supporting each other during festivals or emergencies.

4 Social Interaction

Continuous interaction among members strengthens relationships and promotes social cohesion.

Example: Community meetings, local markets, and social gatherings.

5 Common Culture

Community members often share common customs, beliefs, language, and traditions.

Example: Cultural festivals celebrated collectively.

These elements collectively form the structure and identity of a community.

5.4 RURAL AND URBAN COMMUNITIES

Communities are broadly classified into rural communities and urban communities.

Rural Community

A rural community refers to people living in villages or countryside areas. These communities are usually characterized by agriculture-based occupations, small populations, and strong social relationships.

Characteristics of Rural Communities

- Small population

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- Close social relationships
- Traditional lifestyle
- Agriculture as main occupation
- Strong cultural traditions

Example: A farming village where people depend on agriculture for livelihood.

Urban Community

An urban community refers to people living in cities or towns. These communities are characterized by large populations, industrial occupations, and diverse social groups.

Characteristics of Urban Communities

- Large and dense population
- Complex social relationships
- Industrial and service-based occupations
- Cultural diversity
- Modern lifestyle

Example: A metropolitan city where people from different backgrounds live together.

Comparison of Rural and Urban Communities

Aspect	Rural Community	Urban Community
Population	Small	Large
Occupation	Agriculture	Industry and services
Social relations	Close and personal	Formal and impersonal
Lifestyle	Traditional	Modern

Both types of communities play important roles in social and economic development.

5.5 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY GROUPS

Although the terms **community** and **society** are related, they represent different concepts in sociology.

Meaning of Society

Society refers to the broader system of social relationships, institutions, and cultural patterns that connect individuals within a large population.

Difference between Community and Society

Basis	Community	Society
Meaning	Group of people living in a specific area	Larger system of social relationships
Area	Limited geographical area	No specific geographical limit
Relationships	Close and personal	Indirect and complex
Size	Small	Large
Example	Village, neighborhood	Nation, global society

Example

A **village** is a community because people live in a specific area and share close relationships.

A **nation** represents a society because it includes many communities connected through social institutions such as government, economy, and education.

Understanding this distinction helps sociologists analyze social structures at different levels.

Check Your Progress – 1

Note: (a) Space is given below for your answer.

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

- 1 What is community?
- 2 Name two elements of community.
- 3 What is rural community?
- 4 What is urban community?
- 5 What is the difference between community and society?

5.6 SUMMARY

This unit explained the concept of community and its importance in sociology and social work. A community is defined as a group of people living in a particular geographical area who share social relationships, cultural values, and a sense of belonging. The concept is fundamental to understanding social life because communities provide the basic framework for human interaction and cooperation.

Several sociologists have defined community in different ways, but most definitions emphasize three main elements: population, locality, and we-feeling. These elements create social cohesion and allow individuals to develop a shared identity.

NOTE

The unit also discussed the basic elements of community such as population, geographical area, social interaction, common culture, and sense of belonging. These elements ensure that communities function effectively and maintain social harmony.

Communities can be broadly classified into rural and urban communities. Rural communities are typically characterized by small populations, agriculture-based occupations, and close social relationships. Urban communities, on the other hand, are larger, more diverse, and often involve complex social interactions and industrial occupations.

Another important topic covered in this unit is the difference between community and society. While community refers to a localized group of people with close relationships, society represents a larger system of social relationships and institutions that encompass many communities.

Understanding communities is particularly important for social workers because community-based approaches are essential for solving social problems and promoting development. By working with communities, social workers can mobilize resources, empower individuals, and create sustainable social change.

Overall, the study of community helps us understand how individuals interact, cooperate, and organize themselves within social structures.

5.7 GLOSSARY

1. Community – Group of people living together with shared relationships.
- 2 Population – People living in a particular area.
- 3 Locality – Geographical area where community members live.
- 4 We-feeling – Sense of belonging among members.
- 5 Rural Community – Community located in villages.
- 6 Urban Community – Community located in cities.
- 7 Social Interaction – Communication and relationships among people.
- 8 Culture – Shared beliefs and traditions.
- 9 Society – Larger system of social relationships.
- 10 Social Cohesion – Unity among members of a group.

5.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. A community is a group of people living in a specific area who share social relationships and a sense of belonging.
2. Population and geographical area.
3. A rural community is a group of people living in villages with agriculture-based occupations.
4. An urban community refers to people living in cities with industrial or service-based occupations

5. Community is localized and small, while society is broader and includes many communities.

NOTE

5.9 SUGGESTED READINGS – OER

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectonline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13621	

5.10 REFERENCE

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- 2 Giddens, A. (2009). *Sociology*.
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5.11 EXERCISE

Part 1

A. Multiple choice question

- 1 Community is mainly based on
 - a Common territory
 - b Shared relationships
 - c We-feeling
 - d All of the above
- 2 The term community refers to
 - a A group of animals
 - b A group of people living together
 - c A political party
 - d A business organization

COMMUNITY, INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

NOTE

3 Rural communities mainly depend on

- a Agriculture
- b Industry
- c Banking
- d Tourism

4 Urban communities are characterized by

- a Small population
- b Agriculture
- c Large population
- d Isolation

5 Society refers to

- a Small local group
- b Large system of social relationships
- c A village
- d A neighborhood

Answers with Explanations:

1 **d) All of the above**

Community includes territory, relationships, and we-feeling.

2 **b) A group of people living together**

Community refers to people sharing social relationships in a locality.

3 **a) Agriculture**

Most rural communities depend on farming and agriculture.

4 **c) Large population**

Urban communities usually have high population density.

5 **b) Large system of social relationships**

Society is broader and includes many communities.

Part 2

C. Short answer type question (answer in 200 words)

- 1 Define community.
- 2 What are the basic elements of community?
- 3 Explain rural community.

Part 3

D. Long answer type question (answer in 300 words)

1. Explain the meaning and elements of community.
2. Discuss rural and urban communities with examples.
3. Differentiate between community and society

UNIT - 6

Committees and Social Organizations

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 6.1 Introduction**
- 6.2 Objective**
- 6.2 Meaning and objectives of committees**
- 6.3 Role of committees in society**
- 6.4 Differences between committee and organization**
- 6.5 Entity framework of committees**
- 6.6 Summary**
- 6.7 Glossary**
- 6.8 Answers to Check Your Progress**
- 6.9 Suggested Readings – OER**
- 6.10 References**
- 6.11 Exercise**

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Human society functions through different types of organized groups and institutions. Among these, committees and social organizations play an important role in decision-making, governance, and social development. In modern societies, individuals rarely work alone to solve social problems. Instead, they collaborate in structured groups where responsibilities are distributed among members. Committees and organizations provide the framework through which such collective action becomes possible.

A committee is generally a small group of people appointed or elected to perform a specific task or to make decisions on a particular issue. Committees are commonly found in educational institutions, government bodies, community organizations, and voluntary groups. They help in planning activities, implementing policies, solving problems, and monitoring progress. For example, a school management committee may supervise school functioning, while a village development committee may work for local infrastructure and welfare activities.

NOTE

On the other hand, a social organization refers to a structured group of individuals who work together to achieve certain social goals or objectives. Social organizations may be formal or informal. Formal organizations include government departments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and registered societies, whereas informal organizations include community groups, self-help groups, and neighborhood associations. These organizations are important in addressing social issues such as poverty, health, education, gender equality, and community development.

Committees often function within organizations. For example, a large organization may create different committees such as finance committees, welfare committees, planning committees, and monitoring committees to ensure efficient functioning. These committees allow members to specialize in particular tasks and help the organization operate smoothly.

In the context of social work, committees and organizations play a crucial role in planning and implementing social welfare programs. Social workers often collaborate with community organizations, government agencies, and voluntary groups to promote social justice, empower marginalized communities, and improve living conditions. Committees provide a democratic platform where different stakeholders can participate in decision-making and express their views.

This unit focuses on the concept and functioning of committees and social organizations. It explains the meaning and objectives of committees, their role in society, and the differences between committees and organizations. The unit also discusses the entity framework, which helps to understand how social institutions and groups function as structured entities in society. Through examples and comparisons, learners will gain a clear understanding of how committees and organizations contribute to social development and community welfare.

By the end of this unit, students will understand how committees function as decision-making bodies and how social organizations operate as structured systems to achieve social goals.

6.2 OBJECTIVE

After reading this section, you will be able to:

- Distinguish between the structure of formal social organizations and the specific functions of committees.
- Evaluate the role of organizations in maintaining social order and achieving collective goals.
- Formulate strategies for building effective committee structures within community settings.

6.2 MEANING AND OBJECTIVES OF COMMITTEES

A **committee** is a group of individuals appointed, nominated, or elected to perform a specific function or task within an organization or community. Committees are usually formed to study an issue, make recommendations, plan activities, or implement decisions. They play an important role in collective decision-making and democratic governance.

Definitions

William H. Newman:

A committee is a group of people formally assigned to perform a specific task or make decisions on particular matters.

Encyclopedia of Social Sciences:

A committee is a small group created within a larger organization to carry out specialized functions or responsibilities.

Objectives of Committees

Committees are formed to achieve several objectives:

1. **Decision-making**
Committees help organizations make collective decisions by discussing issues from multiple perspectives.
2. **Planning and Policy Formulation**
Committees help in developing plans, policies, and strategies for organizational functioning.
3. **Coordination**
They coordinate activities between different departments or members of an organization.
4. **Problem Solving**
Committees analyze problems and suggest practical solutions.
5. **Representation**
They represent the views and interests of different groups within an organization.
6. **Monitoring and Evaluation**
Committees monitor progress and evaluate the implementation of programs.

Types of Committees

Type of Committee	Description	Example
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NOTE

Standing Committee	Permanent committee formed for regular tasks	Finance committee
Ad-hoc Committee	Temporary committee for specific purpose	Event organizing committee
Advisory Committee	Provides advice and suggestions	Academic advisory committee
Executive Committee	Responsible for implementation of decisions	NGO executive board

Example In a village development project, a Village Water Committee may be formed to manage water resources. The committee decides how funds should be used, monitors water supply systems, and ensures fair distribution of water among residents.

Committees promote participation, accountability, and transparency, which are essential principles in democratic societies.

6.3 ROLE OF COMMITTEES IN SOCIETY

Committees play a crucial role in the functioning of institutions and society. They help manage complex tasks by distributing responsibilities among different individuals. Their role is especially important in governance, education, community development, and social welfare programs.

Major Roles of Committees

1. Facilitating Democratic Decision-Making

Committees encourage discussion and debate before decisions are made. This ensures that decisions reflect the opinions of multiple stakeholders.

Example: A **municipal committee** discussing urban sanitation policies.

2. Improving Efficiency

Committees allow tasks to be divided among members based on expertise and skills. This improves efficiency and effectiveness.

Example: A hospital committee may include doctors, administrators, and community representatives.

3. Promoting Participation

Committees allow people to participate in governance and development processes.

Example: **School Management Committees** include parents, teachers, and local representatives.

4. Ensuring Transparency and Accountability

Since decisions are taken collectively, committees reduce the chances of misuse of power.

5. Supporting Social Development

Committees often implement welfare programs related to education, health, and community development.

Example: A **Self-Help Group committee** managing micro-credit for women in rural areas.

Committees in Social Work

In social work practice, committees help coordinate different stakeholders such as government agencies, NGOs, and community members. They facilitate community participation and collective responsibility.

For example, a child protection committee in a community monitors child welfare and reports cases of child abuse.

Thus, committees act as important mechanisms of governance, participation, and social problem-solving.

6.4 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COMMITTEE AND ORGANIZATION

Although committees and organizations are related, they are not the same. A committee is usually a **subgroup within an organization**, while an organization is a larger structured system.

Comparison Table

Basis	Committee	Organization
Meaning	A small group formed for specific tasks	A structured group working toward common goals
Size	Usually small	Usually large

NOTE

Purpose	Specific and limited tasks	Broad social or institutional objectives
Duration	Temporary or permanent	Usually permanent
Authority	Limited decision-making power	Wider authority and responsibilities
Structure	Less complex	More complex structure
Example	School examination committee	University

Example - A non-governmental organization (NGO) working for women's empowerment may form different committees such as:

- Finance Committee
- Program Committee
- Monitoring Committee

Each committee handles specific tasks while the **organization oversees overall activities.**

Thus, committees function as **support mechanisms within organizations**, ensuring specialization and efficiency.

6.5 ENTITY FRAMEWORK

The **entity framework** is a conceptual approach used to understand how different institutions, organizations, and social groups function as structured units within society. In social sciences and social work, this framework helps analyze relationships between individuals, groups, and institutions.

Meaning of Entity

An **entity** refers to any identifiable unit that has a distinct structure and function within a system. In society, entities may include:

- Individuals
- Families
- Committees
- Organizations
- Institutions
- Communities

Each entity interacts with others and contributes to the functioning of the overall social system.

Components of Entity Framework

Component	Description
Structure	Organizational arrangement of members
Function	Roles and responsibilities
Relationships	Interaction with other entities
Goals	Objectives to be achieved

Example

Consider a **community health program**.

Entity	Role
Government Health Department	Policy and funding
NGO	Implementation of programs
Village Health Committee	Monitoring local health services
Community Members	Participation and feedback

Through the entity framework, we can understand how these different entities interact to achieve the goal of improving community health.

Importance in Social Work

The entity framework helps social workers:

- Identify stakeholders
- Understand institutional relationships
- Coordinate different groups
- Improve program implementation

For example, when implementing a nutrition program, social workers must collaborate with schools, health departments, community organizations, and local committees.

Thus, the entity framework helps analyze organizational structures and collaborative networks in society.

NOTE**Check Your Progress – 1**

Note: (a) Space is given below for your answer.

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

- 1. What is a committee?**
- 2. What are the objectives of committees?**
- 3. How do committees promote participation?**
- 4. What is the difference between committee and organization?**
- 5. What is the entity framework?**

6.6 SUMMARY

This unit examined the concepts of **committees and social organizations** and their importance in society. Committees are small groups formed within organizations to perform specific tasks, make decisions, and coordinate activities. They help improve efficiency, promote participation, and support democratic governance.

The unit explained the **meaning and objectives of committees**, highlighting their role in planning, decision-making, problem-solving, and monitoring programs. Committees may be standing, ad-hoc, advisory, or executive depending on their purpose and duration.

The role of committees in society is significant because they promote participation, transparency, and accountability. They are widely used in government institutions, educational organizations, NGOs, and community groups. In social work practice, committees help coordinate welfare programs and ensure community involvement.

The unit also discussed the **difference between committees and organizations**. While committees are small groups responsible for specific tasks, organizations are larger structured systems with broader objectives. Committees often function as sub-units within organizations and help in efficient management.

Another important concept discussed in this unit is the **entity framework**, which explains how individuals, committees, organizations, and institutions function as interconnected units within society. This framework helps understand relationships between different stakeholders involved in social development programs.

Overall, committees and social organizations play an essential role in the functioning of modern society. They provide platforms for cooperation, collective decision-making, and community participation. Understanding these structures is particularly important for social workers, as they frequently collaborate with committees and organizations to address social problems and promote community welfare.

6.7 GLOSSARY

- Committee A small group formed to perform specific tasks
- Organization Structured group working toward common goals
- Executive Committee Committee responsible for implementing decisions
- Advisory Committee Committee providing guidance and suggestions
- Social Organization Organized group working for social objectives
- Participation Involvement of people in decision-making
- Governance System of managing and directing organizations
- Entity A distinct unit within a system
- Coordination Process of organizing activities together
- Stakeholder Individual or group affected by decisions

6.8 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-POSSIBLE ONE

1. A committee is a group of individuals appointed or elected to perform a specific task or make decisions on particular matters within an organization.
2. Objectives include decision-making, planning, coordination, problem solving, and monitoring activities.
3. Committees involve members from different groups, allowing them to share opinions and participate in decision-making.
4. A committee is a small group for specific tasks, while an organization is a large structured system with broader objectives.
5. The entity framework explains how different social units such as individuals, groups, and organizations interact within a system.

6.9 SUGGESTED READINGS – OER

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectonline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13622	

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6.12 EXERCISE**Part 1****A. Multiple choice question**

1. A committee is usually
 - a Small group
 - b Large institution
 - c Informal gathering
 - d None
2. Committees are formed mainly
 - a Entertainment
 - b Decision making
 - c Personal profit
 - d Competition
3. Which type of committee is temporary?
 - a Standing committee
 - b Advisory committee
 - c Ad-hoc committee
 - d Executive committee
4. Organizations generally have
 - a No structure
 - b Clear structure and objectives
 - c No members
 - d No goals

5. Committees promote
- a Individual control
 - b Collective participation
 - c Isolation
 - d Competition

MCQ Answers with Explanation

1. **a Small group**
Committees are small groups formed to handle specific responsibilities.
2. **b Decision making**
Committees help organizations make collective decisions through discussion.
3. **c Ad-hoc committee**
Ad-hoc committees are temporary groups created for specific tasks.
4. **b Clear structure and objectives**
Organizations have defined structures, goals, and responsibilities.
5. **b Collective participation**
Committees encourage members to participate in discussions and decision-making.

Part 2**D. Long answer type question**

1. Define committee.
2. What are the objectives of committees?
3. Explain the role of committees in society.

Part 3**D. Long answer type question (answer in 300 words)**

1. Explain the meaning, objectives, and types of committees.
2. Discuss the difference between committee and organization with examples.
3. Explain the entity framework and its relevance in social work.

NOTE

UNIT 7

Social and Institution

UNIT STRUCTURE

7.1 Introduction

7.2 Objective

7.2 Meaning and definition of institution

7.3 Characteristics of social institutions

7.4 Types of institutions (family, education, religion, economy, polity)

7.5 Importance of institutions in social work practice

7.6 Summary

7.7 Glossary

7.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

7.9 Suggested Readings – OER

7.10 References

7.11 Exercise

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Human society is organized through various structures that guide the behavior of individuals and groups. These structures are known as **social institutions**. Social institutions are established patterns of behavior and relationships that help maintain order and stability in society. They regulate how individuals interact with each other and fulfill essential needs such as family life, education, religion, economic production, and governance.

Every society develops institutions to organize social life and ensure that social needs are met in a systematic way. For example, the **family institution** regulates marriage, reproduction, and child-rearing. Similarly, the **education institution** is responsible for transmitting knowledge, skills, and cultural values to the next generation. Institutions provide rules, norms, and procedures that guide individual behavior and promote social harmony.

Social institutions are not isolated structures; rather, they are interconnected. The family prepares children for school, the education system trains individuals for economic activities, and political

NOTE

institutions establish laws that regulate social behavior. This interconnected nature ensures that society functions as a coordinated system.

In modern societies, institutions also play an important role in addressing social problems such as poverty, unemployment, inequality, and social injustice. Governments, schools, religious organizations, and economic institutions contribute to social welfare and development through policies and programs designed to improve living conditions.

From a **social work perspective**, understanding social institutions is extremely important. Social workers often work with institutions such as schools, hospitals, courts, and community organizations. These institutions provide the framework through which social services are delivered. For example, child welfare services operate through legal and educational institutions, while healthcare institutions address issues related to public health and social well-being.

Social institutions also influence social values, norms, and roles. They define acceptable patterns of behavior and help individuals understand their responsibilities in society. For instance, the institution of marriage defines the roles of husband and wife, while educational institutions establish expectations for teachers and students.

However, social institutions are not static; they change over time in response to social, economic, and cultural transformations. Industrialization, urbanization, technological advancement, and globalization have significantly influenced the structure and functioning of institutions in modern societies.

This unit explains the concept of social institutions in detail. It discusses the meaning and definitions of institutions, their characteristics, and the major types of institutions such as family, education, religion, economy, and polity. The unit also highlights the importance of social institutions in social work practice, emphasizing how these institutions contribute to social welfare and community development.

By understanding social institutions, students of social work can better analyze social structures and develop effective strategies to address social problems and promote social change.

7.2 OBJECTIVE

After reading this section, you will be able to:

- Identify primary social institutions such as family, marriage, education, economy, and religion.

- Analyze the manifest and latent functions these institutions serve within society.
- Critique how institutions adapt to or resist social changes over time.

7.2 MEANING AND DEFINITION OF INSTITUTION

A **social institution** refers to an organized system of beliefs, norms, roles, and relationships that fulfill important functions in society. Institutions provide a framework through which individuals satisfy basic social needs such as reproduction, education, governance, and economic production.

Meaning of Institution

The term “institution” refers to established patterns of behavior that regulate the activities of individuals and groups. These patterns are supported by social norms, rules, and values that guide human interaction.

Institutions are not merely physical structures such as buildings or organizations. Instead, they represent **systems of relationships and practices** that shape social life.

For example:

- Marriage is an institution because it regulates family relationships.
- Education is an institution because it organizes learning and knowledge transmission.
- Religion is an institution because it provides beliefs, rituals, and moral guidance.

Definitions

MacIver and Page:

A social institution is an established form or condition of procedure characteristic of group activity.

Kingsley Davis:

Institutions are organized systems of social relationships that embody certain common values and procedures.

Sumner:

An institution consists of a concept and a structure designed to fulfill a social need.

Example

Consider the **education system** as a social institution.

NOTE

Component	Example
Norms	Students should attend classes regularly
Roles	Teacher, student, administrator
Rules	Examination system
Function	Transmission of knowledge

Similarly, the **family institution** regulates marriage, inheritance, and child upbringing.

Functions of Social Institutions

1. Satisfy basic human needs
2. Provide social order and stability
3. Transmit culture and values
4. Regulate social behavior
5. Promote social integration

Example from Indian Society

In India, the **joint family system** traditionally served as an institution that provided social security, economic support, and emotional stability to family members. However, modernization has led to the growth of nuclear families.

Thus, social institutions play a crucial role in shaping the structure and functioning of society.

7.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Social institutions have several important characteristics that distinguish them from other social groups.

1. Established Norms and Rules

Institutions operate according to established norms and rules that guide behavior.

Example: Marriage laws regulate relationships between spouses.

2. Organized Structure

Institutions have a structured system of roles and responsibilities.

Example: In schools, there are teachers, principals, and students.

3. Social Approval

Institutions are socially recognized and accepted by society.

Example: Religious practices such as worship are socially approved activities.

4. Continuity and Stability

Institutions exist over long periods and provide stability to society.

Example: The family institution has existed for centuries.

5. Fulfillment of Social Needs

Institutions exist because they fulfill essential human needs.

Example:

Institution	Need Fulfilled
Family	Reproduction and emotional support
Education	Knowledge and skill development
Economy	Production and distribution of goods

6. Cultural Transmission

Institutions transmit cultural values and traditions from one generation to another.

Example: Schools teach national values, history, and culture.

7. Social Control

Institutions regulate behavior and maintain social order.

Example: Laws established by political institutions regulate citizen behavior.

Example

The **religious institution** teaches moral values such as honesty, compassion, and respect. These values help maintain social harmony.

Thus, social institutions provide structure, stability, and continuity to social life.

7.4 TYPES OF SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS (FAMILY, EDUCATION, RELIGION, ECONOMY, POLITY)

Sociologists generally identify five major social institutions that perform essential functions in society.

Major Social Institutions

Institution	Main Function	Example
Family	Reproduction and socialization	Parents raising children
Education	Knowledge transmission	Schools and universities
Religion	Moral guidance	Temples, mosques, churches
Economy	Production and distribution	Industries and markets
Polity	Governance and law	Government and parliament

NOTE

1. Family Institution

The family is the primary social institution responsible for reproduction, socialization, and emotional support.

Example: Parents teaching children values and traditions.

2. Educational Institution

Educational institutions provide formal learning and skill development.

Example: Schools, colleges, and universities.

Education prepares individuals for employment and responsible citizenship.

3. Religious Institution

Religion provides spiritual guidance and moral values.

Example: Religious organizations conducting rituals and ceremonies.

4. Economic Institution

Economic institutions regulate production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services.

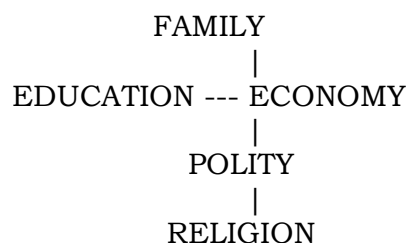
Example: Businesses, industries, and financial institutions.

5. Political Institution (Polity)

Political institutions maintain law, order, and governance in society.

Example: Government, parliament, judiciary.

Diagram: Relationship Between Institutions



These institutions work together to maintain social stability and development.

7.5 IMPORTANCE OF INSTITUTIONS IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

Social institutions play a crucial role in **social work practice** because social workers interact with various institutions while addressing social problems.

1. Service Delivery

Many social services are delivered through institutions such as schools, hospitals, and welfare organizations.

Example: Child welfare services through educational and legal institutions.

2. Social Welfare Programs

Government institutions implement programs related to health, education, poverty reduction, and gender equality.

Example: Welfare schemes for women and children.

3. Community Development

Community institutions help mobilize resources and promote local development.

Example: Village committees and community organizations.

4. Policy Implementation

Political institutions create policies that affect social welfare.

Example: Laws protecting child rights and women's rights.

5. Social Justice

Institutions help promote equality and protect marginalized groups.

Example: Legal institutions ensuring justice for victims of discrimination.

Table: Institutions and Social Work Roles

Institution	Role of Social Worker
School	Counseling students

NOTE

Hospital	Medical social work
Community	Community development
Court	Legal aid and rehabilitation

Example

A social worker helping children from disadvantaged families may collaborate with:

- Schools
- Child protection agencies
- Government welfare departments

This demonstrates the importance of institutions in social work practice.

Check Your Progress – 1

Note: (a) Space is given below for your answer.

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

1. What is a social institution?
2. Name five major social institutions.
3. What is the function of the family institution?
4. How does education function as an institution?
5. Why are institutions important in social work?

7.6 SUMMARY

This unit explained the concept of social institutions and their importance in society. Social institutions are organized systems of norms, roles, and relationships that fulfill essential social needs. They help maintain social order and provide stability to society.

The unit discussed the meaning and definitions of social institutions, highlighting their role in regulating human behavior and organizing social life. Institutions are characterized by established norms, structured roles, social approval, continuity, and the ability to fulfill basic human needs.

Five major social institutions were examined: family, education, religion, economy, and polity. Each institution performs specific

functions such as socialization, knowledge transmission, moral guidance, economic production, and governance.

The unit also emphasized the importance of social institutions in social work practice. Social workers collaborate with institutions such as schools, hospitals, courts, and community organizations to provide services, implement welfare programs, and promote social justice.

Overall, social institutions form the backbone of society by organizing human activities and ensuring the satisfaction of fundamental social needs.

7.7 GLOSSARY

Social Institution	Organized system of social relationships
Norms	Rules guiding behavior
Socialization	Process of learning cultural values
Governance	System of managing society
Economy	System of production and distribution
Religion	System of beliefs and rituals
Polity	Political system of governance
Social Control	Regulation of behavior
Culture	Shared beliefs and practices
Social Welfare	Programs promoting well-being

7.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. A social institution is an organized system of norms and relationships that fulfills essential social functions.
2. Family, education, religion, economy, and polity.
3. Reproduction, socialization, and emotional support.
4. It transmits knowledge, skills, and cultural values.
5. They provide frameworks for delivering social services and welfare programs.

7.9 SUGGESTED READINGS – OER

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectonline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13623	

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7.11 EXERCISE**Part 1****A. Multiple choice question**

- Social institutions help in
 - Maintaining social order
 - Creating chaos
 - Destroying culture
 - None
- The primary institution responsible for socialization is
 - School
 - Family
 - Government
 - Market
- Which institution regulates economic activities?
 - Religion
 - Economy
 - Family
 - Education
- Political institutions are responsible for
 - Worship
 - Governance
 - Marriage
 - Trade

5. Education institutions mainly provide
 - a Employment only
 - b Knowledge and skills
 - c Political power
 - d Religious rituals

Answers with Detailed Explanations

1. **a Maintaining social order**
Institutions regulate behavior and ensure stability in society.
2. **b Family**
The family is the first institution responsible for socialization of children.
3. **b Economy**
Economic institutions manage production, distribution, and consumption.
4. **b Governance**
Political institutions create laws and maintain order.
5. **b Knowledge and skills**
Educational institutions provide learning and skill development.

Part II

B. Short Answer Questions

1. Define social institution.
2. List the characteristics of social institutions.
3. Explain the role of family as a social institution.

Part III

C. Long Essay Questions

1. Explain the meaning and characteristics of social institutions.
2. Discuss the major types of social institutions with examples.
3. Explain the importance of social institutions in social work practice.

NOTE



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SLM FEEDBACK FORM

PROGRAMME : _____

COURSE : _____

BLOCK : _____

UNIT : _____

Dear Student,

While studying the units of this block, you may have found certain portions of the text difficult to comprehend. We wish to know your difficulties and suggestions, in order to improve the course. Therefore, we request you to fill up and send us the following questionnaire, which pertains to this block. If you find the space provided insufficient, kindly use a separate sheet.

Please mail to aisectcontent@aisect.org/ for online submission please scan QR code:

Questionnaire

1. Name : _____

2. Enrolment No. :

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

3. How many hours did you need for studying the units? :

--

4. Please give your reactions to the following items based on your reading of the block:

Items	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Poor	Give specific Examples (If poor)
Presentation Quality					
Language and Style					
Illustrations					
Used (diagrams, tables, etc.)					
Conceptual Clarity					
Check Your Progress Questions					
Suggested Readings - OER					

5. Any other comments:

BLOCK III	CULTURE AND SOCIAL CHANGE	97-138
Unit 8	Culture Meaning and Characteristics	99
Unit 9	Civilization and Its Relationship with Culture	113
Unit 10	Social Change	121
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This block examines culture as a fundamental element of social life and explores the processes through which societies change over time. It introduces the meaning, characteristics, elements, and functions of culture, including values, beliefs, norms, customs, traditions, symbols, and language. Learners examine cultural diversity and understand how culture influences individual identity, behaviour, relationships, and social institutions. The block also introduces concepts such as cultural change, modernization, industrialization, globalization, urbanization, and social transformation. It explains that social change may result from technological developments, economic conditions, political processes, demographic changes, social movements, and changing cultural values. The block encourages learners to recognize both continuity and transformation within society and to examine how different groups experience social change differently. For social work practice, an understanding of culture and change is essential for working respectfully with diverse individuals and communities. The block therefore develops learners' ability to analyse cultural contexts, appreciate diversity, identify emerging social challenges, and respond appropriately to changing social needs.

UNIT 8

Culture

NOTE

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 Objective
- 8.2 Meaning and definition of culture
- 8.3 Nature and characteristics of culture
- 8.4 Major dimensions of culture
- 8.5 Cultural components
- 8.6 Summary
- 8.7 Glossary
- 8.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 8.9 Suggested Readings – OER
- 8.10 References
- 8.11 Exercise

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Culture is one of the most important concepts in sociology and social sciences. It refers to the way of life of a group of people. Culture includes beliefs, values, customs, traditions, language, symbols, knowledge, art, laws, and habits that individuals learn as members of society. It shapes human behavior and influences how people think, feel, and interact with others.

Human beings are not born with culture; they learn it through the process of **socialization**. From childhood, individuals acquire cultural patterns from their families, schools, communities, and other social institutions. Culture therefore acts as a guiding framework that directs the behavior of individuals in society.

Culture is shared among members of a group. People living in the same society usually follow similar traditions, practices, and values. For example, celebrating festivals such as Diwali, Eid, Christmas, or harvest festivals reflects cultural practices shared by communities. These practices strengthen social unity and identity.

Culture also varies from one society to another. What is considered acceptable behavior in one culture may not be acceptable in another. For instance, food habits, dress styles, marriage customs, and greeting methods differ across societies. In India, touching the feet of elders is

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a traditional gesture of respect, while in Western societies a handshake or hug may be more common.

Sociologists consider culture as a **social heritage** because it is passed from one generation to another. Through language, education, and traditions, cultural knowledge is transmitted to younger members of society. This process ensures the continuity of social life and helps maintain social stability.

Culture is not static; it changes over time. Social changes such as industrialization, urbanization, technological advancement, and globalization influence cultural practices. For example, the use of smartphones, social media, and digital communication has transformed many aspects of modern culture. Similarly, globalization has introduced cultural exchange between different societies.

In the field of social work, understanding culture is extremely important. Social workers often interact with individuals and communities belonging to diverse cultural backgrounds. Cultural sensitivity helps social workers understand people's beliefs, values, and practices while designing interventions and welfare programs.

For example, when working with tribal communities, social workers must respect traditional customs and cultural practices while promoting development initiatives. Similarly, cultural understanding helps in addressing issues such as gender discrimination, child welfare, health awareness, and community development.

This unit explains the concept of culture in detail. It discusses the meaning and definitions of culture, its nature and characteristics, major dimensions, and cultural components. The unit also highlights the relevance of culture in understanding human behavior and social relationships.

A clear understanding of culture helps students of sociology and social work analyze social structures, cultural diversity, and the role of culture in shaping social change.

8.2 OBJECTIVE

After reading this section, you will be able to:

- Define culture and identify its material and non-material elements.
- Examine the core characteristics of culture, including how it is learned, shared, and transmitted.
- Analyze the role of cultural norms, values, and sanctions in regulating human behavior.

8.2 MEANING AND DEFINITION OF CULTURE

Meaning of Culture

Culture refers to the **total way of life of people in a society**. It includes shared beliefs, values, traditions, customs, language, art, morals, laws, and knowledge that are learned and transmitted from generation to generation.

Culture influences how people think, behave, and interact with others. It provides guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable behavior in society.

For example:

- Greeting elders with respect
- Celebrating religious festivals
- Wearing traditional clothing
- Following marriage rituals

All these practices represent cultural patterns.

Definitions of Culture

E.B. Tylor:

Culture is the complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and other capabilities acquired by humans as members of society.

Bronislaw Malinowski:

Culture is a social heritage that includes traditional skills, ideas, values, and institutions.

MacIver and Page:

Culture is the expression of human nature in our ways of living and thinking.

Example

In Indian society, the celebration of **Diwali** includes lighting lamps, decorating homes, worshiping Goddess Lakshmi, and sharing sweets. These practices represent cultural traditions passed down through generations.

Table: Examples of Culture in Daily Life

Cultural Aspect	Example
Language	Hindi, English, Tamil
Food habits	Vegetarian or non-vegetarian diets
Dress	Saree, kurta, western clothes

NOTE

Festivals	Diwali, Eid, Christmas
Customs	Marriage rituals

Importance of Culture

1. Shapes human behavior
2. Provides identity to individuals and communities
3. Maintains social order
4. Promotes unity and cooperation
5. Transmits traditions across generations

Example from Social Work

When implementing a **health awareness program in rural areas**, social workers must understand local cultural beliefs about health and medicine. This helps in designing culturally acceptable interventions.

Thus, culture plays a vital role in shaping social life and guiding human behavior.

8.3 NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF CULTURE

Culture has several important characteristics that distinguish it from biological traits.

1. Learned Behavior

Culture is not inherited biologically but learned through social interaction.

Example: Children learn language and manners from parents.

2. Shared by Society

Culture is shared by members of a group or society.

Example: National festivals celebrated by citizens.

3. Transmitted from Generation to Generation

Culture is passed from older generations to younger generations through education and tradition.

Example: Traditional crafts and folk music.

4. Dynamic and Changing

Culture evolves with social changes.

Example: The adoption of digital technology in communication.

5. Integrated System

Cultural elements are interconnected.

Example: Religion influences marriage rituals and food habits.

6. Normative Nature

Culture establishes norms that guide acceptable behavior.

Example: Respecting elders.

Characteristic	Explanation	Example
Learned	Acquired through socialization	Language learning
Shared	Common to members of society	Festivals
Dynamic	Changes over time	Modern technology
Transmitted	Passed between generations	Traditions

Table: Characteristics of Culture

Example In rural communities, traditional farming practices are passed from parents to children. However, modern technology has introduced new farming methods, showing cultural adaptation.

8.4 MAJOR DIMENSIONS OF CULTURE

Culture has several dimensions that influence social life.

1. Cognitive Dimension

This refers to knowledge and beliefs about the world.

Example: Scientific knowledge and traditional beliefs.

2. Normative Dimension

Norms and rules that guide behavior.

Example: Respecting elders and obeying laws.

3. Material Dimension

Physical objects created by humans.

Example: Buildings, tools, machines.

NOTE**4. Symbolic Dimension**

Symbols and language used to communicate ideas.

Example: National flags and religious symbols.

Table: Dimensions of Culture

Dimension	Meaning	Example
Cognitive	Knowledge and beliefs	Science, myths
Normative	Rules and norms	Social customs
Material	Physical objects	Technology
Symbolic	Symbols and language	National flag

Example

The **Indian national flag** is a symbol representing national unity, identity, and cultural values.

8.7 CULTURAL COMPONENTS

Cultural components are the basic elements that make up culture.

1. Values

Values are shared beliefs about what is good or desirable.

Example: Honesty, equality, respect.

2. Norms

Norms are rules that guide behavior.

Example: Queueing in public places.

3. Symbols

Symbols represent ideas and meanings.

Example: Religious symbols.

4. Language

Language is the primary medium for communication.

Example: Hindi, English, regional languages.

5. Customs and Traditions

Customs are established patterns of behavior.

Example: Wedding ceremonies.

Component	Description	Example
Values	Shared beliefs	Honesty
Norms	Social rules	Respect elders
Symbols	Represent ideas	National flag
Language	Communication system	Hindi

Customs	Traditional practices	Marriage rituals
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Table: Cultural Components

Example- In many Indian communities, touching the feet of elders is a cultural custom that symbolizes respect.

Check Your Progress – 1

Note: (a) Space is given below for your answer.

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

1. **What is culture?**
2. **Who defined culture as a complex whole? Name two characteristics of culture.**
3. **What are cultural values?**
4. **Give an example of cultural tradition.**

8.8 SUMMARY

This unit discussed the concept of **culture**, which represents the total way of life of people in a society. Culture includes beliefs, values, traditions, customs, language, and social practices that guide human behavior.

The unit explained the meaning and definitions of culture given by sociologists such as E.B. Tylor and Malinowski. Culture was described as a social heritage that is learned, shared, and transmitted from one generation to another.

The nature and characteristics of culture were also discussed. Culture is learned, shared, dynamic, and integrated. It provides norms and values that regulate social behavior and maintain social order.

The unit further explained the major dimensions of culture, including cognitive, normative, material, and symbolic dimensions. These dimensions represent different aspects of cultural life such as knowledge, social rules, physical objects, and symbols.

Finally, the unit highlighted cultural components such as values, norms, symbols, language, and customs. These elements collectively form the cultural system of a society.

NOTE

Understanding culture is essential for sociology and social work students because it helps analyze social relationships, cultural diversity, and social change. Cultural awareness is particularly important in social work practice, where professionals interact with individuals and communities from diverse cultural backgrounds.

8.9 GLOSSARY

Term	Meaning
Culture	Total way of life of people
Values	Shared beliefs about good and bad
Norms	Rules guiding behavior
Socialization	Learning cultural practices
Tradition	Cultural practice passed through generations
Symbol	Object representing an idea
Language	System of communication
Heritage	Cultural legacy
Customs	Traditional behaviors
Cultural diversity	Variety of cultures

8.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Culture is the total way of life of people including beliefs, customs, and traditions.
2. E.B. Tylor.
3. Culture is learned and shared
4. Values are beliefs about what is desirable or important.
5. Celebrating festivals like Diwali.

8.10 SUGGESTED READINGS – OER

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectonline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13624	

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8.12 EXERCISE

Part 1

A. Multiple choice question

Q1. Culture is best defined as:

- a) Biological inheritance passed through genes
- b) The total way of life of a society
- c) Individual personality traits
- d) Governmental rules and regulations

Q2. The term “culture” is derived from the Latin word *colere*, which means:

- a) To organize
- b) To cultivate
- c) To govern
- d) To communicate

Q3. Which of the following is an example of non-material culture?

- a) Computer
- b) Building
- c) Moral values
- d) Road

Q4. The concept of cultural lag was introduced by:

NOTE

- a) Edward B. Tylor
- b) William F. Ogburn
- c) Bronislaw Malinowski
- d) Ralph Linton

Q5. Judging other cultures by the standards of one's own culture is known as:

- a) Cultural relativism
- b) Cultural diffusion
- c) Ethnocentrism
- d) Assimilation

Q6. Which of the following is an example of material culture?

- a) Language
- b) Law
- c) Belief system
- d) Technology

Q7. A group that rejects dominant cultural values and norms is called:

- a) Subculture
- b) Folk culture
- c) Counter culture
- d) High culture

Q8. Culture is transmitted from one generation to another primarily through:

- a) Biological inheritance
- b) Socialization
- c) Genetic mutation
- d) Natural selection

Q9. Popular culture is mainly spread through:

- a) Rural traditions
- b) Religious rituals
- c) Mass media and technology

d) Ancient customs

Q10. Cultural relativism encourages:

- a) Superiority of one's culture
- b) Rejection of all traditions
- c) Understanding cultures in their own context
- d) Uniformity of global culture

Answers with Detailed Explanations

Q1. committee is generally formed to:

Correct Answer: b) The total way of life of a society

Explanation:

Culture encompasses beliefs, values, norms, customs, knowledge, language, art, and material objects that characterize a society. It is not biologically inherited (option a) nor limited to personality (option c) or governmental rules alone (option d). It represents the comprehensive social heritage of a group.

Q2. The term “culture” is derived from the Latin word *colere*, which means:

Correct Answer: b) To cultivate

Explanation:

The word *colere* originally referred to cultivating land but later came to signify the cultivation of the human mind and social life. This reflects the idea that culture is developed and nurtured through social processes.

Q3. Which of the following is an example of non-material culture?

Correct Answer: c) Moral values

Explanation:

Non-material culture consists of intangible elements such as beliefs, values, norms, and customs. Computers and buildings (options a and b) are material culture because they are physical objects. Moral values are abstract standards guiding behavior.

Q4. The concept of cultural lag was introduced by:

Correct Answer: b) William F. Ogburn

Explanation:

William F. Ogburn introduced the concept of cultural lag to explain

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the gap between rapid changes in material culture (e.g., technology) and slower changes in non-material culture (e.g., laws, norms). This lag may create social adjustment problems.

Q5. Judging other cultures by the standards of one's own culture is known as:

Correct Answer: c) Ethnocentrism

Explanation:

Ethnocentrism involves evaluating other cultures using one's own cultural norms as the benchmark, often leading to bias. In contrast, cultural relativism encourages understanding cultures within their own context.

Q6. Which of the following is an example of material culture?

Correct Answer: d) Technology

Explanation:

Material culture includes physical objects and technological innovations. Language, law, and belief systems are non-material components because they consist of ideas and norms rather than tangible objects.

Q7. A group that rejects dominant cultural values and norms is called:

Correct Answer: c) Counter culture

Explanation:

A counterculture actively opposes mainstream societal norms and values. Subculture (option a) may differ but does not necessarily reject dominant culture. Folk and high culture represent different forms of cultural expression.

Q8. Culture is transmitted from one generation to another primarily through:

Correct Answer: b) Socialization

Explanation:

Socialization is the process through which individuals learn cultural norms, values, and behaviors. This occurs through family, education, peer groups, religion, and media. Culture is not passed genetically

Q9. Popular culture is mainly spread through:

Correct Answer: c) Mass media and technology

Explanation:

Popular culture spreads rapidly through television, cinema, social media, and digital platforms. It is characteristic of modern industrial societies and differs from traditional rural-based folk culture.

Q10. Cultural relativism encourages:

Correct Answer: c) Understanding cultures in their own context

Explanation:

Cultural relativism promotes interpreting cultural practices according to their own social and historical context, rather than judging them by external standards. It is essential for culturally sensitive social work practice.

B. Short Answer Questions (Answer in 50–80 words)

1. Define culture.
2. Explain two characteristics of culture.
3. What are cultural values?

Part II

B. LONG Answer Questions (200 words)

1. Explain the meaning and characteristics of culture with examples.
2. Discuss the major dimensions and components of culture.
3. Explain the importance of culture in understanding society and social work practice.

Part III

C. LONG Answer Questions (300 words)

1. Define Culture and explain its importance in society.
2. Culture manifests in diverse forms within society. One classification identifies folk culture, popular culture, high culture, subculture, and counterculture.

UNIT 9

Civilization and Its Relationship with Culture

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Objective
- 9.2 Meaning and Concept of Civilization
- 9.3 Characteristics of Civilization
- 9.4 Historical Development of Civilizations
- 9.5 Relationship between Culture and Civilization
- 9.6 Difference between Culture and Civilization
- 9.7 Views of Sociologists on Culture and Civilization
- 9.8 Importance of Understanding Civilization in Social Work
- 9.9 Contemporary Civilization and Globalization
- 9.10 Summary
- 9.11 Glossary
- 9.12 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 9.13 Suggested Readings – OER
- 9.14 References
- 9.15 Exercise

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Civilization is one of the central concepts in sociology, anthropology, and history. While culture refers broadly to the total way of life of a society, civilization is generally associated with advanced stages of social development characterized by urbanization, complex institutions, technological progress, and organized political systems. Understanding civilization enables scholars to analyze societal transformation, progress, and structural differentiation.

In sociological discourse, civilization is not merely material advancement but a cumulative process of institutional development, administrative organization, economic specialization, and intellectual growth. For social work professionals, studying civilization is crucial because contemporary social problems are deeply embedded within

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civilizational structures such as industrialization, globalization, bureaucracy, and technological change.

9.2 OBJECTIVE

After reading this section, you will be able to:

- Differentiate between the concepts of culture (internal values/art) and civilization (external technology/infrastructure).
- Analyze the historical and structural relationship between advancing civilizations and shifting cultural paradigms.
- Evaluate critiques regarding the mechanization of society and cultural lag.

9.2 MEANING AND CONCEPT OF CIVILIZATION

9.2.1 Etymology of Civilization

The term “civilization” is derived from the Latin word *civis* (citizen) and *civitas* (city-state). It originally referred to organized urban living. Over time, it came to signify a developed and organized society marked by political order, economic complexity, and cultural achievements.

9.2.2 Definitions by Sociologists and Thinkers

Different scholars have interpreted civilization in varied ways:

- MacIver and Charles H. Page defined civilization as the whole mechanism and organization developed by man in his effort to control the conditions of life.
- Oswald Spengler viewed civilization as the final stage in the life cycle of a culture.
- Arnold J. Toynbee considered civilization as a response to challenges faced by societies.
- Edward Burnett Tylor used the term civilization synonymously with culture, though later scholars differentiated the two.

Thus, civilization often emphasizes material and institutional advancement, whereas culture includes values, beliefs, and norms.

9.2.3 Civilization as a Stage of Social Development

Civilization represents a higher level of social organization following primitive and tribal societies. It includes:

- Organized government
- Legal systems
- Economic specialization
- Written language
- Urban settlements

Civilization emerges when societies move from simple kinship-based structures to complex institutional systems.

9.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF CIVILIZATION

1. **Urbanization** - Civilizations are marked by the growth of cities. Urban centers function as administrative, economic, and cultural hubs. The shift from rural to urban living increases social complexity.
2. **Division of Labour**- Advanced division of labour is a defining feature. Occupational specialization enhances productivity and economic interdependence.
3. **Technological Advancement** - Civilizations demonstrate progress in science, engineering, transport, communication, and industrial production.
4. **Written Language and Record Keeping**- The presence of writing systems enables documentation of laws, trade records, literature, and historical events.
5. **9.3.5 Political Organization and Legal System** - Civilizations develop structured governance systems, bureaucracies, codified laws, and administrative institutions.
6. **Economic Organization and Trade** - Markets, trade networks, currency systems, and surplus production distinguish civilizations from subsistence-based societies.

9.4 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF CIVILIZATIONS

1 Ancient Civilizations

Examples include:

- Indus Valley Civilization
- Mesopotamia
- Ancient Egypt

These civilizations developed writing, urban planning, and centralized governance.

2 Medieval Civilizations

Characterized by feudal systems, religious authority, and limited technological progress compared to modern times.

3 Modern Industrial Civilization

Industrialization, capitalism, democracy, and scientific innovation define modern civilization. Technological integration and globalization characterize this phase.

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9.5 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION

1 Interdependence

Culture and civilization are interrelated. Culture provides values and meanings, while civilization provides material tools and institutional mechanisms.

2 Culture as Means and Civilization as End

Some scholars argue culture is internal (values), whereas civilization is external (technology). Others reject strict separation, emphasizing their integration.

Culture consists of multiple interrelated components forming an integrated system.

Culture consists of multiple interrelated components forming an integrated system.

9.6 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION

1 Basis of Comparison

Basis	Culture	Civilization
Nature	Internal and spiritual	External and material
Measurement	Cannot be measured	Can be measured by progress
Change	Slow and gradual	Rapid and dynamic
Evaluation	Value-oriented	Utility-oriented

2 Critical Evaluation

The distinction is analytical, not absolute. Modern sociologists recognize overlap between both concepts.

9.7 IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING CIVILIZATION IN SOCIAL WORK

Social work practice operates within civilizational contexts such as:

- Industrialization
- Urbanization
- Globalization
- Technological inequality

Understanding civilization helps social workers analyze structural inequalities, institutional frameworks, and policy environments affecting communities.

9.8 CONTEMPORARY CIVILIZATION AND GLOBALIZATION

Modern civilization is characterized by:

- Digital technology
- Global communication networks
- Multicultural interactions
- Environmental challenges

Globalization integrates economies and cultures, creating both opportunities and inequalities..

Check Your Progress – 1

Note: (a) Space is given below for your answer.

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

Q1. Define Culture and explain why it is called a “social heritage.”

Q2. Differentiate between Material Culture and Non-Material Culture.

Q3 . What is Cultural Lag? Who introduced this concept?

9.9 SUMMARY

Civilization refers to an advanced stage of social development marked by urbanization, technological progress, institutional complexity, and organized governance. While culture represents the total way of life, civilization primarily emphasizes material and institutional achievements. Scholars differ in their interpretation of the relationship between culture and civilization, but both are interdependent and essential for understanding societal evolution..

NOTE**9.10 GLOSSARY**

- **Civilization:** Advanced stage of organized social development.
- **Urbanization:** Growth of cities and urban population.
- **Division of Labour:** Specialization of work roles.
- **Industrialization:** Development of industries on a large scale.
- **Globalization:** Worldwide integration of economies and cultures.

9.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Answer:- Culture refers to the total pattern of learned behavior, beliefs, values, norms, customs, language, and material objects shared by members of a society. It is called a “social heritage” because it is transmitted from one generation to another through socialization. Individuals inherit culture not biologically, but socially, through interaction with family, education, religion, and other institutions.

2. Answer- Material culture includes tangible and physical objects such as tools, machines, buildings, clothing, and technology. Non-material culture consists of intangible elements like beliefs, values, norms, customs, morals, language, and traditions. While material culture changes rapidly due to technological advancement, non-material culture often changes more slowly, sometimes leading to cultural lag.

3. Answer - Cultural lag refers to the delay in the adjustment of non-material culture (values, norms, laws) to changes in material culture (technology, inventions). This concept was introduced by William F. Ogburn. Cultural lag creates social imbalance when society struggles to adapt its moral or legal frameworks to technological changes.

9.11 SUGGESTED READINGS – OER

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectonline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13625	

9.12 REFERENCES

- MacIver, R.M. & Page, C.H. – *Society: An Introductory Analysis*
- Toynbee, A.J. – *A Study of History*
- Spengler, O. – *The Decline of the West*

9.13 EXERCISE

Part 1

A. Multiple choice question

Q1. The word 'Civilization' is derived from the Latin word:

- a) A. Cultura
- B. Civis
- C. Societas
- D. Humanitas

Q2. According to MacIver and Page, civilization refers to:

- A. The spiritual life of people
- B. The emotional unity of society
- C. The entire mechanism and organization developed to control life conditions
- D. Primitive tribal living

Q3. Which of the following is NOT a characteristic of civilization?

- A. Urbanization
- B. Division of Labour
- C. Simple kinship organization
- D. Written language

Q4. The concept that civilization represents the final stage in the life cycle of culture was proposed by:

- A. Arnold Toynbee
- B. Edward Tylor
- C. Oswald Spengler
- D. Emile Durkheim

Q5. Which of the following best explains the difference between culture and civilization?

- A. Culture is measurable; civilization is not
- B. Civilization is internal; culture is external
- C. Culture relates to values and beliefs, while civilization relates to material and institutional development
- D. There is no difference between the two

NOTE**Answers with Detailed Explanations****1. Answer: B. Civis****Explanation:**

The term “civilization” originates from the Latin word *civis*, meaning citizen, and *civitas*, meaning city-state. The concept initially referred to organized urban life and later evolved to represent advanced stages of social organization, governance, and institutional development.

2. Answer: C. The entire mechanism and organization developed to control life conditions**Explanation:**

MacIver and Charles H. Page defined civilization as the whole mechanism and organization created by humans in their effort to control the conditions of life. This includes technology, institutions, laws, and administrative systems—essentially the material and structural aspects of society.

3. Answer: C. Simple kinship organization**Explanation:**

Civilization is marked by complex social organization, including urbanization, occupational specialization, written records, and political institutions. Simple kinship-based organization is typical of primitive or tribal societies, not advanced civilizations.

4. Answer: C. Oswald Spengler**Explanation:**

Oswald Spengler argued in *The Decline of the West* that civilization is the final and declining phase of culture. According to him, cultures are living organisms that eventually evolve into civilizations, which signify rigidity and decline.

5. Answer: C. Culture relates to values and beliefs, while civilization relates to material and institutional development**Explanation:**

Culture refers to norms, values, customs, traditions, and beliefs—the internal aspects of social life. Civilization emphasizes material progress, technology, institutional organization, and administrative systems—the external and measurable aspects of development. However, both are interrelated and mutually dependent.

Part II –**B. Short Answer Questions (Answer in 50–80 words)**

Q1. Define Civilization and mention its main characteristics.

Q2. Differentiate between Culture and Civilization.

Part III –

C. Long Essay Questions

Q1. Discuss the meaning, characteristics, and historical development of Civilization.

Q2. Explain the relationship and differences between Culture and Civilization.

NOTE

UNIT 10

Social Change

NOTE

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 Objective
- 10.2 Concept and Definition of Social Change
- 10.3 Nature and Characteristics of Social Change
- 10.4 Theories of Social Change
 - 10.4.1 Evolutionary Theory - Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer
 - 10.4.2 Cyclical Theory - Oswald Spengler, Arnold J. Toynbee
 - 10.4.3 Conflict Theory - Karl Marx
 - 10.4.4 Functionalist Theory - Talcott Parsons
- 10.5 Factors of Social Change
- 10.6 Forms and Patterns of Social Change
- 10.7 Social Change and Modernization
- 10.8 Social Change and Globalization
- 10.9 Social Change in Indian Society
- 10.10 Role of Social Work in Social Change
- 10.11 Summary
- 10.12 Glossary
- 10.13 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 10.14 Suggested Readings – OER
- 10.15 References
- 10.16 Exercise

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Social change is a fundamental concept in sociology that refers to significant alterations in social structure, social relationships, cultural patterns, and institutional arrangements over time. Society is dynamic rather than static; it continuously evolves in response to internal developments and external influences. Social change may occur

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gradually or rapidly, peacefully or through conflict, and may affect specific institutions or the entire social system.

Understanding social change is essential for postgraduate students of sociology and social work because it provides analytical tools to interpret transformation in family patterns, economic systems, political institutions, technology, and cultural values. In the contemporary world marked by globalization, digitalization, and rapid modernization, social change has become more visible and accelerated.

10.2 OBJECTIVE

After reading this section, you will be able to:

- Define social change and identify its primary demographic, technological, and ideological catalysts.
- Compare major sociological theories of change, including evolutionary, cyclical, and conflict models.
- Assess the impact of rapid social change on traditional community structures.

10.2 CONCEPT AND DEFINITION OF SOCIAL CHANGE

The concept of social change refers to transformations in the organization and functioning of society. It involves modifications in social institutions such as family, religion, economy, education, and state, as well as changes in norms, values, and social roles.

Sociologists have defined social change in various ways:

- MacIver described social change as a change in social relationships.
- Kingsley Davis defined it as changes in social organization, structure, and functions.
- Gillin and Gillin viewed it as variations or modifications in accepted modes of life.

These definitions emphasize that social change is not merely individual change but structural transformation affecting collective life.

10.3 NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Social change possesses several distinctive features:

1. **Universality** – It occurs in all societies, though the rate and direction may differ.

2. **Continuity** – Change is ongoing; society is never completely static.
3. **Relative Speed** – Some societies change rapidly (industrial societies), while others change slowly (traditional societies).
4. **Complexity** – Social change is influenced by multiple interconnected factors.
5. **Predictability** – While trends may be observed, exact outcomes are difficult to predict.
6. **Planned and Unplanned** – Change may be deliberate (policy reforms) or accidental (natural disasters, pandemics).
7. **Qualitative and Quantitative Dimensions** – Change may involve numerical growth or structural transformation.
Thus, social change is multidimensional and affects both material and non-material aspects of society.

10.4 THEORIES OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Sociological theories provide systematic explanations of how and why societies change.

10.4.1 Evolutionary Theory

Evolutionary theory views social change as a gradual and progressive development from simple to complex forms.

- Auguste Comte proposed the “Law of Three Stages”: theological, metaphysical, and positive stages.
- Herbert Spencer compared society to a biological organism, evolving from simple to complex structures.

This theory emphasizes linear progress and differentiation in social systems.

10.4.2 Cyclical Theory

Cyclical theorists argue that societies rise, flourish, decline, and collapse in recurring cycles.

- Oswald Spengler viewed civilizations as living organisms with life cycles.
- Arnold J. Toynbee suggested that civilizations grow when they successfully respond to challenges and decline when they fail.

This perspective rejects the idea of permanent progress.

10.4.3 Conflict Theory

Conflict theory views social change as the result of tension and conflict between competing groups.

- Karl Marx argued that class struggle between the bourgeoisie and proletariat drives historical change.

NOTE

According to Marx, economic structures determine social relations, and revolutionary transformation occurs when contradictions intensify.

10.4.4 Functionalist Theory

Functionalists see social change as a process of system adjustment.

- Talcott Parsons proposed that societies maintain equilibrium through adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and pattern maintenance (AGIL framework).

Change occurs when institutions adjust to maintain social stability.

10.5 FACTORS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Social change results from various interrelated factors:

1. **Technological Factors** – Innovations like the internet and artificial intelligence transform communication and work.
2. **Economic Factors** – Industrialization and capitalism reshape social organization.
3. **Political Factors** – Policy reforms, revolutions, and governance systems influence change.
4. **Cultural Factors** – Changes in beliefs and values affect social norms.
5. **Demographic Factors** – Population growth, migration, and urbanization alter social structure.
6. **Educational Factors** – Expansion of education promotes awareness and modernization.

These factors operate simultaneously and reinforce one another.

10.6 FORMS AND PATTERNS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Social change may take different forms:

- **Linear Change** – Continuous progress in one direction.
- **Cyclical Change** – Repetition of patterns over time.
- **Revolutionary Change** – Rapid and radical transformation (e.g., political revolutions).
- **Reformative Change** – Gradual modification through policies and reforms.
- **Structural Change** – Alteration in institutional frameworks.
- **Cultural Change** – Transformation in norms and values.

Understanding patterns helps analyze societal transformation.

10.7 SOCIAL CHANGE AND MODERNIZATION

Modernization refers to the transformation from traditional to modern society. It includes industrialization, urbanization, secularization, rationalization, and technological advancement.

Modernization theories argue that development follows a linear path toward industrial society. However, critics point out cultural diversity and uneven development.

10.8 SOCIAL CHANGE AND GLOBALIZATION

Globalization accelerates social change by increasing global interconnectedness. It promotes economic integration, cultural exchange, and technological diffusion. While globalization enhances development and communication, it may also increase inequality and cultural homogenization.

10.9 SOCIAL CHANGE IN INDIAN SOCIETY

India has experienced profound social change due to industrialization, urbanization, education, democratic governance, and constitutional reforms. Changes include:

- Decline of rigid caste practices
- Women's empowerment
- Expansion of education
- Growth of urban middle class
- Digital transformation

Government policies, constitutional values, and social movements have contributed significantly to transformation in Indian society.

10.10 SUMMARY

Social change refers to structural and cultural transformations in society over time. It is universal, continuous, and multidimensional. Theories of social change—including evolutionary, cyclical, conflict, and functionalist perspectives—offer varied explanations of social transformation. Technological, economic, political, and cultural factors influence change. In contemporary society, modernization and globalization have accelerated transformation. Social work plays a vital role in guiding planned and equitable social change.

10.11 GLOSSARY

- **Social Change** – Alteration in social structure and relationships.
- **Modernization** – Process of transition from traditional to modern society.
- **Globalization** – Increasing global interconnectedness.
- **Revolution** – Rapid and radical social transformation.
- **Equilibrium** – Balance within social systems.
- **Class Struggle** – Conflict between social classes.
- **Urbanization** – Growth of cities and urban population.

NOTE**10.12 SUGGESTED READINGS – OER**

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectonline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13626	

10.13 REFERENCES

- Karl Marx
- Auguste Comte
- Herbert Spencer
- Talcott Parsons
- Arnold J. Toynbee

10.14 EXERCISE**Part 1****A. Multiple choice question**

Q1. Social change primarily refers to:

- A. Change in individual personality
- B. Change in weather conditions
- C. Change in social structure and social relationships
- D. Change in biological traits

Q2. The “Law of Three Stages” explaining social evolution was proposed by:

- A. Herbert Spencer
- B. Karl Marx
- C. Auguste Comte
- D. Talcott Parsons

Q3. According to Conflict Theory, social change occurs mainly due to:

- A. Social harmony
- B. Class struggle
- C. Religious unity
- D. Cultural diffusion

Q4. Which of the following is an example of revolutionary social change?

- A. Gradual educational reform
- B. Technological innovation
- C. Sudden political revolution
- D. Population growth

Q5. Globalization influences social change mainly through:

- A. Isolation of societies
- B. Decrease in communication
- C. Increased global interconnectedness
- D. Elimination of cultural exchange

Answers with Detailed Explanations

Q1. Social change primarily refers to:

Correct Answer: C. Change in social structure and social relationships

Explanation:

Social change does not refer to individual-level changes or biological variations. It involves transformation in the structure and functioning of society, including institutions such as family, economy, religion, education, and state. As explained by MacIver, social change essentially means change in social relationships. Therefore, it is structural and collective rather than purely personal.

Q2. The “Law of Three Stages” explaining social evolution was proposed by:

Correct Answer: C. Auguste Comte

Explanation:

Auguste Comte, the founder of sociology, proposed that human intellectual development passes through three stages:

1. Theological Stage (belief in supernatural explanations)
2. Metaphysical Stage (abstract philosophical reasoning)
3. Positive Stage (scientific thinking)

This theory represents an evolutionary perspective of social change, suggesting gradual intellectual and societal progress.

Q3. According to Conflict Theory, social change occurs mainly due to:

Correct Answer: B. Class struggle

Explanation:

Conflict theory, primarily associated with Karl Marx, argues that social change arises from contradictions and conflicts between different social classes. Marx emphasized the struggle between the bourgeoisie

NOTE

(owners of production) and the proletariat (working class). When exploitation intensifies, revolutionary transformation occurs. Thus, conflict—not harmony—is considered the driving force of change.

Q4. Which of the following is an example of revolutionary social change?

Correct Answer: C. Sudden political revolution

Explanation:

Revolutionary social change refers to rapid, fundamental, and radical transformation in social, political, or economic structures. A sudden political revolution alters governance systems, laws, and power structures within a short period. In contrast, gradual reforms or technological innovation represent evolutionary or reformatory change rather than revolutionary change.

Q5. Globalization influences social change mainly through:

Correct Answer: C. Increased global interconnectedness

Explanation:

Globalization accelerates social change by linking societies through trade, communication, technology, migration, and cultural exchange. It facilitates rapid transmission of ideas, innovations, and lifestyles across national boundaries. While globalization may create inequality or cultural homogenization, its primary feature is enhanced global interconnectedness rather than isolation.

Part II –**Short Answer Questions (Answer in 50–80 words)**

Q1. Explain the main characteristics of Social Change.

Q2. Briefly explain the Conflict Theory of Social Change.

Part III –**Long Essay Questions**

Q1. Discuss the major theories of Social Change in detail.

Q2. Examine the factors and contemporary dimensions of Social Change with special reference to India.

UNIT 11

Secularization

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 Objective
- 11.2 Meaning and Concept of Secularization
- 11.3 Historical Development of Secularization
 - 11.3.1 Secularization in Western Societies
 - 11.3.2 Secularization in Modern Democratic States
 - 11.3.3 Secularization in India
- 11.4 Characteristics of Secularization
- 11.5 Theories of Secularization
 - 11.5.1 Classical Sociological Perspective - Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx
 - 11.5.2 Modern Secularization Theory
 - 11.5.3 Critique of Secularization Theory
- 11.6 Secularization and Modernization
- 11.7 Secularization and Social Change
- 11.8 Secularization in Indian Context
 - 11.8.1 Constitutional Secularism
 - 11.8.2 Religious Pluralism in India
 - 11.8.3 Challenges to Secularization
- 11.9 Relevance of Secularization in Social Work Practice
- 11.10 Summary
- 11.11 Glossary
- 11.12 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 11.13 Suggested Readings – OER
- 11.14 References
- 11.15 Exercise

NOTE**11.1 INTRODUCTION**

Secularization is one of the most significant processes associated with modernity and social transformation. It refers to the declining influence of religion in social institutions, public life, and individual decision-making. In traditional societies, religion dominated social, political, economic, and educational institutions. However, with the rise of rationality, science, industrialization, and democratic governance, the authority of religion has gradually reduced in many spheres of life.

For postgraduate students of sociology and social work, understanding secularization is essential because religion continues to influence identity, community organization, politics, and social welfare systems. Secularization does not necessarily mean the disappearance of religion; rather, it signifies structural differentiation and the limitation of religious authority in public domains.

11.2 OBJECTIVE

After reading this section, you will be able to:

- Define secularization and trace its historical development within the Indian socio-political context.
- Analyze how secularization alters traditional social patterns, caste dynamics, and institutional authority.
- Evaluate the challenges and conflicts arising from the transition toward secular social models.

11.2 MEANING AND CONCEPT OF SECULARIZATION

Secularization refers to the process by which religious beliefs, practices, and institutions lose social significance. It involves the transformation of society from religious dominance to rational and scientific orientation.

11.2.1 Etymology of Secularization

The term “secular” is derived from the Latin word *saeculum*, meaning “this age” or “worldly.” It originally referred to matters related to worldly affairs as distinct from religious or spiritual concerns.

11.2.2 Definitions by Sociologists

- Max Weber associated secularization with rationalization and the “disenchantment of the world,” where supernatural explanations are replaced by scientific reasoning.
- Peter L. Berger described secularization as the process by which sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols.
- Bryan Wilson defined secularization as the decline in religious belief, practice, and institutional power.

11.2.3 Secularism and Secularization: Conceptual Distinction

Secularism is a political principle advocating the separation of religion from state affairs and equal respect for all religions. Secularization, on the other hand, is a sociological process describing the declining social importance of religion. Secularism is normative; secularization is descriptive.

11.3 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF SECULARIZATION

11.3.1 Secularization in Western Societies

In Europe, secularization accelerated after the Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment, and Industrial Revolution. Scientific discoveries and rational philosophy challenged religious authority. Democratic revolutions further separated church and state.

11.3.2 Secularization in Modern Democratic States

Modern states emphasize constitutional governance, rule of law, and institutional differentiation. Religion remains a private matter, while public policy is based on rational and legal principles.

11.3.3 Secularization in India

India adopted secularism as a constitutional principle. However, Indian secularization differs from Western models because religion remains socially influential. The Indian model promotes equal respect for all religions rather than strict separation.

11.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF SECULARIZATION

1. **Decline of Religious Authority** – Religious institutions lose control over politics, education, and law.
2. **Rationalization and Scientific Temper** – Scientific reasoning replaces supernatural explanations.
3. **Differentiation of Social Institutions** – Religion becomes separate from economy, education, and state.
4. **Religious Tolerance** – Promotion of pluralism and interfaith coexistence.
5. **Privatization of Religion** – Religion becomes a personal rather than public matter.

NOTE**11.5 THEORIES OF SECULARIZATION****11.5.1 Classical Sociological Perspective**

- Max Weber emphasized rationalization.
- Emile Durkheim believed religion would transform rather than disappear.
- Karl Marx viewed religion as an instrument of ideological control, predicting its decline in a classless society.

11.5.2 Modern Secularization Theory

Modern theorists argue that industrialization, urbanization, and education reduce religious participation. However, religion may persist in new forms.

11.5.3 Critique of Secularization Theory

Critics argue that religion has not declined globally but has transformed. Religious revival movements challenge the idea of inevitable decline.

11.6 SECULARIZATION AND MODERNIZATION

Modernization involves industrial growth, scientific advancement, and bureaucratic organization. Secularization often accompanies modernization because rational institutions replace religious control.

11.7 SECULARIZATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Secularization contributes to social change by promoting gender equality, educational reform, democratic governance, and human rights. It supports pluralism and reduces religious conflict in public policy.

11.8 SECULARIZATION IN INDIAN CONTEXT**11.8.1 Constitutional Secularism**

The Indian Constitution ensures freedom of religion and prohibits discrimination based on religion.

11.8.2 Religious Pluralism in India

India is home to multiple religions, requiring a model of inclusive secularism.

11.8.3 Challenges to Secularization

Communalism, political mobilization of religion, and identity conflicts challenge secular principles.

11.9 RELEVANCE OF SECULARIZATION IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

Social workers operate in culturally and religiously diverse communities. Secular principles ensure non-discrimination, equality, and professional neutrality. Social workers must respect religious diversity while promoting constitutional values.

11.10 SUMMARY

Secularization refers to the declining influence of religion in social institutions and public life. It involves rationalization, institutional differentiation, and privatization of religion. While Western societies experienced strong secularization, India follows a pluralistic model of secularism. Secularization remains central to understanding modernization, democracy, and professional social work practice.

11.11 GLOSSARY

- **Secularization** – Decline of religious influence in society.
- **Secularism** – Separation of religion and state.
- **Rationalization** – Replacement of traditional beliefs with scientific reasoning.
- **Privatization of Religion** – Religion becoming a personal matter.

Pluralism – Coexistence of diverse religious beliefs.

11.12 SUGGESTED READINGS – OER

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectonline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13627	

NOTE**11.13 REFERENCES**

- Max Weber
- Emile Durkheim
- Karl Marx
- Peter L. Berger

11.14 EXERCISE**Part 1****A. Multiple choice question**

1. The term secularization is most closely associated with the concept of:
 - a) Industrialization
 - b) Rationalization
 - c) Capitalism
 - d) Urbanization
2. The concept of “disenchantment of the world” was given by:
 - a) Emile Durkheim
 - b) Karl Marx
 - c) Max Weber
 - d) Peter L. Berger
3. Secularization primarily refers to:
 - a) Abolition of religion
 - b) Increase in religious practices
 - c) Decline in religious authority
 - d) Spread of missionary activities
4. Secularism in India is based on:
 - a) Complete separation of religion and state
 - b) State religion
 - c) Equal respect for all religions
 - d) Religious dominance in politics
5. The differentiation of institutions means:
 - a) Religion controls politics
 - b) Religion and state function independently
 - c) Church controls economy
 - d) Religious law dominates civil law

Answers with Detailed Explanations**Q1. Correct Answer: (b) Rationalization****Explanation:**

Secularization is closely linked with the process of rationalization, a concept extensively discussed by Max Weber. Rationalization refers to the replacement of traditional, religious, and emotional explanations

with scientific reasoning, bureaucratic organization, and logical thinking. Secularization does not simply mean industrial or urban growth; rather, it involves a shift from sacred to rational authority in social institutions.

Q2. Correct Answer: (c) Max Weber**Explanation:**

The phrase “disenchantment of the world” (Entzauberung) was used by Max Weber to describe the decline of mystical and religious explanations in modern society. According to Weber, modernity promotes scientific thinking, bureaucratic administration, and technological advancement, which gradually reduce the influence of supernatural beliefs in everyday life. This process is central to secularization.

Q3. Correct Answer: (c) Decline in religious authority**Explanation:**

Secularization does not mean the total disappearance of religion. Instead, it refers to the decline in the social, political, and institutional authority of religion. Religious institutions lose control over education, law, governance, and economy. Individuals may still practice religion privately, but religion no longer dominates public decision-making.

Q4. Correct Answer: (c) Equal respect for all religions**Explanation:**

The Indian model of secularism differs from the Western model. In India, secularism means “Sarva Dharma Sambhava”—equal respect and treatment for all religions. The Indian state does not completely separate religion from public life; instead, it maintains principled distance and may intervene to ensure social justice and reform. This framework is constitutionally embedded after the 42nd Amendment (1976).

Q5. (b) Religion and state function independently**Explanation:**

Differentiation is a core feature of secularization. It refers to the structural separation of major social institutions such as religion, politics, economy, and education. In traditional societies, religion often controlled political and legal systems. In modern secular societies, these institutions function autonomously, reducing religious dominance over governance and public policy.

Part II –

NOTE

Short Answer Questions (Answer in 50–80 words)

1. Define secularization and explain its sociological meaning.
2. Distinguish between secularism and secularization.
3. Explain the concept of rationalization in secularization.
4. Discuss the characteristics of secularization.
5. Write a short note on secularization in India.

Part III –

Long Essay Questions

1. Critically examine the concept of secularization. Is religion declining or transforming in modern society? Discuss with suitable examples.
2. Analyze the process of secularization in the Indian context. How does the Indian model of secularism differ from Western secularism?
3. Discuss the relevance of secularization in professional social work practice, particularly in pluralistic societies like India.
4. Evaluate the impact of secularization on democracy, human rights, and social development.



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SLM FEEDBACK FORM

PROGRAMME : _____

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BLOCK : _____

UNIT : _____

Dear Student,

While studying the units of this block, you may have found certain portions of the text difficult to comprehend. We wish to know your difficulties and suggestions, in order to improve the course. Therefore, we request you to fill up and send us the following questionnaire, which pertains to this block. If you find the space provided insufficient, kindly use a separate sheet.

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Questionnaire

1. Name : _____

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3. How many hours did you need for studying the units? :

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4. Please give your reactions to the following items based on your reading of the block:

Items	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Poor	Give specific Examples (If poor)
Presentation Quality					
Language and Style					
Illustrations					
Used (diagrams, tables, etc.)					
Conceptual Clarity					
Check Your Progress Questions					
Suggested Readings - OER					

5. Any other comments:

BLOCK IV	GENDER AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN INDIA	139-202
Unit 12	Women and Society	141
Unit 13	Social Stratification	183
Unit 14	Backward Castes, Tribes and Marginalized Sections	191

This block explores gender and social stratification as important dimensions of inequality in Indian society. It introduces the concepts of social stratification, status, class, caste, gender, and social mobility, while examining how social positions influence access to resources, opportunities, rights, and social participation. Particular emphasis is placed on the construction of gender roles and the ways in which family, education, religion, media, economy, and other institutions shape expectations about women and men. The block examines caste-based inequalities, class differences, gender discrimination, and intersectional forms of disadvantage within the Indian social context. It also considers issues such as patriarchy, unequal opportunities, violence, exclusion, and discrimination. Learners are encouraged to critically examine how social structures can reproduce inequality while also recognizing processes of social mobility, empowerment, and social transformation. These concepts are highly relevant to social work because effective practice requires an understanding of structural inequalities and the experiences of marginalized groups. The block therefore promotes a rights-based, inclusive, and socially responsive perspective for social work practice.

UNIT 12

Women and Society

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 12.1 Introduction
- 12.2 Objective
- 12.2 Status of women in Indian society
- 12.3 Demographic changes
- 12.4 Specific problems of women (dowry, torture, discrimination)
- 12.5 Welfare programmes for women and children
- 12.6 Summary
- 12.7 Glossary
- 12.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 12.9 Suggested Readings – OER
- 12.10 References
- 12.11 Exercise

12.1 INTRODUCTION

Women constitute nearly half of the population in every society, and their status, roles, and contributions are essential for the development and progress of a nation. The relationship between women and society has evolved over time due to changes in cultural values, economic structures, education, and legal systems. In traditional societies, women were often confined to domestic roles and had limited participation in public life. However, with social reform movements, modernization, education, and government interventions, the position of women has gradually improved in many parts of the world, including India. Despite these advancements, women continue to face several social, economic, and political challenges that affect their overall well-being and development.

This unit focuses on understanding the position and issues of women in society, particularly in the Indian context. It begins with an examination of the status of women in Indian society, which has historically been shaped by cultural traditions, religious practices, and social norms. The unit will discuss how women's status has changed from ancient to modern times and how factors such as education, employment opportunities, and legal reforms have influenced their position.

NOTE

Another important aspect covered in this unit is demographic changes. Demographic factors such as population growth, sex ratio, literacy rate, fertility rate, and life expectancy significantly influence the lives of women. Changes in these indicators reflect broader social transformations and highlight the progress as well as the continuing inequalities faced by women. Understanding demographic trends helps in analyzing women's participation in education, employment, and decision-making processes.

The unit will also explore specific problems faced by women, such as dowry, domestic violence, discrimination, and social oppression. These issues continue to exist in many societies and have serious consequences for women's physical, emotional, and economic well-being. Dowry-related harassment, gender-based discrimination in education and employment, and violence against women are some of the major challenges that hinder gender equality and social justice. By studying these problems, learners will gain a deeper understanding of the structural and cultural barriers that women encounter in their daily lives.

In addition, the unit highlights welfare programmes for women and children implemented by the government and various organizations. These programmes aim to improve the health, education, safety, and economic empowerment of women. Initiatives such as women's self-help groups, maternal health programmes, child development services, and schemes promoting female education play a vital role in enhancing the status of women in society.

Overall, this unit provides a comprehensive understanding of women's position in society, the challenges they face, and the efforts being made to improve their lives. By studying these aspects, students of social work will be better equipped to analyze gender issues and contribute to the promotion of equality, empowerment, and social justice for women.

12.2 OBJECTIVE

After reading this section, you will be able to:

- Examine the historical and contemporary status of women within various Indian social structures.
- Critique patriarchal norms and their impact on women's access to education, health, and economic resources.
- Evaluate contemporary social movements and legislative interventions aimed at gender equity.

12.2 STATUS OF WOMEN IN INDIAN SOCIETY

The status of women in Indian society has undergone significant transformation across historical periods. From relative autonomy in early Vedic times to subordination during medieval and colonial periods, and then gradual empowerment in the modern democratic era, women's position reflects broader social, economic, political, and cultural dynamics. Despite constitutional guarantees of equality, gender disparities continue to persist in education, employment, health, and political participation.

1. Historical Perspective

a) Ancient Period

In early Vedic society, women enjoyed comparatively higher status. They had access to education, could participate in religious rituals, and some women scholars such as Gargi Vachaknavi and Maitreyi were respected intellectual figures. However, later Vedic and post-Vedic periods saw a gradual decline in women's autonomy.

b) Medieval Period

The medieval era witnessed increased restrictions on women due to socio-political instability and patriarchal norms. Practices such as child marriage, purdah, and sati became prevalent in certain regions. Women's mobility and educational access declined.

c) Colonial Period

During British rule, social reform movements challenged oppressive practices. Reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy campaigned against sati, and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar advocated widow remarriage. Female education gained attention during this period.

2. Constitutional and Legal Status

After independence, the Constitution of India guaranteed equality before law (Article 14) and prohibited discrimination based on sex (Article 15). It also ensures equal opportunity in public employment (Article 16).

Important legislative measures include:

- Dowry Prohibition Act (1961)
- Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005)
- Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act (2013)

These laws aim to safeguard women's rights and promote gender justice.

3. Educational Status

NOTE

Women's literacy rate has significantly improved over the decades, yet gender gaps persist, particularly in rural and marginalized communities. Government initiatives such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao aim to promote girl child education and survival.

However, issues such as school dropout, early marriage, and limited access to higher education in STEM fields remain challenges.

4. Economic Status

Women participate in agriculture, informal sector work, and increasingly in professional fields. However:

- Female labor force participation remains relatively low.
- Wage disparities persist.
- Women are overrepresented in unpaid care work.

Self-help groups (SHGs) and microfinance initiatives have enhanced rural women's economic empowerment.

5. Political Status

Women have achieved significant milestones in politics. Indira Gandhi served as India's first woman Prime Minister. Reservation of seats for women in Panchayati Raj institutions (33%) has increased grassroots political participation.

However, representation in Parliament and state legislatures remains limited compared to men.

6. Social and Cultural Status

Indian society is largely patriarchal, influencing gender roles and expectations. Issues affecting women include:

- Gender-based violence
- Dowry-related harassment
- Female foeticide
- Limited property rights in practice

At the same time, modernization, urbanization, and media exposure have expanded women's aspirations and agency.

7. Contemporary Trends

Modern Indian women are increasingly visible in diverse fields such as science, defense, sports, and entrepreneurship. For example, Kalpana Chawla symbolized women's achievements in space science.

Urban middle-class women experience greater autonomy, yet intersectional inequalities based on caste, class, religion, and region persist.

Major Challenges

- Persistent gender inequality
- Violence against women
- Low workforce participation
- Health and nutrition disparities
- Digital gender divide

The status of women in Indian society reflects a complex interplay of tradition and modernity. While constitutional provisions and social reforms have significantly improved women's position, structural inequalities and patriarchal norms continue to restrict full gender equality. Achieving substantive equality requires not only legal safeguards but also social transformation, economic empowerment, and attitudinal change.

12.3 DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

Demographic changes refer to variations in population size, composition, structure, and distribution over time. In the context of women in Indian society, demographic changes are critical indicators of gender status, social development, and stratification. These changes include trends in sex ratio, fertility rate, mortality rate, life expectancy, migration, literacy levels, and workforce participation. Such demographic factors significantly influence women's social position, access to resources, and overall empowerment.

1. Sex Ratio

The sex ratio (number of females per 1000 males) is a crucial indicator of gender equality and social attitudes toward women.

According to the Census of India, India has historically experienced an adverse sex ratio, reflecting gender bias and discrimination.

Key Issues:

- Female foeticide and sex-selective abortions
- Preference for male children
- Neglect of girl child nutrition and healthcare

The declining child sex ratio in previous decades raised serious concerns about gender discrimination. However, recent data show marginal improvement, though disparities persist across states.

Sociological Significance:

An imbalanced sex ratio reflects deep-rooted patriarchy and affects marriage patterns, trafficking, and social stability.

NOTE**2. Fertility Rate**

The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) represents the average number of children born per woman.

India has witnessed a significant decline in fertility due to:

- Increased female education
- Urbanization
- Access to contraception
- Delayed marriage

Lower fertility rates indicate changing gender roles and increasing reproductive autonomy among women.

Impact on Women's Status:

- Greater participation in education and employment
- Improved maternal health
- Smaller family size leading to better child care

3. Mortality and Life Expectancy

Life expectancy of women in India has gradually increased due to improved healthcare services and awareness.

However:

- Maternal mortality remains a concern in certain rural and economically backward regions.
- Nutritional deficiencies affect women disproportionately.

Improved life expectancy indicates progress, yet quality of life remains uneven due to class, caste, and regional disparities.

4. Age at Marriage

Traditionally, early marriage was common in India. Legal reforms and awareness campaigns have increased the average age at marriage.

Legal Framework:

- Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (2006)

Increasing age at marriage contributes to:

- Higher educational attainment
- Reduced maternal mortality
- Greater decision-making power

5. Female Literacy and Education

Female literacy has significantly improved post-independence. Programs like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao have promoted girl child education.

Despite progress:

- Rural-urban gap persists
- Dropout rates remain high at secondary level
- Digital gender divide is emerging

Education enhances women's empowerment, employment opportunities, and social mobility.

6. Female Workforce Participation

Women's participation in the labor force has shown mixed trends.

Characteristics:

- High participation in informal sector
- Concentration in agriculture and unpaid work
- Gender wage gap

Although educational attainment has increased, workforce participation remains relatively low due to:

- Domestic responsibilities
- Social norms
- Safety concerns

7. Migration Patterns

Female migration is increasing, especially due to:

- Marriage
- Employment
- Education

Urban migration exposes women to new opportunities but also risks such as exploitation and insecurity.

8. Urbanization and Changing Family Structure

Urbanization has led to:

- Nuclear families
- Increased female employment
- Changing gender roles

Women in urban areas often experience greater autonomy compared to rural counterparts, though work-life balance challenges remain.

NOTE**Demographic Changes and Social Stratification**

Demographic indicators are not uniform across India. They vary based on:

- Caste
- Class
- Religion
- Region
- Rural-urban divide

Marginalized women (Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, minority communities) often face compounded disadvantages, demonstrating the intersection of gender with other stratification systems.

Demographic changes in India reflect both progress and persistent inequalities in women's status. Improvements in literacy, fertility rates, and life expectancy suggest positive transformation. However, skewed sex ratios, low workforce participation, and regional disparities indicate ongoing structural challenges.

Understanding demographic trends is essential for analyzing gender inequality and formulating effective social policies aimed at empowerment and inclusive development.

12.4 SPECIFIC PROBLEMS OF WOMEN (DOWRY, TORTURE, DISCRIMINATION)

Despite constitutional guarantees of equality under the Constitution of India, women in India continue to face multiple forms of oppression rooted in patriarchy and gender stratification. Among the most persistent and harmful problems are dowry-related issues, domestic torture/violence, and gender discrimination. These problems are not isolated individual incidents but are deeply embedded in social structure, cultural norms, and economic inequalities.

1. Dowry- Dowry refers to the transfer of money, property, gifts, or valuable assets from the bride's family to the groom's family at the time of marriage. Although originally considered a voluntary gift, it has become a coercive and commercialized practice in many communities.

Nature and Causes

- Patriarchal family system
- Preference for male children
- Marriage as a social contract involving economic exchange
- Status competition among families
- Perception of daughters as economic burden

Sociologically, dowry is linked with social stratification, hypergamy (marrying into higher status families), and consumerism.

Consequences

- Dowry harassment
- Domestic violence
- Dowry deaths
- Financial burden on bride's family
- Female foeticide

The Dowry Prohibition Act was enacted to prevent this practice, yet enforcement remains weak in many areas.

Social Work Perspective

Social workers address dowry issues through:

- Legal awareness programs
- Counseling services
- Women support groups
- Community education campaigns
- Advocacy for strict law implementation

2. Torture and Domestic Violence - Torture against women commonly refers to physical, emotional, sexual, and economic abuse within domestic settings. Domestic violence is one of the most widespread forms of gender-based violence.

The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act provides legal protection and defines multiple forms of abuse.

Forms of Torture

- Physical assault
- Verbal abuse and humiliation
- Sexual coercion
- Economic deprivation
- Dowry-related harassment

Causes

- Patriarchal authority
- Alcoholism and substance abuse
- Economic stress
- Lack of women's economic independence
- Cultural acceptance of male dominance

Consequences

- Physical injuries
- Psychological trauma (depression, anxiety)
- Social isolation
- Intergenerational impact on children

NOTE**Role of Social Work**

- Crisis intervention
- Shelter homes and rehabilitation
- Legal aid and protection orders
- Counseling and mental health support
- Community sensitization

3. Gender Discrimination - Gender discrimination refers to unequal treatment or denial of opportunities based on sex. It begins at birth and continues throughout a woman's life cycle.

Areas of Discrimination**1. Education**

Girls may face restricted access to schooling, especially in rural areas.

2. Employment

- Wage gap
- Occupational segregation
- Glass ceiling effect

3. Health

- Malnutrition
- Inadequate healthcare access
- High maternal mortality in vulnerable regions

4. Property and Inheritance

Although laws grant rights, social norms often prevent women from claiming property.

Sociological Explanation

From a conflict perspective (associated with Karl Marx), gender discrimination reflects unequal control over economic resources. From a feminist perspective, patriarchy institutionalizes male dominance in family, economy, and politics.

Interrelationship Between These Problems

Dowry, torture, and discrimination are interconnected:

- Gender discrimination creates son preference.
- Son preference sustains dowry practices.
- Dowry demands often lead to domestic violence.

Thus, these issues reinforce each other within a patriarchal structure.

Impact on Society

- Skewed sex ratio
- Reduced female workforce participation
- Mental health crisis
- Obstruction to national development
- Violation of human rights

Measures for Prevention

1. Strict implementation of laws
2. Women's education and economic empowerment
3. Gender sensitization programs
4. Community-based monitoring systems
5. Strengthening self-help groups and NGOs
6. Promoting gender-equitable socialization

Dowry, torture, and discrimination are structural problems rooted in patriarchal ideology and social stratification. Legal reforms have created protective frameworks, but social transformation requires attitudinal change, empowerment strategies, and sustained social work intervention. Addressing these problems is essential not only for women's welfare but also for achieving social justice and inclusive development.

12.5 WELFARE PROGRAMMES FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Women and children constitute vulnerable sections of society due to structural inequalities, poverty, malnutrition, gender discrimination, and limited access to resources. Welfare programmes aim to promote protection, development, empowerment, and social security for these groups. In India, various schemes have been launched by the Government to ensure health, education, nutrition, safety, and economic empowerment.

These programmes operate under constitutional mandates of equality and social justice as provided in the Constitution of India.

I. Welfare Programmes for Women**1. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)**

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (Save the Daughter, Educate the Daughter) is a flagship initiative of the Government of India launched on 22 January 2015. The programme was introduced in response to the declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and persistent gender discrimination

NOTE

against the girl child. It adopts a multi-sectoral approach to ensure survival, protection, and education of girls.

Background and Rationale

India has historically faced gender imbalance due to:

- Son preference
- Female foeticide
- Sex-selective abortions
- Neglect of girl child health and nutrition
- Limited access to education

The declining child sex ratio, as reported by the Census of India, highlighted the urgent need for corrective measures. BBBP was therefore designed as a social reform and awareness campaign rather than merely a financial assistance scheme.

Objectives:

1. Prevent gender-biased sex selection.
2. Ensure survival and protection of the girl child.
3. Promote education and participation of girls.
4. Address gender discrimination at all levels.

Key Components**1. Advocacy and Mass Communication**

- Awareness campaigns to change societal mindset.
- Community mobilization through local governance institutions.

2. Multi-Sectoral Intervention

- Convergence of Ministries of Women and Child Development, Health & Family Welfare, and Education.
- Focus on districts with low Child Sex Ratio.

3. Enforcement of Laws

- Strict implementation of the PCPNDT Act (Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act).
- Monitoring illegal sex determination practices.

Implementation Strategy

- District-level action plans.
- Capacity building of frontline workers (Anganwadi workers, ASHA, teachers).
- Community engagement through Panchayats and local leaders.

The scheme initially targeted 100 gender-critical districts and later expanded nationwide.

Achievements

- Improved awareness about girl child rights.
- Increased institutional deliveries and birth registrations.
- Marginal improvement in child sex ratio in some states.
- Enhanced enrollment of girls in schools.

Criticism and Challenges

- Overemphasis on publicity expenditure in early phases.
- Limited measurable impact in certain regions.
- Deep-rooted patriarchal norms slow behavioral change.

Sociological Significance

From a sociological perspective, BBBP addresses structural patriarchy and gender stratification. It attempts to transform social attitudes toward daughters by promoting gender equity and social inclusion.

Role of Social Workers

- Conducting awareness campaigns.
- Identifying vulnerable families.
- Monitoring implementation at grassroots level.
- Promoting gender-sensitive community dialogue.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao is not merely a welfare scheme but a social transformation initiative aimed at correcting gender imbalance and promoting empowerment of the girl child. While legal and administrative measures are important, long-term success depends on attitudinal change and sustained community participation.

2. One Stop Centre Scheme

One Stop Centre Scheme is a flagship initiative of the Government of India launched in 2015 under the Ministry of Women and Child Development. The scheme aims to provide integrated support and assistance to women affected by violence—both in public and private spaces—under one roof.

The scheme is funded through the Nirbhaya Fund and is commonly known as *Sakhi Centres* in many states.

Background and Rationale

Women facing violence often struggle due to:

- Lack of immediate support

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- Fear of social stigma
- Limited access to legal remedies
- Fragmented service delivery

Before the introduction of OSC, survivors had to approach multiple institutions—police, hospitals, courts, NGOs—separately. The One Stop Centre model integrates all essential services at a single location to ensure timely and coordinated assistance.

Objectives

1. Provide immediate and emergency response to women affected by violence.
2. Offer medical, legal, psychological, and police assistance in one place.
3. Facilitate access to justice and rehabilitation.
4. Strengthen institutional support systems for women's protection.

Target Beneficiaries

- Women of all ages (including girls below 18 years)
- Victims of domestic violence
- Survivors of sexual assault
- Victims of trafficking
- Women facing emotional, physical, or economic abuse

Services Provided**1. Emergency and Medical Assistance**

- Immediate first aid
- Medical examination and treatment
- Referral to hospitals if required

2. Legal Aid and Police Facilitation

- Assistance in filing FIRs
- Legal counseling
- Court-related support

3. Psychological Counseling

- Trauma counseling
- Mental health support
- Long-term rehabilitation guidance

4. Temporary Shelter

- Short-term accommodation (up to 5 days)
- Referral to long-term shelter homes

5. Video Conferencing Facility

- Enables recording of statements for court proceedings without repeated trauma.

Implementation Structure

- Established at district level.
- Operated by State Governments/UT Administrations.
- Linked with Women Helpline (181).
- Coordinated with police, hospitals, legal services authorities, and NGOs.

Sociological Significance

From a sociological perspective, the OSC scheme addresses structural patriarchy and gender-based violence. It recognizes violence not as a private issue but as a social problem requiring institutional intervention. The scheme also reflects a rights-based approach to women's protection.

Role of Social Workers

Social workers in OSCs perform crucial functions:

- Crisis intervention
- Case management
- Counseling and emotional support
- Coordinating multi-agency services
- Follow-up and rehabilitation planning
- Community awareness campaigns

They act as advocates for survivors and ensure dignity, confidentiality, and empowerment.

Achievements

- Increased reporting of violence cases
- Improved coordination among service providers
- Enhanced accessibility of support services in districts

Challenges

- Limited awareness in rural areas
- Inadequate trained staff in some centres
- Social stigma discouraging reporting
- Infrastructure constraints

The One Stop Centre Scheme is a comprehensive and integrated model for addressing violence against women. By providing multi-sectoral support under one roof, it strengthens the institutional

NOTE

response system and promotes access to justice and rehabilitation. However, sustained awareness, trained personnel, and effective monitoring are essential for maximizing its impact.

3. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) is a centrally sponsored maternity benefit programme launched in 2017 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India. The scheme aims to provide partial wage compensation to pregnant and lactating mothers for the first live birth, thereby improving maternal and child health outcomes.

It is implemented through the Anganwadi Services under the Integrated Child Development framework.

Background and Rationale

India has historically faced challenges such as:

- High maternal mortality rates
- Malnutrition among pregnant women
- Low birth weight infants
- Financial constraints preventing adequate rest during pregnancy

Many women in the informal sector continue working during pregnancy due to economic necessity. PMMVY addresses this issue by offering conditional cash transfers to support rest, nutrition, and institutional healthcare.

Objectives

1. Provide partial wage compensation to pregnant and lactating mothers.
2. Promote proper nutrition and rest during pregnancy.
3. Encourage early registration of pregnancy.
4. Promote institutional delivery and child immunization.
5. Reduce maternal and infant mortality.

Eligibility Criteria

- Pregnant women and lactating mothers aged 19 years and above.
- Applicable for the first live birth (with recent revisions expanding certain benefits).
- Excludes women in regular employment with government/public sector who receive maternity benefits under other laws.

Financial Assistance

Under PMMVY, eligible beneficiaries receive a cash incentive (traditionally ₹5,000 in installments), subject to fulfillment of conditions such as:

- Early registration of pregnancy
- Antenatal check-ups
- Childbirth registration
- Immunization compliance

The amount is transferred directly to the beneficiary's bank account through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).

Implementation Mechanism

- Implemented through Anganwadi Centres.
- Managed by State Governments/UT Administrations.
- Monitored through a digital tracking system (PMMVY-CAS portal).
- Convergence with health departments and ASHA workers.

Sociological Significance

From a sociological perspective, PMMVY:

- Recognizes reproductive labor as socially valuable.
- Addresses gender-based economic vulnerability.
- Promotes women's agency in maternal healthcare decisions.
- Reflects a rights-based and welfare-oriented approach.

The scheme also contributes to demographic transition by promoting healthier childbirth practices and reducing maternal risks.

Role of Social Workers

Social workers contribute by:

- Identifying eligible beneficiaries.
- Facilitating documentation and registration.
- Conducting awareness programmes on maternal health.
- Ensuring accountability and transparency.
- Monitoring service delivery at grassroots level.

Achievements

- Increased institutional deliveries.
- Improved pregnancy registration rates.
- Financial support for economically vulnerable women.

Challenges

- Delays in payment disbursement.

NOTE

- Documentation and digital literacy barriers.
- Limited awareness in rural areas.
- Exclusion errors due to strict eligibility criteria.

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana is an important maternal welfare initiative that addresses economic and health vulnerabilities during pregnancy. While it provides partial financial relief and promotes institutional care, effective implementation and expanded coverage are essential for maximizing maternal and child health outcomes.

4. Mahila Shakti Kendra

Mahila Shakti Kendra (MSK) is a centrally sponsored scheme launched by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India in 2017. The programme was designed to empower rural women through community participation, capacity building, and access to government welfare schemes. It functions as a support system at national, state, district, and block levels.

Background and Rationale

Rural women in India face multiple disadvantages:

- Limited access to education and employment
- Lack of awareness about government schemes
- Restricted mobility
- Gender-based discrimination
- Limited participation in decision-making

Although numerous welfare programmes exist, many women are unable to benefit due to information gaps and administrative barriers. MSK was introduced to bridge this gap by creating institutional mechanisms for outreach and facilitation.

Objectives

1. Empower rural women through community participation.
2. Create awareness about women-centric schemes and entitlements.
3. Facilitate access to healthcare, education, skill development, and employment.
4. Promote digital literacy and financial inclusion.
5. Strengthen grassroots support systems for women.

Structure of the Scheme

MSK operates at four levels:

1. National Level

- Policy guidance and monitoring.

2. State Level

- Coordination and supervision.

3. District Level

- District Mahila Shakti Kendras provide support services and convergence with departments.

4. Block Level

- Community engagement and direct interaction with women beneficiaries.

Key Components**1. Community Engagement**

- Mobilization of rural women through local volunteers.
- Awareness campaigns regarding legal rights and welfare schemes.

2. Convergence with Other Schemes

- Linkage with skill development programmes.
- Facilitation of health and nutrition services.
- Support for entrepreneurship initiatives.

3. Student Volunteer Programme

- Engagement of college students to support awareness and outreach activities.

Sociological Significance

From a sociological perspective, MSK addresses gender stratification in rural India by:

- Enhancing women's agency.
- Promoting participatory development.
- Reducing structural barriers to resource access.
- Encouraging community-level empowerment.

The scheme supports the transition from welfare to empowerment by strengthening institutional access rather than providing direct financial transfers alone.

Role of Social Workers

Social workers play a key role in MSK implementation by:

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- Conducting needs assessments.
- Organizing awareness camps and workshops.
- Facilitating linkage to government schemes.
- Promoting self-help groups (SHGs).
- Encouraging leadership development among rural women.

They act as facilitators, mobilizers, and advocates at grassroots level.

Achievements

- Increased awareness of government schemes among rural women.
- Enhanced participation in skill development programmes.
- Strengthened local-level coordination mechanisms.

Challenges

- Limited infrastructure in remote areas.
- Lack of trained personnel.
- Socio-cultural resistance in conservative communities.
- Monitoring and evaluation gaps.

Mahila Shakti Kendra represents a decentralized and participatory approach to women's empowerment in rural India. By focusing on awareness, capacity building, and institutional convergence, it strengthens women's access to rights and resources. However, sustained funding, effective monitoring, and community engagement are essential to ensure long-term impact.

5. Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana**Introduction**

Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY) is a small savings scheme launched by the Government of India in 2015 under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao initiative. The scheme aims to encourage parents and guardians to save for the future education and marriage expenses of a girl child. It promotes financial security and long-term economic empowerment of girls.

Background and Rationale

In Indian society, daughters have traditionally been perceived as economic liabilities due to marriage-related expenses and limited inheritance practices. Financial insecurity often contributes to:

- Preference for male children
- Early marriage of girls
- Limited investment in girl child education

SSY was introduced to change this mindset by incentivizing savings for the girl child and strengthening her future financial foundation.

Objectives

1. Promote financial inclusion for the girl child.
2. Encourage long-term savings for education and marriage.
3. Reduce economic burden associated with raising daughters.
4. Support gender equality through economic security.

Eligibility Criteria

- Account can be opened in the name of a girl child below 10 years of age.
- Only one account per girl child is permitted.
- Maximum of two girl children per family (with certain exceptions for twins/triplets).

Accounts can be opened in post offices and authorized banks.

Key Features**1. Deposit Limits**

- Minimum annual deposit: ₹250
- Maximum annual deposit: ₹1.5 lakh

2. Interest Rate

- Attractive interest rate (notified quarterly by the Government).
- Higher than many other small savings schemes.

3. Maturity Period

- Account matures after 21 years from the date of opening.
- Partial withdrawal allowed after the girl turns 18 for higher education.

4. Tax Benefits

- Deposits qualify for tax deduction under Section 80C of the Income Tax Act.
- Interest earned and maturity amount are tax-free (EEE status).

Sociological Significance

From a sociological perspective, SSY:

- Promotes economic empowerment of women from childhood.
- Challenges patriarchal perceptions of daughters as financial burdens.
- Encourages investment in girls' education.
- Supports demographic balance by reinforcing the value of the girl child.

NOTE

It aligns with broader gender equality goals by linking economic planning with social reform.

Role of Social Workers

Social workers contribute by:

- Creating awareness in rural and marginalized communities.
- Assisting families in opening accounts.
- Promoting financial literacy among women.
- Linking the scheme with education and empowerment initiatives.

Achievements

- Increased number of savings accounts for girl children.
- Improved financial inclusion among rural households.
- Positive attitudinal shift toward educating daughters.

Challenges

- Limited awareness in remote areas.
- Irregular deposits due to poverty.
- Misconception that the scheme is only for marriage expenses rather than education.

Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana is a strategic savings initiative aimed at securing the financial future of the girl child. By promoting structured savings and offering tax benefits, it supports education and empowerment. While it contributes to economic security, sustained awareness and inclusion efforts are essential to ensure that marginalized families fully benefit from the scheme.

6. Working Women Hostel Scheme**Introduction**

Working Women Hostel Scheme is a Government of India initiative designed to provide safe and affordable accommodation to working women, especially those who migrate from rural or smaller towns to urban areas for employment. The scheme aims to promote women's economic participation by addressing housing insecurity and safety concerns.

It is implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development through State Governments, NGOs, and other eligible organizations.

Background and Rationale

Women entering the workforce, particularly in urban centers, often face:

- Lack of safe and affordable housing
- High rental costs
- Security concerns
- Social stigma attached to single working women
- Limited childcare support

Housing insecurity can discourage women from seeking employment or continuing their careers. The Working Women Hostel Scheme addresses this structural barrier by ensuring safe residential facilities.

Objectives

1. Provide safe and secure accommodation for working women.
2. Promote women's mobility and economic independence.
3. Support women migrating for employment or training.
4. Provide daycare facilities for children of working mothers (where feasible).

Target Beneficiaries

- Employed women (single, widowed, divorced, separated).
- Women undergoing training for employment.
- Women from low-income groups.
- Women with children (in certain hostels with daycare facilities).

Income limits are prescribed to ensure that benefits reach economically weaker sections.

Key Features**1. Safe Accommodation**

- Well-maintained hostels in urban, semi-urban, and sometimes rural areas.
- Security arrangements and essential facilities.

2. Affordable Rent

- Subsidized accommodation charges.
- Shared rooms to reduce costs.

3. Childcare Support

- Daycare facilities for children up to a specified age.
- Supports working mothers.

4. Implementing Agencies

- NGOs
- Women's Development Corporations
- Local bodies

NOTE

- Universities and institutions

Sociological Significance

From a sociological perspective, the scheme:

- Challenges traditional gender roles restricting women's mobility.
- Encourages female labor force participation.
- Promotes urban migration and social mobility for women.
- Addresses structural barriers in patriarchal society.

Housing is a critical component of empowerment, as safe shelter enhances autonomy, confidence, and economic participation.

Role of Social Workers

Social workers contribute through:

- Identifying eligible beneficiaries.
- Counseling residents.
- Ensuring safe and supportive environment.
- Addressing grievances and conflicts.
- Linking residents with employment and welfare services.

They also monitor quality standards and advocate for improved facilities.

Achievements

- Increased support for single and migrant working women.
- Enhanced economic independence.
- Reduced vulnerability to exploitation and unsafe housing.

Challenges

- Limited number of hostels compared to demand.
- Infrastructure constraints.
- Maintenance and management issues in some locations.
- Urban land cost limiting expansion.

The Working Women Hostel Scheme is an important welfare initiative aimed at facilitating women's participation in the workforce by providing secure accommodation. By reducing housing insecurity, it promotes gender equality, economic empowerment, and social mobility. However, expansion, proper monitoring, and modernization of facilities are necessary to meet growing urban demands.

II. Welfare Programmes for Children**1. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)****Introduction**

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) is one of the world's largest early childhood care and development programmes. Launched in 1975 by the Government of India, the scheme aims to improve the health, nutrition, and development of children below six years of age, as well as pregnant and lactating mothers. It adopts a holistic approach by integrating health, nutrition, and pre-school education services at the grassroots level.

ICDS is implemented through a vast network of Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) across rural, urban, and tribal areas.

Background and Rationale

India has historically faced challenges such as:

- Child malnutrition
- High infant and maternal mortality rates
- Low immunization coverage
- Poor early childhood education

Recognizing that early childhood is a critical period for physical, cognitive, and emotional development, ICDS was designed to intervene at the foundational stage of life.

Objectives

1. Improve the nutritional and health status of children (0–6 years).
2. Lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical, and social development.
3. Reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, and malnutrition.
4. Achieve effective coordination among departments dealing with child development.
5. Enhance the capability of mothers to care for their children through nutrition and health education.

Target Beneficiaries

- Children below six years of age
- Pregnant women
- Lactating mothers
- Adolescent girls (under certain components)

Services Provided under ICDS

ICDS provides six integrated services:

1. Supplementary Nutrition

- Provides nutritious food to children and mothers to combat malnutrition.

NOTE

2. Immunization

- Conducted in coordination with the health department.

3. Health Check-ups

- Regular monitoring of child growth and maternal health.

4. Referral Services

- Identifies severe cases and refers them to higher medical institutions.

5. Pre-School Non-Formal Education

- Early childhood education for children aged 3–6 years to prepare them for primary schooling.

6. Nutrition and Health Education

- Awareness programmes for mothers regarding hygiene, nutrition, and childcare practices.

Anganwadi Centres (AWCs)

Anganwadi Centres are the grassroots units of ICDS.

- Managed by Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) and helpers.
- Act as focal points for community-based child development services.
- Serve as a platform for delivering multiple welfare programmes.

Sociological Significance

From a sociological perspective, ICDS:

- Addresses structural inequalities related to poverty and malnutrition.
- Promotes gender equality by supporting girl child nutrition.
- Strengthens community-based welfare mechanisms.
- Reduces intergenerational transmission of poverty and ill-health.

The programme also contributes to demographic transition by improving maternal and child survival rates.

Achievements

- Expansion of Anganwadi network nationwide.
- Improved immunization coverage.
- Increased awareness of maternal and child health.
- Reduction in severe malnutrition in several regions.

Challenges

- Infrastructure gaps in Anganwadi Centres.
- Inadequate training and remuneration of workers.
- Irregular supply of nutrition supplements.
- Regional disparities in implementation.

Role of Social Workers

Social workers play a critical role in:

- Community mobilization.
- Conducting awareness campaigns.
- Monitoring service delivery.
- Facilitating inter-agency coordination.
- Advocating for improved quality of services.

Integrated Child Development Services is a comprehensive and preventive welfare programme aimed at strengthening early childhood development and maternal health. By combining nutrition, healthcare, and education, ICDS plays a pivotal role in nation-building and human resource development. However, continuous monitoring, capacity building, and infrastructure improvement are essential to maximize its long-term impact.

2. Mid-Day Meal Scheme

Midday Meal Scheme is a centrally sponsored programme of the Government of India aimed at providing free cooked meals to children studying in government and government-aided schools. Launched at the national level in 1995 (as the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education), the scheme seeks to enhance school enrollment, retention, attendance, and improve the nutritional status of children.

In 2021, the scheme was renamed as PM POSHAN (Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman), but it continues to serve the same core objectives.

Background and Rationale

India has long faced issues such as:

- Child malnutrition
- Low school enrollment, especially among girls and marginalized communities
- High dropout rates
- Classroom hunger affecting learning outcomes

NOTE

The Mid-Day Meal Scheme was introduced as both a nutritional intervention and an educational incentive to encourage universalization of elementary education.

Objectives

1. Improve the nutritional status of school-going children.
2. Increase enrollment and regular attendance in schools.
3. Reduce dropout rates.
4. Promote social equity by encouraging children from different castes and communities to eat together.

Target Beneficiaries

- Children studying in government and government-aided primary and upper primary schools.
- Students in Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative & Innovative Education (AIE) centers.

Key Features**1. Provision of Cooked Meals**

- Nutritious cooked meals served on school days.
- Prescribed calorie and protein norms based on age group.

2. Nutritional Standards

- Specific guidelines for caloric and protein intake.
- Inclusion of vegetables, pulses, and grains.

3. Social Integration

- Encourages children of different caste, class, and religion to dine together.

4. Local Implementation

- Meals prepared by local cooks and self-help groups (SHGs).
- Community monitoring through School Management Committees (SMCs).

Sociological Significance

From a sociological perspective, the scheme:

- Addresses structural poverty and child malnutrition.

- Promotes educational access for marginalized communities.
- Reduces caste-based discrimination through common dining.
- Encourages gender equality by improving girl child enrollment.

The scheme functions not only as a welfare measure but also as a tool for social integration and inclusive development.

Achievements

- Increased enrollment rates in primary education.
- Improved attendance, especially among girls and Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes.
- Enhanced nutritional intake for children from low-income families.

Challenges

- Food quality and hygiene concerns in some regions.
- Irregular supply and monitoring issues.
- Occasional cases of discrimination during meal distribution.
- Infrastructure limitations in schools.

Role of Social Workers

Social workers contribute by:

- Monitoring implementation at community level.
- Ensuring equitable distribution without discrimination.
- Conducting awareness programmes on nutrition.
- Strengthening school-community partnerships.

The Mid-Day Meal Scheme is one of the largest school nutrition programmes globally. By linking education with nutrition, it addresses both human capital development and social inequality. While significant progress has been achieved, continuous monitoring, infrastructure improvement, and community participation are essential to sustain its impact.

3. POSHAN Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission)**Introduction**

POSHAN Abhiyaan (Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition), launched in 2018 by the Government of India, is a flagship initiative aimed at improving nutritional outcomes for children, pregnant women, and lactating mothers. It adopts a multi-sectoral and technology-driven approach to address malnutrition, stunting, underweight prevalence, and anemia in India.

NOTE

The mission integrates various existing schemes and promotes convergence among ministries dealing with health, women and child development, sanitation, drinking water, and food security.

Background and Rationale

India has faced persistent nutritional challenges such as:

- High levels of stunting and wasting among children
- Anemia among women and adolescent girls
- Low birth weight
- Intergenerational cycle of malnutrition

Malnutrition is not only a health issue but also a social and developmental concern, affecting cognitive development, productivity, and economic growth. POSHAN Abhiyaan was introduced to create a coordinated and focused strategy to combat these challenges.

Objectives

1. Reduce stunting among children (0–6 years).
2. Reduce undernutrition and low birth weight.
3. Reduce anemia among women and adolescent girls.
4. Improve maternal health and child nutrition practices.
5. Promote behavioral change communication for nutrition awareness.

Target Beneficiaries

- Children under six years
- Pregnant women
- Lactating mothers
- Adolescent girls

Key Components**1. Convergence Strategy**

- Coordination between ministries and departments.
- Integration with schemes such as ICDS, health missions, sanitation programmes, and food security initiatives.

2. Technology-Based Monitoring

- Use of digital tools and real-time monitoring systems.
- Mobile-based tracking of beneficiaries through Anganwadi workers.

3. Community-Based Events

- Monthly “POSHAN Maah” (Nutrition Month).
- Growth monitoring and awareness drives.

- Village Health and Nutrition Days.

4. Behavioral Change Communication (BCC)

- Awareness campaigns on breastfeeding, complementary feeding, and hygiene practices.

Sociological Significance

From a sociological perspective, POSHAN Abhiyaan:

- Addresses structural poverty and food insecurity.
- Focuses on women as key agents of nutritional change.
- Breaks the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition.
- Promotes community participation and collective responsibility.

Nutrition is closely linked with social stratification, as marginalized communities often experience higher levels of undernutrition.

Achievements

- Increased awareness regarding nutrition and hygiene.
- Improved monitoring of child growth.
- Strengthened coordination among departments.
- Greater community participation in nutrition campaigns.

Challenges

- Regional disparities in nutritional outcomes.
- Inadequate infrastructure at Anganwadi Centres.
- Digital literacy challenges among frontline workers.
- Persistent anemia rates among women and adolescent girls.

Role of Social Workers

Social workers play an important role in:

- Conducting nutrition awareness campaigns.
- Community mobilization and participation.
- Monitoring service delivery.
- Supporting vulnerable families.
- Advocating for improved implementation.

POSHAN Abhiyaan represents a comprehensive and mission-mode approach to combating malnutrition in India. By combining convergence, technology, and community engagement, it aims to improve maternal and child nutrition outcomes. However, sustained political commitment, infrastructure strengthening, and behavioral transformation are essential for long-term success.

4. Child Protection Services (Mission Vatsalya)

NOTE

Mission Vatsalya (earlier known as Integrated Child Protection Scheme – ICPS) is a centrally sponsored scheme of the Government of India aimed at ensuring the care, protection, development, and rehabilitation of children in need of care and protection and children in conflict with law. It functions under the Ministry of Women and Child Development and adopts a child rights-based approach aligned with constitutional provisions and international conventions.

Mission Vatsalya seeks to create a safety net for vulnerable children through institutional and non-institutional mechanisms.

Background and Rationale

India faces multiple child protection concerns such as:

- Child abuse and exploitation
- Child trafficking
- Child labour
- Abandonment and orphanhood
- Children in conflict with law
- Street and homeless children

The scheme was conceptualized to provide an integrated framework for child protection services at national, state, and district levels.

Objectives

1. Ensure safety and security of children.
2. Provide institutional and non-institutional care for children in need.
3. Strengthen child protection mechanisms at all administrative levels.
4. Promote family-based care and rehabilitation.
5. Prevent child abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Target Beneficiaries

- Orphaned and abandoned children
- Street children
- Children rescued from trafficking or child labour
- Children in conflict with law
- Children affected by abuse or violence

Key Components**1. Institutional Care**

- Child Care Institutions (CCIs)
- Observation Homes and Special Homes
- Open Shelters

These facilities provide shelter, food, education, counseling, and rehabilitation services.

2. Non-Institutional Care

- Foster care
- Sponsorship
- Adoption services
- Aftercare programmes

The emphasis is on family-based care as a preferred alternative to institutionalization.

3. Child Protection Structures

- State Child Protection Societies (SCPS)
- District Child Protection Units (DCPU)
- Child Welfare Committees (CWC)
- Juvenile Justice Boards (JJB)

These bodies ensure legal protection and case management under the Juvenile Justice framework.

4. Child Helpline

Integration with Childline services (1098 helpline) for emergency assistance and rescue of children in distress.

Sociological Significance

From a sociological perspective, Mission Vatsalya:

- Addresses structural vulnerabilities rooted in poverty and social exclusion.
- Recognizes children as rights-bearing individuals rather than passive recipients of charity.
- Strengthens social institutions like family and community.
- Promotes restorative justice for children in conflict with law.

It reflects a shift from welfare-based to rights-based child protection.

Achievements

- Institutionalization of child protection mechanisms at district levels.
- Expansion of foster care and adoption services.
- Improved rescue and rehabilitation services for trafficked and abused children.

Challenges

NOTE

- Inadequate infrastructure in some Child Care Institutions.
- Shortage of trained social workers and counselors.
- Delays in adoption and rehabilitation processes.
- Monitoring and quality control issues.

Role of Social Workers

Social workers are central to Mission Vatsalya through:

- Case management and assessment
- Counseling and psychosocial support
- Family reintegration services
- Advocacy for child rights
- Monitoring institutional standards

They ensure child-centered and trauma-informed interventions.

Mission Vatsalya represents a comprehensive child protection framework in India, emphasizing prevention, care, rehabilitation, and reintegration. By strengthening institutional mechanisms and promoting family-based alternatives, it aims to secure a protective environment for every child. Continuous capacity building, monitoring, and community participation are essential for achieving sustainable child welfare outcomes.

5. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a flagship programme of the Government of India launched in 2001 with the objective of achieving Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE). It was designed to provide free and compulsory education to all children in the age group of 6–14 years, in line with the constitutional mandate of the Right to Education.

SSA later became an integral component of the Samagra Shiksha programme (2018), which integrates school education from pre-primary to senior secondary levels.

Background and Rationale

Prior to SSA, India faced serious educational challenges:

- Low enrollment and high dropout rates
- Gender disparity in education
- Regional imbalances
- Poor infrastructure in government schools
- High levels of illiteracy among marginalized communities

The programme emerged as a response to the need for inclusive and equitable elementary education, especially after the 86th Constitutional Amendment (2002), which made education a fundamental right.

Objectives

1. Achieve universal access and retention in elementary education.
2. Bridge gender and social category gaps in education.
3. Improve the quality of education.
4. Ensure life skills and child-centered learning.
5. Promote community participation in school management.

Target Beneficiaries

- Children aged 6–14 years
- Special focus on girls, Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), minorities, and children with disabilities

Key Components**1. Universal Access**

- Opening new schools in underserved areas
- Provision of additional classrooms and infrastructure

2. Teacher Recruitment and Training

- Appointment of qualified teachers
- In-service teacher training
- Capacity building for quality teaching

3. Inclusive Education

- Support for children with special needs
- Provision of aids and appliances
- Barrier-free school infrastructure

4. Quality Improvement

- Curriculum reform
- Activity-based learning
- Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE)

5. Community Participation

- School Management Committees (SMCs)
- Decentralized planning
- Community monitoring of school functioning

Sociological Significance

From a sociological perspective, SSA:

- Reduces educational inequality arising from caste, class, and gender stratification.

NOTE

- Promotes social mobility through education.
- Encourages social integration and nation-building.
- Empowers marginalized communities by expanding access to knowledge and skills.

Education acts as an agent of social change, and SSA institutionalized state responsibility toward universal elementary education.

Achievements

- Significant increase in enrollment rates across India.
- Reduction in gender gap at primary level.
- Improved school infrastructure and teacher availability.
- Greater participation of disadvantaged groups in education.

Challenges

- Learning outcome concerns despite high enrollment.
- Teacher absenteeism in some regions.
- Quality disparities between urban and rural schools.
- Dropout rates at upper primary level.

Role of Social Workers

Social workers contribute to SSA through:

- Community mobilization for school enrollment.
- Counseling for dropout prevention.
- Advocacy for inclusive education.
- Strengthening School Management Committees.
- Working with marginalized families to promote educational participation.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan marked a transformative phase in India's educational policy by institutionalizing universal elementary education. It contributed significantly to enrollment expansion and reduction of gender disparities. However, ensuring quality education and improving learning outcomes remain critical challenges.

Objectives of Welfare Programmes

- Promote gender equality
- Ensure health and nutrition
- Provide educational opportunities
- Prevent exploitation and abuse
- Enhance economic empowerment
- Strengthen social security

Role of Social Work in Welfare Programmes

Social workers play a crucial role in:

- Awareness generation
- Mobilizing beneficiaries
- Conducting needs assessment
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Advocacy for effective implementation
- Community participation facilitation

Challenges in Implementation

- Lack of awareness
- Corruption and leakages
- Regional disparities
- Social stigma
- Limited accessibility in rural and tribal areas

भारत में महिला एवं बाल कल्याण योजनाएं:
एक व्यापक अध्ययन मार्गदर्शिका

भारत में महिलाओं और बच्चों के कल्याण के लिए एक विस्तृत ढांचा तैयार किया गया है जो स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा, पोषण और सुरक्षा जैसे विभिन्न आयामों पर केंद्रित है। ये योजनाएं भारतीय संविधान में निहित समानता और सामाजिक न्याय के सिद्धांतों पर आधारित हैं, जिनका प्रमुख उद्देश्य ऐतिहासिक रूप से संचित इन समूहों को गैरमुख बनाना और समाज की मुख्यधारा से जोड़ना है। वे कार्यक्रम विशेष रूप से लैंगिक भेदभाव को दूर करने, बाल मृत्यु दर को कम करने और महिलाओं के लिए सुरक्षित वातावरण सुनिश्चित करने के लिए डिज़ाइन किए गए हैं। एकीकृत बाल विकास सेवा (ICDS) से लेकर बेटों बचाओ बेटों पढ़ाओ जैसे सामाजिक सुधार अभियानों तक, ये पहल देश के सामाजिक-आर्थिक विकास और भविष्य की पीढ़ी के निर्माण में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाती हैं।

महिला सशक्तिकरण और सुरक्षा	स्वास्थ्य और वित्तीय सुरक्षा	बाल विकास और शिक्षा
बेटों बचाओ बेटों पढ़ाओ (BBBP) इसका मुख्य उद्देश्य लिंग-चयनात्मक गर्भपात को रोकना, बालिकाओं का अस्तित्व और सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित करना और उनकी शिक्षा तथा भागीदारी को बढ़ावा देना है।	प्रधानमंत्री मातृ वंदना योजना (PMMVY) गर्भवती और स्तनपान कराने वाली माताओं को पहले जीवित जन्म के लिए ₹5,000 की नगद सहायता प्रदान की जाती है ताकि उन्हें उचित पोषण और आराम मिल सके।	एकीकृत बाल विकास सेवा (ICDS) - छठ सेवाएं यह योजना (1) पूरक पोषण, (2) टीकाकरण, (3) स्वास्थ्य जांच, (4) खेलन सेवाएं, (5) पूर्व-स्कूली अनौपचारिक शिक्षा और (6) पोषण और स्वास्थ्य शिक्षा प्रदान करती है।
वन स्टॉप सेंटर योजना (OSC) हिंसा से पीड़ित महिलाओं को एक ही छत के नीचे चिकित्सा सहायता, कानूनी सहायता, पुलिस सुविधा, मनोवैज्ञानिक परामर्श और अस्थायी आश्रय (5 दिन तक) प्रदान किया जाता है।	सुकन्या समृद्धि योजना (SSY) 10 वर्ष से कम आयु की बालिकाओं के लिए एक बचत योजना, जिसमें आकर्षक ब्याज दर और धारा 80C के तहत कर लाभ के साथ शिक्षा और विवाह के लिए दीर्घकालिक वित्तीय सुरक्षा मिलती है।	मध्याह्न भोजन योजना (Mid-Day Meal) स्कूल में पका हुआ भोजन प्रदान कर बच्चों के पोषण स्तर को सुधारना, स्कूलों में नामांकन और उपस्थिति बढ़ाना और सामाजिक समानता को बढ़ावा देना।
महिला शक्ति केंद्र (MSK) यह योजना राष्ट्रीय, राज्य, जिला और ब्लॉक स्तर पर एक पार-स्तरीय संरचना के माध्यम से ग्रामीण महिलाओं को सामुदायिक भागीदारी और क्षमता निर्माण द्वारा सशक्त बनाती है।	पोषण अभियान (POSHAN Abhiyaan) इसका लक्ष्य बच्चों, गर्भवती महिलाओं और स्तनपान कराने वाली माताओं में स्टिथि (नाटपन), अल्पपोषण, कम वजन और एनीमिया (रक्तअल्पता) को कम करना है।	मिशन वात्सल्य (Mission Vatsalya) यह योजना कठिन परिस्थितियों में रहने वाले बच्चों की सुरक्षा, पुनर्वास, और पारिवारिक देखभाल (जैसे गोद लेना और फोस्टर केयर) पर ध्यान केंद्रित करती है।
कामकाजी महिला छात्रावास योजना रोजगार के लिए शहरों में प्रवास करने वाली महिलाओं को सुरक्षित और महत्वपूर्ण आवास प्रदान करना और जहां संभव हो, उनके बच्चों के लिए डे-केयर की सुविधा देना।		सर्व शिक्षा अभियान (SSA) 6-14 वर्ष के सभी बच्चों के लिए सार्वभौमिक प्राथमिक शिक्षा सुनिश्चित करना और शिक्षा की गुणवत्ता में सुधार के साथ लैंगिक और सामाजिक अंतराल को पाटना।

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Welfare programmes for women and children are essential instruments for social justice and inclusive development. While India has developed an extensive welfare framework, effective

NOTE

implementation, community participation, and continuous monitoring are necessary to achieve intended outcomes. Empowerment of women and protection of children contribute significantly to national development and social transformation.

12.6 SUMMARY

This unit examines the position and challenges of women in society, particularly in the Indian context. It explains how the status of women has evolved historically and how social, cultural, and economic factors influence their roles and opportunities. The unit highlights that although women have made significant progress in areas such as education, employment, and political participation, many gender inequalities still exist.

The unit also discusses demographic changes related to women, including improvements in female literacy, changes in population patterns, declining fertility rates, and increasing participation of women in the workforce. Despite these positive developments, women continue to face several social problems such as dowry practices, domestic violence, torture, and various forms of discrimination in family, education, and employment.

In addition, the unit focuses on major welfare programmes introduced by the government to improve the condition of women and children. These programmes aim to promote education, health, nutrition, safety, and economic empowerment of women. By understanding these issues and policies, students gain a deeper awareness of gender inequality and the importance of social interventions. Overall, the unit emphasizes the need for social work practice, awareness, and policy support to promote gender equality and ensure the dignity, rights, and empowerment of women in society.

12.7 GLOSSARY

1. **Adoption:** A legal process through which a child becomes the lawful child of adoptive parents with all rights and responsibilities.
2. **Anganwadi Centre (AWC)**
A rural child-care center established under Integrated Child Development Services to provide supplementary nutrition, preschool education, immunization support, and health services.
3. **Anemia**
A medical condition characterized by low hemoglobin levels in the blood, common among women and children due to iron deficiency.
4. **Behavior Change Communication (BCC)**
Strategic communication aimed at influencing positive health and social behaviors, widely used in POSHAN Abhiyaan.

5. **Child in Need of Care and Protection (CNCP)**
A child who is vulnerable due to abuse, neglect, abandonment, trafficking, or exploitation.
6. **Convergence Approach**
Coordination among multiple government departments to achieve integrated service delivery, especially in nutrition and welfare programmes.
7. **Foster Care**
A non-institutional child care arrangement where a child is placed with a family other than biological parents for temporary or long-term care.
8. **School Management Committee (SMC)**
Community-based body responsible for monitoring school functioning under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.
9. **Social Stratification**
System of structured social inequality based on class, caste, gender, or other criteria.
10. **Stunting**
Low height-for-age indicating chronic malnutrition in children.
11. **Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE)**
Policy objective ensuring access, enrollment, retention, and quality education for all children aged 6–14 years.

12.8 SUGGESTED READINGS - OER

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectonline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13628	

12.9 REFERENCES

Comte, A. – *Positive Philosophy*
 Weber, M. – *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*
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12.10 EXERCISE

Part 1

NOTE

A. Multiple choice question

Q1. POSHAN Abhiyaan primarily aims to reduce:

- a) School dropout rates
- b) Malnutrition among women and children
- c) Unemployment among women
- d) Domestic violence

Q2. The Mid-Day Meal Scheme is mainly associated with:

- a) Child protection services
- b) School nutrition and attendance
- c) Women entrepreneurship
- d) Adoption services

Q3. Mission Vatsalya primarily deals with:

- a) Women's employment generation
- b) Nutrition supplementation
- c) Child protection and rehabilitation
- d) Universal elementary education

Q4. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was launched to achieve:

- a) Higher education reforms
- b) Universalization of elementary education
- c) Skill development training
- d) Adult literacy only

Q5. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana provides:

- a) Free school education
- b) Financial assistance to pregnant and lactating mothers
- c) Shelter for working women
- d) Nutrition to school children

Answers with Detailed Explanations

Q1. Correct Answer: b) Malnutrition among women and children

Explanation: POSHAN Abhiyaan focuses on reducing stunting, wasting, underweight prevalence, and anemia among children, pregnant women, and lactating mothers through a multi-sectoral nutrition strategy.

Q2. Correct Answer: b) School nutrition and attendance

Explanation: Midday Meal Scheme provides free cooked meals to school children to improve nutritional status, increase enrollment, and enhance attendance in primary and upper primary schools.

Q3. Correct Answer: c) Child protection and rehabilitation

Explanation: Mission Vatsalya provides institutional and non-institutional care for children in need of care and protection, including foster care, adoption, and rehabilitation services.

Q4. Correct Answer: b) Universalization of elementary education

Explanation: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was introduced to ensure free

and compulsory education for children aged 6–14 years and to reduce gender and social disparities in elementary education.

Q5. Correct Answer: b) Financial assistance to pregnant and lactating mothers

Explanation: Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana provides maternity benefits in the form of cash incentives to support proper nutrition and rest during pregnancy and after childbirth.

Part II

B. Short Answer Questions (Answer in 50–80 words)

Q1. What are the main objectives of POSHAN Abhiyaan?

Q2. Explain the significance of the Mid-Day Meal Scheme in social development.

Q3. What is the role of Mission Vatsalya in child protection?

Part III

C. Long Essay Questions

Q1. Critically examine the role of welfare programmes in improving the status of women and children in India.

Q2. Analyze the relationship between education and social change with reference to Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and the Mid-Day Meal Scheme.

Q3. Discuss child protection mechanisms in India with special reference to Mission Vatsalya.

UNIT 13

Social Stratification

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Objective
- 13.2 Concept of social stratification
- 13.3 Caste, class and tribe
- 13.4 Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes
- 13.5 Contemporary status of backward communities
- 13.6 Summary
- 13.7 Glossary
- 13.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 13.9 Suggested Readings – OER
- 13.10 References
- 13.11 Exercise

13.1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study the concept of social stratification and its major forms in India, particularly caste, class, and tribe. We will examine the constitutional categories of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes, and analyze the contemporary status of backward communities in Indian society.

13.2 OBJECTIVE

After reading this section, you will be able to:

- Define social stratification and identify its universal characteristics.
- Differentiate between closed systems (like caste) and open systems (like class) of stratification.
- Analyze the functionalist and conflict perspectives on the necessity and consequences of social inequality.

NOTE**13.2 CONCEPT OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION**

Social stratification refers to the structured system of social inequality in which individuals and groups are ranked hierarchically based on wealth, power, prestige, and social status. It is a universal phenomenon found in all societies, though its form and intensity vary across cultures and historical periods.

Sociologically, stratification is not merely individual inequality but a patterned and institutionalized system. It is reproduced across generations through social institutions such as family, education, religion, economy, and politics. Social stratification determines life chances, access to resources, and opportunities for social mobility.

Major characteristics of social stratification include:

- It is social in nature (not biological).
- It is hierarchical and involves ranking.
- It is relatively stable over time.
- It is supported by ideology and belief systems.
- It affects life chances and opportunities.

There are different systems of stratification:

1. **Caste System** – Closed system based on birth.
2. **Class System** – Open system based on economic position.
3. **Estate System** – Based on land ownership and feudal relations.
4. **Slavery** – Extreme form of inequality.

In India, the caste system has historically been the dominant form of stratification. According to functionalist theory, stratification ensures role allocation and motivation. However, conflict theorists argue that it perpetuates inequality and exploitation.

Example:

A child born in a wealthy urban family has access to private education, healthcare, and social networks, increasing life opportunities. In contrast, a child born into a marginalized rural caste group may face limited access to quality education and employment, demonstrating how stratification affects life chances.

Thus, social stratification shapes patterns of privilege and deprivation in society and is central to understanding inequality in India.

13.3 CASTE, CLASS AND TRIBE

Caste

Caste is a hereditary and endogamous social group traditionally associated with specific occupations and ritual status. It is a closed system where mobility is highly restricted. The caste system historically divided society into hierarchical categories such as Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras, along with numerous sub-castes.

Example: Traditional occupations like priesthood (Brahmins) or leather work (Dalits) were assigned by birth and strictly regulated.

Class

Class refers to an economic grouping based on income, occupation, education, and wealth. Unlike caste, class is relatively open and allows social mobility. Individuals can improve their class position through education, employment, and entrepreneurship.

Example: A person from a low-income background who becomes a government officer through competitive examinations moves upward in class status.

Tribe

Tribes are social groups characterized by distinct culture, language, territory, and kinship patterns. Tribal communities often live in geographically isolated areas and maintain unique socio-cultural identities.

Example: The Gond tribe in central India has distinct cultural practices, festivals, and traditional governance systems.

Comparison

Basis	Caste	Class	Tribe
Basis of Membership	Birth	Economic position	Common ancestry & territory
Mobility	Closed	Open	Limited
Occupation	Hereditary	Achieved	Traditional
Social Interaction	Restricted	Flexible	Community-based

Caste emphasizes ritual hierarchy, class emphasizes economic inequality, and tribe emphasizes cultural distinctiveness.

NOTE

13.4 SCHEDULED CASTES, SCHEDULED TRIBES AND OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES

The Constitution of India recognizes historically disadvantaged groups under specific categories.

Scheduled Castes (SCs)

These are communities historically subjected to untouchability and social exclusion.

Scheduled Tribes (STs)

Indigenous tribal communities with distinct culture and geographical isolation.

Other Backward Classes (OBCs)

Socially and educationally backward groups not included in SC/ST categories.

These categories receive affirmative action benefits in education, employment, and political representation.

Category	Basis of Backwardness	Constitutional Safeguards	Example
SC	Historical untouchability	Reservation in jobs & education	Dalit
ST	Tribal isolation	Political reservation	Santhal
OBC	Social & educational backwardness	Educational & job reservation	Yadav

Example: Reservation policies enable students from SC/ST communities to access higher education institutions that were historically inaccessible.

13.5 CONTEMPORARY STATUS OF BACKWARD COMMUNITIES

Despite constitutional safeguards, backward communities continue to face challenges such as:

- Poverty and unemployment
- Educational disparities
- Social discrimination
- Landlessness

- Gender inequality within communities

Urbanization and education have improved mobility for many individuals. Government schemes and reservations have enhanced representation in public services and politics.

However, structural inequalities persist, particularly in rural areas. Digital divide, caste-based violence, and limited access to quality education remain major issues.

Example:

An SC student benefiting from reservation in higher education may still face social stigma and discrimination in urban settings.

Social movements and legal activism have increased awareness and empowerment among backward communities. Yet, inclusive development requires sustained policy efforts and social transformation.

13.6 SUMMARY

This unit explained social stratification and its forms in India—caste, class, and tribe. It examined constitutional categories such as SC, ST, and OBC, and analyzed their contemporary socio-economic status. The unit highlighted ongoing inequalities and the importance of affirmative action for social justice and inclusive development.

13.7 GLOSSARY

1. **Social Stratification** – The hierarchical division of society into different layers based on factors such as wealth, power, status, and occupation.
2. **Caste** – A hereditary social group in which membership is determined by birth and traditionally associated with specific occupations and social status in India.
3. **Class** – A social category of people who share similar economic status, income level, education, and lifestyle.
4. **Tribe** – A social group with a common culture, language, territory, and kinship ties, often living in relatively isolated or traditional communities.
5. **Reservation** – A government policy in India that provides a fixed percentage of seats or opportunities in education, employment, and politics for disadvantaged groups.
6. **Affirmative Action** – Measures and policies designed to improve opportunities for historically marginalized or disadvantaged social groups.
7. **Social Mobility** – The movement of individuals or groups from one social position or status to another within a social hierarchy.

NOTE

8. **Untouchability** – A discriminatory practice in which certain castes were historically considered impure and excluded from social interaction and public facilities.
9. **Backward Classes** – Social groups that are socially and educationally disadvantaged and are provided special support by the government.
10. **Marginalization** – The process by which certain individuals or groups are pushed to the edge of society and denied access to resources, opportunities, and power.

13.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**Check Your Progress – 1**

Note: (a) Space is given below for your answer.

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

1. What is social stratification?

It is a system of structured social inequality based on hierarchy and differential access to resources.

2. How is caste different from class?

Caste is birth-based and closed; class is economic and relatively open.

3. Who are Scheduled Castes?

Communities historically subjected to untouchability recognized under the Constitution.

4. What is affirmative action?

Policy measures such as reservation to reduce social inequality.

5. What challenges do backward communities face today?

Poverty, discrimination, unemployment, and limited access to quality education.

13.9 SUGGESTED READINGS – OER

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectonline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13629	

13.10 REFERENCES

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13.11 EXERCISE

Part 1

A. Multiple choice question

1. Social stratification is based on:
 - a) Equality
 - b) Hierarchy
 - c) Uniformity
 - d) Brotherhood
2. Caste system is:
 - a) Open
 - b) Closed
 - c) Flexible
 - d) Temporary
3. OBC stands for:
 - a) Other Backward Classes
 - b) Official Backward Category
 - c) Organized Backward Community
 - d) Occupational Backward Class
4. Reservation policy is an example of:
 - a) Exploitation
 - b) Affirmative action
 - c) Privatization
 - d) Globalization
5. Tribe is primarily based on:
 - a) Wealth
 - b) Ritual hierarchy
 - c) Common territory and culture
 - d) Industrial occupation

NOTE

Answers with Explanations:

1. Correct Answer: b) Hierarchy

Explanation: Social stratification refers to a hierarchical arrangement of individuals and groups in society based on unequal distribution of resources, power, and prestige. It involves ranking people into higher and lower positions, affecting their life chances and social mobility.

2. Correct Answer: b) Hierarchy

Explanation: Social stratification refers to a hierarchical arrangement of individuals and groups in society based on unequal distribution of resources, power, and prestige. It involves ranking people into higher and lower positions, affecting their life chances and social mobility.

3. Correct Answer: a) Other Backward Classes

Explanation: Other Backward Classes (OBCs) refer to socially and educationally backward communities recognized by the Government of India for affirmative action benefits in education and public employment to reduce inequality.

4. Correct Answer: a) Other Backward Classes

Explanation: Other Backward Classes (OBCs) refer to socially and educationally backward communities recognized by the Government of India for affirmative action benefits in education and public employment to reduce inequality.

5. Correct Answer: b) Affirmative action

Explanation: Reservation is a policy tool under affirmative action aimed at promoting social justice by providing special provisions in education, employment, and political representation to historically disadvantaged groups such as SC, ST, and OBC communities.

Part 2

C. Long answer type question (answer in 200 words)

1. Define caste system.
2. Explain social mobility.
3. What are constitutional safeguards for SC/ST?

Part 3

D. Long answer type question (answer in 300 words)

1. Discuss the concept and forms of social stratification in India.
2. Compare caste, class, and tribe with suitable examples.
3. Critically analyze the contemporary status of backward communities in India.

NOTE

UNIT 14

BACKWARD CASTES, TRIBES AND MARGINALIZED SECTIONS

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 14.1 Introduction
- 14.2 Objective
- 14.2 Entity framework
- 14.3 Constitutional safeguards
- 14.4 Current socio-economic conditions
- 14.5 Social work interventions
- 14.6 Summary
- 14.7 Glossary
- 14.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 14.9 Suggested Readings – OER
- 14.10 References
- 14.11 Exercise

14.1 INTRODUCTION

Indian society is characterized by diversity in terms of caste, tribe, religion, language, and culture. However, this diversity has also historically produced inequalities and hierarchical social structures. Certain communities such as backward castes, tribal populations, and other marginalized groups have experienced systematic exclusion from social, economic, and political opportunities. These groups have historically faced discrimination, deprivation of resources, and limited access to education, healthcare, and employment.

Backward castes generally refer to communities that are socially and educationally disadvantaged within the caste hierarchy. Similarly, tribal communities have traditionally lived in geographically isolated areas and maintained unique cultural traditions, but they have often been marginalized from mainstream development processes. Marginalized sections include groups that experience social exclusion due to factors such as caste, ethnicity, gender, disability, poverty, or minority status.

In India, the recognition of these disadvantaged groups has been institutionalized through constitutional categories such as Scheduled

NOTE

Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs). These categories were established to address historical injustices and promote equality through affirmative policies and welfare programs. The Constitution of India provides special safeguards, reservations, and development initiatives aimed at improving the status of these communities.

Despite constitutional provisions and government interventions, many marginalized groups continue to face challenges such as poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, landlessness, social discrimination, and lack of political representation. Rapid economic development and globalization have brought opportunities for some sections of society, but the benefits have not been equally distributed. As a result, backward castes, tribes, and marginalized groups remain vulnerable to exploitation and social exclusion.

Social work plays an important role in addressing the problems faced by these communities. Social workers engage in community development, advocacy, capacity building, and policy implementation to promote social justice and empowerment. They work with marginalized populations to ensure access to education, healthcare, livelihood opportunities, and social protection schemes.

This unit focuses on understanding the concept of backward castes, tribes, and marginalized sections in the Indian context. It discusses the legal and constitutional framework designed to protect these communities, examines their present socio-economic conditions, and highlights the role of social work interventions in promoting inclusive development and social justice.

14.2 OBJECTIVE

After reading this section, you will be able to:

- Identify the specific socio-economic and political challenges faced by backward castes, scheduled tribes, and other marginalized groups.
- Analyze the historical processes that led to their systemic marginalization.
- Assess the effectiveness of constitutional safeguards and affirmative action policies in India.

14.2 ENTITY FRAMEWORK

The entity framework refers to the structural classification and recognition of marginalized communities within the social and administrative system. In the Indian context, this framework includes categories such as Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC). These categories were created to

identify historically disadvantaged communities and provide them with special protections and development opportunities.

Scheduled Castes are communities that historically faced social exclusion and discrimination under the caste system. These communities were previously referred to as “untouchables” and were denied access to public spaces, education, and economic opportunities. The recognition of SC communities as a constitutional category aims to eliminate discrimination and ensure equal rights.

Scheduled Tribes refer to indigenous communities that have distinct cultural identities, languages, and social institutions. Tribal communities often reside in forested or remote regions and maintain traditional lifestyles based on agriculture, hunting, and gathering. They have historically been marginalized from mainstream economic and political systems.

Other Backward Classes are communities that are socially and educationally disadvantaged but do not fall within the categories of Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes. These groups were recognized following recommendations of commissions such as the Mandal Commission to promote greater social equality.

Example:

A tribal community living in a forest region may rely on forest resources for livelihood. When development projects such as dams or mining displace them without adequate rehabilitation, they become further marginalized. The entity framework allows the government to identify such communities and design targeted welfare programs.

This framework helps policymakers develop inclusive policies for education, employment, housing, healthcare, and political representation. It also helps social workers identify vulnerable populations and design appropriate interventions.

14.3 CONSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS

The Constitution of India provides extensive safeguards for backward castes, tribes, and marginalized communities. These safeguards aim to eliminate discrimination, promote equality, and ensure social justice.

Important constitutional provisions include:

- Article 15: Prohibits discrimination based on caste, religion, race, sex, or place of birth.
- Article 16: Provides equality of opportunity in public employment and allows reservations for backward classes.
- Article 17: Abolishes untouchability.

NOTE

- Article 46: Directs the state to promote the educational and economic interests of weaker sections, especially SCs and STs.

The Constitution also provides political representation through reserved seats in Parliament, state legislatures, and local government institutions. These provisions help marginalized communities participate in democratic decision-making processes.

Example:

Reservation policies enable students from Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe communities to access higher education institutions that were historically inaccessible due to social discrimination and economic barriers.

Various commissions and institutions have been established to protect the rights of marginalized communities. These include the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes. These bodies monitor the implementation of constitutional safeguards and address grievances related to discrimination and injustice.

These constitutional provisions represent a commitment to building a more inclusive and equitable society.

14.4 CURRENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Despite progress in education, employment, and political participation, many backward castes, tribes, and marginalized communities continue to face socio-economic challenges.

Major issues include:

- High levels of poverty
- Low literacy rates
- Limited access to healthcare
- Unemployment and underemployment
- Landlessness
- Social discrimination and caste-based violence

Many tribal communities also face displacement due to development projects such as mining, dams, and industrial expansion. These projects often lead to loss of traditional livelihoods and cultural identity.

Example:

A tribal village located near a mining area may lose access to forests and agricultural land due to industrial expansion. Without proper rehabilitation and livelihood support, families may migrate to urban areas as unskilled laborers.

However, there have also been positive developments. Increased access to education, reservation policies, and social welfare programs have improved the socio-economic status of many individuals from marginalized communities. Political mobilization and social movements have also helped raise awareness about rights and equality.

Nevertheless, structural inequalities remain deeply embedded in society, requiring continuous policy intervention and social reform.

14.5 SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTIONS

Social work plays a crucial role in addressing the challenges faced by backward castes, tribes, and marginalized groups. Social workers aim to empower communities, promote social justice, and facilitate access to resources and opportunities.

Major areas of social work intervention include:

1. **Community Development-** Social workers promote collective action, community participation, and local leadership to improve living conditions.
2. **Education and Awareness** - Programs are organized to improve literacy, awareness of rights, and access to government schemes.
3. **Advocacy and Policy Support** - Social workers advocate for policy reforms and ensure effective implementation of welfare programs.
4. **Livelihood Development** - Training programs and self-help groups help marginalized communities develop sustainable livelihoods.

Example: A social worker working in a tribal area may organize skill development programs for youth, help women form self-help groups, and assist villagers in accessing government welfare schemes.

Through these interventions, social workers contribute to reducing inequality and promoting inclusive development.

14.6 SUMMARY

This unit examined the conditions of backward castes, tribes, and marginalized sections in India. These groups have historically experienced social exclusion, discrimination, and economic deprivation due to hierarchical social structures such as caste and unequal access to resources.

The unit explained the entity framework used to classify disadvantaged communities, including Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes. These categories help the

NOTE

government identify vulnerable populations and implement targeted welfare programs.

The unit also discussed constitutional safeguards that aim to protect the rights of marginalized communities. Provisions such as the abolition of untouchability, equality of opportunity, and reservation in education and employment are important measures to promote social justice and inclusive development.

Despite these safeguards, marginalized communities continue to face significant socio-economic challenges. Poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, landlessness, and social discrimination remain persistent problems. Development projects and environmental changes have also affected tribal communities by disrupting traditional livelihoods and cultural practices.

The role of social work is critical in addressing these challenges. Social workers engage in community development, advocacy, education, and empowerment initiatives to improve the living conditions of marginalized populations. They help communities access government programs, develop livelihood opportunities, and participate in decision-making processes.

Overall, the unit highlights the importance of inclusive policies, social justice, and community empowerment in addressing inequality and improving the socio-economic conditions of backward castes, tribes, and marginalized sections in India.

14.7 GLOSSARY

1. Marginalization – Social exclusion from economic and political participation
2. Affirmative Action – Policies to support disadvantaged groups
3. Reservation – Quotas in education and employment
4. Social Justice – Fair distribution of opportunities and resources
5. Social Exclusion – Denial of access to social institutions
6. Empowerment – Process of gaining control over one's life
7. Backward Classes – Socially and educationally disadvantaged communities
8. Tribal Communities – Indigenous groups with distinct culture
9. Discrimination – Unfair treatment based on identity
10. Inclusive Development – Development that benefits all sections of society

14.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress – 1

Note: (a) Space is given below for your answer.

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

1. **What are marginalized communities?**
Groups that face social, economic, or political exclusion.
2. **What is the purpose of constitutional safeguards?**
To protect disadvantaged communities and promote equality.
3. **Who are Scheduled Tribes?**
Indigenous communities recognized by the Constitution.
4. **What are major socio-economic problems of marginalized communities?**
Poverty, illiteracy, discrimination, unemployment.
5. **What is the role of social workers in marginalized communities?**
Empowerment, advocacy, awareness, and community development.

14.9 SUGGESTED READINGS – OER

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectonline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13630	

14.10 REFERENCES

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NOTE**14.11 EXERCISE****Part 1****A. Multiple choice question**

1. Marginalized communities face:
A Poverty
B Social exclusion
C Discrimination
D All of the above

2. Reservation policy aims to:
A Increase inequality
B Promote social justice
C Reduce education
D Eliminate democracy

3. Scheduled Tribes are mainly identified by:
A Industrial occupation
B Cultural identity and geographical isolation
C Wealth
D Religion

4. Article 17 of the Constitution abolishes:
A Poverty
B Untouchability
C Unemployment
D Illiteracy

5. Social work intervention focuses on:
A Exploitation
B Community empowerment
C Discrimination
D Isolation

Answers with Explanations:**1. Correct Answer: D**

Explanation: Marginalization includes economic deprivation, social exclusion, and discrimination.

2. Correct Answer: B

Explanation: Reservation helps reduce historical inequality.

3. Correct Answer: B

Explanation: Tribal communities have distinct culture and territorial identity.

4. Correct Answer: B

Explanation: Article 17 prohibits untouchability.

5. Correct Answer: B

Explanation: Social workers empower communities through development programs.

Part 2

C. Long answer type question (answer in 200 words)

1. Define marginalized communities.
2. Explain constitutional safeguards for backward communities.
3. Describe the role of social workers in tribal development.

Part 3

D. Long answer type question (answer in 300 words)

1. Discuss the socio-economic conditions of backward communities in India.
2. Explain constitutional safeguards for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
3. Analyze the role of social work interventions in empowering marginalized communities.

NOTE



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SLM FEEDBACK FORM

PROGRAMME : _____

COURSE : _____

BLOCK : _____

UNIT : _____

Dear Student,

While studying the units of this block, you may have found certain portions of the text difficult to comprehend. We wish to know your difficulties and suggestions, in order to improve the course. Therefore, we request you to fill up and send us the following questionnaire, which pertains to this block. If you find the space provided insufficient, kindly use a separate sheet.

Please mail to aisectcontent@aisect.org / for online submission please scan QR code:

Questionnaire

1. Name : _____

2. Enrolment No. :

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3. How many hours did you need for studying the units? :

--

4. Please give your reactions to the following items based on your reading of the block:

Items	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Poor	Give specific Examples (If poor)
Presentation Quality					
Language and Style					
Illustrations					
Used (diagrams, tables, etc.)					
Conceptual Clarity					
Check Your Progress Questions					
Suggested Readings - OER					

5. Any other comments:

BLOCK V	URBAN ISSUES AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION	203-
Unit 15	Slums – Concept and Growth	205
Unit 16	Slum Improvement and Urban Development	215
Unit 17	Untouchability in India	227
Unit 18	Prevention of Untouchability and Social Inclusion	237

This block examines the changing nature of urban society and the social challenges associated with urbanization in India. It introduces the concepts of urbanization, urban communities, migration, informal settlements, and changing patterns of urban social organization. Learners explore major urban issues such as poverty, unemployment, inadequate housing, homelessness, congestion, environmental problems, inadequate public services, and unequal access to resources. The block also focuses on social exclusion and examines how certain individuals and groups may experience barriers to participation in economic, social, cultural, and political life. Particular attention is given to marginalized communities, migrants, vulnerable populations, and people living in disadvantaged urban environments. The block highlights the relationship between urban development, inequality, social vulnerability, and access to basic services and opportunities. From a social work perspective, understanding these issues is essential for assessing community needs and designing interventions that promote inclusion, participation, and social justice. The block encourages learners to examine urban problems from both individual and structural perspectives and to identify approaches for community development and social empowerment.

UNIT 15

Slums – Concept and Growth

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 15.1 Introduction
- 15.2 Objective
- 15.2 Meaning and definition of slums
- 15.3 Origin and evolution of slums
- 15.4 Growth of slums in India
- 15.5 Causes and consequences
- 15.6 Summary
- 15.7 Glossary
- 15.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 15.9 Suggested Readings – OER
- 15.10 References
- 15.11 Exercise

15.1 INTRODUCTION

Rapid urbanization is one of the most significant social transformations of modern societies. Cities attract large numbers of people because they offer opportunities for employment, education, healthcare, and better living conditions. However, when urban growth occurs without adequate planning and infrastructure, it leads to the emergence of overcrowded and poorly serviced settlements known as slums. Slums have become a common feature of many developing countries, including India.

Slums are characterized by substandard housing, inadequate sanitation, lack of safe drinking water, poor drainage systems, overcrowding, and limited access to social services. These settlements are usually inhabited by economically weaker sections of society such as migrant workers, daily wage laborers, domestic workers, and informal sector employees. Because of poverty and the high cost of urban housing, these groups often have no option but to live in informal settlements.

The existence of slums reflects deep socio-economic inequalities within urban society. While cities may display modern infrastructure,

NOTE

commercial centers, and advanced technology, slums represent the marginalized side of urban development. The living conditions in slums often create serious social and health problems such as malnutrition, communicable diseases, unemployment, crime, and lack of educational opportunities.

Understanding the concept and growth of slums is important for students of sociology and social work because slum populations constitute a large and vulnerable section of urban society. Social workers frequently work in slum areas to improve living conditions, promote community development, and help residents access government welfare programs.

This unit introduces the concept of slums and explains their meaning and definitions given by scholars and international organizations. It examines the historical origin and evolution of slums and discusses the factors responsible for their rapid growth in India. The unit also analyzes the major causes and consequences of slum development and highlights the challenges faced by slum dwellers. By studying this unit, learners will gain a deeper understanding of urban poverty and the need for inclusive urban development policies.

15.2 OBJECTIVE

After reading this section, you will be able to:

- Define the structural and demographic characteristics of urban slums.
- Analyze the push and pull factors of migration that drive rapid slum proliferation in India.
- Examine the socio-economic conditions and informal economies prevalent within slum settlements.

15.2 MEANING AND DEFINITION OF SLUMS

The term *slum* generally refers to a densely populated urban settlement characterized by poor housing conditions and lack of basic civic amenities. Slums are often formed when low-income populations occupy land illegally or construct temporary shelters because they cannot afford formal housing.

According to the **United Nations**, a slum household is one that lacks one or more of the following conditions: durable housing, sufficient living space, access to safe water, access to sanitation, and secure tenure.

In the Indian context, the Census of India defines slums as residential areas where dwellings are unfit for human habitation due to

overcrowding, poor construction, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of sanitation.

Sociologists describe slums as manifestations of urban poverty. They represent areas where the urban poor live in informal settlements that lack proper planning and basic services. These areas usually develop near industrial zones, railway lines, riverbanks, or unused government land.

Slums may be classified into three main types:

1. **Notified slums** – officially recognized by the government.
2. **Recognized slums** – identified by local authorities but not officially notified.
3. **Identified slums** – areas recognized by surveys due to poor living conditions.

Example: In cities like Mumbai and Delhi, many migrants from rural areas live in slums because they cannot afford formal housing. The settlement known as **Dharavi** is one of the largest slum settlements in Asia and houses thousands of families in small, densely packed homes.

Thus, slums represent a form of informal urban settlement resulting from poverty, migration, and lack of affordable housing.

14.3 ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF SLUMS

The origin of slums can be traced back to the period of industrialization during the nineteenth century. When industries began to expand in cities, large numbers of workers migrated from rural areas in search of employment. However, urban infrastructure and housing facilities were not developed rapidly enough to accommodate the increasing population. As a result, workers started living in overcrowded settlements near factories and industrial areas.

In Europe, the earliest slums emerged during the Industrial Revolution in cities such as London and Manchester. Workers lived in small, poorly ventilated houses without sanitation or clean water. These areas became known as slums because of their poor living conditions.

In developing countries, slums expanded rapidly after the twentieth century due to rapid urbanization and rural-to-urban migration. Economic opportunities in cities attracted people from villages, but the shortage of affordable housing forced migrants to settle in informal areas.

Example: In Mumbai, the development of textile mills during the colonial period attracted thousands of workers from rural Maharashtra and other parts of India. Since workers could not afford

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formal housing, they settled in informal settlements around industrial areas. Over time, these settlements expanded and developed into large slum clusters.

Another factor in the evolution of slums is the lack of effective urban planning. Rapid population growth and limited resources make it difficult for city authorities to provide housing and infrastructure for all residents.

Slums have also evolved into complex socio-economic communities. Despite poor living conditions, many slums have vibrant economic activities such as small-scale industries, recycling work, street vending, and informal businesses. Residents develop strong social networks and community organizations that help them survive in difficult circumstances.

Today, slums are a global urban phenomenon. According to international development reports, millions of people around the world live in informal settlements. Governments and international organizations are now focusing on slum improvement programs, urban housing schemes, and inclusive urban development policies to address this issue.

14.4 GROWTH OF SLUMS IN INDIA

The growth of slums in India is closely associated with rapid urbanization, industrialization, and migration. As cities expand economically, they attract large numbers of people seeking employment and better living conditions. However, the supply of affordable housing has not kept pace with population growth.

Several major cities in India have experienced significant slum expansion. These include **Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, and Chennai**.

Major factors contributing to the growth of slums:

- 1. Rural-to-Urban Migration** - People migrate from villages to cities in search of jobs, education, and healthcare facilities.
- 2. Shortage of Affordable Housing** - Urban housing prices are very high, making it difficult for low-income groups to buy or rent formal housing.
- 3. Industrial Development** - Factories and industries attract workers who settle in nearby informal settlements.
- 4. Population Growth** - Increasing population leads to overcrowding and expansion of informal housing areas.
- 5. Urban Poverty** - Low wages and irregular employment prevent many workers from improving their living conditions.

Example- Mumbai has one of the highest slum populations in India. Many migrant workers who work in construction, domestic services,

and small industries live in slums due to the extremely high cost of housing in the city.

The growth of slums presents serious challenges for urban governance. Overcrowding, poor sanitation, and lack of infrastructure increase the risk of disease and environmental degradation. Therefore, governments have introduced housing and slum development programs to improve living conditions.

15.5 CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

Causes of Slum Development

Cause	Explanation
Poverty	Poor people cannot afford proper housing
Migration	Rural migrants settle in informal urban areas
Unemployment	Lack of stable income leads to poor housing
Lack of Urban Planning	Cities expand without adequate infrastructure
High Housing Costs	Formal housing becomes inaccessible to low-income groups

Consequences of Slum Development

Consequence	Explanation
Poor Health Conditions	Lack of sanitation leads to disease
Overcrowding	Too many people live in small spaces
Crime and Social Problems	Economic hardship can lead to social tensions
Environmental Pollution	Poor waste management harms the environment
Lack of Education	Children may drop out of school due to poverty

Example: In many slum areas, families live in one-room houses with limited ventilation and sanitation. During monsoon seasons, poor drainage can cause flooding and spread waterborne diseases.

Despite these challenges, slum communities often show strong resilience. Residents form support networks, community groups, and informal economies that help them survive in difficult conditions.

NOTE**15.6 SUMMARY**

This unit examined the concept and growth of slums in urban societies. Slums are informal settlements characterized by poor housing, overcrowding, inadequate sanitation, and lack of basic services. They are usually inhabited by low-income groups who cannot afford formal urban housing.

The unit explained the meaning and definitions of slums provided by scholars and international organizations. It highlighted that slums emerge primarily due to poverty, migration, and lack of affordable housing. The origin of slums can be traced to industrialization, when workers migrated to cities but found limited housing facilities.

The unit also discussed the growth of slums in India. Rapid urbanization, population growth, industrial development, and rural-to-urban migration have contributed significantly to the expansion of slum settlements in major cities.

Furthermore, the unit analyzed the major causes and consequences of slum development. Poverty, unemployment, high housing costs, and lack of urban planning are key factors responsible for slum growth. The consequences include poor health conditions, overcrowding, environmental pollution, and limited access to education and social services.

Understanding the problem of slums is important for policymakers, urban planners, and social workers. Effective interventions such as affordable housing schemes, slum redevelopment programs, improved infrastructure, and community participation are necessary to improve the living conditions of slum dwellers.

Overall, the study of slums highlights the need for inclusive urban development policies that ensure equitable access to housing and basic services for all sections of society.

13.7 GLOSSARY

1. Slum – Overcrowded urban settlement with poor living conditions.
2. Urbanization – Growth of cities and urban population.
3. Migration – Movement of people from one place to another.
4. Informal Settlement – Housing developed without legal planning or approval.
5. Urban Poverty – Poverty experienced in cities.
6. Overcrowding – Too many people living in limited space.
7. Infrastructure – Basic facilities such as roads, water, and sanitation.
8. Sanitation – Systems for safe disposal of waste and sewage.
9. Urban Planning – Designing and managing city development.
10. Housing Shortage – Lack of sufficient housing for population.

15.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress – 1

Note: (a) Space is given below for your answer.

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

1. What is a slum?

A densely populated urban settlement with poor housing and lack of basic services.

2. Why do slums develop in cities?

Due to migration, poverty, and lack of affordable housing.

3. Name two features of slums.

Overcrowding and poor sanitation.

4. Which groups mainly live in slums?

Low-income workers and migrant populations.

5. What are the major problems of slum dwellers?

Poor health conditions, lack of sanitation, unemployment, and limited education opportunities.

15.9 SUGGESTED READINGS – OER

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectonline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13631	

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15.11 EXERCISE

Part 1

A. Multiple choice question

1. Slums are mainly associated with
 - a Poverty
 - b Migration
 - c Lack of housing
 - d All of the above
2. Slums are commonly found in
 - a Rural areas
 - b Urban areas
 - c Forest areas
 - d Desert regions
3. One major cause of slum growth is
 - a Industrialization
 - b Climate change
 - c Tourism
 - d Agriculture
4. Slum dwellers mostly belong to
 - a Wealthy class
 - b Middle class
 - c Low-income groups
 - d Political leaders
5. Overcrowding in slums leads to
 - a Better living conditions
 - b Health problems
 - c More jobs
 - d Higher education

Answers with Explanations:

Correct Answer: d) All of the above

Explanation: Slums develop due to multiple factors such as poverty, migration, and lack of proper housing facilities. Poor people migrate to cities in search of work but cannot afford proper houses, which leads to the formation of slums.

2. Correct Answer: b) Urban areas

Explanation: Slums are mostly located in cities and urban areas where rapid population growth and migration create pressure on housing and basic services.

3. Correct Answer: a) Industrialization

Explanation: Industrialization attracts people from rural areas to cities for employment. Due to limited affordable housing, many migrants settle in informal settlements, leading to the expansion of slums.

4. Correct Answer: c) Low-income groups

Explanation: People living in slums generally have low income and unstable employment. Because of financial limitations, they cannot afford proper housing and basic facilities.

5. Correct Answer: b) Health problems

Explanation: Overcrowded living conditions lead to poor sanitation, spread of diseases, and lack of clean water, which result in serious health issues for slum residents.

Part 2

C. Long answer type question (answer in 200 words)

1. Define slums and explain two characteristics.
2. What are the major causes of slum growth?
3. Explain the problems faced by slum dwellers.

Part 3

D. Long answer type question (answer in 300 words)

1. Discuss the origin and evolution of slums in urban societies.
2. Explain the growth of slums in India and its major causes.
3. Analyze the social and economic consequences of slum development.

NOTE

UNIT 16

Slum Improvement and Urban Development

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 16.1 Introduction
- 16.2 Objective
- 16.2 Meaning and definition of slums
- 16.3 Effects of slums
- 16.4 Slum improvement programmes
- 16.5 Urban poverty alleviation schemes
- 16.6 Role of social workers in urban communities
- 16.7 Summary
- 16.8 Glossary
- 16.9 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 16.10 Suggested Readings – OER
- 16.11 References
- 16.12 Exercise

16.1 INTRODUCTION

Urbanization is one of the most significant social and economic transformations of modern society. With the rapid growth of cities, people migrate from rural areas in search of employment, education, healthcare, and better living conditions. However, due to limited urban resources, inadequate housing, and economic inequality, a large number of migrants are unable to access proper accommodation. As a result, they settle in overcrowded and poorly developed areas known as **slums**.

Slums are characterized by **substandard housing, poor sanitation, lack of clean water, overcrowding, and inadequate infrastructure**. These areas often develop informally on vacant land, railway tracks, riverbanks, or city outskirts. The growth of slums is closely linked with **poverty, unemployment, population growth, and unplanned urban development**.

According to the **United Nations**, millions of people around the world live in slum conditions. In developing countries such as India, slums are a major urban issue. Cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, and

NOTE

Chennai have large slum populations where people struggle with basic needs such as shelter, sanitation, healthcare, and education.

Slums not only affect the residents but also influence the overall urban environment. Problems such as **pollution, disease outbreaks, crime, and social exclusion** often emerge in slum areas due to poor living conditions. Therefore, addressing slum problems is essential for achieving **sustainable urban development**.

Governments and international organizations have introduced several programs aimed at improving slum conditions. These include **housing schemes, sanitation initiatives, livelihood programs, and community development projects**. Such programs aim to provide better housing, clean drinking water, waste management systems, healthcare services, and employment opportunities.

Social workers play an important role in this process. They work with urban communities to **mobilize residents, promote participation, provide awareness, and support community development initiatives**. Their role includes advocacy, capacity building, and connecting communities with government welfare programs.

This unit focuses on understanding the concept of slums, their causes and effects, and various slum improvement programs. It also examines the role of social workers in addressing urban poverty and improving living conditions in slum communities.

By studying this unit, learners will gain knowledge about:

- Meaning and definition of slums
- Causes and effects of slum development
- Government and development programs for slum improvement
- Urban poverty alleviation schemes
- Role of social workers in urban communities

Understanding these aspects will help social work students develop the skills and knowledge required to address urban social issues effectively.

16.2 OBJECTIVE

After reading this section, you will be able to:

- Evaluate historical and contemporary policies aimed at slum eradication versus slum rehabilitation.
- Critique the outcomes of major urban development frameworks and housing schemes in India.
- Propose sustainable urban development interventions that prioritize community participation.

16.2 MEANING AND DEFINITION OF SLUMS

A **slum** is a densely populated urban area characterized by inadequate housing, poor sanitation, lack of basic services, and unhealthy living conditions. Slums are often formed due to rapid urbanization, poverty, and lack of affordable housing.

Definitions

UN-Habitat Definition

A slum household is a group of individuals living under the same roof lacking one or more of the following:

- Durable housing
- Sufficient living space
- Access to safe drinking water
- Access to sanitation facilities
- Secure tenure

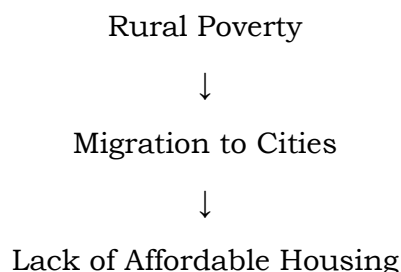
Indian Census Definition

According to the Census of India, a slum is a **compact settlement of poorly built houses in congested conditions with inadequate infrastructure and sanitation.**

Characteristics of Slums

Characteristic	Description
Overcrowding	Many people live in small houses
Poor sanitation	Lack of toilets and drainage
Lack of infrastructure	Poor roads, electricity, water
Informal housing	Houses made of temporary materials
Poverty	Residents have low income

Structure of Slum Formation



NOTE

↓
Informal Settlements

↓
Development of Slums

Slums therefore represent a complex urban issue involving economic, social, and environmental challenges.

16.3 EFFECTS OF SLUMS

Slums have several negative impacts on individuals, communities, and urban development. These effects can be social, economic, environmental, and health-related.

1. Health Problems

Due to poor sanitation and contaminated water, slum residents often suffer from diseases such as:

- Cholera
- Tuberculosis
- Malaria
- Dengue

Overcrowding increases the spread of infectious diseases.

2. Poor Living Conditions

Slum houses are often made of temporary materials like:

- Plastic sheets
- Tin roofs
- Mud walls

These houses are vulnerable to floods, fires, and storms.

3. Environmental Pollution

Slums often lack waste management systems. Garbage accumulates in open spaces, causing pollution and unpleasant living conditions.

4. Social Problems

Slums may face social issues such as:

- Crime
- Drug abuse
- Child labour

- Lack of education

5. Economic Insecurity

Most slum residents work in **informal sector jobs** such as street vending, domestic work, or construction labor, which provide low income and little job security.

Example

In many Indian cities, slum residents work as daily wage laborers, earning irregular income. This makes it difficult for families to afford proper healthcare and education.

Area	Impact
Health	Spread of diseases
Education	Low literacy rates
Environment	Pollution and waste
Economy	Poverty and unemployment
Social	Crime and social exclusion

Table: Major Effects of Slums

16.4 SLUM IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMMES

Governments and organizations have launched several programs to improve living conditions in slums. These programs focus on housing, sanitation, infrastructure, and livelihood opportunities.

Objectives of Slum Improvement

- Provide better housing
- Improve sanitation and water supply
- Develop infrastructure
- Promote community participation

Major Slum Improvement Programs in India

1. Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM)

This program aimed to improve urban infrastructure and provide housing for slum dwellers.

2. Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)

Provides affordable housing to urban poor families.

3. Swachh Bharat Mission

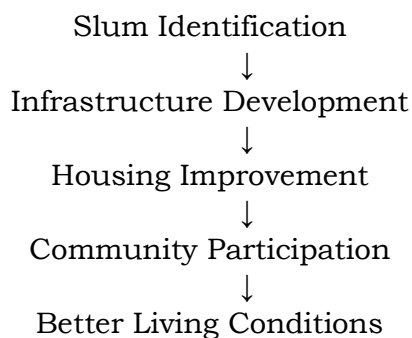
SOCIOLOGY & SOCIAL WORK

NOTE

Focuses on sanitation and construction of toilets in urban areas.

Example

Under **PMAY**, many slum families have received financial assistance to build permanent houses.

Slum Improvement Strategy

16.5 URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION SCHEMES

Urban poverty refers to the lack of income and resources among city residents. Governments implement various schemes to reduce poverty and improve living conditions.

Major Schemes in India**1. National Urban Livelihoods Mission (NULM)**

Provides skill training and employment opportunities for urban poor.

2. Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana

Focuses on self-employment and skill development.

3. Smart Cities Mission

Aims to improve urban infrastructure and quality of life.

Table: Key Urban Poverty Schemes

Scheme	Objective
NULM	Employment and skill development
PMAY	Affordable housing
Swachh Bharat	Sanitation improvement
Smart Cities	Urban infrastructure

These schemes aim to promote inclusive urban development.

16.6 ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN URBAN COMMUNITIES

Social workers play a vital role in addressing problems faced by slum communities.

Major Roles

1. Community Mobilization

Encouraging community members to participate in development programs.

2. Awareness Creation

Educating residents about:

- Health
- Sanitation
- Government schemes

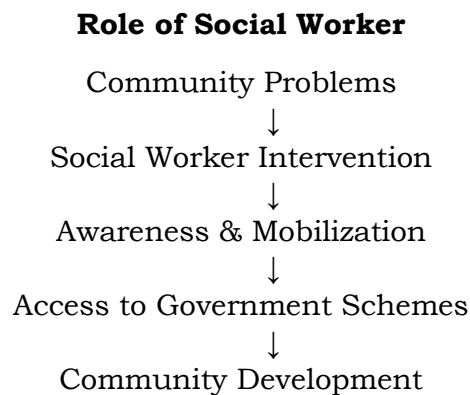
3. Advocacy

Social workers advocate for the rights of slum dwellers and demand better services.

4. Capacity Building

Helping communities develop skills for employment and leadership.

Example - A social worker may organize health awareness camps in slum areas to educate people about hygiene and disease prevention.



16.7 SUMMARY

This unit explained the concept of slum improvement and urban development. Slums are densely populated urban areas characterized by poor housing, inadequate sanitation, and lack of basic services. They develop mainly due to poverty, migration, and rapid urbanization.

NOTE

The unit discussed the meaning and definitions of slums as given by organizations such as the United Nations and the Census of India. Slums typically lack proper housing, sanitation, and infrastructure, which leads to various social and health problems.

The effects of slums include poor health conditions, environmental pollution, economic insecurity, and social issues such as crime and unemployment. These challenges affect not only slum residents but also the overall urban environment.

Several government programs aim to improve slum conditions. Initiatives such as Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Swachh Bharat Mission, and Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission focus on providing housing, sanitation, and infrastructure.

Urban poverty alleviation schemes like National Urban Livelihoods Mission provide skill development and employment opportunities for urban poor communities.

Social workers play a critical role in urban development by mobilizing communities, creating awareness, advocating for rights, and connecting people with government welfare programs.

Overall, slum improvement requires a combined effort of government agencies, community participation, and professional social work practice to ensure sustainable urban development and better quality of life for urban poor populations.

16.8 GLOSSARY

Term	Explanation
Slum	Poorly developed urban settlement
Urbanization	Growth of cities due to population increase
Poverty	Lack of basic economic resources
Infrastructure	Basic facilities like roads, water, electricity
Sanitation	Clean water and waste disposal systems
Migration	Movement of people from rural to urban areas
Housing	Shelter or residential buildings
Livelihood	Means of earning income
Community	Improvement of social and economic

Development	conditions
Urban Poverty	Poverty experienced in city areas

16.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress – 1

Note: (a) Space is given below for your answer.

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

1. What is a slum?

A slum is a densely populated urban area characterized by poor housing, lack of sanitation, and inadequate infrastructure.

2. Name two causes of slum formation.

Poverty and rural-to-urban migration.

3. Mention one effect of slums.

Slums lead to health problems due to poor sanitation.

4. Name one slum improvement program in India.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana.

5. What is the role of social workers in slums?

They promote community participation and help residents access welfare schemes

16.10 SUGGESTED READINGS – OER

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectonline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13632	

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16.12 EXERCISE**Part 1****A. Multiple choice question**

- 1. The main objective of slum improvement programmes is to**
 - a) Remove poor people from cities
 - b) Improve housing and living conditions of slum dwellers
 - c) Increase urban population
 - d) Promote industrial growth
- 2. Which of the following is an important component of urban development?**
 - a) Infrastructure development
 - b) Environmental protection
 - c) Housing facilities
 - d) All of the above
- 3. One major challenge faced by slum improvement programmes is**

- a) Availability of too many resources
- b) Lack of community participation
- c) Excessive urban planning
- d) Low population density

4. Which factor contributes significantly to urban poverty?

- a) Unemployment
- b) Low wages
- c) Lack of education
- d) All of the above

5. Social workers in urban communities mainly work to

- a) Ignore urban problems
- b) Support community development and welfare
- c) Promote migration
- d) Increase slum population

Answers with Explanations:

1. Correct Answer: b) Improve housing and living conditions of slum dwellers

Explanation: Slum improvement programmes focus on enhancing the quality of life of people living in slums. These programmes aim to provide better housing, sanitation, drinking water, roads, electricity, and social services. Instead of removing people from cities, governments and social organizations try to upgrade living conditions and integrate slum settlements into urban development plans.

2. Correct Answer: D) All of the above

Explanation: Urban development is a comprehensive process that includes infrastructure development, housing facilities, environmental protection, transportation systems, and social services. All these components work together to improve the economic, social, and environmental conditions of cities, especially for marginalized populations such as slum dwellers.

3. Correct Answer: : b) Lack of community participation

Explanation: Many slum development programmes fail or face difficulties because local residents are not actively involved in planning and implementation. Community participation is essential because residents understand their own problems and needs. Social workers often play an important role in mobilizing communities and encouraging participation in development initiatives.

NOTE**4. Correct Answer: d) All of the above**

Explanation: Urban poverty results from several interconnected factors such as unemployment, low wages, lack of education, migration, and inadequate access to social services. These factors prevent people from achieving stable livelihoods and often push them to live in informal settlements or slums.

5. Correct Answer: b) Support community development and welfare

Explanation: Social workers play a crucial role in urban community development. They help people access government schemes, healthcare, education, and employment opportunities. They also work with communities to organize self-help groups, raise awareness, and promote social justice, which contributes to sustainable urban development.

Part 2**C. Long answer type question (answer in 200 words)**

1. What are the main characteristics of slums?
2. Explain two causes of slum formation.
3. Write the importance of slum improvement programs.

Part 3**D. Long answer type question (answer in 300 words)**

1. Explain the causes and effects of slum development.
2. Discuss major slum improvement programs in India.
3. Explain the role of social workers in urban communities.

UNIT 17

Untouchability in India

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 17.1 Introduction
- 17.2 Objective
- 17.2 Meaning and definition of Untouchability
- 17.3 Concept and historical background
- 17.4 Social consequences
- 17.5 Constitutional provisions
- 17.6 Legal measures
- 17.7 Summary
- 17.8 Glossary
- 17.9 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 17.10 Suggested Readings – OER
- 17.11 References
- 17.12 Exercise

17.1 INTRODUCTION

Indian society has historically been characterized by a complex system of social stratification, particularly the caste system. One of the most severe consequences of this hierarchical structure has been the practice of **untouchability**, which refers to the social exclusion and discrimination faced by certain communities, especially those historically categorized as “lower castes” or **Scheduled Castes (SCs)**. Untouchability represents a system of social inequality where individuals are denied equal rights, opportunities, and dignity due to their caste identity.

The practice of untouchability has existed for centuries in India and has deeply influenced the social, economic, and cultural life of marginalized communities. Individuals considered “untouchable” were often denied access to temples, public wells, schools, and even common roads. They were forced to live in segregated settlements and were restricted to certain occupations considered impure by dominant social groups. These practices not only deprived them of social dignity but also limited their access to education, employment, and basic human rights.

NOTE

Over time, several social reformers and movements emerged to challenge this discriminatory system. Leaders such as **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Mahatma Gandhi, and Jyotirao Phule** played significant roles in raising awareness about caste discrimination and advocating for social equality. Their efforts contributed to the development of policies and legal frameworks aimed at eliminating untouchability and promoting social justice.

After India gained independence in 1947, the Constitution of India took strong measures to abolish untouchability. **Article 17 of the Constitution** explicitly declares the practice of untouchability illegal and punishable by law. Various legislative measures and welfare programmes have also been introduced to protect the rights of marginalized communities and improve their socio-economic conditions.

Despite these efforts, untouchability and caste-based discrimination still persist in some parts of India, particularly in rural areas. Social exclusion, violence, and economic marginalization continue to affect many members of Scheduled Castes. Therefore, understanding the concept, historical background, social consequences, and legal measures related to untouchability remains crucial for students of sociology and social work.

This unit aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of untouchability in India. It discusses the meaning and definition of untouchability, its historical roots, and its impact on society. The unit also examines constitutional provisions and legal measures introduced to eliminate this practice. Furthermore, it highlights the role of social work and public policy in addressing caste-based discrimination and promoting social equality. By studying this unit, students will gain insights into one of the most significant social issues in India and the efforts being made to eradicate it.

17.2 OBJECTIVE

After reading this section, you will be able to:

- Trace the historical and ideological origins of the practice of untouchability within the caste system.
- Analyze the psychological, economic, and social impacts of untouchability on affected communities.
- Examine the mechanisms through which this practice is structurally maintained in modern society.

17.2 MEANING AND DEFINITION OF UNTOUCHABILITY

Untouchability is a form of social discrimination in which certain groups of people are considered impure or inferior and are excluded from social interaction with the rest of society. It is closely linked to the caste system in India, where individuals belonging to lower castes were traditionally treated as socially inferior and were denied basic human rights.

In simple terms, untouchability refers to the practice of **avoiding physical contact or social interaction with certain groups because they are considered ritually impure**. These groups were historically referred to as “untouchables” and are now officially recognized as **Scheduled Castes** in India.

Definitions

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar described untouchability as a form of social exclusion in which certain communities are denied participation in social life and are treated as inferior.

According to sociologist **G. S. Ghurye**, untouchability is a social practice based on the belief that certain castes are polluted and must be kept separate from the rest of society.

The **Indian Constitution** defines untouchability as any form of social disability imposed on individuals based on caste.

Examples of Untouchability Practices

Historically, several discriminatory practices were associated with untouchability:

Practice	Description
Temple entry restrictions	Lower caste individuals were not allowed to enter temples
Separate wells	Dalits were prohibited from using public wells
Segregated housing	Dalit communities lived in separate settlements
Restricted occupations	They were limited to menial jobs like manual scavenging
Social exclusion	Denied participation in community events

For example, in many villages, Dalits were required to live outside the main settlement and were not allowed to sit with members of higher castes in schools or public gatherings.

Untouchability also affected access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities, reinforcing economic inequality and social marginalization.

NOTE

Although the practice has been legally abolished, some forms of discrimination still exist in subtle or indirect ways. For instance, in certain rural areas, caste-based segregation in housing and marriage practices still persists.

Understanding the meaning and implications of untouchability is essential for promoting social equality and human rights.

17.3 CONCEPT AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The concept of untouchability developed within the broader framework of the caste system, which divided society into hierarchical groups based on occupation and social status. According to traditional Hindu social order, society was divided into four major varnas:

Varna	Traditional Role
Brahmins	Priests and scholars
Kshatriyas	Warriors and rulers
Vaishyas	Traders and merchants
Shudras	Servants and laborers

People who performed occupations considered impure—such as cleaning waste, tanning leather, or handling dead animals—were placed outside the varna system and treated as untouchables.

Historically, these communities were denied social mobility and were forced to perform hereditary occupations. Their living conditions were often poor, and they faced severe social restrictions.

During the medieval period, untouchability became more rigid due to religious and social norms that emphasized ritual purity and pollution. However, several Bhakti saints, such as Kabir and Ravidas, criticized caste discrimination and promoted equality.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, social reform movements began challenging the practice of untouchability. Reformers such as Jyotirao Phule, Periyar, and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar advocated for the rights of oppressed communities and demanded social and political reforms.

The struggle against untouchability played an important role in India's freedom movement. Mahatma Gandhi referred to the untouchables as Harijans, meaning "children of God," and campaigned for their social inclusion.

After independence, the Indian government introduced constitutional provisions and legal measures to abolish untouchability and promote equality.

17.4 SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES

Untouchability has had profound social consequences for Indian society. It has created deep divisions and inequalities among communities and has hindered social integration and development.

Major Social Consequences

Area	Impact
Education	Limited access to schools and higher education
Employment	Restricted to low-paying jobs
Housing	Segregated settlements
Health	Poor access to healthcare facilities
Social dignity	Loss of self-respect and social status

For example, many Dalit children historically faced discrimination in schools, where they were sometimes forced to sit separately or perform cleaning tasks.

Untouchability also contributed to poverty and economic marginalization, as affected communities were denied opportunities for upward mobility.

Furthermore, caste discrimination has sometimes led to social conflicts and violence, particularly in rural areas where caste hierarchies remain strong.

17.5 CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

The **Constitution of India** provides several safeguards to eliminate untouchability and promote social equality.

Important Constitutional Provisions

Article	Provision
Article 14	Equality before law
Article 15	Prohibition of discrimination
Article 16	Equal opportunity in public employment
Article 17	Abolition of untouchability
Article 46	Protection of SC/ST interests

Article 17 is particularly significant because it explicitly declares that untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is prohibited.

Example: If a person denies entry to someone in a public place based on caste, it is considered a violation of constitutional rights.

NOTE

The Constitution also provides **reservations in education, employment, and political representation** to uplift marginalized communities.

17.6 LEGAL MEASURES

To enforce constitutional provisions, the government has enacted several laws to prevent caste discrimination and protect the rights of Scheduled Castes.

Important Laws

Law	Year	Purpose
Protection of Civil Rights Act	1955	Punishes untouchability practices
SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act	1989	Prevents violence and discrimination
Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers Act	2013	Eliminates manual scavenging

For example, the **SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act** provides strict punishment for crimes such as caste-based violence, social boycott, or humiliation.

These laws also provide **legal support, compensation, and rehabilitation** to victims.

17.7 SUMMARY

Untouchability is one of the most serious social problems that emerged from the caste system in India. It refers to the practice of discriminating against certain communities by treating them as socially inferior and excluding them from social interaction. Historically, people belonging to lower castes were denied access to temples, schools, and public resources and were forced to live in segregated areas.

The concept of untouchability developed within the caste hierarchy and was reinforced by social and religious beliefs about purity and pollution. Over time, social reformers and movements challenged these practices and advocated for equality and justice.

The Constitution of India abolished untouchability and introduced several provisions to protect the rights of marginalized communities. Important articles such as Articles 14, 15, 16, and 17 ensure equality and prohibit discrimination based on caste.

Various laws, including the Protection of Civil Rights Act and the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act, have been enacted to prevent

discrimination and punish offenders. These legal measures aim to promote social justice and protect the dignity of vulnerable communities.

Despite these efforts, some forms of caste-based discrimination still exist in certain parts of society. Therefore, continuous efforts through education, awareness, legal enforcement, and social work interventions are necessary to eliminate untouchability completely.

17.8 GLOSSARY

1. **Untouchability** – Social discrimination based on caste.
2. **Caste System** – Hierarchical social structure in India.
3. **Scheduled Castes** – Communities historically subjected to untouchability.
4. **Social Exclusion** – Denial of participation in social activities.
5. **Equality** – Equal rights and opportunities for all individuals.
6. **Discrimination** – Unfair treatment based on social identity.
7. **Social Justice** – Fair distribution of resources and opportunities.
8. **Reservation** – Policy providing opportunities for marginalized groups.
9. **Human Rights** – Basic rights and freedoms of individuals.
10. **Social Reform** – Efforts to improve social conditions.

17.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress – 1

Note: (a) Space is given below for your answer.

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

1. What is untouchability?

Untouchability is a social practice in which certain communities are treated as inferior and excluded from social interaction based on caste.

2. Which constitutional article abolishes untouchability?

Article 17 of the Indian Constitution abolishes untouchability.

3. Name one law that protects Scheduled Castes from discrimination.

The SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989.

4. Who was a major leader in the fight against untouchability?

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar.

5. What is one social consequence of untouchability?

Social exclusion and lack of access to education and employment.

NOTE**17.10 SUGGESTED READINGS – OER**

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectonline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13633	

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17.12 EXERCISE**Part 1****A. Multiple choice question**

- 1 Untouchability is mainly related to
 a Religion
 b Caste system
 c Economy
 d Politics
- 2 Article abolishing untouchability is
 a Article 14
 b Article 17
 c Article 19
 d Article 21
- 3 Which act protects SC/ST communities?
 a RTI Act
 b SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act
 c Education Act
 d Labour Act

- 4 Untouchability leads to
- a Social equality
 - b Social exclusion
 - c Social harmony
 - d Economic growth

- 5 Manual scavenging is associated with
- a Caste discrimination
 - b Agriculture
 - c Education
 - d Technology

Answers with Explanations:

1. Correct Answer: b) Caste system

Explanation: Untouchability developed as a result of caste-based social hierarchy.

2. Correct Answer: b) Article 17

Explanation: Article 17 of the Indian Constitution abolishes untouchability and declares it illegal.

3 Correct Answer: b) SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act

Explanation This law protects marginalized communities from caste-based violence and discrimination.

4 Correct Answer: b) Social exclusion

Explanation Untouchability isolates communities and prevents them from participating in social life.

5 Correct Answer: a) Caste discrimination

Explanation Manual scavenging was historically imposed on lower caste communities.

Part 2

C. Long answer type question (answer in 200 words)

- 1. Define untouchability.
- 2 Explain the historical background of untouchability.
- 3 What are the constitutional safeguards against untouchability?

Part 3

D. Long answer type question (answer in 300 words)

COMMUNITY, INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

NOTE

1. Discuss the concept and historical development of untouchability in India.
- 2 Explain the constitutional and legal measures taken to abolish untouchability.
- 3 Analyze the social consequences of untouchability in Indian society.

UNIT 18

Prevention of Untouchability and Social Inclusion

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 18.1 Introduction
- 18.2 Objective
- 18.2 Strategies for elimination
- 18.3 Government and NGO initiatives
- 18.4 Role of social work practice in social justice
- 18.5 Community awareness and empowerment
- 18.6 Summary
- 18.7 Glossary
- 18.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 18.9 Suggested Readings – OER
- 18.10 References
- 18.11 Exercise

18.1 INTRODUCTION

Indian society has historically been influenced by the caste system, which created deep social divisions and inequalities. One of the most severe manifestations of caste discrimination has been the practice of untouchability. Although the Constitution of India abolished untouchability in 1950, social discrimination based on caste has continued in various forms. Preventing untouchability and promoting social inclusion have therefore become essential objectives of social policy, governance, and social work practice.

Untouchability refers to the exclusion and discrimination faced by certain communities, particularly Scheduled Castes (SCs), who were historically considered socially inferior. These communities were denied access to public spaces such as temples, schools, wells, and roads. They were also forced into occupations considered impure and were socially segregated from the rest of society. Such discrimination not only violated human dignity but also restricted economic and educational opportunities for millions of people.

Over the years, several constitutional provisions, legal measures, and social reform movements have aimed to eliminate untouchability and

NOTE

ensure equality. Article 17 of the Indian Constitution explicitly abolishes untouchability and prohibits its practice in any form. Additionally, various laws such as the Protection of Civil Rights Act (1955) and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act (1989) were enacted to protect marginalized communities from discrimination and violence.

Preventing untouchability is not only a legal responsibility but also a social and moral obligation. Achieving social inclusion requires the active participation of government institutions, civil society organizations, community leaders, and social workers. Social inclusion refers to the process of ensuring equal access to opportunities, resources, and rights for all individuals regardless of caste, gender, religion, or socio-economic background.

Government programmes aimed at improving education, employment, housing, and social security for marginalized communities have played an important role in promoting inclusion. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have also contributed significantly by conducting awareness campaigns, providing legal aid, and empowering marginalized communities through education and community development initiatives.

Social workers play a crucial role in this process by advocating for human rights, promoting equality, and facilitating community participation. Through methods such as community organization, social action, and advocacy, social workers help marginalized communities claim their rights and participate fully in social and economic life.

This unit focuses on the prevention of untouchability and the promotion of social inclusion in India. It discusses strategies for eliminating caste discrimination, the role of government and NGOs, and the importance of social work practice in promoting social justice. The unit also examines the significance of community awareness and empowerment in creating an inclusive society. By studying this unit, students will develop a deeper understanding of the challenges and solutions related to caste-based discrimination and social exclusion.

18.2 OBJECTIVE

After reading this section, you will be able to:

- Assess the legal frameworks and constitutional provisions designed to abolish untouchability.
- Evaluate the success of civil society and social work interventions in enforcing these anti-discrimination laws.
- Design community-level strategies to dismantle exclusionary practices and foster genuine social inclusion.

18.2 STRATEGIES FOR ELIMINATION

Eliminating untouchability requires a multi-dimensional approach involving legal, educational, economic, and social strategies. The goal is not only to abolish discriminatory practices but also to promote equality and dignity for all members of society.

Major Strategies for Elimination

Strategy	Description	Example
Legal enforcement	Strict implementation of anti-discrimination laws	Punishment under SC/ST Act
Education	Promoting inclusive education and awareness	Scholarships for SC students
Economic empowerment	Providing employment opportunities	Skill development programs
Social awareness	Campaigns against caste discrimination	Community awareness programs
Political participation	Representation in governance	Reserved seats in Parliament

1 Legal Measures

Effective implementation of laws such as the **SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act** is essential to deter caste-based discrimination. Legal awareness among marginalized communities helps them claim their rights and seek justice.

2 Education and Awareness

Education plays a crucial role in changing social attitudes. Schools and universities can promote equality through inclusive policies and curriculum that emphasize human rights and social justice.

Example: Awareness campaigns in rural schools that teach children about equality and constitutional rights.

3 Economic Empowerment

Economic inequality often reinforces social discrimination. Providing employment opportunities, skill training, and financial assistance helps marginalized communities achieve economic independence.

Example: Government skill development programmes for Scheduled Castes.

4 Social Reform Movements

NOTE

Social reform movements led by activists and community leaders have historically played an important role in challenging caste discrimination.

Example: Dalit rights movements advocating equality and dignity.

These strategies collectively help reduce caste discrimination and promote inclusive development.

18.3 GOVERNMENT AND NGO INITIATIVES

Government institutions and non-governmental organizations play a crucial role in preventing untouchability and promoting social inclusion.

Major Government Initiatives

Programme	Objective
Scheduled Caste Sub Plan	Economic development of SC communities
Scholarship schemes	Support education of marginalized students
Stand Up India	Promote entrepreneurship
Skill India	Provide vocational training

For example, the government provides **scholarships and hostels for SC students**, enabling them to pursue higher education and improve their socio-economic status.

Role of NGOs

Non-governmental organizations complement government efforts by working directly with communities. They conduct awareness programmes, provide legal support, and empower marginalized groups through education and training.

Example: NGOs organizing legal awareness camps in rural areas to educate people about their rights under the Constitution.

NGO Activities

- Community education programs
- Legal aid services
- Advocacy for human rights
- Capacity-building workshops

Through collaborative efforts between government agencies and NGOs, social inclusion initiatives can reach a larger population.

18.4 ROLE OF SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN SOCIAL JUSTICE

Social work is a profession dedicated to promoting social justice, human rights, and community well-being. Social workers play a significant role in addressing caste discrimination and supporting marginalized communities.

Roles of Social Workers

Role	Description
Advocate	Protect rights of marginalized communities
Educator	Promote awareness about equality
Counsellor	Provide support to victims of discrimination
Community organizer	Mobilize communities for collective action
Policy advocate	Influence policies for social justice

Example: A social worker in a rural village may organize community meetings to discuss caste discrimination and encourage inclusive practices.

Social Work Methods

- Community organization
- Social action
- Advocacy
- Policy development
- Capacity building

Social workers also collaborate with government agencies and NGOs to implement welfare programmes and ensure that marginalized communities receive benefits.

Through these interventions, social workers help create a more inclusive and equitable society.

18.5 COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND EMPOWERMENT

Community awareness and empowerment are essential for eliminating untouchability and promoting social inclusion. When communities become aware of their rights and responsibilities, they are better able to challenge discriminatory practices.

NOTE**Importance of Community Awareness**

Area	Impact
Human rights awareness	Encourages equality
Education	Promotes social mobility
Community participation	Strengthens democracy
Social harmony	Reduces discrimination

Empowerment Strategies

- 1 Community education programmes
- 2 Leadership training for marginalized groups
- 3 Formation of self-help groups
- 4 Legal literacy campaigns
- 5 Community dialogue initiatives

Example: A social worker may conduct workshops in villages to educate people about constitutional rights and encourage cooperation among different caste groups.

Empowerment helps marginalized communities gain confidence, participate in decision-making, and advocate for their rights.

18.6 SUMMARY

This unit examined the prevention of untouchability and the promotion of social inclusion in Indian society. Untouchability has historically been one of the most severe forms of caste-based discrimination, resulting in social exclusion, economic marginalization, and denial of basic human rights to certain communities, particularly Scheduled Castes.

The unit discussed various strategies for eliminating untouchability, including legal enforcement, education, economic empowerment, and social awareness programmes. Effective implementation of laws such as the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act is essential to protect marginalized communities from discrimination and violence.

Government initiatives play an important role in promoting social inclusion through welfare programmes, educational scholarships, and employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups. Non-governmental organizations also contribute significantly by providing legal aid, conducting awareness campaigns, and empowering communities through education and training.

The role of social workers is particularly important in promoting social justice and equality. Through advocacy, community organization, counseling, and policy interventions, social workers help marginalized communities access their rights and opportunities.

Community awareness and empowerment are key components in the process of social transformation. Educating people about human rights and encouraging community participation can reduce discrimination and promote social harmony.

Overall, preventing untouchability requires collective efforts from government institutions, civil society, communities, and social work professionals. By promoting equality, dignity, and inclusive development, society can move toward achieving the constitutional vision of justice and equality for all.

18.7 GLOSSARY

1. Social Inclusion – Process of ensuring equal opportunities for all.
- 2 Untouchability – Caste-based social discrimination.
- 3 Social Justice – Fair treatment and equal rights in society.
- 4 Marginalization – Social exclusion of certain groups.
- 5 Empowerment – Enabling individuals to control their lives.
- 6 Discrimination – Unfair treatment based on identity.
- 7 Advocacy – Supporting the rights of others.
- 8 Social Reform – Efforts to improve social conditions.
- 9 Equality – Equal opportunities and rights for all.
- 10 Human Rights – Basic rights of every individual.

18.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress – 1

Note: (a) Space is given below for your answer.

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

1 What is social inclusion?

Social inclusion refers to ensuring equal access to opportunities, resources, and rights for all individuals regardless of social background.

2 Name one law that prevents caste discrimination.

The SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989.

3 What is the role of NGOs in preventing untouchability?

NGOs conduct awareness programs, provide legal aid, and empower marginalized communities.

4 How can education help eliminate untouchability?

NOTE

Education promotes awareness, equality, and social mobility.

5 What is one role of social workers in promoting social justice?
Advocating for the rights of marginalized communities.

18.9 SUGGESTED READINGS – OER

Sr. No.	Title	URL	QR Code
1	Sociology & Social Work	http://books.aisectonline.com/User/UnitUrls?unitId=13634	

18.10 REFERENCES

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16.12 EXERCISE**Part 1****A. Multiple choice question**

1. Untouchability was abolished under
 - a Article 14
 - b Article 17
 - c Article 19
 - d Article 21
- 2 Social inclusion means
 - a Excluding certain groups
 - b Equal participation of all people

- c Economic competition
- d Political dominance

3 Which law protects SC/ST communities?

- a RTI Act
- b SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act
- c Labour Act
- d Education Act

4 NGOs mainly work for

- a Profit
- b Social welfare
- c Political campaigns
- d Industrial growth

5 Empowerment helps communities to

- a Remain dependent
- b Gain confidence and rights
- c Increase discrimination
- d Reduce education

Answers with Explanations:

1. Correct Answer: b) Article 17

Explanation: Article 17 of the Indian Constitution abolishes untouchability and prohibits its practice.

2. Correct Answer: b) Equal participation of all people

Explanation: Social inclusion ensures that every individual has equal opportunities and rights.

3 Correct Answer: b) SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act

Explanation This law protects marginalized communities from discrimination and violence.

4 Correct Answer: b) Social welfare

Explanation NGOs work to improve social conditions and support vulnerable groups.

5 Correct Answer: b) Gain confidence and rights

Explanation Empowerment enables communities to participate in decision-making and claim their rights.

Part 2

C. Short answer type question (answer in 200 words)

NOTE

1. Define social inclusion.
- 2 Explain the role of NGOs in preventing untouchability.
- 3 What is the importance of community awareness?

Part 3

D. Long answer type question (answer in 300 words)

- 1 Discuss strategies for eliminating untouchability in India.
- 2 Explain the role of social workers in promoting social justice.
- 3 Analyze the importance of community empowerment in achieving social inclusion.



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Dear Student,

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3. How many hours did you need for studying the units? :

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4. Please give your reactions to the following items based on your reading of the block:

Items	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Poor	Give specific Examples (If poor)
Presentation Quality					
Language and Style					
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